

This summer I spent two full months, June and July of 2014, working as an intern in the chambers of United States District Judge Gregory F. Van Tatenhove. The Judge's chambers resided in Frankfort, Kentucky, which is also the city where I lived for the duration of the internship. Unlike some internships in the legal field where interns spend their time getting coffee and running documents for the professionals, the other interns and I were designated an office area with desks. Here, we worked on and influenced previous and current cases that fell under the Judge's jurisdiction. The majority of my time as an intern was spent reading, reviewing, and summarizing cases. I could not become involved in the legal research portion because I have not yet attended law school, but I was more than exposed to the law and its discrepancies.

During the 8 weeks I worked in chambers every weekday 9-5 and I accomplished three large projects. For my first project I went through the United States Code, which is literally the law in print form, removing the 2013 annotative pamphlets and replacing them with the 2014 pamphlets. This was a simple task, but an important one nonetheless because the law is constantly changing—new cases, trials, and rulings change the wording of or overturn laws everyday. Therefore, to keep every court in the country on the same page and assure the impartiality of the United States legal system, the code must be kept up to date.

The second project I accomplished as an intern drew me in closer proximity with the law. Like many people who sit on the federal bench, Judge Van Tatenhove aspires to one day write a book about interesting cases that have been argued before him, particularly those that went to trial. Trials are not at all common anymore, despite the fact

that television shows such as *Law and Order* mislead us to believe that every criminal case goes to trial. According to Drew Trimble, a law clerk for Judge Van Tatenhove, only a staggering 3% of federal cases proceed to trial. As a result, federal trials have a tendency to captivate audiences when they do come around, though maybe not as much as they do on television. My second project was to read over nearly every trial from the past 3 years and write a 1-2 page detailed summary of the case, including the dates of the trial, the lawyers, the defendant, the charges, the arguments, and the verdict. Hopefully, these trial narratives will one day help Judge Van Tatenhove write a book.

For my third and final project in the chambers I dove into the mindset of a judge's law clerk. More specifically, I was given three current cases, each with pending motions. This meant both sides were waiting for the court to publish a decision, or memorandum opinion and order, in response to a request by a party in the case. I read, took notes on, and outlined the charges and arguments for each of these cases. Two of the cases were writs for *habeas corpus*, where a prisoner petitions to be set free from jail for various reasons, and the third contained a pending motion to suppress evidence. Because these are still current cases I cannot be more specific than that. However, I may say that I took my own notes and outlines and used them to draft a memorandum opinion and order for each case. These draft orders responded to the arguments of both sides on the pending motion, referenced case law, and laid down a decision that was to become law. Though my draft orders could not be published, since I do not yet have a law degree, they were used as helpful reference points to the law clerks when it came time for them to write the actual orders.

In total, I learned a lot about the law and how it works; and I am interested in continuing to learn more. For the first couple of days I spent a lot of time looking up and getting used to using the legal jargon, some of which was thrown around colloquially and some which was very specific. I then learned how the United States Code works, as I had to replace the annotative pamphlets. However, maybe the most significant skill I acquired through this internship was being able to advance my writing to come as close as possible to the mock memorandums written by a law student. In terms of high and low points during the internship I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see a trial, not just because they have become less common but because it was fascinating to see lawyers argue in front of a judge. As far as low points, I honestly cannot think of any low points involving the internship. The city of Frankfort is not somewhere I would consider living for long periods of time in the future, but that is merely my personal preference. I would consider working there, especially if it were for Judge Van Tatenhove again.

I originally applied for this internship on the fence about my career aspirations. I may now say pretty confidently that I believe I want to go to law school and become a lawyer. What I do with a law degree is something to determine much later down the road, though Judge Van Tatenhove gave us good advice during the internship on that subject. He advised us that we don't have to become lawyers; we could become politicians, businessmen, or teachers. We don't have to limit ourselves to working for a Judge or law firm. For where I am in my education currently, it's food for thought, but that is merely one nugget of life and legal advice I absorbed from the Judge and law clerks. I learned an

enormous amount this summer in Judge Van Tatenhove's chambers, and it was a potentially life-altering experience that will stay with me for the rest of my life.