

My Summer Associate Experience: Ryan Eaton

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Our 2023 Summer Associate Program brought 14 law students from eight 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.

Ryan P. Eaton, a student at Florida State University College of Law, joined us in the Orlando office. At FSU Law, Ryan is the Article & Notes Editor for the Florida State University Business Review. He also participates as a teaching assistant for Legal Writing & Research I and II courses.

Ryan shares his thoughts on his summer experience at Shutts.

Why did you choose to join Shutts for the summer?

I was looking for a firm that provided a range of practice areas and access to attorneys with a depth of knowledge and experience. Shutts delivered on both of those. Additionally, being from the greater Orlando area, I was excited by their active role in the city's rapid growth. I felt that a summer at Shutts would offer valuable development early in my legal career.

What advice would you give to someone looking for a summer associate position on how to be successful?

Above all, be proactive. There are countless resources available to summer associates if they actively pursue them. From networking events to just walking around the office, it is important to invite conversations, as they often lead to learning experiences. For assignments, be comfortable asking questions, be confident in your solutions, and, most importantly, be receptive to feedback and suggestions.

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

First, we had the unique opportunity to attend a board meeting at a local airport. It was interesting to see how the board operated and the responsibilities of their general counsel.

Next, my first assignment, which involved a complex business litigation case. I had no prior experience in litigation, so being thrown in the mix right away was eye-opening. It was exciting to learn on the fly under the guidance of experienced attorneys.

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Finally, the trip to Miami was an incredible experience. It was great meeting summer associates from the other offices while participating in activities like the beach cleanup.

Describe a typical day as a summer associate at Shutts.

I began each day checking emails and mapping out what my schedule would look like based on the priority of each assignment. If I had time, I would walk around the office to check in with the attorneys or other summer associates. We were frequently invited to lunches with partners from various practice groups, which made me aware of the many opportunities that exist within the firm. At the end of the day, I would check in with the attorneys I was completing work for prior to heading out. After hours, I frequently attended social events set up by the firm that gave summer associates even more opportunities to build relationships.

About Shutts & Bowen LLP

Shutts & Bowen, established in 1910, is a full-service business law firm with approximately 270 lawyers in offices in Ft. Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Sarasota, Tallahassee, Tampa, and West Palm Beach. Learn more about Shutts & Bowen at www.shutts.com.

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