

I had the honor and privilege to intern this summer with the Henry County General Sessions and Juvenile Court Judge Vicki S. Snyder in Paris, Tennessee. Judge Snyder is responsible for General Sessions Court every Tuesday and Thursday. I attended criminal court every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the duration of my internship. In the beginning of my internship I would typically sit in the jury box where I would be able to observe arraignments of individuals charged with primarily traffic citations, shoplifting, or assaults. However, I also witnessed several statutory rape charges be arraigned as well as one individual charged with the rape of a child. The variation of crimes that I was exposed to helped me to obtain knowledge about the volume of crimes that occur in rural West Tennessee. Henry County is in the 24th Judicial District of Tennessee along with Benton, Carroll, Decatur, and Hardin County and is one of the largest of these counties. Judge Snyder's volume of cases exceeds the amount of cases in Carroll County and Decatur County. The benefits of interning with such a large county with a high volume of cases not only includes an exposure to a variety of charges, but also provides a glimpse into the workload that an Assistant District Attorney would have and an introduction into what the case load of a Public Defender would look like.

About halfway through my internship, I was encouraged by Judge Snyder to move from the jury box back into the jury room where the lawyers and the Assistant District Attorney would discuss particular cases. I was able to hear the lawyers negotiating on behalf of their clients and the amount of work that the Assistant District Attorney is presented with every Tuesday and Thursday. Upon further encouragement from Judge Snyder, I began accompanying the Assistant District Attorney's staff as they would interview the state's witnesses. This would typically be victims of domestic assault or owners of businesses that had been the victim of shoplifters. My

exposure to these victims of domestic assault contributed greatly to the affect that this internship had on my future goals.

On Mondays I would attend civil court where I would primarily observe landlords seeking possession of their property due to tenants failing to pay rent. I also saw individuals who owed money to the Henry County Medical Center. Typically these individuals were given the opportunity to create a payment plan in order to resolve their debts. Civil Court would generally conclude around noon at which time I would go to the Henry County Juvenile Office. I spent the majority of my time this summer assisting the Henry County Juvenile Clerk organize and maximize the space in the office. My duties in the Juvenile Office included picking up the mail daily, filing documents, creating new mittimus forms, creating new court appearance forms, and various other tasks depending on what the clerk needed. On the first Wednesday of the month, we had Delinquent Juvenile Court where juveniles who had typically been charged with theft of property or vandalism were arraigned. On the second Wednesday of the month we had Child Support Court where individuals were assessed the amount of child support they owed and were given the opportunity to create payment plans. On the third Wednesday of the month we would have the Department of Children Services staff and attorneys present in order to deal with any custody situations. For instance, any child abuse dependency and neglect cases would be handled during this court day. In preparation for all of these juvenile court dates I was responsible for pulling the appropriate files. The Juvenile Court Clerk would give me a docket, and I would be expected to arrange all the files in the proper order as well as check the files to ensure that the orders were in chronological order. On Fridays we would have District Attorney Day where juvenile delinquents who are represented by the public defender's office would typically be taken into the State of Tennessee's custody due to continued unruly or inappropriate behavior.

I was asked by Judge Snyder to undertake several significant jobs aside from my assistance to the Juvenile Clerk. In the beginning of my internship I was asked to write a letter to the Henry County Commissioners explaining Judge Snyder's desire to change the title and position of the Juvenile Court Clerk who assumed the role of secretary as well as a first deputy for the Henry County Circuit and General Sessions Court Clerk. This letter included the financial advantage that the county would have if they increased the Juvenile Clerk's salary rather than hiring a new individual who would require an additional salary. The letter also included the responsibilities that the Juvenile Clerk assumed. The Judge's proposition and the letter were successful as the Juvenile Clerk was awarded an additional stipend each month due to our efforts to demonstrate the financial advantage this would be.

Throughout my time this summer I learned the patience and compassion that is necessary not only in criminal court but also in juvenile court. My exposure to troubled children and young adults strengthened my desire to be accepted into the Teach For America 2017 Corps. However, my work this summer also led me to register to take the Law School Admission Test in September. I do not think I would have made this decision had I not participated in this internship. My passion to help others was amplified this summer after seeing the number of people in need in rural West Tennessee. I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to realize how influential a judge or a lawyer can be in a young person's life. I have applied for the first Teach For America deadline and will know soon if I have been invited to have a telephone interview. I will strive to carry the patience and compassion that I learned this summer into the next chapter of my life!