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**Liman Summer Fellows 2009
Final Report**

1. *Briefly describe your summer placement. What was your host organization and what kind of work does it do?*

My host organization was New York County Defender Services, a public defender's office in Manhattan. The organization handles approximately 16,000 cases annually, or roughly 20 percent of the cases in Manhattan. Its clients are indigent men and women arrested in New York and charged with crimes, ranging from violations for trespassing to felonies for homicide, and everything in-between. NYCDS lawyers meet clients at their arraignments and typically continue with the case until it is disposed.

2. *Describe your work over the summer. What did you do, who did you help, what documents did you write etc.?*

My time this summer was split fairly evenly between following and observing the attorneys from my office in court, and working on research projects back at my desk. On a typical day I would spend the morning in court with a lawyer to whom I had been assigned (or spoken with on my own), following them around to various hearings with their clients. I had the opportunity to observe a wide variety of clients, crimes, and proceedings, and witnessed every step in the process, from arraignments to hearings to trial and sentencing. I quickly developed a strong sense of how the criminal system operates in New York City, and the time I spent with the lawyers was fun and interesting. The lawyers in my office were almost universally eager to talk with the interns and explain their work.

The other half of my time was spent on research projects back at the office. On a typical day, I would spend several hours after lunch working on a variety of tasks. My work included tracking down clients held by immigration, finding background information on an expert witness in a homicide case, and helping locate our clients' files from out-of-state. More typically, however, I would spend my research hours writing legal memos. I was taught how to use Westlaw and Nexus Lexis, and wrote memos for lawyers on topics like search warrants, forged instruments, grand jury procedure and the use of psychological evidence. This involved looking at both state law and past cases, which allowed me to become very familiar with New York criminal law.

Overall, the exposure and responsibility I had was absolutely unique for an undergraduate. I was treated more like a law student than a junior in college (and indeed, the other interns I was working with had just finished their first year of law school at Columbia and NYU). I could not be happier with the work that I was given this summer, and with the experience overall.

3. *Pick at least one particularly memorable moment and describe it in more detail. Why was the moment memorable? Was it because of the person/people you were working with? Was it because of the substance of the problem? Was it because you learned something of importance about you or your own aspirations? This is the section that the Liman Program will primarily use to create content for its Liman newsletter, so frame your answer with an eye towards that.*

One night near the end of the summer, I had the opportunity to go to a late-night arraignment shift with three of the lawyers from my office. After a full day of work, we headed to court at 5:00pm and stayed until 1:00am. A 16-hour day might not sound like fun, but it was one of my best memories from the summer. The lawyers I was with that night were all particularly interested in allowing me to meet and interview the clients, and the judge had me sit with him for a few hours and explain how he viewed the proceedings. It was less formal environment than usual, and I when I got back to my apartment at 2:00 in the morning I was exhausted but thrilled.

4. *If you have just graduated, what are your plans for next year? If you haven't graduated yet, do you have thoughts on your post-graduation plans?*

I am a rising senior, applying for jobs this fall. I'm applying for several jobs, none of them law-related. I plan on spending a few years away from school and from legal work, before attending law school. Beyond a basic plan to go to law school, I have yet to decide what type of law I'd like to study/practice.

5. *Is there anything that the Liman Program could have done differently/better to help or support you?*

Overall I thought the program was terrific, and I appreciate the opportunity it provided me this summer. I have a handful of suggestions, though:

-I would have liked to have a local mentor over the summer – it wasn't necessary by any means, but it would have been a nice part of the program. I asked if it would be possible to have one assigned when Ms. Russell emailed us, but I was slow in sending this request and I never heard back.

-In places where there are many Liman fellows spending the summer (New York, Washington) I think there's strong potential for having gatherings during the summer. I don't think it would be necessary to do anything formal, but it would have been fun to gather as a group and hear about other people's experiences. Even something like an optional dinner would have been well attended, I think, and a lot of fun for those who showed up.

-The \$3000 stipend was certainly helpful, but I had the opportunity to supplement this with additional money and was denied, much to my chagrin. Had I opted to accept funding from my department at school instead, I would have received \$4500 for the same work. I decided to accept Liman funding because I wanted to be a part of the

program, but my department was still willing to make up the extra \$1500. This would have been at no cost to any other student (I wouldn't have been taking \$1500 away from anybody else), and it would have helped me pay rent in NYC, which was, of course, exorbitant. I understand requiring students not to accept other primary sources of funding, but I think it would make sense to allow students to supplement their stipend with secondary funding if it would not negatively impact other students.

NOTE: This report has been reviewed by my direct supervisor at NYCDS, Louise Corrigan.