

Deposition Workshop, Mediation and Actual Depos

Andres Chinchilla, University of Miami

This week set the bar for the rest of the summer. It was filled primarily with work assignments, coupled with opportunities to learn through observation and discussion.

We kicked off our week with a highly informative seminar on depositions hosted by partner Darryl Gavin. We learned about every aspect of preparing, conducting, and defending a deposition. Darryl, relying on his years of experience, taught us the ins and outs of depositions. We received specific advice like “ask short and punch questions,” as well as advice on general strategy regarding outlines and objectives. Shortly after our seminar, we were given materials to prepare our own deposition. Just a couple of days later, I was performing my own 20-minute deposition on a party witness involving a breach of contract for a first party insurance dispute. Admittedly, my deposition did not go exactly as planned. Partner Sally Culley did an excellent job in her role as witness, and forced me to work for my points. Even so, using the tools from our seminar, and some tips I picked up from the Miami Law Litigation Skills Program, I got through the deposition with much of the information I had hoped for. And although there is room for improvement, I look forward to honing my skills through RK’s SA program!

My experience with depositions did not end there. I sat it on two more, one with associate Alejandro Moreno and another with partner Suzanne Singer. In fact, the highlight of my week was observing the very skilled Suzanne depose a detective in a wrongful death suit.

Both did an excellent job in getting the information they needed in a professional manner. I also had the opportunity to observe several mediations throughout the week involving partner Doug Ede and associate Loren Korkin. I had never sat it in on a mediation and this was the perfect introduction. Although these sessions were shorter “blitz” mediations, I learned a lot about strategically presenting a case in an informal setting.

In terms of assignments, I have had the privilege of working with several lawyers in a broad spectrum of practice areas. Whether its research assignments, responses to discovery, or drafting memos or motions I have been doing it all. Particularly, I was excited to have finished my summary judgment motion draft for Suzanne Singer and look forward to reading the finished product. I am also excited to conduct research in support of partner Mike Holt’s motion in limine for an upcoming trial.

These past two weeks have flown by. I am doing my best to not blink before the summer ends. In the meantime, however, I plan to appreciate my time here and soak it all in!