

**Matthew Hagler**  
**Tonya Internship Fund Final Report**  
**Executive Summary**

This summer, I interned in the chambers of Judge David C. Norton in the United States District Court of South Carolina in Charleston, South Carolina. I started off the internship proofreading bench memorandums and orders prepared by the Judge's clerks. This gave me a great introduction to the role judge and his staff fulfill in the judicial process. After familiarizing myself with this process of motions and judicial orders, I began to conduct research of federal and state law as well as previous judicial decisions (case law) in order to assist the Judge and his clerks in their preparation of court documents. I would read the briefs by each side, look up the cases and laws they each cite as well as relevant cases they do not include, and evaluate whether or not the cases and laws are applied correctly.

Eventually, my responsibility increased, and I began to write up my research in the form of bench memos and orders rather than simply preparing outlines. This required me to learn the correct format, writing style, and citations of legal documents, which is far different from undergraduate writing and which I am still far from mastering. I would submit my work to the clerks, who would look it over and return it with questions, criticism, and many recommendations for revisions. I made many mistakes and incorrect recommendations, but I improved greatly.

I also had the privilege of attending the Judge's hearings and trials. I was able to observe proceedings in both civil and criminal cases, and I saw cases at all stages of litigation. After working so intimately with these cases behind the scenes in the chambers, it was extremely informative to see how they played out in open court with this insider's knowledge. Overall, I felt like I gained a year's worth of practical legal education in the two months I worked in Judge Norton's chambers, and I am very grateful to the Judge, his staff, Sewanee's Career Service and Leadership Development, and the Tonya internship fund for making it possible.