

My First Year at Selendy & Gay

01/04/22



After several years in Big Law, Alvaro Mon Cureño grew disillusioned that his opportunities were limited by his class year. Looking for hands-on work that would strengthen his skills as a litigator, he agreed to talk with a recruiter about a new firm that was investing heavily in associate development.

Now rounding out his first year at Selendy & Gay, Alvaro spoke to us about the benefits of a meritocratic culture, developing an “ownership mindset”, and why he hasn’t looked back since joining the firm.

How Did You First Learn About Selendy & Gay?

I first learned about Selendy & Gay from a recruiter. It was the kind of outreach email I might normally have deleted, but the substantive experience being offered to associates far exceeded anything my then-current firm could provide. After speaking with the recruiter, I went online to learn more about Selendy & Gay and was enthralled. Here was a dynamic, new law firm that was making incredible headway in the legal industry while giving associates meaningful, hands-on work that directly impacted case outcomes. It sounded amazing and the more I read, the more I knew I needed to make a move.

What Made You Want to Join the Firm?

Until I joined Selendy & Gay, my experience had been limited by my class year. It didn’t matter how hard I worked or how much ability I showed, the projects available to me were dictated by “what year I was in,” and I felt stuck doing the same assignments. I began to grow frustrated that I wasn’t developing the skills I would need to grow as an attorney and advance my career.

I came to learn that Selendy & Gay prioritizes and invests heavily in associate development. The firm has an extensive training program taught almost exclusively by the partners. Senior attorneys are seriously committed to mentorship and the firm operates under an apprenticeship system that stresses learning by doing.

When the opportunity came to join a firm that was committed to developing and training its associates and providing opportunities not available at larger or more traditional law firms, I jumped at it.

What Has Your First Year Been Like

I hit the ground running when I joined the firm and haven't looked back. In my first week, I drafted discovery documents and helped prepare an opposition to a motion to dismiss. The associates here are encouraged to work with one another and adopt an ownership mindset over their work. My colleagues are one of the best parts of this job and we all step-up to help each other.

The practical experience has been tremendous. I am routinely asked for my strategic input on tough questions facing our clients and have regular interactions with them; I've even led several calls where I've walked clients through thorny legal issues and advised them on the best course of conduct.

How Has the Firm Helped You Develop Professionally?

I am a far better attorney today than when I first joined Selendy & Gay. The firm's willingness to focus less on class year and more on associates' abilities when assigning work has been motivating and helped me grow. The partners are very supportive and have encouraged me to expand my capabilities by conducting witness interviews, developing strategy, and leading client calls. The firm's lack of hierarchy also means that my work is reviewed directly by partners, without a middle layer of senior associate review, so I get direct feedback on my work, which has been invaluable for my development.

What Are You Most Looking Forward to At Selendy & Gay in the Coming Year?

I joined Selendy & Gay during the pandemic when everyone was working remotely. I've met some of my colleagues in person but am looking forward to the office fully reopening so I can meet everyone and interact with them in person regularly.

The firm is also continuing to grow, and many interesting cases (both commercial and pro-bono) are being brought in. The litigators here are generalists who handle every type of complex commercial matter, and our current roster of cases and clients reflects that. I'm excited to further my development and work on many more new areas of the law.

Attorney

- Alvaro Mon Cureño