

This summer I was honored to serve as the undergraduate intern in the United States Attorney's Office, in the Chattanooga Office of the Eastern District of Tennessee. Under the direction and leadership of US Attorney for this District, Bill Killian, and with authority from current US Attorney General Eric Holder, the office is directly responsible for prosecuting in support of, and representing, the interests of the United States Federal Government. I pursued this internship because of my interest in the law and my desire to attend law school. Through this internship I received invaluable courtroom and trial prep experience, but more importantly, I was able to form close bonds with several of the Assistant US Attorneys in the office, and the two law student interns, who have helped me tremendously on my path to law school. Over the course of this internship, I learned the valuable lesson that I do not want to be a prosecuting attorney, but my interest in the law and my desire to further study and practice it was not dissuaged, and was instead bolstered by the relationships formed and the experiences had.

I had many duties at the office this summer, ranging from Discovery, which involves compiling and organizing evidence for both the prosecution and the defense; Trial Prep, including the transcribing of FBI and TBI audio recordings, phone conversations, and interviews, and general case research. I was involved, in some manner, in about eight different cases this summer, and got to sit in on court for the duration of three trials. I was also able to work directly with witnesses and victims of crime during the Grand Jury process. From these various projects I was able to expand and hone my organizational skills, increase the efficiency of my research methods, and gain an introduction into the style of legal writing.

Over the course of the summer, there were several instances that made a particular impact on me, but also gave me a very active role in the functionings of our prosecuting team and its successes in court. Very early on in the summer, I was asked to transcribe several jail calls for the prosecuting attorney to submit as evidence to the court on his current trial - after learning the office's system for transcripts, which I found cumbersome and difficult to read, I created my own style of transcript, which was viewed so positively by the US Attorney that he adopted it as the new office-wide "norm" for any and all transcriptions. To my great amusement, I spent most of the rest of the summer teaching the paralegals in the office how to use my new system. In another case, I was able to do a bit of my own detective work, and was actually asked by an FBI agent who was working on a case to make a fake Facebook profile to add a defendant and several of his closest known associates and scour their profiles to find evidence for a Grand Jury. Some of the evidence I was able to uncover actually earned our office a guilty plea from the defendant before the case could even go to trial.

The most important thing I gained from this internship was the pleasure of working in an office that felt so much like a team - the attorneys are all supportive of each other, and each individuals successes are viewed as a victory for everyone in the office. It was also interesting to see, as one of my colleagues and mentors put it, "what goes on after the CSI episode ends"; the relationship between the police and FBI agents and my office this summer was so interesting, and it was exciting to be "catching the bad guys" together. The toughest part about working at the USAO office this summer was being forced to acknowledge my own limitations in terms of knowledge and skill. I was working alongside two 3L (third year) law student interns, who were

actually able to prosecute their own case and were given assignments to write and submit to the court - it was very frustrating for me to want to be writing and doing real court work, but to be lacking in the specific training and education my colleagues had received. However, it did teach me a valuable lesson about the realities about what it means to be an attorney - it's not all sitting in court shouting "I object!". There's so much more that goes on behind the scenes, back in the office, sometimes late at night, and sometimes on the weekends, that goes into making a trial a success before a trial has even begun. From that perspective, and with that knowledge, I am beyond grateful for my experiences in that behind the scenes work.

Being surrounded by such intelligent, hard-working, and accomplished attorneys day-in and day-out was simultaneously the most intimidating and rewarding experience I've ever had. I developed such close mentor relationships with several of the attorneys in the office, and while the "boy's club" seemed inaccessible at first, by the end of the summer I had been invited to join the all-male office workout club, and was going to dinner almost every night to watch the World Cup with the office. These personal relationships built over the summer completely made my experience, and I'm still in contact with several members of the office today. Their advice has been incredible and they have all helped me in planning my next move after I leave Sewanee.