

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TEL 88562

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Whibbs, Rayboun, & Stone

Supervising Attorney: Scott Stone

105 E. Gregory Square

Pensacola, FL 32502

(850)434-5395

Dates of Internship:

01/08/07 - 04/10/07

I am very glad I chose to participate in an internship during my last semester at the University of West Florida. I decided to intern at Whibbs, Raybon & Stone, a law firm in downtown Pensacola. This opportunity allowed me to apply the knowledge I acquired from the classroom to legitimate cases and situations. My placement site allowed me to manage many tasks by myself. I enjoyed the freedom and trust of being able to complete my duties without anybody hovering over my shoulder, instructing me through every step of the project. Also, I enjoyed the vast variety of work assigned to me. I wrote letters, drafted many types of pleadings, attended a trial, sat in on several depositions, called clients, and gained on-the-job experience. The program at UWF completely prepared me for the everyday demands of a law office. Without hesitation, I would recommend the internship experience to any student.

Usually, I wrote letters everyday of my internship. I did not realize the massive amount of letters that needed to be mailed daily from a law office. I wrote letters to clients, medical providers, the opposing counsel, the Clerk of Court, insurance companies etc. I learned that there are form letters that can be used for the majority of letters I had to write. Form letters saved time and allowed me to draft letters to several individuals within

minutes, with only minor changes to the letter. Writing letters is an essential aspect of a law office.

In addition to writing letters, I also drafted pleadings nearly everyday. I became familiar with many different types of pleadings that were used regularly in my supervising attorney's cases. I enjoyed drafting pleadings. I took pleasure in the thought that my work would be filed with the court and part of a record. However, I had to pay great attention to detail on pleadings, because mistakes can prove to be detrimental to clients. Along with drafting letters and pleadings, I was able to work on many additional projects.

During the beginning of my internship, I was fortunate enough to attend a trial. My firm represented a client who filed suit against his insurance company for not paying damages from hurricane Ivan. I helped work on the case before it went to trial. There were so many documents that needed to be in perfect order before the big day. In fact, the attorneys and paralegals were slightly frantic in trying to prepare for trial. I realized that no matter how prepared an attorney is for trial, something unexpected can always occur. Also, I noticed that attorneys rely on and put a lot of trust in their paralegals. When the attorneys needed to immediately pull documents from the client's file, they would depend on the paralegal to know the exact

location and retrieve the particular papers. I enjoyed the trial, but observed how stressful it was for the parties involved and the legal staff. I have watched trials before, but I saw a completely different perspective from “behind the scenes.”

In addition to the trial, I was able to sit in on several depositions. The depositions were significantly more casual than I had expected. Generally, the individuals being deposed appeared quite nervous. I think the laid-back atmosphere helped to put everybody at ease. In fact, the attorneys and clients even made jokes, which took me aback at first. Also, I have a greater appreciation for court reporters. Court reporters must be present at depositions. I do not know how court reporters are able to hear and record every word that is spoken. I find this fascinating.

Another task of my internship was to call clients, medical providers, and insurance companies, just to name a few. At first I was apprehensive because I did not think I would be able to answer questions if they were proposed. However, I became comfortable calling and talking to anyone my supervising attorney needed. Generally, people are friendly. Plus, the medical providers and insurance companies are accustomed to handling calls from law offices.

I was able to make a smooth transition from the classroom to the law office due to UWF's exceptional program. I felt completely prepared and confident when I first started my internship. I understood the legal terms and "lawyer talk." Overall, there was nothing that occurred during my internship that I had not learned about in UWF's program. From writing letters in Advanced Legal Research and Writing, to a mock deposition in Civil Litigation I, to a mock trial in Civil Litigation II, I felt prepared. My education at UWF allowed me to squeeze the most out of my internship. In addition, the law firm benefited from UWF's program as well because I was confident and retained the necessary skills.

I would definitely recommend participating in an internship while attending UWF. I enjoyed the experience and learned valuable information. The office personnel, including the attorneys, were fabulous. I felt welcomed and wanted from my first day to my last. Everybody was friendly, helpful, and I was able to learn so much from them. I appreciated the fact that the attorneys even took their time to sit with me and discuss my future in law school. I was offered a job to start after my internship concluded, but I was unable to accept since I will be attending law school in the fall. Nevertheless, I believe that Whibbs, Rayboun, & Stone would be a great place to work full time. Without question, I would recommend any

student to have an internship at the same law firm I did; however, I am probably biased. I am very appreciative that I had the chance to participate in the internship experience.

My internship gave me hands-on experience. I was able to use the knowledge I had attained in my UWF program and apply it to real cases and law office situations. Through my internship, I gained and utilized many skills. I have a better understanding of how a law office functions. My on-the-job experience gave me greater confidence of my abilities and an enhanced appreciation for the legal team. My internship helped reiterate my future career goals. I am confident that I want to go to law school and become an attorney. I would recommend an internship to any interested student.