

WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON SUMMER DIVERSITY EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM



The Western District of Washington is partnering with the Federal Bar Association for the Western District of Washington to provide summer judicial externships to law students who bring diverse perspectives to the legal profession as a result of their adaptability, cultural fluency, resilience, and life experiences. In addition to being placed in judicial chambers for the summer, the externship opportunity provides each student with a structured educational program. The program includes matching students with an attorney mentor, meetings with Assistant Federal Public Defenders, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, and Probation Officers, federal agents and judges, weekly meetings with the judicial coordinator, and opportunities to observe civil and criminal proceedings. The program provides a \$5,000 stipend to defray students' living expenses, as well as a \$200 stipend for travel expenses. Externs will be placed in the U.S. District Court in either a District Court Judge or a Magistrate Judge's Chambers, as well as in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. Placements are in Seattle and Tacoma.

PROGRAM CRITERIA

This is a summer externship program and is open to all 1L and 2L students at an accredited law school. Applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to bring diverse perspectives to the program and the legal community. The program begins between May 29 and June 10, 2024, depending on the students' law school terms, is eight weeks long and is full time (40 hours per week). The program is demanding and externs should be hardworking, organized, honest, ethical, and committed to making the most of their summer to gain critical lawyering skills and habits.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

The application period opens on January 1 and closes on February 5, 2024. Zoom interviews will be conducted between January 22 and February 19, 2024. Applicants will be notified as soon as possible. Students should submit the following materials to diversity_externship@wawd.uscourts.gov:

1. A resume.
2. A one to two page cover letter addressing why you are interested in being a judicial extern, how you believe you meet the program's criteria of serving students who bring diverse perspectives to the legal profession as a result of their adaptability, cultural fluency, resilience, and life experiences, and if you have a preference for placement in Seattle or Tacoma.
3. A writing sample (10 pages or fewer).
4. The names and contact information for three references. One should be a legal writing professor, if possible (no family members please).

Previous participants have commented:

The Summer Diversity Externship Program was the highlight of my law school experience! This program exposes students to a comprehensive understanding of the Court from different perspectives. I was given the opportunity to work closely with my chambers in legal research and writing with invaluable feedback that I know has made me a better writer. The participants that coordinate this program went above and beyond for the externs through the learning opportunities that were put together. We had a robust schedule that exposed us to all of the inner workings of the courthouse and to many legal professionals, which allowed me to create new connections and learn about post-law school opportunities that I was not previously aware existed. Some of my favorite experiences were watching attorneys in court advocating and learning different styles, meeting with the judges and learning about their pathway to the bench, and creating lasting connections with my fellow externs and clerks. I highly recommend law students to apply for this program. - Victoria Molina

This externship was a great way to spend my 1L summer. The experiential programming provided our extern group the opportunity to meet with judges, attorneys, clerks, and other professionals affiliated with the courthouse. It was very cool, and I was always engaged when we met with a new department. I was exposed to a variety of career paths, and I left knowing a lot more about how a federal courthouse operates. The mentor I got matched with is a lawyer who practices in the exact area that I'm interested in, and she was able to give me helpful tips as I progress in my career. And I noticed that people in the courthouse were aware of our extern group and made efforts to talk with us. It was important for me to grow a network, and the program definitely helped with that. The chambers work was the other major component. I never felt overloaded with work. I also received great feedback. I was always able to see where I excelled and where I didn't, and that was a significant takeaway for me. Finally, the coordinators of the program did a great job selecting the externs because our group had great camaraderie. We became friends over just eight weeks, and those bonds might be the biggest takeaway of this entire experience for me. Definitely apply for and accept this externship if you have the chance! - Karl T. Kahambwe

My participation in the Summer Diversity was nothing short of amazing! I was given a variety of unique assignments that not only sharpened my legal writing and research skills but also provided a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of the chambers. The program also offered various opportunities to meet with distinguished professionals within the legal field, including judges, federal public defenders, and federal prosecutors. One of the most valuable components of the program was the chance to observe both criminal and civil proceedings in real time. Seeing the intricacies of a trial and the intrinsic human element of such is something that one cannot simply gather from a textbook. I would highly recommend the Summer Diversity Program to any law school student, regardless of their specific legal interest. - Arturo Lopez Lena Toledo