

Alumni Spotlight: Sharaine Sibblies, Deputy General Counsel, Southeast Toyota Distributors

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Update us on your current role. I am deputy general counsel of Southeast Toyota Distributors, the world's largest independent distributor of Toyotas. I support our business and leadership in a broad variety of areas, but primarily offer the most support in the areas of franchise laws and marketing. **What is the most interesting trend in your industry?** Currently, the most interesting trend is the unprecedented demand on the automotive industry. Much like the residential real estate market, there is almost not enough new car supply to meet the demand, which has also

placed an unprecedented demand on the used/pre-owned market. We are also seeing more dealerships with low inventory as a result of high customer demand and supply chain constraints.

What did your time at Carlton Fields teach you? What stuck out to me the most from my time at Carlton Fields was the importance of networking and building (and maintaining) strong relationships. Carlton Fields also taught me the fundamentals of being a lawyer, starting with things like billing and extending to other highly valuable skills such as truly knowing your client and being able to tailor your advice and support to meet the needs of each unique client. I am better able to manage our outside lawyers today because of my experience of being that outside lawyer while I was at Carlton Fields. Carlton Fields also provided me the opportunity to get involved in different bar organizations and supported me in taking on leadership roles within those organizations. **How has your involvement in the Caribbean Bar Association shaped your career/impacted you?** I have been a member of the Caribbean Bar Association for at least 10 years, and I served as the treasurer for five of those years. I have built a strong support system through the Caribbean Bar Association that has stayed strong to this day. Although I wasn't a civil litigator, the organization exposed me to litigators and judges alike,

so I am able to recognize lawyers and judges who may be assigned to cases that I am now responsible for managing. I also have trusted advisers with very diverse backgrounds whom I can call upon in a time of need, many of whom I met through my involvement with the Caribbean Bar Association. **What advice would you give to attorneys considering a career in your industry?** Prepare to learn a lot about many different (seemingly unrelated) areas and to think into the future to keep up with the trends, the consumers' needs, and the evolving laws, especially when it comes to data privacy. The automotive industry has so many different facets, touches so many different areas of the law, and is constantly evolving. Growing up, our car windows had crank handles. Now our cars can tell us when we need to stop for coffee! **What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?** I enjoy traveling with friends, especially to island destinations. I look forward to getting back to that soon! **What is one thing that is on your bucket list?** I love participating in Caribbean carnivals and participate in Trinidad and Jamaica's carnivals annually. These carnivals occur all over the world (even outside of the Caribbean, though Caribbean-inspired). I would love to spend a year as a "carnival chaser," going from carnival to carnival worldwide. **What is your favorite quote?** "Love the life you live. Live the life you love." – Bob Marley

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