For exactly two months of this summer, I worked with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender in Baltimore City, Md. I worked in two different divisions of the Public Defender, the Felony Trial Division and the Appellate Division; I worked with Felony for the first three weeks, and the Appellate division for the remaining five weeks. Because of the time spent with both divisions, I had the ability to better understand how the Appeals process in Maryland works, and why felony attorneys behave the way they do in court.

In my first three weeks I worked alongside Rosemary Ranier, who is a felony trial attorney. In these three weeks I a wide variety of work, ranging from transcribing tapes of custodial interrogations to visiting the city jail to take notes while attorneys asked their client questions concerning the case. I would also go to court with attorneys and assist them whenever they needed anything, such as remembering certain people during jury selection or simply running to the office to grab civilian clothes for the defendant. The work in Felony Trial was fast paced, and there was the constant anxiety of a deadline looming over whatever work or task you were given.

The last five weeks were spent with the Appellate Division of the Public Defender. While working with Appellate, my work was consistent, calm, and could be done, for the most part, on my own schedule. The Appeals attorney I worked with, Brad Peabody, would give me certain legal issues he needed researched for a case. I would then go to the Bar Library on the top floor of the Circuit Courthouse and research Maryland and Federal cases, statutes, and rules which might help or hurt his argument. Because Appellate has far fewer cases then Felony, and because the nature of an Appeals court is much more academic, I would have roughly a week for each research project I was given. After thoroughly researching the issues given to me for about a week, I would write a report on my findings and upon turning them into Brad, I would get another assignment.

The internship helped me learn how the criminal justice process works, and it also helped me see that those who are poor and marginalized in our society, and who make very bad decisions or mistakes, are still human.