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I interned under Assistant Public Defender, Angela Oetting, in the Office of the Public Defender in the South Baltimore district. After working at the office for several weeks, I became accustomed to the intricate system under which the attorneys operate, and I believe this system can only be described as an “assembly line of justice.” For example, an attorney would receive a case with four counts: the first count would be trespassing, second count possession of a controlled dangerous substance (CDS), third count intention to distribute an illegal narcotic, and the fourth count would be a violation for parole. The variation in an attorney’s treatment of the case would be partially dependent upon the client’s previous arrests and convictions. When the attorney with whom I worked reviewed a case and could find a “loop hole” in the investigation phase, or found evidence that our client was innocent, then I was sent to further investigate. Not only did I intern under Angela Oetting, but I also spent some time “shadowing” the Baltimore attorneys who specialize in Mental Health Court.

My internship with Ms. Oetting allowed me to learn my way around the legal system of Baltimore and gain experience in an official office setting. On some days I was invited to sit in on the court cases, which was one of the most interesting and rewarding aspects of my internship. I also acted as Ms. Oetting’s assistant and answered phone calls, relayed messages, received and distributed paperwork, and transcribed testimonies. One of the most hands-on experiences I gained was the actual investigation fieldwork. During certain cases, I was asked to go to the crime scene and photograph evidence or lack thereof. My photographs would then be used as evidence in the court of law to prove the client innocent. The opportunity to give someone justice was very rewarding. My time spent in the Mental Health Court was also very interesting, yet less intensive and hands-on as compared to working under Ms. Oetting. I “shadowed” the attorneys and observed the cases and trials. Overall, both experiences were informative and a once in a lifetime opportunity.