
From the Denver Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2019/06/21/ey-eoy-eldon-james-corp.html>

EY 2019 Entrepreneur Of The Year finalist: Health Care

Eldon James Corp. keeps it all in the family

Entrepreneurship seems to run in the Coulson family's blood – Eldon James Corp. is just one example.

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Marcia Coulson says she isn't sure if being an entrepreneur is contagious or genetic. Her history makes it a true toss-up.

Her parents started a manufacturing company, Value Plastics, in their basement when Coulson was 10 years old.

"In my family you were always busy," Coulson recalls. "There was an unlimited supply of plastic parts to be separated. There was no watching TV without simultaneously separating plastic parts."

Then, in 1989, she bought Eldon James Corp., which makes hose fittings and PVC-free plastic tubing.

"I was a single mom of three children while growing the business," she said. "My kids grew up with the business ... always recruited for special projects and summer jobs."

Now her sons have started their own businesses.

To add more entrepreneurialism to the story, she met Bill Coulson in 2006 and they married two years later. He too grew up with a family-owned business, Coulson Excavation, which his grandfather started in 1949 and today employs three generations of Coulsons.

"It was not unusual for either of our families to have worked most weekends and everyone pitched in," Marcia Coulson said. "When you grow up in an entrepreneurial family, you tend to understand the steps toward building a business as each step [takes] great effort and a lot of invested time."

That early exposure to entrepreneurship for both of them might explain part of Eldon James' success. Since the two began working together — a 10-year period — the company's growth has doubled. Coulson says the company's year-over-year growth hovers between 10 and 20%.

The secret to working well with a spouse? It doesn't hurt if you complement (and compliment) each other.



PROVIDED BY EY

Eldon James Corp. is a finalist in EY's 2019 Entrepreneur Of The Year awards. Seen here: Husband-and-wife team Marcia (president) and William (VP) Coulson.

“Bill is good at doing things that I don’t do well, and I think I’m good at doing the things he doesn’t really enjoy doing,” Coulson said. “We share the same goals and we are growing together.”

Indeed, they are growing together. In 2014 they founded another company, WilMarc Medical, which designs, manufactures and markets disposable medical devices with a focus on anesthesia and respiratory products.

Coulson said a key lesson she’s learned over the years is that people are the best and hardest part of business.

“You are only as good as the people you surround yourself with,” she said. “My kids will probably put that on my grave as they have heard that so many times. It applies to business as well as friends. A company is about the people in the company and the culture you build together. This culture shows in the way you treat your customers and suppliers. Customers who tour our company have told me that they can tell our employees are happy and enjoy what they’re doing.”

Eldon James celebrates its 32nd anniversary this month (June 2019) and Coulson says she’s enjoying where the business is now.

“We’re just launching the new products and our customers’ reactions are so positive and fulfilling,” she said. “It feels like a perfect storm right now ... we’re blessed that now is the best time.”

Marcia Coulson

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