

Assigned a Motion for Summary Judgment Week One!

Andres Chinchilla, University of Miami

This past week was one for the books. After a couple of weeks, it feels like I finally found my groove. I have had a constant stream of assignments keeping my plate full, and my coworkers have been there to guide me through the trenches.

To start the week, we received our materials for our motion practice workshop. The objective of this workshop was to test our critical thinking and oral advocacy skills. We were given a brief fact pattern involving a plaintiff's negligence suit against their former employer, coupled with case law to support our positions. The issue at our mock hearing on Friday would be whether arbitration should be compelled under the employment agreement. I was assigned to represent the plaintiff. Initially, I skimmed through the materials just to get familiar with the issue, but as the mock hearing got closer preparation geared up. I prepared an outline of the facts with bullet points of specific rules I needed from the law to support my arguments. We were paired against fellow summer associates, and in my hearing I argued against the talented Julie Potts. She led with her argument, followed by my brief response and then partner Allan Rotlewicz served as the judge asking questions throughout. The experience was as fun as it was enlightening.

The rest of the week was filled with assignments covering a broad range of topics. I was tasked with another motion for summary judgment on a premises liability issue, several research assignments on a construction defect case, an evidentiary matter regarding Rule 403, and a causation analysis under a breach of contract claim. While this list does not encompass all the work I did, it reflects the diversity of practice areas my assignments cover.

Of course, there was more than just hard work. On Thursday, partner Suzanne Singer gave an insightful presentation on conducting and defending depositions. She covered strategical outlining, demeanor, preparing for trial, and much more. I am grateful to have Suzanne here and am lucky to be working with someone as experienced and knowledgeable as her. To top things off, on Thursday evening, the attorneys and summer associates were invited to happy hour at American Social. This gave Harris and me the opportunity to interact with our coworkers outside the office over a couple of drinks. We all stayed for a few hours, enjoying each other's company before it was time to get ready for our last day of the week.

Ready for the next week and am particularly excited for our opening and closing statements workshop!