

My Summer Associate Experience: Eric C. Bielefeldt

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Our 2018 [Summer Clerkship Program](#) brought five law students for an intellectually challenging and professionally gratifying experience. Nearing the end of the program, the students agreed to share a few of the highlights about their summer.

Eric joined us from The University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he is part of the Intellectual Property and Technology Law Association as well as the recipient of a UF Law Governor's Scholarship. Eric has a Master's degree in Management. He is expected to graduate in 2020.

Here is what Eric had to say about his summer at Shutts.

Q1. What did you do before coming to Shutts?

Prior to law school and joining Shutts, I received a Master's degree from UF and worked for a year as an analyst for an international real estate company. Through my summer clerkship and the various real estate projects I was lucky enough to work on, I have been able to see the experience I gained from work and school through a different prism. It is definitely a very rewarding feeling when everything starts to click.

Q2. What advice would you give to someone looking for a summer clerkship? What should they do to succeed in the position?

My best advice would be to stick with the process and not to get discouraged. Finding a summer clerkship can be very nerve-racking, especially for a 1L looking to work at a firm their first summer. Focus on your grades and rounding out your resume/application, and don't be afraid to use all the resources at your disposal.

During your clerkship, my advice is essentially the same. There is definitely a big learning curve, but trust yourself and work hard. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Reach out to attorneys and ask questions. Summer clerkships can be stressful, but the attorneys and support staff (especially at Shutts) are more than willing to help guide and assist you, as long as you are willing to ask.

Q3. What knowledge and/or skills will you be taking with you after completing the program?

My writing has improved tremendously. Additionally, my ability to research nuanced areas of law and to understand those complexities has improved as well. I was exposed to a wide number of practice areas, gaining invaluable knowledge and getting a better idea of the work I want to be doing once I graduate. Perhaps most importantly, the summer program at Shutts has highlighted the

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importance of a firm's culture and the relationships you have with your coworkers. Shutts clearly cares about building lasting relationships and finding a good work life balance while simultaneously putting out excellent work product – a quality and a culture that I would imagine is unmatched at other big firms.

Q4. Describe a typical day on the job.

In the morning, I began my day by having coffee, checking emails and reviewing my list of assignments. I would then work on those assignments, typically prioritizing them by deadline and/or the size of the task. Partners and associates would designate assignments throughout the day, so it was imperative to keep track of the work and constantly prioritize by importance. I would normally end my day by sending status reports when necessary, making a note of what I had accomplished/ still needed to accomplish, and of course billing my time.

About Shutts & Bowen LLP

Established in 1910, Shutts & Bowen is a full-service business law firm with more than 280 lawyers with offices in Fort Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Sarasota, Tallahassee, Tampa and West Palm Beach. Learn more about Shutts & Bowen at www.shutts.com.