

Mary Zick

Summer Legal Fellows Experience

Dr. Cutler

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This summer, I was a Siena Summer Legal Fellow at Albany Law School. I specifically worked in the Government Law Center on the Rural Law Initiative, where my supervisors were Andy Ayers and Kendra Sena. I worked on several different projects, received training on using WestLaw, and sat in on a constitutional law class. Being a Siena Summer Legal Fellow at Albany Law School was a very profitable, unique experience.

The first task that was assigned to me by Andy at the Government Law Center was to make an information packet about trademarks for small business owners. The goal of the information packet was to provide small business owners with information on trademarks in easily understandable terms in one place. This packet contained information about what a trademark is, the trademark rights a person has without registering, the difference between state and federal registration, and the advantages and disadvantages of registering. The information packet also explained the difference between the TM, SM, and ® symbols, how to select a unique and strong mark, and in detail how to file a federal trademark registration application.

My second task assigned by Andy at the Government Law Center was to compile an intellectual property resource guide. This guide consisted of website addresses to useful resources with a brief description of why someone would be interested in looking at that website. The resource guide was divided into three categories: "Intellectual Property," "Patent," and "Trademark." The trademark category was divided into the subcategories: "About trademarks," "Filing your federal trademark registration application," and "Resources for assistance with trademarks."

My third task assigned by Andy was to write a memorandum on the importance of protecting intellectual property. The goal of this task was to explain to small business owners why they should consider protecting their intellectual property. The memorandum explains what intellectual property is,

how to protect it, why protecting it is vital, the benefits of the protection, misunderstandings small business owners have about intellectual property, and how to begin the process of protecting their intellectual property.

My fourth task assigned by Andy was to write an intellectual property strategy guide. The goal of this project was to help small business owners create their intellectual property strategies. Some of the sources I used were differing intellectual property strategy guides; the differing intellectual property strategy guides contained some similar information but were written to different specific audiences. I used these differing strategy guides to create a detailed intellectual property strategy guide that could be used by small businesses of any type.

My first task assigned by Kendra was to research cooperatives. I had to research what cooperatives are, what rights workers have to their intellectual property in a cooperative, and which cooperatives our client could join. Lydia shared with me a document that she had previously written, which compared several business organizations, so that I could compare cooperatives with other business organizations. Lou and I collaborated in regards to our client. Since Lou was directly working with Kendra and our client, Lou shared with me information that I needed about our client. We both searched for and researched cooperatives that our client could join. I wrote a memorandum about what a cooperative is, what the benefits and drawbacks of it are, what existing cooperatives our client could join, why our client should not start a cooperative, and why our client may or may not want to join a chosen cooperative.

My second task assigned by Kendra was to compile a background memorandum for a new attorney. The new attorney would be handling the case of a client who was previously helped by the Government Law Center. I used the memorandums that the attorney that previously handled the client had written and the client's current questions to write the background memorandum.

Lydia, Lou, and I received training on using WestLaw in two two-hour sessions on June 29 and June 30. The training was very informative and was extremely helpful to me. Before the training, I was having difficulties in searching WestLaw. My only dissatisfaction with the WestLaw training was that it

was after a month of working. However, it's understandable that it happened so late in the summer because the Government Law Center is going through a lot of changes, such as employees coming and leaving and the Government Law Center relocating to another floor. Since it was busy in the Government Law Center, it was sometimes difficult to receive feedback. For instance, at the beginning of our last week of working at the Government Law Center Andy and Kendra had us submit to them all of our written work in order for them to choose one of our documents each to edit to become a writing sample. However, Kendra and Andy didn't edit our documents by our last day of work, but Andy and Kendra told us we could still finish our writing sample by working from home and communicating with them during the rest of the summer. Nonetheless, everyone at the Government Law Center is exceedingly friendly and willing to help.

One of my favorite parts of this program was sitting in on a constitutional law class. We were given the readings for the class the day before so that we knew what the professor and the class were talking about. The cases were cases that we had already discussed in Dr. Cutler's class last spring: *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, *Gratz v. Bollinger*, and *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*. The professor also allowed us to participate in the discussion. Thus, we had the opportunity to contribute as actual students in the class. This experience was a good sample of what law school is like, which would be difficult to obtain without being a Siena Summer Legal Fellow.

Before this program, I was interested in law but was unsure if I wanted to go to law school. This program helped fuel my growing interest in intellectual property issues and my interest in going to law school. I now am seriously considering going to law school to become a patent attorney because of this program.