

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

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Rita Treadwell ([00:21](#)):

Welcome to GT Drives Dynamic Dialogues, a Greenberg Trauring Diversity Equity and Inclusion podcast. My name is Rita Treadwell, Diversity Equity and Inclusion Manager in our Atlanta office. I will be hosting this episode where we'll be discussing on-campus interviews and summer associate recruiting with Kesha Allen Law School Talent Acquisition Manager located in our Washington D.C. Office. We are excited to share this content with you, our listeners. So Kesha, I said where you were and I gave your title. Why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Kesha Allen ([00:53](#)):

First, I want to say thanks for having me, Rita. This conversation is important and interesting, and I'm excited to be a part of it. I've been at GT for almost four years, but I've worked in the attorney recruiting industry for about 14 years, so not new to the industry, but new to GT. My time at GT has been interesting. I've worked in the lateral associate recruiting space and as well as the law student recruiting space. And I have to say both are interesting within their own right, and I do enjoy working with young lawyers or aspiring lawyers, and it is not easy, but well worth it.

Rita Treadwell ([01:41](#)):

When you think about the differences between summer recruiting and lateral recruiting, what stands out most to you?

Kesha Allen ([01:46](#)):

When you are recruiting lateral associates, lateral associates already have an idea of what they're getting into, what they want their practice to look like. They sometimes are well into their practice, whether they're mid-levels, senior level associates, so they already have a sense of where they are, where they want to be, and how they want their career shaped. And I think when working in the law student recruiting space, it's different. It is really giving advice, really shaping.

Rita Treadwell ([02:25](#)):

You're nurturing a bit, aren't you?

Kesha Allen ([02:27](#)):

Nurturing. Yeah. We really talk to our students about what they want to accomplish within their legal careers, what practices they'd like to be a part of, and not only in the practice, but who they want to be as they graduate from law school and start their legal careers. I think that's the beauty of working in the space that I'm in currently in law student recruiting.

Rita Treadwell ([02:56](#)):

Yeah, I agree with you. Law students are just usually young. They're impressionable, but they need some guidance, so it's nice to be able to have the reservoir of experience to give them that guidance.

Kesha Allen ([03:07](#)):

Absolutely.

Rita Treadwell ([03:08](#)):

So I'm going to move to our next question. In your opinion, what qualities or attributes does GT typically look for in a summer associate?

Kesha Allen ([03:16](#)):

Well, as you know, we strive to hire the highest quality candidates. Within that, we're looking for leaders with real-world experience, self-starters. We want people that are entrepreneurial, innovative, collaborative, dedicated. We also would like folks to have grit and be tenacious and have a commitment to excellence. As you know, in a law firm, our clients are not only outside clients, but also internal clients. And we want to provide excellence whether internally or externally.

Rita Treadwell ([03:54](#)):

Amen to that. I agree. It's really important to us and a lot of the things that you listed in terms of attributes are a part of who we are as a firm. So can you share tips for students to prepare for their interviews?

Kesha Allen ([04:06](#)):

I'd like to start by saying, remember, we are interviewing you, but you're also interviewing us. We want you to be authentic, relax, be your best self. Be prepared though. Learn about the firm, and if you have the knowledge of who your interviewers are going to be, research them a little bit. Find out some little known facts about the firm as well as your interviewers that help. Be inquisitive, ask good questions. No question is too small. I think as you start your career, this is an important choice you're making, and so you want to make sure that you have all of the information when choosing what firm you want to go to. And then the other thing is rest. Make sure you rest.

Rita Treadwell ([04:55](#)):

You can't really answer those questions well if you're tired, if you're not on your A game.

Kesha Allen ([04:58](#)):

That's right.

Rita Treadwell ([05:01](#)):

Absolutely. And I would say I've interviewed students too and I'm not on our website and when they have information about me, I'm impressed. They know what I'm involved in locally and the organizations that I'm a part of. That's impressive. I couldn't agree with you more. Can you share one or two specific initiatives or activities GT uses to foster collaborative and inclusive environments for summer associates, which is aimed at relationship building?

Kesha Allen ([05:24](#)):

Okay. One or two is a little bit difficult.

Rita Treadwell ([05:25](#)):

One or two or three.

Kesha Allen ([05:29](#)):

But what I'll say is this. Our offices who host summer programs, we host events to help foster our collaborative, supportive and inclusive work environment. We host icebreakers, social events, team building exercises slash events because again, as you start your career, your class is going to be who you look to most of the time to help. They may be on your team, they may not be on your team, but you want to know them. These will be your lifelong GT friends that go beyond your summer class. So we offer community service events and projects through many community organizations within each city where we hold a summer associate program, we offer cultural trainings for our summers. This past year we offered a DEI summer program forum, which focused on connecting our summer associates with various affinity group leaders and members. The summers enjoyed the program.

Rita Treadwell ([06:39](#)):

I know I did. It was fun.

Kesha Allen ([06:41](#)):

I did. It was a great program. I think all of us learned something that we did not know about the affinity groups and their initiatives. So many people involved in so many different aspects of our DEI initiatives, and it was great to learn about that. The goal of this program was to provide our summers with additional resources to assist them in navigating their summers and to provide that additional mentorship that summer associates or diverse summer associates and first generation summers don't necessarily receive. You know, Rita, pro bono at GT is a big deal. We definitely like getting out in the community and serving the communities that we're in. So overall, the new summer forum was a success.

Rita Treadwell ([07:35](#)):

I think it was a phenomenal tool. I felt like it eased our summers into the firm culture, which is very important when you talk about looking at your classmates and looking at the class you're entering with. You become colleagues, but eventually you become family. We like to say that it's the GT family.

Kesha Allen ([07:55](#)):

GT family. That's right.

Rita Treadwell ([07:57](#)):

GT family. But that's a real thing around here. And so you only get that once you can have that connectivity where you get to learn about each other and get to meet each other's families, and you have events inside and outside of our hallways and outside of the firm wall. So thank you so much for those answers. What do you think, what role does diversity, equity and inclusion play in GT's law school recruiting efforts?

Kesha Allen ([08:21](#)):

Well, diversity has been central to, or I'll say DEI initiatives has been central to GT's identity since its establishment. We recruit from 60 plus law schools and job fairs around the country so that we can have diversity in our summer associate classes and then obviously in our associate ranks. And then onto

shareholder rank. We sponsor many affinity group events at law school campuses, as well as community organizations and job fairs to connect with our first generation and diverse students. A lot of these partnerships is where we first meet some of our later on to become some of our summer associates. And I think this outreach is very important to further the work in the DEI space as it relates to summer associates, as well as law firms in general.

Rita Treadwell ([09:25](#)):

How do we use our alumni though, to help with those efforts? I can think of one recent occasion that we use an alumni to help with recruiting. So how does that work? How does that look for us?

Kesha Allen ([09:36](#)):

We try to get our diverse attorneys out into and connect them with summer associates or future summer associates. We've had them interview at several schools, job fairs. We also tap our affinity group members and leaders to help in any law school campus activities that we do within that space as well. And I think it really helps when we can connect students with folks that identify and really have conversations and ask questions of them that they may not otherwise be comfortable asking. Having our diverse attorneys, associates and shareholders very involved in the recruiting process is vital to our recruitment effort. We also attend many affinity group events on law school campuses as well as Affinity Bar Association events and job fairs. And again, those are avenues to connect the first gen and diverse students with our first gen and diverse attorney population.

Rita Treadwell ([10:51](#)):

Our recruiting efforts are not just showing up at a job here. They're multi-layered. We're hitting it from different angles, and that's great.

Kesha Allen ([10:58](#)):

It's important that as we continue our DEI efforts and we are speaking with and engaging our diverse summer associates or summer students, it's important again for them to meet and be able to feel comfortable asking questions, and it is multi-layered. And it is definitely great work that we're doing. It shows our commitment to DE&I. I think it shows our commitment to the communities that we live in and work. And I think as we try to further these efforts and reach many more students, hopefully the students that we have touched will talk with their peers about us. This work, again, is vital in the attorney recruiting space.

Rita Treadwell ([11:49](#)):

I couldn't agree with you more. It's about how we make people feel, right?

Kesha Allen ([11:52](#)):

That's right.

Rita Treadwell ([11:53](#)):

To touch people and affect how they feel about the firm and their potential place in it. Then we're doing an amazing job.

Kesha Allen ([12:01](#)):

Absolutely.

Rita Treadwell ([12:02](#)):

So Kesha, you shared that there are not a lot of recruiters who look like you in the legal landscape. How does that affect potential summer associates respond to you?

Kesha Allen ([12:12](#)):

Again, it's important to have our recruiters represent our firm and our firm's diversity. And when I'm speaking with students, first gen and diverse law students, a lot of times they're more comfortable. I think it puts the student at ease and they'll ask questions because they feel as though I can relate to them on many levels.

Rita Treadwell ([12:38](#)):

They're in a safe space.

Kesha Allen ([12:40](#)):

Yeah, they're in a safe space. So I think overall it's great to have not only me, but other diverse recruiters out in the community as well as college campus activities that we can be involved in. Because again, it's about connecting our students with someone that they feel as though they can relate to.

Rita Treadwell ([13:04](#)):

Absolutely. So what sets GT apart when it comes to providing a valuable and enriching experience for our law student recruits?

Kesha Allen ([13:14](#)):

Authenticity. I think we are who we say we are. Overall we are all immersed in DEI initiatives all throughout the year. This is who we are. We are living this every day. We're a global firm. But it doesn't feel that way in your daily connections with people. It feels like we're at a small firm. And that's great because you feel like you have a voice. You feel like your ideas are heard. You feel like you can have those relationships where you're collaborating with many people and many offices across the firm. You still feel like you're in touch with what's happening. And I think that's important in a global firm because that is very hard to achieve.

Rita Treadwell ([14:02](#)):

This magic is just not easy.

Kesha Allen ([14:05](#)):

No.

Rita Treadwell ([14:05](#)):

The secret sauce that it takes to get us here is a secret for a reason, but those are part of those pieces, right? The elements of the small firm field with the impact and the punch of a global firm. It's kismet and hard to find.

Kesha Allen ([14:19](#)):

Yes, it is. I definitely think that GT has this rare magic in that because that is not easy. That feeling is not easy to achieve at a global firm.

Rita Treadwell ([14:30](#)):

What are some of the key takeaways you would like for law students to remember when they're considering GT for their legal careers?

Kesha Allen ([14:37](#)):

GT is authentic. GT is a family. GT makes sure that you have a voice, that you can collaborate with others who may or may not look like you, but you receive the mentoring that you should receive. I think our affinity groups are proactive. They reach out to our summers and our associates for that matter and immediately engage them in our any DEI initiatives, but also just to have them engaged within the firm and integrated well. And so I think those would be some key takeaways for any student who would be considering GT for a legal career.

Rita Treadwell ([15:20](#)):

Kesha, that's great. Thank you so much for joining us today for today's Dynamic Dialogue. I want to thank our audience for joining us today with Ms. Kesha Allen from the Washington DC office. Please stay tuned for the next episode where we'll continue this lively discussion.

Kesha Allen ([15:36](#)):

Thanks for having me, Rita. This was great.