

Black History Month | Ryan Adams

February 12, 2021

Media Contact

Powers Tanis

Director of Strategic Marketing and
Communications 803.221.4907

email@mgclaw.com

Checkout our second Black History Month feature on MGC Charleston attorney **Ryan Adams**.

You may have seen [Ryan Adams'](#) name floating around our feed recently—just last month the MGC Charleston attorney earned the coveted Data Science certification from IBM, and spoke with our [innovation team](#) at the University of South Carolina's LegalTech Seminar Series on the firm's Insurance Defense Incubator. "My introduction into technology is an interesting one," Ryan says. "I've always had a surface-level fascination with computer science and coding."

Early in his legal career, while practicing at another firm, Ryan identified an obstacle in the way that cases were being analyzed. "Everything from interactions, to case evaluations were based on experience, which I had none of at the time," he explains. "Therefore, you're at the mercy of relying on other's experience until you amalgamated enough to formulate your own gut instinct. This was bothersome to me and I thought there had to be a better way." Ryan considered the massive amounts of data that firms generate every day, and began learning to code. "Harnessing the data and providing a tool to remove gut instinct from the equation has been my primary goal," he adds. Since joining MGC, Ryan has worked with our innovation team to build this idea into something tangible.

Raised in Columbia, Ryan graduated from the University of South Carolina where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2012 and Juris Doctor in 2016. Although computer science has always been a major passion of his, he studied History with a focus on African American Diaspora in undergrad. "Classes in political science, criminal justice and the judicial system ultimately set me on my journey into the legal field," Ryan says. "Specifically, I had an interest in racial justice and its impacts on the African American community and experience."

Ryan recalls an uncountable number of historical figures who he not only admires, but who have shaped the person he is today—he names a few: "James Baldwin taught me the power of language and how to be meaningful in advocacy for people of color. Medgar Evers and his work with the Civil Rights movement influences how I view the constitution, and how far people of color have come and how far we still have to go. After fighting for a country that denied him, and others who looked like him, basic rights guaranteed by the US Constitution, Medgar Evers provided a foundation for our voices to be heard." Not to mention modern day activists, such as Ta-Nehisi Coates, Stacy Abrams, Esmeralda Simmons and Patrisse Cullors.

“Many barriers impede the advancement and retention of diverse lawyers in the legal profession,” Ryan explains. “Favoritism, ‘in groups’ and unconscious bias, I feel, are the biggest factors.” Unconscious, or implicit, bias is the social stereotype, prejudice or unsupported judgement about certain individuals that are built outside of conscious awareness. “I have been in many rooms filled with attorneys that do not look like me,” he adds. “This can usually lead to feelings of isolation, and that you somehow do not belong.” Ryan mentions that a big step in the direction of diversity, equity and inclusion is breaking down barriers: “By introducing minority attorneys to others in the legal community, you invite the community to challenge biases that may have excluded others,” he explains. “My hope is that MGC can work to be an example on how the legal profession can serve the community in which it relies upon.”

Growing up with the sounds of jazz and blues—everything from John Coltrane to Ella Fitzgerald—Ryan has also drawn inspiration from a rather unconventional place.

“It is a cultural expression that is freeing in form and implementation. The confidence that great musicians can inspire is something that I wish to take into my professional life—being passionate about your advocacy, while staying rooted in who you are, is important to me and I think important to my practice of law.”

Ryan with his wife, Catherine.