

Application Deadlines and Orientation Schedules

Paralegal, Graduate & Undergraduate Studies.

Applications for Summer 2011 must be received by May 13, 2011
Intern Orientation will be held on June 9 and 10, 2011

Law Studies.

Applications for Summer 2011 must be received by March 17, 2011
Intern Orientation will be held on May 25, 2011

Placement opportunities, eligibility and application process can be obtained at our new website www.jud.ct.gov/intern

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Volunteer/Intern Program Approaches its 40th Year

JUDICIAL COLUMN

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Exciting new internships now available to students

By Rosanne Purtill
Intern Coordinator

When Bob Eccleston from the Office of Victim Services was approached by a Judicial Branch intern coordinator with a request to provide an internship placement for a college student, the longtime victim advocate in Hartford Superior Court was quick to say yes.

Although he had some preliminary anxiety about both his own role and that of the student, Eccleston was hopeful that a capable and trustworthy individual would be able to assist him with the heavy caseload of victims that GA 14 generates.

Eccleston's first intern was a University of Connecticut senior majoring in urban and community studies. In describing her experience, she credited Eccleston with being a "fountain of knowledge" about the court



Joanna Tomczyk, an intern from Central Connecticut State University, hard at work in the Office of Victim Services in Hartford.

process. She added that he also taught her what role the victim advocate plays.

Since that first semester, Eccleston has had two more interns and with each one has become more comfortable as a mentor. He now is able to integrate his intern into his schedule to not only help him, but provide a valuable and educational experience for the student. He has become a firm believer in the Intern Program and has passed on his positive impressions to his colleagues.

New Victim Services placements have developed in the Fairfield and New Haven JD courts as well as with Victim Services Supervisor Valina Carpenter in the

central office in Wethersfield.

The program staff looks forward to assisting other advocates in coming semesters.

New experiences abound in External Affairs office

By Lauren Walker
Judicial Branch Intern

Interning for External Affairs was an amazing experience. It granted me unique opportunities that I wouldn't have had access to anywhere else. I was able to meet and shadow judges, sit in on court cases in criminal, family and the Supreme Court, as well as tour state buildings, such as the Supreme Court, the Superior Court GA 14 at 101 Lafayette St. in Hartford and the state Capitol.

During my internship, I was assigned an assortment of important projects. I was placed in charge of editing the Judicial Branch's high

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**Lauren Walker
Intern**



Lauren Walker researches state court Web sites in search for improvements to the Connecticut Judicial Branch Web site.

school civics curriculum, redesigning pages of the Judicial Branch Web site and conducting the international visits of Chinese and Korean delegates. I also assisted in preparing Judicial Branch publications, such as the Biennial Report.

This internship has had numerous advantages. My placement provided me with an opportunity to work in a professional work environment, where I enjoyed collaborating with friendly and hardworking staff members. The tasks and experiences have allowed me to network, build my resume and gain valuable insight into the legal system. In addition, these achievements and newly acquired attributes will be highly beneficial when I pursue my future aspirations.

Pro Bono Project interns give back to Branch, community

By Juana Brown
Program Coordinator

In the spring of 2008, Professor Leslie C. Levin from the University of Connecticut School of Law and Superior Court Judge Constance Epstein initiated the Hartford Temporary Restraining Order and Divorce Project. This pro bono project let law students assist unrepresented individuals fill out the forms necessary to obtain a temporary restraining order or an uncontested divorce.

Each semester since then, the Court Service Center at the Hartford Family Court has hosted the TRO/Divorce Pro Bono Project, known also as the Family Court Volunteer Program, through the UConn Law Domestic Assistance Program.

These students are placed by the Judicial Branch Intern Program staff, as required by the Branch. Between six and eight students participate each semester and receive an orientation to the Judicial Branch prior to their official placements.

According to Miriam Godfrey, who coordinates the

project for UConn, the students "help individuals with the pro se divorce process. They help walk-ins fill out financial assistance forms, motions for modification of child custody and child support court orders. Though the students do not offer legal advice, they are able to guide self-represented parties through an uncomfortable and unnerving process."

The interns are at court three days a week Godfrey said. "Court Planners Norma Moriconi and Desiree Biggs are always there to offer assistance and expertise when students face a novel issue or problematic situation. These women are masterful at their job and adept at dealing with a diverse group of people."

UConn and other law schools encourage students to perform pro bono, which translates to work for the public good, for which no credit or compensation is received. In return, the students are given the opportunity to have a hands-on role in the legal process.

Moriconi considers the students to be a great help, especially during busy hours. "We are very lucky to have them," she said.

Fall interns gear up for semester

By Rosanne Purtill
Intern Coordinator

"I had no idea that we would be allowed to meet directly with clients and have access to the details of their cases. I thought it would be mostly observation, but we were told that we would be expected to work and actually help out the staff."

This is a comment made by one of the participants in attendance at the September Orientation held for students headed for internships within the state's Judicial Branch Intern Program.

Approximately 150 fall semester students came together to learn the "dos and don'ts" of the program and gained insight about all of the exciting opportunities that lay before them. The Code of Conduct as well as the Judicial Branch Dress Code is reviewed thoroughly as part of the Orientation process, with particular attention paid to issues of confidentiality. Because students have access to the same information as staff, they are treated as members of the Branch and must follow the same rules as all staff.

The Judicial Branch's Intern Program allows students to be fully incorporated into the everyday activity of their offices. Once students become acclimated to their environment and have learned all the tasks they will be expected to complete, they are treated as any other member of the team within that office.

Staff Expected to Provide Opportunities

Probation officers, family relations counselors, court clerks and all the staff who take on interns are expected to provide the students with opportunities to experience the "reality" of the careers they are pursuing. In return, the students act as an extra member on the team.

Field work, courtroom exposure and client contact are part of most placements as are filing, answering the phone and similar office tasks. Students learn quickly and are an integral part of offices in which they are placed.

Functions of Court Operations Explained

This semester saw a new approach to the information sessions for those students headed to placements within Superior Court Operations. Representatives from several units were on hand to explain their various responsibilities within the framework of the criminal justice system.



Above: Fall interns are apprised of Judicial Branch policies and procedures. Right: Victim Services Supervisor Valina Carpenter addresses interns.



They included:
Deputy Director of Jury Administration Kay Berris;
Victim Services Supervisor Valina Carpenter;
Deputy Director of Interpreter and Translator Services Scott Hartley; Staff Development Specialist for Continuing Education Lee Helwig; and Program Manager for Support Enforcement Administration Paul Bourdoulous, who was once an intern with the Judicial Branch.

After many years of employment with the Branch, each of these supervisors exhibited their expertise and continuing enthusiasm for their chosen professions. They emphasized the extraordinary opportunity that was being given to the students and hoped that their experiences would help direct each student toward rewarding careers of their own.