Melissa Benton

Melissa Benton, 2L, interned in the Criminal Division of the Lucas County Prosecutor’s Office in Toledo. As a legal intern, Melissa assisted trial attorneys with case preparation, legal research, drafting of motions, and with discovery and witness interviews.

Sara Bergene

Sara Bergene, 3L, was a summer intern at the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), a program of Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights based in Chicago. In addition to advocating for legislative improvements to the immigration law system, NIJC is a nonprofit organization providing quality, low-cost legal services to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Midwest. Through its dedicated team of staff attorneys, legal workers, and a network of more than 750 pro bono attorneys, NIJC serves over 8,000 clients annually. Sara assisted staff attorneys with preparation for immigration hearings, conducted legal research, and drafted motions and briefs. Sara’s ultimate career goal is to practice public interest immigration and refugee law.

Rachel Burlage

Rachel Burlage, 2L, was a law clerk at Ohio State Legal Services Association (OSLSA), a nonprofit provider of legal services founded by the Ohio State Bar Association in 1966. Rachel researched a wide variety of legal issues to assist attorneys, and helped research and create a series of brochures to inform homeless Ohio residents of their legal rights. Rachel will be clerking this summer at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, where she will work with the economic and social justice team.

Rachel Chodera

Rachel Chodera, 3L, was a legal intern at FairVote, a non-partisan, nonprofit electoral reform organization in Washington, D.C. FairVote is dedicated to empowering disenfranchised groups through electoral systems changes and right-to-vote initiatives. Rachel assisted with research and writing of amicus briefs and provided analysis of past and pending election legislation.

Kathleen Clyde

Kathleen Clyde, 3L, the 2007 Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP PILF Fellow, was a law clerk at the Brennan Center for Justice at the NYU School of Law in New York City. Her placement was with the voting rights and elections section. She assisted the Brennan Center staff in research, litigation, legislative drafting and counseling, and public education on a wide range of issues including improving election systems nationally and ensuring access to elections for all citizens. Kathleen hopes to pursue a career in election law.

Lauren Fontana

Lauren Fontana, 3L, was a public interest legal intern at the Center’s Legal Initiative’s Project (CLIP) in Denver. Founded in 1992, CLIP is one of the country’s oldest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender support services centers. CLIP engages in impact litigation and legal services for the most disadvantaged members of the LGBT Community in Denver. Lauren’s duties primarily consisted of legal research for current and prospective cases. Lauren also assisted with direct legal services through CLIP’s legal hotline. Lauren, who plans to become a legal advocate for the LGBT Community after graduation, considers her summer internship as an important step toward realizing her goal.
Dylan Griffiths
Dylan Griffiths, 2L, was a summer intern at the Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Ohio in Columbus. The Federal Public Defender provides legal services and representation for indigent criminal defendants. Dylan performed a variety of legal duties, including preparing trial, hearing, and appeal materials. Dylan also assisted with legal research and memo drafting and accompanied counsel on client visits to local jails for consultation.

Katie Jory
Katie Jory, 2L, was a law clerk for Ohio State Legal Services Association at its state support center and worked to prevent and solve legal problems that affect Ohioans living in poverty. Katie also assisted clients with tax problems.

Shannon Karla
Shannon Karla, 3L, interned this summer for the Code Enforcement Department of the City of Cleveland’s Department of Law. Shannon’s duties included legal research and writing. In addition, with her Legal Intern Certificate from the Supreme Court of Ohio, Shannon had the opportunity to appear in court, representing Cleveland’s residents by helping to enforce fire, health, zoning, and housing codes.

Rachel Laing
Rachel Laing, 2L, was a legal intern at Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS). CRIS is an independent nonprofit agency serving refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants in central Ohio and exists as the largest local community-based organization doing such work in the area. Rachel assisted clients with legal permanent residency and naturalization applications, conducted country conditions research, and especially enjoyed her work on a nunc pro tunc asylum case.

Katherine Lengieza
Katherine Lengieza, 3L, who plans to pursue a career in criminal law after graduation, was a legal intern in the Criminal Enforcement Division at the Office of the Attorney General of Texas in Austin. Katherine assisted with legal research, memoranda drafting, and trial preparation in a variety of areas such as prosecution of child pornography and online solicitation, violent crimes, abuse of official capacity, and white collar crime.

Renato Manay
Renato Manay, 2L, served as a summer legal intern at the Office of the Public Defender in San Francisco. The mission of the San Francisco Public Defender’s Office is to provide vigorous, effective, and ethical legal representation to persons who are accused of a crime and cannot afford to hire an attorney. As a summer intern, Renato assisted an experienced attorney with in- and out-of-custody client interviews, legal research, writing projects, and trial preparation, and assisted at trials and hearings.
Julie McDermott
Julie McDermott, 2L, was a law clerk for Ohio State Legal Services Association. She helped low-income clients at both the state support center in Columbus and the direct services program, Southeastern Ohio Legal Services (SEOLS), in Portsmouth, Ohio. While working for OSLSA, Julie conducted extensive research in Special Education Law, assisting the staff attorneys in creating and editing informational brochures for parents with special needs children. Additionally, Julie assisted staff attorneys by researching various civil procedure and discovery issues affecting pending litigation. While working for SEOLS, Julie helped prepare arguments for pending state court appeals concerning issues of Family Law. The experience and knowledge Julie gained from these two job experiences will be greatly beneficial as she begins her next summer public service job with the United States Air Force JAG Corps in southeast Ohio.

Adrienne Montalvo
Adrienne Montalvo, 3L, was a legal intern at the National Immigration Project in Boston. For over three decades, the National Immigration Project has been protecting the rights of non-citizens facing the greatest barriers to justice. The National Immigration Project is comprised of immigration attorneys, public defenders, legal workers, grassroots advocates, and others working to defend immigrant rights through the promotion of social justice and equal treatment of immigrants and non-citizens including crime victims, detainees, and individuals with HIV. As a legal intern, Adrienne supported staff attorneys with legal research and writing.

Ryan Muennich
Ryan Muennich, 3L, clerked at Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS). CRIS is one of the only nonprofit organizations in the Columbus area that provides immigration related legal services and representation. Ryan assisted with on-site client intakes and processing for naturalization.

Caitlin O’Donnell
Caitlin O’Donnell, 2L, served as a summer intern at the Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Ohio in Columbus. The Federal Public Defender provides legal services and representation for indigent criminal defendants. Caitlin performed a variety of duties including preparing trial, hearing, and appeals materials. Caitlin also assisted with legal research and memo drafting in addition to accompanying counsel on client visits to local jails for consultation.

Laura Sminchak
Laura Sminchak, 3L, worked this summer at the Equal Justice Foundation (EJF), a nonprofit law firm in Columbus. EJF’s primary mission is the direct representation of individuals and organizations in impact litigation or cases raising issues of statewide significance for low-income persons. Since 1992, EJF has focused on key impact areas including human services, consumer protection, fair housing, predatory lending, and discrimination, disability, and education rights. During the summer, Laura accompanied attorneys at hearings and depositions. After graduation, Laura will work as an Equal Justice Works Fellow at SEOLS where she will focus on improving access to healthcare for low-income people by establishing medical-legal partnerships with legal services providers and healthcare providers.

Sarah J. Staley
Sarah J. Staley, 2L, the 2007 Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation PILF Fellow, worked as a summer law clerk at the Equal Justice Foundation (EJF), a nonprofit law firm in Columbus. EJF’s primary mission is the direct representation of individuals and organizations in impact litigation or cases raising issues of statewide significance for low-income persons. Since 1992, EJF has focused on key impact areas including human services, consumer protection, fair housing, predatory lending, and discrimination, disability, and education rights. During the summer, Sarah’s primary responsibilities included conducting legal research, drafting legal memoranda, and serving as an intake specialist for EJF’s clients.