Deirdre Chione McCarrell Otis ‘00

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Major: Liberal Studies
Profession: Stay at Home Mom and owner of Deirdre’s Boutique – sells used children’s clothing on Ebay

Deirdre is the mother of 7 children – 3 are adopted and 4 are biological. James (8), Sailorann (6), John-Luke (6), Michael (5), Nathaniel (4), Mark (2) and Daisy (1). She is a stay-at-home mom AND runs Deirdre’s Boutique – selling used children’s clothing online. Deirdre has enjoyed growing her business and now ships world-wide, with a following of loyal customers in Germany and Hong Kong. Deirdre has had to learn how to say thank you in many different languages – that is important to her – to let her customers know she appreciates their business.

Deirdre has always wanted a large family with lots of kids. The decision to adopt made by both Deirdre and her husband, Sheff was intentional. They decided to adopt their first child before having one of their own. In making that decision, Deirdre explains why it was so important to both her and her husband to bring an adopted child into their home “there are so many babies out there waiting to be adopted. We wanted our first child to be adopted so that everyone understood how truly important this was to us.”

Deirdre talks about the life choices that both her and her husband made to make their family possible. She had an offer from Bergdorf Goodman as a buyer on the East Coast and Sheff was an actor in LA. He had a reoccurring role in “Malcolm in the Middle” and has been part of the cast for Charlie’s Angels and other smaller parts in recent years. There are definitely hard times, 7 kids in 8 years involves a lot of physical work and sacrifice in order to make it work in the family.

When asked about advice for women who have left the work force to stay at home, Deirdre responded, “Keep some irons in the fire – see if you can do some work from home – think about possible projects you can work on to keep your name floating around in fields you like and may want to return to someday – volunteer to keep the necessary skills needed to re-enter the workforce.”

Deirdre’s advice for families considering adoption: “Do your research. The adoption process has a lot to do with your adoption agency. Also, talk to your spouse and think about some of the limitations you may be faced with such as; a child with special needs, race issues and really address the issue of needing an infant versus being willing to adopt an older child. Think about what you need as a family. Finally, RELAX – you WILL fall in love with that child!” Deirdre admits being worried about the bonding process when adopting James who was 2 years old. When adopting a child this age, bonding can be an issue and because James was adopted from
Russia, they had to learn an entirely new culture from the language to the food. Deirdre and Sheff also had to understand how children are raised in Russia.

For some funny insight into a typical day at the Otis household, check out their website www.sevensidekicks.com

**Last book:** “Three Men and a Body” by Stephanie Bond  
**Favorite Movie:** “Three Weddings and a Funeral” AND “Love Actually”  
**Favorite Restaurant:** Tan Popo – Sushi and Japanese cooking