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Day in the Life: Alana C. St. Aude

Interviews and Profiles





Alana C. St. Aude

Director, Assistant General Counsel

Capital One Bank

New York, NY, USA

7 am: Wake up and check my work phone for any urgent emails that came in overnight or early in the morning.

8:15 am: Listen to *The Daily* by *The New York Times* podcast while taking a shower and getting ready for the workday. *The Journal* podcast by the *Wall Street Journal* is another favorite of mine.

[Listening to a podcast while I prepare for work quickly updates me on news developments and is key to ensuring I don't take too long getting ready in the morning.](#)

8:45 am: Make coffee using my Keurig coffee machine — I miss the pre-pandemic routine of picking up a coffee with breakfast on the way to work. Nostalgic, I treat myself to a homemade “bacon-egg-and-cheese” (said in one breath like a true New Yorker).

9 am: My first call of the day: pipeline discussion for one of the lines of business I cover from a legal standpoint. I'm responsible for tech, media and telecom (TMT), and financial institutions group (FIG) lines of businesses, which includes managing issues like security alarm, vacation ownership, tax lien, consumer auto, and asset-backed securitizations.

9:30 am: Join divisional team call with updates about the COVID-19 pandemic, HR, and the business. I could have anywhere from five to 15 Zoom calls in a day, and sometimes I am double or triple-booked and have to assess which meeting takes priority. It brings a new meaning to the phrase “Zoom fatigue”!

10 am: Prepare for the credit committee meetings where I will present legal issues and risks in a particular credit arrangement.

10:15 am: I'm monitoring my email all morning and one of my tech deals closes. We have stayed incredibly busy during the pandemic; initially with customer assistance programs such as the paycheck protection program (PPP) and subsequently with deal flow that picked up steam throughout the year.

11 am. Attend the credit committee meeting, which goes well. Attending these sessions allows me to also hear the key risks and challenges the underwriters, relationship managers, and credit officers are focused on in terms of lending to a particular borrower.

[I love that my role entails working so closely with the business. My knowledge of the ways in which they analyze a credit has increased exponentially since working in-house.](#)

12 pm: Lunchtime. Earlier in the pandemic, I was overwhelmed trying to adjust and would sometimes skip lunch. Now, I have learned to block at least 30 minutes to an hour daily for my mid-day meal.

1 pm: I lead a legal department-wide diversity training around microaggressions and unconscious bias. This year I have spoken on a few panels around diversity, inclusion, and belonging issues.

2:45 pm: A package arrives from my Capital One legal team with a gourmet cheese and cracker cutting board set. They have been so creative with virtual social events (games, cooking classes, and happy hours) and gifts (tasty pies, blankets, and other Capital One swag), providing a personal touch during the pandemic.

3 - 5 pm: I attend credit committee sessions for deals that fulfill different threshold of approval levels. If no deal is being presented, I address “fire drills,” reviewing credit agreements, term sheets, and commitment letters, working on legal department-wide initiatives or projects such as environmental,

societal, and governance (ESG), and answering questions from colleagues on NDAs and NRLs.

[I realize it is better to focus on one task at a time to avoid missing key facts in meetings, so I am trying to be more mindful of paying attention on Zoom calls. It can be challenging to find time to keep up with email traffic during the business day due to the volume of calls.](#)

5 pm: Attend the weekly team stand-up meeting with my direct manager and teammates to discuss team-wide updates, what we are working on, and any upcoming deadlines. It is great to catch up with my colleagues since we do not see each other as often as we might have in person.

5:30 pm: Take a 20-minute walk outside before sunset to get some movement in, mask in tow! I call family and friends to check in while walking.

6 pm: I lead a networking event for the Advancement Initiative (a group I co-founded) for women of color attorneys. I've remained surprisingly active with professional development organizations during the pandemic and often attend fellowship meetings with my 92Y Women in Power Fellowship cohort.

[If I don't exercise in the morning, I squeeze in a workout after finishing up with work. In extended periods of isolation, group fitness exercises \(and the resulting endorphins\) have kept me sane.](#)

7 pm: Start preparing dinner. I decide between reading a book or listening to a podcast (on unsolved crimes, financial market investments, or industry trends) while eating.

8:30 pm: After dinner, I watch some mindless TV to relax. Reality shows from around the world are my guilty pleasure (especially from the United Kingdom and Australia).

10 pm: Check and respond to work emails that came in the evening and catch up on other work.

11 pm: I start to wind down for bed and get ready to do it all over again!

[Alana C. St. Aude](#)



Director, Assistant General

Capital One Bank

Alana C. St. Aude is director, assistant general counsel at Capital One Bank, where she provides legal advice to investment professionals financing loans to sponsor-backed and other corporate borrowers, with a focus on the technology, media, and telecommunications sectors, asset-backed securitizations, and esoteric lending transactions. At Capital One, St. Aude advises as to market terms and risks, provides regulatory advice, and implements strategic bank initiatives. St. Aude serves as a member of the Capital One Legal Department Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Before joining Capital One, St. Aude was a senior associate in the Banking & Finance Group of Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP. She began her legal career as a corporate associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in 2010.

St. Aude is the co-founder and co-chair of the Advancement Initiative, a network geared toward female lawyers of color who are mid-level in career in law firm practice and in-house in New York and New Jersey. She is the recipient of the following 2019 honors: The Association of Corporate Counsel's Top 10 30-Somethings award and The Network Journal's 40 Under 40 award. St. Aude is a 2020 Women in Power Fellow for the 92Y.

St. Aude obtained her law degree from Harvard Law School in 2010, where she was a student attorney at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, and her Bachelor of Science in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University in 2007, where she was a Cornell Tradition Fellow. St. Aude is a first-generation American of Caribbean descent, speaks French, and enjoys travel and intense workouts such as running half-marathons and Barry's Bootcamp.