

Subject: Re: Summer Internship

Dear Mary,

I had an awesome summer last year, but I wanted something very different than others in my class. I didn't want to get the "summer camp" experience. I wanted to learn to write a better brief than the sanitized BLS brief. I wanted to get my hands on the pleadings, draft the motions, and go to court. I got to do all of those things at SW.

Last summer, we all got to go to the Sixth Circuit to watch one of the partners argue. We went to motions, trials, and depositions. It was a summer on the frontlines, and I wouldn't have traded it for anything. Some of my friends worked for the government, and some worked for bigger firms, and I think I came away with the most practical experience.

As a 2L, I use those experiences as reference points in my studies. I took what I learned from the oral advocates and used it in moot court. I found a neat area of law for my law journal note while researching for SW. After school started in the fall, I stayed on. Now, I can go to the attorneys in my firm for explanations of tricky points of law from class. Paul even helped me practice for one of my competitions (all of SW's current clerks are involved in moot court activities).

I'm not familiar with any local firms that have mentor programs for clerks, but it seems sort of odd. Unless you know exactly what sort of law you want to practice and are certain you will not change your mind, a mentor seems premature. One amazing thing about SW is that the firm represents so many diverse areas of practice, so you can try many areas. I might never have tried appellate work otherwise, and now I dearly love it. If, instead, I had loathed it, I could have focused on another area. Think of it as the trial size samples of toothpaste. If you don't like the flavor, you're not stuck with a whole tube.

It really depends on what you want. I know you've heard that this whole summer employment process is about finding the "right fit." If you want wine and cheese cocktail parties, long lunches, and afternoons at Keeneland, you probably want a bigger firm. If you want impoverished clients that really, really need you, you want the Department of Public Advocacy. SW is neither, but it's the right fit for someone who wants a lot of practical experience in a really friendly place the summer before the 2L year. I hope that helped you, but please contact me if you need more information.

Good luck!

Robyn