

Cassidy Reid

ATDV-499 Summer Legal Fellows

Dr. Cutler

8 August 2020

Becoming a summer legal fellow was a decision I made because I wanted to better understand the legal profession and to allow myself to see if it was a career worth pursuing after graduating from Siena. When the COVID-19 pandemic increasingly worsened around the world and everything was moving online and remote, I was worried I was not going to be able to have the best summer legal fellow experience by not being at Western New England University in-person. I quickly realized that my remote experience this summer was better than I ever could have imagined. I will further discuss my fellowship experience, but the main takeaway was this experience taught me to be adaptive to the changes in the world whether they are positive or negative. Working with Western New England School of Law's Center for Social Justice was a rewarding experience where I was able to improve my written and verbal communication skills, my ability to meet deadlines and schedule remote meetings, and, most importantly my legal research and writing skills.

My summer legal fellow experience started with the daunting task of creating a more effective website design for the Center for Social Justice. The Center for Social Justice recently acquired a new Director, Ariel Clemmer, who was my supervisor and mentor throughout the summer. Clemmer wanted to change the layout of the website of the Center for Social Justice website to communicate the mission, initiatives, and resource list of the Center, so that the

viewer could better understand and to educate themselves about current issues in our country. I was tasked with creating a new and updated list of initiatives for the website. As a group, we decided to create three main initiatives that are most prevalent in the current work the Center is involved in. The three initiatives are racial justice, economic, and holistic justices. The holistic justices includes miscellaneous areas of justice that did not fit in either one of the categories, but is still important. I worked on analyzing the current projects law students involved and analyzing previous events sponsored by the Center to have a holistic idea of the work that is being done at the Center. After many versions of the website, the new layout with content was finalized. I am truly looking forward to seeing my work on initiatives come to fruition and benefit the organization of the Center for Social Justice's website.

The second half of the fellowship was spent researching legal mentoring programs and their benefits as well as researching the LSAC PLUS program offered at law school's around the country. One of the Center's initiatives is to have community involvement as well as to have a mentoring program with the goal of diversifying the legal profession. We were given a file with a little over twenty documents to read and analyze the content within the articles. After reading the content and taking notes, we both created five legal memos that each answered a question related to the benefits of mentoring programs and model programs that Western New England School of Law's Center for Social Justice should emulate. I learned that legal mentoring not only has benefits regarding entering the legal profession, but it also has shown benefits regarding personal achievement.

During the second half of the summer, I worked on creating what we referred to as a 'grant shell'. Essentially, this was a Word Document that I would create in order to apply for

various grants and funding opportunities. I would take questions needed in order to apply and create a spreadsheet and fill in crucial information to the best of my ability and knowledge. This was a unique experience for me because before, I had very little idea how much funding is needed for a non-for-profit organization.

My experience at Western New England School of Law was incredibly rewarding and valuable for me, a rising senior, considering law school. Not only was I able to have experience completing legal research and writing legal style documents, I was able to have support from the faculty and staff at Western New England School of Law there to answer any questions I may have had about the legal profession, the law school application process, or simply about post graduation plans.