

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Law firms and their clients are focused on increasing the presence and prominence of diverse individuals in the legal industry. Caplin and Drysdale was built on the principles of service — both to our clients and the government — and inclusion. When Mortimer Caplin and Douglas Drysdale founded our Firm more than half a century ago, they sought to create a community in which diversity would be welcomed and celebrated. Their appreciation for diversity's value within institutions underpins our Firm's culture.

In the fall of 1949, while Mr. Caplin was a law professor at the University of Virginia School of Law, Gregory Swanson, a Black man who had recently graduated from Howard University, applied to the all-white southern law school. Having experienced discrimination on the basis of his faith, Mr. Caplin understood the value of diversity and fiercely advocated for Mr. Swanson's admission even though he knew speaking up was risky.

Mr. Caplin garnered the support of the entire law school faculty, which unanimously decided to offer Mr. Swanson admission to the law school even though the University's Board of Visitors had directed that no Black student be admitted without its approval. When the Board of Visitors later rejected the decision of the law school faculty, Mr. Swanson filed a complaint against the university. In the end, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Mr. Swanson's admission.

Mr. Swanson's admission to the University of Virginia helped lay the foundation for *Brown v. Board of Education*. Over the next few years, Mr. Caplin organized efforts within the small southern community to circumvent the intense and massive resistance campaigns following the decisions of both *Swanson v. Rector & Visitors of Univ. of Va.* and *Brown v. Board of Education*. Mr. Caplin's spouse, Ruth Sacks Caplin (who later became an accomplished screenwriter) helped organize makeshift classrooms in neighborhood homes to teach children in defiance of local authorities who closed public schools after Brown.

In 1961, while serving as Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, Mr. Caplin offered Mr. Swanson a position as an IRS attorney. Mr. Swanson would work as an IRS attorney until his retirement in 1984. The University of Virginia School of Law created the Gregory H. Swanson Award in 2018 in honor of his legacy at the university.

"We strive to uphold the commitment to diversity and inclusion set forth by our founders Mortimer Caplin and Douglas Drysdale and to foster a community with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives." – Victor Jaramillo, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee Chair

Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is dedicated and committed to creating opportunities for minorities to grow, thrive, and lead in our Firm and the legal industry. Through the Caplin-Swanson Fellowship, education programs, participating in organizations focused on diversity and inclusion, and other initiatives, we work to further the Firm's commitment to developing a community of talented professionals with different backgrounds and perspectives.

The Caplin-Swanson Diversity Fellowship

Every year the firm selects a 1L fellow to participate in our Summer Associate program. In addition to receiving regular Summer Associate compensation, a fellow will receive:

- After completing his/her/their 1L summer, a \$5,000 stipend upon receiving and accepting a 2L Summer Associate employment offer;
- A \$10,000 stipend to be paid at the end of his/her/their 2L summer. The stipend will be awarded only if the applicant commits to a 6-week minimum and regardless if he/she/they receives an offer to return as an Associate;
- If he/she/they receives and accepts a full-time position with the Firm after graduation, a \$10,000 stipend after three months of employment.

To strengthen our cultural foundation we look to support and participate in organizations such as the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA), who are committed to advancing the hiring, retention and promotion of diverse lawyers, and the National Black Law Students Association. We welcome future partnerships and collaboration with other organizations in line with our principles and commitment to diversity.

For more information, please see the application for the Caplin-Swanson Diversity Fellowship. If you have any questions, please email fellowship@capdale.com.