

Mid-Point

|
newcomb@tulane.edu

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Hey y'all!

Next week marks my last week here at the NVRDC and I can't believe how much I've learned. I think I've actually touched each of my learning objectives. The first one, and perhaps most relevant to my project here, has been research. In order to create a virtual privacy guide I've spent hours doing research, figuring out what resources survivors can use if they're being harassed online. My research has shown me that virtual crimes are an unpaved territory in a lot of ways. So, on top of my research for

what victims can use to protect themselves, I've also researched laws that the NVRDC staff use to protect their clients in the court as well as the limitations law enforcement face when dealing with cyber-stalking and revenge porn. This is what my presentation was largely based on at last Friday's staff meeting. In addition to this legal research, I've also become more acquainted with the law through my shadowing experiences. This past week I got to watch a cross Civil Protection Order, which is when both clients file CPOs against one another. The week before that I watched another CPO trial and got to be part of what we described as a "woman shield," as the lawyer, case manager, other interns and I all surrounded the client in the hallway, the same hallway the perpetrator was standing in, while we waited to see the judge. It was an extremely enlightening experience because I got to see the impact a well-utilized justice system can have on the emotional health of a victim.. The client got her CPO and immediately her anxiety alleviated. It was so empowering. Through all of these experiences, the staff here has been really helpful explaining legal terms and procedures with me. While I've grown to appreciate the law in more ways than I thought possible through this internship, I'm still not sure law school is for me. Regardless, I've become a true advocate for victim's rights and the strong impact the law can have on the emotional health of a survivor. I recently finished my social media guide (3 formats: flow chart, packet, presentation) as well as an infographic that depicts a survivor's reporting process timeline following sexual assault. I'm really proud of these projects because through my shadowing I've gotten to put faces to the issue. I can see, tangibly, the lives they will impact. Going back to my learning objectives, I've certainly had to practice self-starting. I love this environment because I feel like I've been given the perfect amount of responsibility: I don't feel undervalued, but I also don't feel overwhelmed. That is, when it comes to the format and organization of my guide, I've been given a tremendous amount of freedom. I've also been working on my fifth learning objective, self care, by trying new dinner recipes and going to yoga!

This internship has helped me develop as a female leader by allowing me enough responsibility to feel valuable. I'm also surrounded by phenomenal female leaders everyday. This office, with the exception of 2 incredible men, is all incredible women. That means constant female empowerment and positivity. A few days ago I was greeted by a "You Are Beautiful" sticker on my desk. If there's one thing I'm definitely taking from this internship, it's that I love working with other women. I'm especially inspired by the organization's co-founder and co-executive, Bridgette Stumpf (pictured below at our cornhole fundraiser last Saturday). Her ambitious

magnetism is precisely the spirit of female leadership I seek to emulate someday.

There are many skills I see myself taking from this internship. Mostly, I'd say I'm taking the ability to be active in my compassion. As an extremely empathetic person, I've always been drawn to places and activities that allow me to utilize that compassion. This usually means listening to my Uber driver's deepest secret or driving to my friend's house at 3 A.M. because her boyfriend broke up with her or donating all of my time to volunteer work. I never really saw myself finding that in a career, though. NVRDC has shown me that there are infinite ways to combine empathy and ambition and create something for the greater good. I'm extremely grateful for this.