

"We've Come a Long Way, Babies!"

Baby News in Sacramento!

As Their Families Grow, KCRA Co-Anchors Mix Careers, Friendship with Motherhood



By Joyce Mitchell
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Sitting side-by-side on the KCRA 3 anchor desk delivering the news in Sacramento, **Edie Lambert** and **Kellie DeMarco** are stellar at what they do. Both women have long-standing careers as broadcast journalists, and earlier this year, in addition to delivering the news, both anchors also

delivered babies.

Nine months ago, Lambert and DeMarco each gave birth to little girls born two weeks apart. First, Lambert gave birth to **Carlie**. Then, DeMarco had baby **Piper**.

During the holidays last month, the NBC station aired a station holiday promo featuring the news anchor team and introducing their babies to viewers.



Ready for their Holiday Promo Close-Up

Edie Lambert, left, with daughter, Carlie, and Kellie DeMarco with her daughter, Piper

"Viewers shared the pregnancy journey with Kellie and me so it's fun to share where we are now," Lambert says.

DeMarco says she feels that viewers relate. They understand.

"As a first time mom, it was wonderful when viewers reached out to me," DeMarco says. "It's as though I've joined a special club. Women, in particular, are being really kind and generous. We're all going through the same thing. We're all trying to be good wives, good girlfriends, and good workers at the same time. It sort of surprised me that so many people stepped forward to offer such encouraging advice."

Hitting the airwaves back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, television, for years, was a male-dominated industry. But, things have changed, and are continuing to change. Women have pioneered the field. According to a 2013 Radio Television Digital News Association report, women are represented in more than 97 percent of major market newsrooms across the country. Statistics show women are making a mark as TV professionals while also having full, personal lives. That includes having children.

"It's really empowering to hear the statistics," DeMarco says. "When you go to journalism school, you think about how you can move up in this industry as fast as you can. More than a decade later, I look around and see all the women on TV holding big anchor jobs and they are all women who've been pioneers in this business. I feel lucky that Edie and I are both part of that movement."

As women have integrated newsrooms on camera and behind the scenes, along with the changing times comes the realization that women -- like their male counterparts -- can have it all: careers, marriage, and children, if they so choose.

Together, pregnant on set, Lambert and DeMarco were symbols of that.

"I'm not sure I ever looked at it as a pioneering voyage," Lambert adds. "I do see it as unusual. But, there was a station in Florida that had us beat!"

Lambert is referring to WFOR, the CBS station in Miami. Three on-air personalities for WFOR's morning newscast -- anchor **Rhiannon Ally**, meteorologist **Lisette Gonzalez** and reporter **Natalia Zea** -- all had baby bumps while behind the anchor desk.

On air, Lambert and DeMarco are smooth and have good chemistry. Personally, having babies at the same time went a long way toward enhancing that chemistry and their friendship.

"I really like it," DeMarco says. "Professionally, we work well together and our friendship has really gotten stronger. We understand what the other is going through as new moms. We know the juggling act well and that it's never easy. But we love our work and our children, so it's fun. We are there to support one another and you couldn't ask for anything more."

Add to that, an outpouring of positive viewer input.

"We really had so much love and support from viewers while we were working pregnant," Lambert says. "It was so kind that they shared our joy. In fact, we heard from some viewers that they had nicknamed the 6:30 evening newscast "the mommy news", to see how much our bellies had grown."

In addition to her nine-month-old, Lambert is also mom to her four-year-old daughter, **Alise**. "Pretty much every second of every day is accounted for," Lambert says. "When people ask me what I do for a hobby, I don't know how to answer that question. What makes me very happy is sleeping and showering."

As for DeMarco, it's a juggling act as well. "I feel like I have a hundred different balls in the air at all times," she says. "I feel my first job is being with my baby, then from 3 p.m. to midnight, television news is my second job. If breaking news happens, one job crosses over into the other and I have to come in to the station early. At the end of the day, I am committed to my job and committed to taking care of my baby."



Co-Anchors Co-Expecting

DeMarco and Lambert, on the KCRA set earlier this year



Baby News Update from the KCRA Newsroom

Lori Waldon, KCRA news director (center), joins Lambert and DeMarco with their babies in the newsroom during a break in last month's holiday promo taping.

bases with my baby. That means being able to go home at night for dinner. Then, it's back to work. Edie and I take our jobs very seriously and we are involved with each newscast."

Without even having the time to realize it, the team is breaking down old stereotypes embedded in the innate history of television. The once male-dominated industry is becoming truly representative of viewers served.

Lambert and DeMarco share evening newscast duties on KCRA and KQCA -- a Sacramento duopoly. Both have returned to work after maternity leave and now deliver the news as beaming mothers.

"On maternity leave, my bosses checked in to make sure I was okay and to see if I needed anything," DeMarco says. "It's an amazing feeling, especially as a new mom, to have somebody there who has your back."

"A couple of things have made this very workable for me," Lambert says. "First, having a supportive boss and second being able to go home on dinner breaks. After the early news, I drive home as fast as I can, read two stories with my four-year-old, talk about her day and tuck her in, and then I nurse my baby and I put her down. And while I am doing that, my sweet husband warms up something for dinner. I take some kind of food with me as I head back to the station and eat at my desk. We work unusual hours and being able to put my girls to bed is so important, especially when they're so little."

Back at work, both anchors pitch in and tackle writing duties for the late newscasts. "It's critical to be able to spend time at home during the workday," Lambert says. "But, when I get back to work each night, I dive in, write copy, and copy edit for the 10 and 11 p.m. newscasts. Making it work requires you to pull your weight on both ends."

Lambert is married to **Lloyd Levine**, a former California Assemblyman who now owns Filament Strategies, a political consulting firm.

"Another thing, Kellie and I are both married to very supportive men," Lambert says. "They own

Lambert and DeMarco credit the support of their husbands and news director **Lori Waldon** for making it all possible. "So wonderful, so supported by my boss Lori Waldon," Lambert says. "She has been really, truly wonderful." Waldon took over as news director at KCRA/KQCA in August of 2012, replacing **Anzio Williams**. Waldon worked in news management at KPIX in San Francisco and KQVR CBS 13 in Sacramento before coming to KCRA.

Waldon also represents the changing journalistic landscape of TV newsrooms. According to a 2013 RTNDA report, women in the top 25 TV markets hold 30 percent of news director jobs. Sacramento ranks as the 20th market in size.

"I feel like I work at the best station ever," DeMarco says.

"Management understands the value of family and that I have to cover the

their own businesses and have flexibility. That's really important given that our schedules can change dramatically with any breaking news event. Both of our husbands are hands-on dads."

DeMarco is growing her family with husband, **Evan DeMarco**. There is no question that he is committed to being a dad. He is chief executive officer of Lifestyle Nutrition Labs and is a Sacramento entrepreneur who markets a new product called Mommy Water. It's a prenatal vitamin formula in a powder form designed to be added to water. "It's so much easier than taking pills!" DeMarco says. "While he's getting his business off the ground, he is so supportive of my career. During the holiday photo shoot, he brought-in our baby, dressed and ready to go. He's always helping out."

Anchoring the news is often perceived as a glamorous job. However, covering the news on a daily basis is far from that. It's hard, demanding work. "I have to laugh at that perception. If people only knew how it really is," Lambert says.

Being a new mom working in TV news in this day and age is rewarding for Lambert and DeMarco. But it's far from easy.

"Some days, it's very difficult to say good-bye to my daughter when I head out the door to work," DeMarco says. "I really miss her. However, I am really proud of the work I do and I think one day, my little girl will be proud of me, too."

"I would not trade it for anything," Lambert explains. "I feel so very blessed. I have the family and job I always dreamed of."

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