

Professional Development

Associate Voices

Diana Breaux on early responsibility and teamwork

As far as early responsibility, that was certainly my experience coming to the firm.

I was probably at the firm for a couple of months before I was sent out to take my first deposition, and what really struck me about the experience was how vested in my experience all the partners were. The night before the deposition, all the partners on the team called me to give me their war stories and were so excited for me to have the opportunity — not for the sake of taking a deposition but because I had earned the privilege. I had developed this aspect of the case and they trusted me and were very excited to give me the opportunity.

Over the course of preparing for several trials during my first year, I worked with witnesses and was sort of shocked by the number of times I was called upon to give my opinions on strategy and witnesses to a client at a meeting. It wasn't something that I was necessarily expecting; it was just expected of me and at team meetings being encouraged to provide input.

In talking to my friends at other firms, I'm always struck by how many of them haven't even been to team meetings. That the partners often don't let them know how what they are doing fits into the bigger picture of the case. And most of the partners I work with here make a big effort to have team meetings and keep everyone involved in the big picture.

I think it's a combination of partners encouraging associates to take on responsibility and finding opportunities for them, and associates expressing interest in and seeking out those opportunities.

