

Midpoint at IPNO

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I can't believe that I am already more than halfway through my internship at IPNO! This summer has progressed very quickly. I have already met most of my defined learning goals that I designed before my internship began. Here are my learning objectives:

1. By the end of my internship, I will discuss the experience of the female lawyers and law students in their education and careers to learn how to overcome gender barriers in my future legal path.

2. By the midpoint of my internship, I will speak with two wrongly convicted prisoners to discover how they view their time behind bars and learn how to empathize with clients.
3. Throughout the internship, I will observe the operations and environment of a nonprofit law office in order to learn how such an office functions and identify if I would be comfortable pursuing a career in nonprofit law.
4. By the end of my internship, I will apply the academic concepts of criminology and the criminal justice system to my duties at Innocence Project New Orleans (IPNO). I will use my firsthand knowledge of the criminal justice system to improve my current information about the prison system in the United States.
5. By the midpoint of my internship, I will learn how to do specific legal research and investigate cases so that I can be a true asset to IPNO. I will apply these research skills to my academic work and future jobs.

Through my interactions with other interns, I have gained a lot of knowledge about law school and the obstacles that women face in order to break into the field. The legal interns have also helped me to understand the process of pursuing a career in public interest law. I have spoken with three wrongfully convicted prisoners so far throughout the summer. Hearing about their experiences and seeing their positive outlook despite horrible circumstances has been truly inspirational. Exposure to the atmosphere in a nonprofit law office has enabled me to reflect on my preferences in an office setting. I definitely have developed a much greater understanding of the system of incarceration in the United States through this internship. It is very different to learn about the criminal justice system in a criminology class and then see the results of the prison-industrial complex in letters from inmates.

I am monitoring my own growth by the ease of completing new tasks and my increasing familiarity with legal procedures and terminology. I am most proud of my ability to handle a large number of cases at one time - it can be confusing to remain knowledgeable about many different peoples' situations at the same time. Through this internship, I am building writing and research skills that will aid me not only with papers in class, but also in my legal career.