

My Summer Associate Experience: Francesca A. Bagala-Maggiolo

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Our 2024 Summer Associate Program brought 13 law students from five law schools to the firm for an intellectually challenging and professionally gratifying experience. The students took part in firm-sponsored social events and community service projects throughout the summer in addition to attending client meetings, depositions, court hearings and other proceedings. Nearing the end of the program, the students agreed to share a few highlights from their summer at Shutts.

Francesca A. Bagala-Maggiolo joined Shutts' Miami office for the summer from the University of Michigan. Francesca is a member of the Latinx Law Students Association.

Francesca shares her thoughts on her summer experience at Shutts.

Why did you choose to spend your Summer with Shutts?

After my initial interviews with Shutts, I knew that Shutts would be the perfect place for me to gain my first legal experience. The entire hiring team was so kind and responsive. I got a look into the firm's welcoming atmosphere every time I spoke to them or any of their attorneys. As a first-generation law student, I knew that one of the most important values I was looking for in a clerkship was mentorship and I am happy to say that I found that at Shutts. Between that and the fact that Shutts is a full-service law firm that would allow me to experiment with both the litigation and transactional sectors, I was pretty much sold.

What were the three most memorable experiences throughout your time here?

My time at Shutts never had a dull moment. Every day presented me with something new and exciting. I think my fondest memory is meeting the two other Summer Associates who I would be spending the summer with. I am so happy to have made such strong friendships in this short period of time. These ladies helped serve as informal mentors, but also were great in helping me navigate my first legal experience. Not to mention that we had some great laughs too. Apart from my wonderful experience with the Summers, I also had a wonderful time at all of the events hosted by the firm. My personal favorites were the visit to the PAMM and the yacht trip we took together; they both allowed me to explore my hometown while still getting to learn about the law and a lawyer's various roles alongside great company. Lastly, I had a lot of fun just meeting the Shutts team and learning from them in every capacity. From grabbing lunch to working on assignments, I feel like my summer was very enriching and I feel prepared to tackle the upcoming school year and everything that lies ahead.

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What advice would you give to someone about to start the OCI process?

Just be yourself - as cheesy and redundant as it sounds. More than that, take time to get to know yourself. I know it does not sound like the most useful answer, and it is definitely one that I did not like hearing when I would ask attorneys and law students about OCI, but it really is true in the end. Ask yourself questions about what kind of work environment you are looking for and what kind of people you want in your life. Chances are you will be spending more time in the office than at home, and the people you choose to surround yourself with matter. Recruiters and attorneys will appreciate your honesty and your commitment to yourself. Most importantly, trust your gut. It will lead you to the people you are meant to be with and learn from and will guide you towards endless opportunities that will benefit your career.

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