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Denville Twin Sisters Celebrate 20 Years in Business Together

For Information or to arrange an interview with Faith and Hope Zimmerman, contact Allison Freeman at Allison Freeman Associates at Allison@AllisonFreemanAssociates.com or (973) 769-6614.

On April 1, twin sisters Faith and Hope Zimmerman will celebrate more than their birthday; they will celebrate 20 years in business together.

The Denville sisters own Zimmerman Architects, a firm specializing in custom residential architectural design, located in downtown Denville. Faith and Hope are best friends, live blocks apart from each other in Cedar Lake, and pride themselves in their ability to create home remodeling, addition or new construction projects that transform their clients' dreams into reality.

The sisters, who grew up in Morris Township, said they did not grow up planning to become architects and open a firm together. Although they had similar interests as teenagers, they each initially pursued very different career goals.

"We kind of ran in opposite directions and ended up in the same place," said Hope Zimmerman, who earned a degree in fine arts in college before studying architecture at NJIT with her sister.

"When you are twins, everybody tells you that you need to find your own self and do different things," noted Faith Zimmerman, whose initial college pursuit was engineering.

The sisters have it down to a system, balancing work and family. They take turns chauffeuring their five kids to activities so the other can be in the office, take family vacations together and note that the

cousins are all very close. They also support green architecture and have appeared on talk shows discussing the issue.

The Zimmermans pride themselves in the high quality of their work as well as customer satisfaction. "I hope you appreciate what an improvement this project has made to our quality of life" one client recently told them.

The architects also make it a practice to give back to their community. They sponsor many local kids' sports teams, swing hammers in Habitat for Humanity builds and give talks to local scouts and school groups.

Both sisters note that their favorite thing about working with each other, besides the fact that they are working with someone they like, is that they each "have a business partner that they totally know and trust."

The sisters said that their firm is "built on creativity, experience and extraordinary customer service. Zimmerman Architects will help you turn your house into your dream house."

When the sisters first opened their business, they did not turn anyone away and designed commercial as well as residential projects. After about 10 years, they decided they preferred working on residential projects. "After 10 years, we evaluated our practice and realized that we really like residential work and decided we would specialize in that," Faith Zimmerman said.

"With residential projects, the clients really put their heart and soul into it. We appreciate that because we put our heart and soul in every project," Hope Zimmerman noted. "Our goal is to get inside their heads and see what makes them tick. When you are designing someone's dream house, it is not your dream house. It is their dream house."

The sisters said they pay attention to detail and really listen to what their clients want. The result: happy clients who refer them to friends and family.

"We want our clients to care about it (their home remodeling projects) as much as we do," Faith Zimmerman added. Occasionally the Zimmermans get a client who owns a commercial building which they care about as much as most people care about their homes. In that case, the Zimmermans gladly accept their project.

The sisters started their firm 20 years ago in Ridgewood with another partner. After two years, they bought him out and moved their firm to Denville. They have been in their current location at 40 Bloomfield Avenue for four years.

Most of the firm's work is located in Morris County, but the sisters have also done work across northern New Jersey and even out-of-state, including a retirement home in Ozark, Missouri, and a lake house in Canada.

When asked if the Zimmermans ever disagree about a project, they noted that they rarely argue. Perhaps they learned to get along coming from a large family of seven siblings growing up in Morris Township.

"There are definitely Hope's projects or my projects, but there is also definitely a collaborative effort on all projects," Faith Zimmerman said. "That helps with quality control and bringing it up to the next level. Getting a second pair of eyes on it always helps."

Although hard pressed to pick a favorite, one of the architectural projects that the sisters are particularly proud of is a renovation and addition on a more than 100-year-old house in Denville, which belongs to the Coccia family. "We kept the old character of the house and brought it up to date with current amenities and standards," Faith Zimmerman said.

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Faith Zimmerman, an 18-year member of the Morris County chapter of the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners, was honored at the chapter's annual awards breakfast on March 7 and presented with the chapter's Pinnacle of Achievement Award for her dedication, quiet strength and consistent support of the chapter. Faith is also a member of both the chapter's Ambassador Committee and Education Committee and will become the chapter's vice president of programming in June.

For her dedication, quiet strength and consistent support, we proudly award Faith Zimmerman the Pinnacle of Achievement Award.

For more information, visit www.zimarch.com, call (973) 625-4001 or e-mail zimarch@nac.net.

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