

# Life at BFKN

We are unlike any law firm – large, small, or mid-sized – and we're proud to stand out in the field. Our unique culture recognizes and reflects the need to be valued and that the contributions of all our attorneys and staff matter. We hold the tenets of our core belief system close to the heart of BFKN and work hard to maintain it. We believe that we all do our best work when we're supported, both in and out of the office, and in an environment that includes a casual dress code. Plus, accessibility by everyone to our partners and members of our management team, has infused itself into our workplace.

We encourage our attorneys and staff to find additional satisfaction through volunteer work, DE&I initiatives, *pro bono* efforts and other contributions that our team members prioritize for the collective good. We know that supporting our people leads them to have fuller, richer lives, which has a ripple effect on their work and time in the office with one another.

We believe that we have the responsibility to be good corporate citizens and encourage involvement through our BFKN Foundation and other firm initiatives to carry the torch of social responsibility through conscious efforts that put our values into action.

## Summer Associate Program

Law students have many options available to them during their school careers. For students who choose to spend their summer in a law firm environment, we know it is our duty to our summer associates to provide them with an experience akin to that of a first-year associate at BFKN. In fact, for those candidates we invite to join us as summer associates, it is our underlying intention to extend permanent offers. For this reason, we invest a great deal of time, attention, resources, and senior-level guidance in those individuals we select as summer associates at BFKN.

The structure of our program gives summer associates an opportunity to witness how we practice law and gain a strong sense for the collegial atmosphere we have nurtured. It also validates the individual's ability to consistently deliver high-caliber work product and, at the same time, ensures that the individual will make a valuable contribution to our diverse environment.

### ***Who We Seek***

BFKN typically hires a small summer class each year of rising 2Ls. Thus, we concentrate our OCI efforts to a small number of top-tier law schools. We encourage top 2Ls and 3Ls at other top-tier law schools to forward their resumes for consideration. In general, we seek well-rounded law students who have excelled in their academic pursuits.

### ***How We Recruit***

Members of our Recruiting Committee, comprised mostly of alumni from the institutions where we recruit, conduct each virtual on-campus interview. Because we limit our summer class size, we are nimble and able to quickly respond to candidates who move into the call-back interview phase. Selected candidates are invited to spend a half-day at our offices if they wish or conduct second-round interviews virtually. Travel expenses are reimbursed in accordance with NALP procedures.

### ***What The Experience Entails***

Summer associates are given challenging assignments that are consistent with first-year associate work. They have the ability to identify the areas of practice that *they* are most interested in – and we do our best to accommodate those preferences. We provide them the opportunity to perform research, draft pleadings, and briefs for client litigation matters, as well as work on agreements, assist with closings, and other transactional documents in our deal practice. Because we are committed to exposing summer associates to our culture, our practice, and our people, we often invite them to attend closings, client meetings, business trips, court appearances, and other important client-related proceedings.

A firm partner chairs our Summer Associate program and is responsible for coordinating with practice group chairs to identify and assign work, as well as serve as the liaison for the summer associates with our staff and our practicing attorneys.

Summer associates are paid the same salary as our first-year associates, on a prorated basis. As with other major firms, students who accept a permanent offer of employment with BFKN receive a summer stipend during the summer of their bar exam.

### ***When We Have Fun***

Our firm culture sets us apart from other firms. Preserving a collegial, respectful atmosphere is important to us. BFKN's summertime social activities reflect this spirit, as we take time to connect with one another and enjoy summer in Chicago. Our summer associates are invited to attend all firmwide social events involving attorneys and staff, as well as participation in several smaller events that facilitate more interaction between attorneys and summer associates.

## **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

Diversity is a core value of BFKN, and the firm is committed to diversity in the broadest sense of the word. Diversity fosters an atmosphere in which a variety of ideas can be fully examined and tested, ultimately producing the best results for our clients. We actively recruit talented professionals and staff based on commitment to personal and professional excellence, and we welcome people of different backgrounds and perspectives. This commitment to diversity and fostering a welcoming culture attracts the most qualified candidates to our firm and creates a rewarding and fulfilling environment for our people. BFKN's Diversity Committee oversees and facilitates these efforts, often working closely with the Women's Committee and the BFKN Foundation.

## **BFKN Benefits**

Our firm offers a comprehensive and affordable benefits package designed to meet the diverse needs of all our employees, so that every employee can maximize the value of the benefits available. All full-time employees and partners of the firm are eligible for benefits coverage upon date of hire. In addition to employee coverage, dependents and domestic partners are also generally eligible for coverage. Benefits include medical, dental and vision insurance, a flexible spending account, health savings account, short- and long-term disability insurance, a generous parental leave policy, life insurance, retirement plans, critical illness and accident coverage, pre-tax transit and parking, and pet insurance. We offer wellness opportunities such as weekly in-house yoga instruction, healthy catered meals for all staff, a hybrid work environment, and access to additional wellness care resources.

## Recruiting Contacts

For staff-related inquiries, please contact Colleen Cheraitia, Director of Human Resources.

For legal position-related inquiries, please contact Jodi M. Dalton, Director of Attorney Development & Recruiting.

*Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg LLP is an equal employment opportunity employer.*