

# Cindy Stumpo

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*We step into the marble foyer of Cindy Stumpo's newly completed home, and the magnificence of the design is immediately evident. The morning light fills the open floor plan, illuminating the lines of the banister and highlighting the detail of the crown molding, while the crystal chandelier splashes delicate color onto the dining room walls. Every detail of this home is stunning in design and construction, a testament to the reputation of C. Stumpo Development as the areas premier builder.*

Rarely do you find a woman who has reached her level of admiration and success in the industry. Her company builds an average of 10 custom homes per year, and they are continuing to thrive in the current economy. Her ambition and dedication to her work is the driving force of the company's success, along with the commitment and talent of her crew. "These projects are a collaborative effort. I believe that you are only as good as the team that you work with" she says. The relationship with her crew can be witnessed first hand on her television show *Tough as Nails* on HGTV, which documents C. Stumpo Development through the stages of building custom homes.

Beyond the glamour and luxury of building homes of this magnitude, it is clear that family is the most important aspect of Cindy's life. She is in constant contact with her parents. Her two children are her number one priority and her ex-husband Joe remains in their lives as well. Spend just moments with Cindy at work, and you can see that C. Stumpo Development is not just a job to Cindy. At the completion of a project, you can find her on her hands and knees, cleaning the house from top to bottom. She does this to be sure that every inch of the house is perfect. Her strength, ambition and drive are evident in her every move. If you are lucky enough to witness her work ethic and determination firsthand, it is plain to see that Cindy is not focused on building a career, she is building an empire.

Her daughter Samantha is destined to one-day run her mothers business. Samantha is proving to possess the talent necessary to flourish in this industry. If Samantha continues on this path, they have the ability to become one of the only custom home development companies that is run by mother and daughter. "I think that she has more respect for me now that she works for me. Now she realizes what my day consists of and how hard

that we all work" says Cindy. And work for Cindy is a seemingly never-ending cycle. "Once we are at completion of one project, we are onto the next one. And I'm grateful for this. I wouldn't want it any other way".

Her son Chad has inherited his mother's determination. He is currently chasing his dream of becoming a professional golfer as he attends a golf academy in Florida. His accomplishments in tournaments have proven his power as an athlete, and his encouragement from both parents will only assist in propelling him towards his goal.

She notes how grateful she is to her ex-husband, Joe, for his support early in her career. She says "He helped make my career in the beginning and I have to give him credit for that. He supported me and encouraged me to find the success that I was after. Because I knew that he was there for me, and supportive of me, it made it easier for me to chase my dream".

Success is not easy to come by, especially on this level. The first stages of her career as a builder were not as glamorous as her current position, though it does seem as though an act of faith and destiny worked together on her behalf. While Cindy realized her dream of becoming a builder, she was pregnant with Samantha. She shared her aspirations with her father, but her hopes were cut short, as there was little support and encouragement for a woman to work in home development and construction. Meanwhile, Cindy and Joe purchased a home that needed major renovations. Halfway through the construction, the crew walked off the job. She saw firsthand, the awful reality of working with a builder who was unprofessional and unfair to his crew.

Cindy was left on partial bed rest during her pregnancy, living in a condo, while her dreams of living in a home with her husband and baby were quickly vanishing. Instead of sulking in her situation, she found an opportunity to achieve two





dreams. "It was right after I decided that I wanted to become a builder that my current builder walked off the job. I was determined to get this project completed. I hired a professor from Wentworth College to tutor me, because the bed-rest didn't allow for me to take classes. I was so ambitious, and I took a risk. I knew what I wanted, and I went after it" she said. Her dreams of becoming a builder, and the completion of her first home were simultaneously realized. Destiny and hard work combined to create the life that she had dreamed of.

Her *Tough as Nails* persona is only one element to this multifaceted woman. She is beautiful, smart and accomplished. She expects the best from people because she gives the best of herself to people. She is tough, yes, but she is also extremely generous with her knowledge and success. As many members of her crew will tell you, if you have a problem, Cindy will help you fix it. She will nurture you, give advice and support, but she expects that you will take what you learned from her to better yourself.

Many of her clients become longtime friends. Referrals and her reputation are key to her continued success. In a business where men typically rule, being a woman in the industry has its advantages. A woman's intuition and encouragement combine to create a more productive job site. "I can be tough when I have to be, but I also know that if I treat my crew with respect, they will work more effectively". Though much of the toughness of Cindy's day is highlighted on her show, there is an underlying sense that she truly cares for each member of her team. "A business, like children, needs nurturing. If you stop nurturing your children, your family grows apart. This can be applied to your career. If you stop nurturing your business, your crew will grow apart and become less productive. It is important to care for and respect people. That is what its all about".

