

# Final Reflections

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At the beginning of the summer I sought an internship that would expose me to what it is like to work directly with women in need. I wanted to work with a diverse group of women, challenge myself to work in difficult circumstances, and further my passion for improving the lives and expanding the opportunities for women and girls throughout the world. In working at Metro, this was most achieved when answering crisis line calls. Although I understood the importance of some of my other tasks, such as working with the Women’s boutique and organizing backpacks and school uniforms for students who could not afford them, it was answering the crisis line that

exposed me to the needs of women in the Greater New Orleans Area. My experience working as Metro's legal advocate has also been enlightening. I love being in the courtroom setting and watching both sides of the trials at hand. Also, a fun side note: the judge at Kenner Court who handles the domestic disturbance cases is bilingual and thus conducts bilingual hearings... excuse my geek out moment but it is SO COOL.

My biggest take away from this experience is that I am better fit working a step away from the people I want to help. I don't have the emotional capacity that it takes to be a social worker. Instead, I am much better fit working to help social workers help others. To other students looking to go into the field of social worker, I commend your strength and perseverance. It is a true gift to be able to have compassion toward others, help them, and still not let it affect your life. I am not one of those people but this experience helped me realize that. I tend to flip flop about my future, but I do think this strongly pushed me in the direction of law. I would love to either be an advocate, politician, or lawyer in the field of social justice.

What I want to strive to continue to do, however, is advocate to give those in need the power. Especially being a step further away from the communities I want to work with, it is vital that I hear their stories and opinions. I want to focus on how I can extend the power and privilege I have been given to those whose voices may otherwise go unheard. Working at Metro only reinforced my beliefs that so often, those in power are making decision for the public without truly understanding what certain communities need. It is impossible to truly understand the difficulties of working with women who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault unless you are on the ground, witnessing it. This ideology can also lend itself to so many social issues, such as politicians with no background in public education implementing monumental changes in the public school system or male policy makers making decisions on women's health care. The list could go on and on, and I aspire to break this cycle in my future endeavors. Voices traditionally have been ignored, so badly need to be heard.