

# WEALTH:

## It's More than Just Money

While many financial advisors focus their investment strategies on stocks, bonds and other types of investment products, Dryden and Laila Pence have long believed there is an entire world of opportunities available to those looking beyond having the wealth needed to retire.

This core understanding – that wealth is more than just the money alone – is the principal on which their firm is founded and serves as the basis of how they help guide their clients today. “It’s Pence Wealth Management and not Pence Retirement Management,” explained co-principal Dryden Pence. “This is really about planning for your dreams.”

Founded in 1980 in Southern California, the firm has grown to include three California branches with a fourth in Michigan, and was built around asking the fundamental question of wealth and making it work for their clients.

“We define wealth as having the time and the resources to do what matters to you the most when you want to do it,” Dryden Pence told The Suit. “That is far more than just retirement.”

“It’s not the money, but what money provides,” added Laila Pence. She has been named by Barron’s Magazine as one of the top financial advisors in the nation<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, while the firm is headed by its married partners, the partnership itself was very much a marriage of skills as well. Laila already had expertise in financial planning, while Dryden brought his 20 years of experience in investment banking. The resulting creation was a successful firm built around those core elements that are key to maintaining their clients’ wealth. Over time, Pence Wealth Management grew to include a service as well as a marketing team, and today the company consists of 26 team



members, including eight advisors and even a PhD in economics. In 2014 the Financial Times has named Pence Wealth Management as one of the TOP 300 Registered Investment Advisors firm in the country<sup>2</sup>.

“Being able to grow quickly and having everyone play their part has worked very well for us,” Dryden said proudly. “That is where we are today.”

What the firm does today is to help clients prepare now for tomorrow – yet this isn’t limited to simply planning for retirement. “Many times people come in, and they really want to be able to provide for their children’s education, for their grandchildren’s education. They

want to provide a legacy,” Laila explained. “As they get older it is far more than just retirement. It becomes providing for the people you love, whether it is also helping their children buy a home or leaving a legacy that transfers not just wealth but values as well.”

As a result, many of the clients of Pence Wealth Management are people who are already comfortable, but still want to ensure that the money they have will last for the rest of their lives, and will also be able to help their loved ones.

“This is about being comfortable with their wealth – and confident that their wealth will be there to do those things

that matter the most,” said Dryden. “It is more than just the dollars you need for retirement but the wealth you may need for the rest of your life, and defining with people what they want to do with that wealth.”

Pence Wealth Management truly

lives by its motto of “planning for your dreams,” and the Pences told The Suit that their clients had some pretty big dreams that they want to see fulfilled. One wanted to build churches for his community, while others have wanted buildings named after them.

“It was about taking advantage of the volatility,” he explained. “A portfolio should aim to generate cash flow, or ‘dry powder’ to take advantage of those moments. Don’t you hate it when something goes on sale but you don’t have the money to buy it?”

In this regard, Dryden said the fact that cash flows trump volatility is a key point that investors, including his clients, need to understand. This point, which he understood during his years in investment banking, is truly one of turning a bad situation into an opportunity.

He added, “It has worked very well for us through the Great Recession of 2008/2009 and beyond.”

Laila Pence & E. Dryden Pence III are Registered Principals with LPL Financial. Securities and Advisory Services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor. Member FINRA/SIPC.

<sup>1</sup> 2014 Barron’s rankings are based on assets under management, revenue generated for advisors’ firms, quality of practices, and other factors.

<sup>2</sup> 2014 Financial Times list is based on six broad factors and calculates a numerical score for each adviser. Areas for consideration include adviser’s AUM, asset growth, years of experience, industry certification, FINRA compliance record and online accessibility.

the investors have realistic expectations, but also whether they are the right clients for Pence Wealth Management.

Meeting those expectations – and the dreams that come with them – became increasingly difficult following the economic downturn of 2008-09. Dryden said that he helped guide clients through it by using rather than fearing the markets.

“We have had many clients who wanted to do things for others. It truly is much, much more than just retirement,” said Laila, adding, “We each have a servant’s heart. We are here to serve our clients. The goal is for the company to scale the business and continue to make a big difference in the lives of our clients.”

While the Pences are there to help make those dreams come true, they said that it isn’t all that uncommon to find clients who don’t know what they want. This is why every potential new client is given a test, so that their investor psychology can be better understood. Doing this helps not only determine that



Newport Beach Location  
5000 Birch Street, Ste 8000  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
www.pencewealthmanagement.com