

Kelley Drye's Trial Advocacy Program Enters Its Second Year

May 3, 2019

Now in its second year, the Kelley Drye Trial Advocacy (KDTA) program is a robust internal trial training curriculum intended to provide litigation associates and special counsel with hands-on motion and trial experience. Throughout the year, attorneys attend and participate in a series of lecture and "learn-by-doing" components, including mock motion, deposition and trial exercises in front of a judge and jury, made up of litigation partners and firm staff, with professional actors playing the roles of witnesses.

"The litigation landscape has shifted in recent years, and we started to see that young attorneys were not getting the opportunity to appear in court as often as their senior colleagues had ten, fifteen years ago," said [Julian Solotorovsky](#), partner and chair of the firm's White Collar, Investigations and Compliance practice. "We thought it was critical to create a program that prepared our attorneys to be highly effective in court, which is why we launched KDTA."

[Mike Lynch](#), chair of the firm's Litigation practice strongly endorsed the need for such a program.

"Oral advocacy skills are critical to a litigator's success not only in the courtroom, but in all parts of being a lawyer. The goals here are to provide great training, exposure to courtroom-like conditions, mentoring opportunities, and ultimately strengthen all of the attorneys in this firm as a group."

The first year of the program proved to be a success, with milestones that include:

- 27 attorneys argued four rounds of motions, arguing each side over the course of two days.
- 22 senior associates and special counsel participated in two rounds of trial segments, which included opening statements, direct examination, cross examination, and closing arguments.
- Attorneys attended eight lectures throughout the year on various motion and trial topics.

[Damon Suden](#), partner and chair of the firm's Associate Training and Development committee, is looking forward to the continued growth of the KDTA program. "Education for attorneys does not stop when we pass the bar, and it should not be limited to taking an online CLE. We want to provide effective training so that our attorneys can be the best advocates for their clients, and this program will continue to grow and evolve to meet those goals."

The 2019 program began in February and will continue to run throughout the year.