

# DUNNINGTON BARTHOLOW & MILLER LLP

During Black History Month, we proudly recognize the talented members of our diverse law firm.

## Meet: Rudyard Ceres, Partner

Rudy is a recent addition to Dunnington's corporate, international, and litigation/ADR practice areas.

He leads our UK/Commonwealth and Africa desk practice areas.



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discovered much more about their successful history - going back to representing family offices, like the Vanderbilt family. Dunnington was also at an historical point - celebrating 100 years and looking forward to the next hundred. I was excited about the opportunity to work with a dynamic and progressive team of partners to help shape the future of the firm and... *I have not been disappointed!*

### **Q: What drew you to a firm that has a 100 year history?**

**A:** Like most things in life, we are drawn to people. The Dunnington partners I met are the reasons I joined. In researching the firm, I

### **Q: You are the firm's first partner of color, thoughts?**

When I joined, I did so with my eyes wide open, knowing that I would be the first black partner. However, it soon became clear that the firm recognized a diversity of thought, experience, perspectives, and cultures and that was vital to advancing the firm into the next 100 years.

And Dunnington has continued to increase diversity at the highest ranks, including an Asian-American female partner in our Trusts and Estates practice and an African-American female counsel in the corporate practice. I see not just lip service but a demonstrated commitment to inclusion and diversity – admittedly not really the norm in the legal profession.

### **In which ways does Dunnington support your career vision and plans for growth?**

Quite a few ways! Soon after I started, I was provided a professional coach who works with me (and all counsel and associates) on devising an actionable business plan. The Executive Committee also asked me to lead our [Cicero League of International Lawyers](#) relationship. There, I am Cicero's U.S. point of contact, allowing me to expand my relationships with lawyers and clients *all over the world*.

**Q: If you could summarize what you deliver to clients, what would that be?**

Well, it's my exposure to a wide range of clients and situations - multiple industries, sectors, startups to large and midmarket companies, always from a "business- first" viewpoint. Over my 25+ years of working in the UK and the States, I've serve my clients holistically as they expand, grow, and develop their businesses. I've advised on acquisitions, raising private capital, and setting-up subsidiaries, addressing myriad issues - corporate, employment, IP, and real estate legal matters.

**Q Who has been instrumental in your path to where and who you are today?**

It really is my parents, Rudy and Ruth Ceres, without whom I would not be the person I am today. My father, also a lawyer, ran a firm with two offices providing black lawyers (both barristers and solicitors) with opportunities in the legal profession -- at a time when opportunities were limited. My mother, a rare C-level member of a hospital group, also encouraged me to take the leap "across the pond" to America. In this, Black History Month and beyond, I am grateful for their unstinting guidance and support!

**Q: What's the last book you read and how does it relate to your view of life, client service, or legal practice?**

I just re-read Dan Hicks' book, *The British Museums*, which explains the punitive British expeditions of the late 1890s, ending in the destruction and looting of the Benin Kingdom in 1897.

You know, I am working with one partner here, Ray Dowd, a real expert in the restitution of stolen/looted art, and the book truly resonated. Leveraging my relationships with Sub-Saharan African governments, Ray and I are currently working on the restitution of African artefacts both here and in the UK.

I am really honored to work on such an important initiative with the goal of recognizing the contributions of artists from the Africa continent and its diaspora.

**Q: Any suggestions or tips for folks who face challenges in their professional journey?**

Three words - grit, determination, and perseverance! Even when it seems like things are not going as we might hope, keep on pushing through. We're all going to face trials and tribulations. Life is really about how we deal with them – *never give up!*

And, something that took me a long time to do - seek advice and help from others, both mentors and peers. We're not alone in this journey even though, at times, it might seem that way.

**Thank you, Rudy. Welcome to the firm! You are certainly making a difference.**

Dunnington

Make a difference.