

## ***Made it Through the Training!***

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On the morning of June 1<sup>st</sup>, our summer associate program start date, I was more than ready to begin what I knew would become one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life. I felt nervous, but ultimately excited to meet everyone in the Tallahassee office in person. Upon arrival, I was escorted around the office and introduced to the partners, associates and assistants. Everyone was so welcoming and excited for me to be there. However, it was during my welcome breakfast where I felt truly at home in the office. My mentor, associate Kayla Platt-Rady, and partner, David Marsey, answered my questions about the firm, offered advice, and put my mind at ease regarding the program's mock trial. It was a good start to a great week.

Soon after the breakfast, we launched into our first batch of trainings. David had warned me this week was going to feel like "drinking from a firehose" and, frankly, I don't think I could come up with a more accurate description than that. Although I was slightly overwhelmed from the back-to-back trainings we received on the first day, the firm managed to squeeze in some fun activities here and there. During our virtual summer associate lunch, we competed to see how many things we had in common with our mentor. It was a fun exercise that allowed me to get to know associate Jeff Grosholz (a summer program alum), who was filling in for Kayla, much better.

We continued training throughout the week. Despite the fact that our office had no access to the internet for an afternoon, I was still able to complete one of my computer trainings from home relatively seamlessly. On Thursday, I met with David Marsey to discuss some administrative aspects of working at a firm. Soon after, Linda Bond Edwards, another partner in the Tallahassee office, gave me my first research assignment regarding a specific arbitration issue. I have to admit, this was the moment where I began to feel extremely overwhelmed. However, I followed up with Linda to ask for clarification and talked with Kayla about how to tackle the issue. I began to feel much better, and by Friday, I had started my research and drafted my first memo.

We ended the week with a casual happy hour at the office, and I was so happy to have made it through the first 4 days. I'm looking forward to seeing what the rest of the summer holds!