

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Milwaukee, Wisconsin



**City of Cincinnati: Solicitor's Office
Cincinnati, Ohio**

Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

This summer I spent two months in the law department of Cincinnati's City Hall. Specifically, I was an intern in the 'Quality of Life' branch. I was lucky enough to work alongside the wonderful group of attorneys that comprises the Quality of Life team. I worked with the team on the following matters: lawsuits against the city and specifically, law enforcement officers, as well as blighted and foreclosed properties (and their owners). A recurring and critical problem in our culture is police misconduct. I sat in on several depositions regarding the violation of civil rights and the alleged violators, law enforcement officers.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

The central focus of my work was the creation of several comprehensive reports on various individual property owners in the city of Cincinnati, all of whom qualify for the slang term "slum lord." These reports gave the Chief Counselors both quantitative and qualitative evidence with which they could use to improve the quality and aesthetic of the city's buildings, structures, and communities. My professional and technical skills improved in that these reports required an advanced knowledge of Excel. I mastered the use of formulas, data input, and formatting. These workbooks at times featured over 500 entries, which took weeks to compile (even with these skills). As an American and Gender Studies, as well as Spanish student, I never imagined I would be capable of such technological projects. This internship pushed me to realize that in fact I am.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

A week short of my final day at City Hall, I was tasked with the creation of a report that featured all tax foreclosures in the city of Cincinnati for the past two years. Specifically, all cases on which a judge

ruled that the defendant was in fact delinquent. This involved probing through thousands of cases in the County Clerk's archive. Although the content of my academic studies at Cincinnati were of little assistance in this task, the work ethic that my Sewanee professors and courses cultivated proved crucial in my ability to complete this report. Lunch at my desk, no phone breaks, and a target data input of entries per hour are examples of this Sewanee work ethic.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

I learned to complete an expansive task on few instructions. For one project I was given a 2,000 page document and told to filter out any page that implicates the City. These documents all pertained to a lawsuit in Northern Kentucky. On this singular instruction and no insight into whether it was City officials, municipalities, the county, etc., I combed through the entire paper stack in 8 hours, to find a precious, albeit significant, few documents to present to the involved attorneys.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

In the past year, I have contemplated the pursuit of a law career in the public sector. This career expanded the scope of my knowledge of the possible careers within the public sector of law. For example, prior to my internship, I had only considered a career as a public defender. This internship showed me that I could be a city-employed attorney and not go to court; rather, I could do meaningful work and improve my community without standing before a judge. I garnered an appreciation for all the steps, elbow grease, collaboration, and work that goes into those 15 minutes before a judge.

In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?

In my internship my co-workers of different backgrounds were individuals of different generations. A lesson from Beyond the Gates that many of the alumni emphasized was the virtue of humility; a trait that is apparently scarce amongst the millennial generation. I took this piece of advice from Beyond the Gates and applied it to my relations with co-workers. As a result, I was able to listen both effectively and actively to their advice, knowledge, and opinions. Consequently, I developed positive relations with all my co-workers and received countless insights and pieces of wisdom.

Words of advice for future interns (housing, transportation, etc.)?

When budgeting your summer, take into account the proximity of your chosen housing, as well as your transportation to your internship. I was lucky enough to secure a parking pass to a lot a quarter-mile away from City Hall. However, it had never occurred to me the financial expenditure that parking my car would require when I accepted this internship. It is a crucial aspect that one must consider!!

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

I cannot express my gratitude for your financial support and gift. Because of you I was able to have a beneficial, informative, and successful summer in a new city.