

This summer I was given the opportunity to complete a 9-week internship with Judge Judy L. McMahon, in Charleston, SC. Judge McMahon is a family court judge with the 9th Judicial Circuit of South Carolina.

My internship was an extremely rewarding experience and gave me a wonderful opportunity to learn first-hand about courtroom procedures and the judicial process. I was able to observe an abundant number of different attorneys and their personal “styles” in the courtroom.

I sat in on court every day with Judge McMahon and listened to each case that was on the docket. Depending on the case, Judge McMahon and I would either discuss the case law that was relevant to the particular case, after the case had concluded or during the case on breaks. This process of examining every case and discussing it with the Judge gave me new insight into how attorneys use the uniform code of laws to represent their positions and clients.

Family Court deals with many different types of law, including: divorce (contested and uncontested), annulments, adoptions, juveniles, child support payments, Department of Social Services’ cases, etc. Because of this, no two cases are the same and the day is never boring. I came to learn very quickly, that a case could never be decided until the last witness had testified and closing arguments had been given.

Besides observing court every day, I also gained knowledge and experience in drafting memorandums for Judge McMahon as well as filing and organizing case files. Through the tasks I did outside of the courtroom, I was able to gain an understanding of the way the State of South Carolina Court system works and what is expected of people when they enter the courtroom.

This internship was an unbelievable experience that I will value forever. I am extremely appreciative of Judge McMahon, her assistant, Lisa, and the Tonya Public Affairs Grant, for the opportunities that I was able to partake in this summer. My internship affirmed my strong desire to pursue a career in law and my desire to help people in need.