

My Summer Associate Experience: Shiza Francis

7.28.23

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.

Shiza Francis participated in the program as a Summer Associate for the Tallahassee office. Shiza is enrolled in the Washington University School of Law, where she is Executive Editor of the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy's Symposium Issues, a Guest Executive Editor of the Texas Review of Law & Politics, and Symposium Editor of the NYU Journal of Law & Liberty. Shiza also participates as a member of the Federalist Society, the First Generation Law Society and the South Asian Law Student Association.

Shiza's summer experience is highlighted below.

Why did you choose to join Shutts for the summer?

I lived in Florida before attending law school out of state and want to start my legal career in the Sunshine State after graduation. My previous interactions with Shutts attorneys and the sterling reputation of Shutts' Appellate and Government Law Practice Groups made the choice a no-brainer. Everyone at Shutts is welcoming, and the talent and skill of the attorneys here is unparalleled!

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

Summer Associate programs are a great way to explore different practice areas and gain exposure to what area may be a great long-term fit. So, you should spend the summer exploring by proactively taking on different projects and talking to different attorneys about their experiences and day-to-day work. Being a summer associate is a great time to observe hearings, oral arguments, depositions, and client meetings. It's also a great time to ask questions and ask for feedback in order to be a better lawyer in the future (although it may seem daunting). Since practicing law is different than studying law, and you are not expected to know everything, but coming into the experience with an open mind, a lot of questions, and a willingness to learn from your mistakes will help you get the most out of the summer.

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What is something that you learned or a new skill that you gained during the summer program?

With anything related to the law, you can keep researching for days and still not read every source or court case out there that is broadly related to the research question you are trying to answer. It is a skill to learn how to refine searches find answers to the question and how to make the most of the limited time you have in finding the best answer to a question.

Describe a typical day as a summer associate at Shutts.

Every morning, I would grab coffee or a latte from the Shutts café and head into my office to check my emails and determine which assignments I needed to work on for the day, and if I needed to ask any questions to the assigning attorney. I would plan out my day, and carve large assignments into smaller action items. Sometimes we would be invited to sit in on a lunch meeting with different practice groups in order to learn more about the work that they do. I also enjoyed the days where there were social events in the evening, since it was a great way to get to know the partners and associates at the firm.

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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