

# Criminal Defense





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# CHAPTER 1

## CRIMINAL DEFENSE

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### A. Overview

There are more than 2.3 million Americans behind bars in the United States<sup>1</sup>—making it the highest rate in the world. There are individuals and organizations dedicated to ensuring that prisons, jails, and other places of detention comply with the Constitution, domestic law, and where applicable, international human rights norms.

It is the responsibility of the government to provide effective legal representation for every defendant in a criminal action. Due to the Sixth Amendment's<sup>2</sup> guarantee of free legal representation to all persons accused of criminal activity, defense services for the indigent are conducted at a variety of levels in the country. Federal public and community defender offices, as well as Criminal Justice Act panel attorneys, provide federal criminal defense services to those unable to afford representation in federal judicial districts. Additionally, at the state and local levels, public defense offices and programs defend people accused of violating state criminal law.

Many Yale law students choose to spend their summers working at a criminal defense office due to the substantial trial experience, stimulating cases, and meaningful public service that these offices provide. Indeed, many YLS alumni elect to pursue careers in criminal defense, for reasons best described in their own words.

*I have been a public defender for over twenty years. I guess I have voted with my feet—I have never left because I cannot contemplate a job I would rather do. My work is intellectually stimulating, desperately important, and ever-changing. And I am lucky enough to be surrounded by engaged, talented, like-minded people.*

*The best part of my job is that I get to stand up for people who the whole world has often turned against. Indigent, young, people of color (primarily), accused of a crime are the least regarded members of our society. . . . It is truly a privilege to stand next to my clients and ensure that the constitution applies equally to them.*

*The job has been more rewarding and intellectually challenging than anything else I've done in my life.*

*At the end of the day, you feel a tremendous amount of personal satisfaction having helped those whom no one else deems worthy of assistance.*

This guide will examine such opportunities and careers in indigent criminal defense.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Ending Mass Incarceration* at [www.brennancenter.org/issues/ending-mass-incarceration](http://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ending-mass-incarceration) and <http://www.aclu.org/issues/prisoners-rights>. Also, the report of the Constitution Project's National Right to Counsel Committee, *Justice Denied: America's Continuing Neglect of Our Constitutional Right to Counsel*, ([www.constitutionproject.org/pdf/139.pdf](http://www.constitutionproject.org/pdf/139.pdf)) is the most comprehensive examination of the indigent defense crisis in over 30 years.

<sup>2</sup> The Sixth Amendment—Rights of Accused in Criminal Prosecutions: “In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.” U.S.C.A. Const. Amend. 6

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## 1. Types of Public Defense

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### a. State and Local Offices

Generally, the title of “public defender” refers to state or local level representation. In most jurisdictions, you will find these offices supported with public funds. Despite being supported by public funding, however, these agencies are ethically bound to be independent in the handling of cases and the hiring of attorneys. In some jurisdictions, you will also find non-profit agencies such as Defender Services or Legal Aid Societies that provide services to indigent clients. For example, the Legal Aid Society of New York is the largest private, not-for-profit legal services organization in the country, handling 300,000 individual cases and matters annually.<sup>3</sup> Public defender programs employ about 4,300 (29%) of the nation’s public defenders and receive about 1.5 million (27%) of the nearly 5.6 million cases received by public defenders nationwide.<sup>4</sup> Numeric caseload standards recommend that a public defender should carry no more than 150 felony, 400 misdemeanor, 200 juvenile-related, or 25 appellate cases in a year.<sup>5</sup>

In some counties, especially in western states, an attorney or group of attorneys contract with the government to provide indigent defense. Their pay is contractually determined for a specified dollar amount and for a specified time period.

You may also find attorneys who are appointed by way of panels, known as *court appointed panel attorneys*. These individuals enter into an agreement with the government to represent indigent clients where there is no public defender office or when there is a conflict of interest which prevents representation by the public defender office. Their pay is contractually determined, either by the hour or at a fixed rate.

### b. Federal Defenders

The mission of the federal defender services program is to ensure that the right to counsel guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment, the Criminal Justice Act (18 U.S.C. § 3006A), and other congressional mandates is enforced on behalf of those who cannot afford to retain counsel and other necessary defense services.<sup>6</sup> Since the enactment of the Criminal Justice Act in 1964, the Defender Services program has created 81 federal defender organizations that serve 91 of the 94 federal judicial districts and employ more than 3,100 lawyers, investigators, paralegals, and support personnel.<sup>7</sup> Independently run but funded by the federal government, federal defender organizations are authorized in federal judicial districts where at least 200 people annually require the appointment of counsel in criminal cases, such as white-collar and drug crimes.

Federal defender offices either operate as a federal public defender organization under the judicial branch of the federal government, overseen by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts,<sup>8</sup> or they operate as a federal community defender organized as a corporation acting independently from the federal judiciary. Federal public defender organizations function under the direction of a chief federal public defender, who is appointed to a four-year term by the Court of Appeals of the circuit in which the organization is located. Staffs at these federal public defender organizations are federal employees and compensated within the federal system. In contrast, federal community defender organizations are state-incorporated

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legal-aid.org/en/las/aboutus/ourmission.aspx](http://www.legal-aid.org/en/las/aboutus/ourmission.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics: [www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/spdp07.pdf](http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/spdp07.pdf) (2007)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> [www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel/Mission.aspx](http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel/Mission.aspx)

<sup>7</sup> [www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/defender-services](http://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/defender-services)

<sup>8</sup> [www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/judicial-administration](http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/judicial-administration)

nonprofit defense counsel organizations that operate under a board of directors. Handling cases in a number of federal judicial districts, community defender organizations receive funds primarily through grants from the federal judiciary.

Finally, over 10,000 court-approved Criminal Justice Act (CJA) panel attorneys also accept appointments for federal criminal cases. These panel attorneys handle all CJA cases in the four districts not served by a federal public defender or community defender organization, as well as 30 to 40 percent of CJA cases in districts with a defender office (typically due to some conflict of interest with the defender organization). Overall, federal defender organizations receive approximately 60% of CJA appointments, while the remaining 40% are assigned to CJA panel attorneys.<sup>9</sup>

The name and contact information for the Federal Public Defender for many districts can be found on the Office of Defender Services Training Branch website at [www.fd.org](http://www.fd.org) or in the *Judicial Yellow Book* (available in the Law School Library or at [www.leadershipdirectories.com](http://www.leadershipdirectories.com)), as part of the court staff list at the beginning of each district listing.

### **c. Capital Defenders**

The high stakes involved in death penalty work make this type of practice extremely challenging. Capital cases are complex and involve legal research and writing; interviews; collection of information from jurors, lawyers, and other witnesses; review of court files, state documents, and evidence; and formulation of legal arguments. Death penalty organizations provide direct representation and may be affiliated with law school clinical programs or public defender offices. A large part of capital defense work involves appellate or post-conviction work. Nonprofits such as the California Appellate Project specialize in providing resources for counsel on appeal or habeas corpus proceedings.

### **d. Holistic Public Defender Offices**

These are organizations that offer “whole person” representation. The goal is not just to represent the individual in contact with the criminal justice system, but to provide comprehensive support to avoid or minimize future problems. Understanding that an individual’s problems may be rooted in poverty, drug abuse, mental illness, or other issues, the organization surrounds each individual with teams of criminal, civil, and family defense lawyers, social workers, parent advocates, investigators, and community organizers working to identify and overcome the challenges they face. The Bronx Defenders, [www.bronxdefenders.org](http://www.bronxdefenders.org), and Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, [www.ndsny.org](http://www.ndsny.org), are two of the bigger organizations in New York providing holistic services. In addition, the Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights (formerly, the Juvenile Regional Services of Louisiana) [www.laccr.org](http://www.laccr.org), provides client-centered advocacy to youth in Louisiana’s juvenile justice system. It also advocates for comprehensive representation, community engagement, and systemic reform.<sup>10</sup>

### **e. Specialized Areas of Criminal Defense**

#### **1. Immigration**

The intersection of immigration law and criminal defense is a challenging and complex one. Individuals who have contact with the criminal justice system may face immigration consequences, including deportation and criminal consequences, even if they are in the country legally. A defense attorney who is aware of these issues ought to be cognizant of these consequences of pleas and convictions upon their client’s immigration status.

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<sup>9</sup> [www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel.aspx](http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel.aspx).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.laccr.org](http://www.laccr.org) for additional information.

**a. Helpful websites/organizations:**

- *Defending Immigrants Partnership* ([www.defendingimmigrants.org](http://www.defendingimmigrants.org)): The Defending Immigrants Partnership is a collaboration of the Immigrant Defense Project (IDP), the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), and the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG). The Partnership offers to defender programs and individual defense counsel, critical resources and training about the immigration consequences of crimes, actively encourages and supports development of in-house immigration specialists in defender programs, forges connections between local criminal defenders and immigration advocates, and provides technical assistance in criminal cases to defenders.
- *Immigrant Legal Resource Center* ([www.ilrc.org/crimes](http://www.ilrc.org/crimes)): The ILRC educates and assists indigent criminal defenders about immigration consequences of crimes.

**2. Juvenile**

The U.S Supreme Court decision of *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. 1 (1967), gave juveniles accused of crimes the same due process rights as adults, including the right to timely notification of the charges, the right to confront witnesses, the right against self-incrimination, and the right to counsel. Since *Gault*, many state legislatures and state courts have provided for greater protections to juveniles, including making it difficult, if not impossible, for juveniles to waive their right to an attorney. Representing juveniles requires a good understanding of the law as it pertains to minors. It may also be helpful to have some knowledge of social work or psychology to assist in what are often emotionally charged situations.

**a. Helpful websites/organizations:**

- *National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers* ([www.nacdl.org](http://www.nacdl.org)): Under the *Criminal Defense* tab, go to *Juvenile Justice* to access information about litigation, news, reports on juvenile criminal defense, and contact information for a variety of relevant organizations.
- *The National Juvenile Defender Center* ([www.njdc.info](http://www.njdc.info)): The National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC) was created in 1999 to respond to the critical need to build the capacity of the juvenile defense bar and to improve access to counsel and quality of representation for children in the justice system. NJDC offers a wide range of integrated services to juvenile defenders, including training, technical assistance, advocacy, networking, collaboration, capacity building, and coordination.
- *Models for Change* ([www.modelsforchange.net](http://www.modelsforchange.net)): Models for Change is a national initiative funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to accelerate reform of juvenile justice systems across the country. Focused on efforts in select states, the initiative aims to create replicable models for reform that effectively hold young people accountable for their actions, provide for their rehabilitation, protect them from harm, increase their life chances, and manage the risk they pose to themselves and to public safety.

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# CHAPTER 2

## HIRING

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### A. Summer Internships

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#### 1. Benefits

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Summers provide a unique opportunity to experiment and explore public defender settings, vet possible fellowship sponsors, and gain real-life experience in the field. Though state and local defenders hire right out of law school, they often require at least a summer or clinical experience in this area. Information about specific requirements for different types of offices can be found in Chapter 3.

#### 2. Qualifications

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Hiring decisions rest heavily on outstanding references and a résumé that demonstrates intelligence, a commitment to public service, and good research, analysis, and writing skills. Trial experience is also a plus, but not expected for summer positions. If you are a first-year student, you will probably not have had much of a chance to differentiate yourself from your classmates in terms of legal experience, but if you handled a project for the Pro Bono Network, worked with the Capital Assistance Project, or participated in the Criminal Justice Clinic, definitely include these experiences in your application materials. Relevant experience also includes any paid or volunteer position where you were called upon to research, write, advocate, present, exercise judgment, or use any other lawyerly skills. Also include activities that show an interest in litigation, prior work including criminal and civil defense, volunteer experiences, or choice of law school classes.

#### 3. Procedure

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Your cover letter should state your strong interest in working for the particular public defender's office to which you are applying. Detailed information about the unique qualities of each office can be obtained by contacting students who have worked in them, writing to the graduate mentors included in this guide, or contacting the offices directly. Refer to CDO's *Introduction to Career Development* for examples of resumes and cover letters.

### B. Attorney Hiring

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#### 1. The Interview

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Interviews at public defender offices are often quite demanding, typically involving the use of hypothetical questions and role-playing of different aspects of the criminal defense process. Due to this, candidates should familiarize themselves as much as possible with the particular interview procedure for defense positions. In addition to possibly speaking to a CDO counselor or consulting with a classmate or an alum who has gone through the process, candidates should glance at publications which offer helpful pointers about these interviews. For example, NYU School of Law's *Public Defender Handbook* (available in the CDO library or online at [www.psjd.org](http://www.psjd.org)) provides examples of the specific hiring procedures at various public defender offices, as well as sample hypothetical questions and responses. Please see the below sections on the Federal Defender System and State and Local Public Defenders for more specific attorney hiring information.



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## 2. Rounds

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At federal and local public defender offices, there are often multiple rounds of interviews prior to a full-time offer. These interviews can range from individual meetings with the recruiter, to multiple-person panel interviews.

Below are examples of the interview process for several offices that are popular among YLS students.

### **Connecticut Public Defender Services**

1. Series of interviews with hiring staff, followed by an appointment made by the Division of Public Defender Services Commission.

### **Federal Public Defender—Middle District of Florida**

1. First and second round interviews conducted by a Hiring Committee, as composed by the Federal Defender.

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# CHAPTER 3

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## DEFENDER OFFICES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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### A. Federal Defender System

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#### 1. Summer Internships

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##### a. Type of Work

Often working under the supervision of an Assistant Federal Defender, summer interns at federal public and community defender offices assist attorneys with their case load and may perform a variety of work, including conducting legal research; drafting motions and memoranda; and assisting with trial preparation and investigation, which may include conducting field investigations and client interviews. Additionally, summer interns gain valuable courtroom experience by observing or participating in court trials. Of course, the work of each federal public or community defender office varies based on the office's geographic location and its resulting size and focus, so students are encouraged to contact interns from prior years to get a better understanding of each office's practices and policies.

##### b. Demand

Each summer, many federal public defender and community defender offices employ law students. The number of students hired by a given office typically varies by the size of the district and their attitude toward student assistance.

##### c. Procedure

Each federal defender office accepting summer interns typically lists their application materials and deadlines on their individual websites. Oftentimes, students must submit a cover letter, resume, transcript, and writing sample as part of their application packet. While many federal defender offices will hire law students of any year, some may give preference to second and third year students. Please note that offices may hire on a rolling basis, beginning in September and ending around March, so students are encouraged to make contact with their preferred offices as early as possible.

## **d. Requirements**

Summer interns should demonstrate an interest in defense work, and have an understanding of the role that they play in the adversarial system. In addition, candidates should have an interest in trial work. First year applicants do not need to have previous experience in defense work. Second year students should be prepared to demonstrate their commitment through previous summer work, clinical experiences, classes, or extracurricular activities.

## **e. Salary**

Usually, federal public and community defender offices do not pay summer interns. Since there may be funds available at some locations, however, students should check with any office(s) in which they are interested.

Below are examples of offices with unpaid summer internships:

- Federal Defenders of New York (Manhattan)
- Federal Public Defender—Middle District of Florida (Tampa)

## **f. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest**

Students should be mindful that in every jurisdiction the Rules of Professional Conduct, or other applicable ethical rules, impose the obligation to avoid conflicts of interest. This could arise in a clinic or internship if you are “on the other side” from your future employer in a case or transaction. Legal employers are responsible for inquiring about possible conflicts of interest, but you should consider whether your past legal work (e.g. cases you handled during your 1L summer) or ongoing legal work (e.g. clinic or externship casework in which you are currently involved) may present a conflict and bring any potential issue to the attention of the hiring attorney as soon as it is feasible. If you have questions as to whether your specific situation could possibly be a conflict of interest with your employer, make an appointment to talk it over with a career counselor.

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## **2. Attorney Hiring**

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### **a. Demand**

Competition for Assistant Federal Defender positions is often extremely competitive, with most offices requiring several years of experience after law school. In general, larger federal public and community defender offices (often located in major cities) are more likely to have positions available.

In 2015, the offices below had the following number of Assistant Federal Defenders:<sup>11</sup>

- Federal Community Defender Office—Eastern District of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia): 39
- Federal Defenders of New York (Manhattan): 15
- Federal Public Defender—Central District of California (Los Angeles/Riverside/Santa Ana): 92
- Federal Public Defender—Central District of Illinois (Peoria/Springfield/Urbana): 8
- Federal Public Defender—District of Connecticut (Hartford/New Haven): 7

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<sup>11</sup> Information on Eastern District of PA obtained from [http://pae.fd.org/Our\\_Staff.html](http://pae.fd.org/Our_Staff.html); information on Central District of CA obtained from <http://www.fpdcaed.org/>; information on District of CT obtained from <http://ct.fd.org/?section=about>; information on District of MA obtained from <http://bostondefender.org/about-us/attorneys/>; information on Middle District of FL obtained from <http://flm.fd.org/offices/tampa.php>; information on Northern District of CA obtained from <http://www.ndcalfpd.org/staff.html>.

- Federal Public Defender—District of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, & Rhode Island: 17
- Federal Public Defender—Middle District of Florida (Tampa Office): 8
- Federal Public Defender—Northern District of California (Oakland/San Francisco/San Jose): 17

## **b. Procedure**

The Office of Defender Services Training Branch maintains an online list of vacancy announcements for positions in federal public defender offices, federal community defender offices, and other select positions related to the Criminal Justice Act on its website, [www.fd.org](http://www.fd.org), under *Employment*. Note, however, that this is not an all-inclusive list of every available vacancy within the federal defender system, so interested persons should contact the specific office to which he or she may apply to inquire about job openings and get more information.

## **c. Requirements**

These positions tend to require significant experience; there is less likelihood of being hired as Assistant Federal Public Defender right out of law school. Sometimes federal defender offices have entry-level “Research and Writing” Attorneys who provide advanced research and writing services to Assistant Federal Defenders on trial and appellate cases; these positions do not involve client contact or trial work.

## **d. Salary**

Attorneys working for federal public defender offices are federal employees and are therefore compensated under the administratively determined judiciary salary plan of the United States Courts. In addition to a base starting salary, attorneys also receive an additional locality pay, based on the geographic location of the position. Locality pay varies from a low of 14.16% to a high of 35.15% added to basic pay. For specific information about base pay and locality rates, visit the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts website at [www.uscourts.gov/Careers/Compensation/JudiciarySalaryPlanPayRates.aspx](http://www.uscourts.gov/Careers/Compensation/JudiciarySalaryPlanPayRates.aspx). In federal community defender offices, attorneys are not considered federal employees, so salaries vary by location depending on available funding.

CJA panel attorneys are paid a rate of about \$127 per hour in non-capital cases and a maximum hourly rate of \$181 in capital cases, including both attorney compensation and office overhead. Further, case maximums exist that limit total panel attorney compensation for certain categories of representation: \$9,900 for felonies, \$2,800 for misdemeanors, and \$7,100 for appeals.<sup>12</sup>

## **B. State and Local Public Defenders**

At the state and local level, a variety of different criminal defense organizations and models exist. Many states operate their own indigent defense systems. Additionally, in some states, public-defender programs are run and funded at the county or local level.

Amongst public defender programs, there are many different philosophies of representation. While some organizations focus primarily on issues pertaining to criminal defense, other offices intentionally employ a more “holistic” model (see above). Overall, the philosophical orientation of an office may impact the types of cases an attorney handles, how involved a client is in directing his or her own representation, etc. Therefore, when considering summer opportunities or long-term employment at a public defender office, it is important to take into account the distinct philosophy and model of each organization.

<sup>12</sup> These maximums may be exceeded when higher amounts are recommended by the district judge as necessary to provide fair compensation and the chief judge of the circuit approves, <http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel.aspx>.

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## 1. Summer Internships

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### a. Type of Work

Given the heavy public defender caseload, a summer intern would do well to be self-directed. Opportunity will likely arise for client interaction (*e.g.* interviews, investigations), observing trials, and a limited amount of research and writing. A high number of clients are in the criminal system because of mental illness, family problems, and chemical use—many often associated with poverty. The work requires interns to be part lawyers and part social workers. They have to be comfortable dealing with a very diverse group of clients, always with the goal of providing them with the best representation possible.

### b. Demand

In the summer of 2015, hundreds of law students worked in state and local criminal defense organizations across the country. The number hired in a particular office varies by the size of the district and their attitude toward student assistance. For example, the projected numbers of students needed for summer 2016 for these popular offices are:

- Bronx Defenders: 60
- Connecticut Public Defender Services: 36

### c. Procedure

Each public defender office has its own hiring process and timeline. For some of the smaller markets, they may not advertise for interns. In that case, send an application (cover letter, resume, list of references, and short writing sample).

### d. Requirements

Summer interns should demonstrate an interest in defense work and have an understanding of the role that they play in the adversarial system. In addition, candidates should have an interest in trial work. First year applicants do not need to have previous experience in defense work. Second year students should be prepared to demonstrate their commitment through previous summer work, clinical experiences, classes or extracurricular activities.

### e. Salary

Although salaries will vary from office to office, the majority of state and local public defender organizations do not pay at the intern level. Students should, however, check with any office(s) they are interested in as there may be funds available at some locations.

Below are examples of offices with unpaid summer internships:

- Bronx Defenders
- Connecticut Public Defender Services
- Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
- Texas Defenders Service

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## 2. Attorney Hiring

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### a. Demand

Attorney positions at public defender offices are typically quite competitive. In 2015, the offices below had the following number of attorneys working with them:<sup>13</sup>

- Bronx Defenders: 148 (Family, Criminal, Civil, and Immigration Practices)
- Connecticut Public Defender Services: 250
- Defender Association of Philadelphia: over 200

### b. Procedure

Since criminal defense offices at the local and state levels operate independently, students are encouraged to check with the organizations in which they are interested for vacancy information and for specific timelines. Employment opportunities are typically listed on a given office's website, although interested persons may also view job information for certain state and local organizations in the *Government Honors & Internship Handbook*.

### c. Requirements

Criminal defenders generally require litigation experience and a demonstrated commitment to defense work. That commitment can be demonstrated through summer internships, clinical experiences, pro bono work, relevant classes, and student group leadership. Appellate offices will also look for excellent research and writing skills. It is rare for a defender office to hire someone without any prior defense experience. Defender offices in larger system do hire new attorney classes every year, the number being dependent on attrition and funding. Applicants should contact offices of interest for their individual timelines. Please note that it may take several months and several rounds of interviews, especially in larger markets, for candidates to be hired.

### d. Salary

According to the NALP *2014 Public Sector and Public Interest Attorney Salary Report*, the average nationwide starting salary of a public defender was \$50,400, while the average salary of a public defender with 11 to 15 years of experience was \$84,500.<sup>14</sup> Of course, exact salaries for attorneys in criminal defense organizations at the state and local levels vary depending on location.

Below are some examples of starting salaries for 2015:<sup>15</sup>

- Bronx Defenders: Varies depending on experience.
- Connecticut Public Defender Services: \$63,758
- Public Defender in Fort Worth, TX \$46,348
- Public Defender in Atlanta, GA \$ 56,436

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<sup>13</sup> Information on Bronx Defenders obtained from <http://www.bronxdefenders.org/who-we-are/our-staff/>; information for Connecticut Public Defender Services obtained from <http://www.ct.gov/ocpd/cwp/view.asp?a=4086&q=479094>; and information on Defenders Association of Philadelphia obtained from [www.philadefender.org/history.php](http://www.philadefender.org/history.php)

<sup>14</sup> [www.nalp.org/july14research](http://www.nalp.org/july14research)

<sup>15</sup> Information for Public Defenders in Fort Worth, TX obtained from <http://publicdefendersalary.com/TX/Fort-Worth/salary/Public-Defender-Salary>; and information on Public Defenders in Atlanta, GA obtained from <http://publicdefendersalary.com/GA/Atlanta/salary/Public-Defender-Salary>.



## C. Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. What should I consider before thinking about becoming a public defender?

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While practice settings for defenders vary a great deal, there are basic questions you should ask yourself before entering this field. How do you feel about defending someone who may have committed a crime? Though it is true that not all charged individuals are guilty, the majority of them may have committed a bad act if not a crime. Do you feel up to “fighting the system” and ensuring that your client receives a fair trial? In some jurisdictions, the defense attorney is the only person in the courtroom standing up for the defendant. It may be or may seem that the justice system is stacked against the defense. Do you enjoy direct interaction with clients? Clients range from likeable individuals who have exercised poor judgment to those who have made conscious decisions to break the law. Interactions can range from short client interviews, to traveling to unfamiliar neighborhoods, to finding and interviewing witnesses, to being a social worker.

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### 2. How do I choose the best office in which to work?

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There is no such thing as “the” best office but rather the best office for you. Defender offices vary greatly. Getting answers to the following questions may help you determine whether the office will be a good fit for you.

- *What kind of training do they provide?* Some larger, better funded offices are able to provide training for new attorneys. The Legal Aid Society in New York is very well known for providing thorough training to its newly minted attorneys. In addition, you will want to find out whether there will be continuing education programs during your tenure there. Keep in mind that smaller offices may not offer any formal training at all. They will expect you to hit the ground running.
- *What is the caseload like?* While there is no defender who is happy with her caseload, you can find out about the kind of support attorneys receive. Member offices of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association follow principles for quality representation.<sup>16</sup>
- *How does the office divide the work on a criminal case?* There are two systems of representation. Vertical representation means that the client is represented by the same attorney through the entire proceedings, from arraignment to motions to hearings and trials. Horizontal representation means that the attorney gets a case when it is at a specific stage. It means that for a period of time, an attorney would handle bail hearings exclusively then shift to another stage of the proceeding regardless of the client. An office with vertical representation means that an attorney is ultimately responsible for the direction and outcome of the case but may not be proficient in all stages of the case. Vertical representation, while not allowing for case continuity, allows an attorney to hone their skills in one area before moving on to the next.
- *What are the possibilities for advancement in the office?* You may want to find out whether there is room for growth. It may also be useful to inquire about the kinds of positions attorneys take when they leave the organization and the rate of turnover.

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<sup>16</sup> [www.nlada.org/Defender/Defender\\_Kit/NCRC](http://www.nlada.org/Defender/Defender_Kit/NCRC)

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### **3. Should I be a defense attorney or a prosecutor?**

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Many students ask themselves: prosecution or defense? Can I switch sides at a later time? In order to answer that question, you have to understand that fundamental differences exist between prosecutors—who represent the state and have distinct responsibilities—and defense attorneys—who are bound to vigorously defend the interests of their client. Given the very different perspectives of the two sides which make up our adversarial legal system, you should be thoughtful about which side you find most compelling. A switch at a later date may prove difficult and challenging, though not always impossible.

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### **4. Is it difficult to get a public defender position right after law school?**

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Many public defender offices do hire recent graduates every year. You will need to have a demonstrated commitment to indigent public defense represented by one or two summer internships, clinical work, and classwork. Use your time in law school to demonstrate your commitment and interest in their work. The Equal Justice Works fair in Washington, DC features several public defender offices. If your organization of interest is not participating in the fair, inquire about their hiring timeline and apply to them directly. Federal defenders do not typically hire right out of law school, however.

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### **5. If I work at a law firm after I graduate, can I make a switch later to public defender work?**

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It is possible, but several facts conspire against you. First, you grow accustomed to the money. Just as you cannot imagine making \$160,000 a year from now, after you've made it for a few years you will not be able to imagine making \$50,000. You will have expenses that seem necessary. Family and friends will tell you that you are insane. You'll wonder if it's fair to the spouse and kids (who, by the way, have been hanging out with other folks who made \$160,000 to \$2 million). Second, you will then have an uphill battle in actually getting a public interest job. Your resume does not demonstrate commitment to public interest; your experience from a corporate law firm may not demonstrate the needed skills or knowledge. Quite frankly, everyone is a little suspicious about whether you are serious about the cause and if you'll stay. These may all be overcome by making sure you do lots of pro bono work during private practice (preferably involving trial work), maintaining and cultivating contacts in the public interest community, and continuing to live a simple life.

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### **6. Do I need to be a U.S. citizen to be a public defender?**

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It depends on the office. Public defender offices seldom have the funds or the staff to petition for a work-permit. We encourage you to inquire at the office(s) in which you are interested. Please see CDO's *Noncitizen JD students and the Job Search Process* for more information, available in the "Career Planning" section at [www.law.yale.edu/student-life/career-development/students/career-guides-advice](http://www.law.yale.edu/student-life/career-development/students/career-guides-advice).

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### **7. Can I survive on a public interest salary?**

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Only you know that. Can people survive on a public interest salary and lead happy lives? Sure. They do it all the time. Not only is this question enormously dependent on what you consider the essentials of life, whether you have a working partner, where you live and whether you plan on raising some kids, but it is also dependent on the type of public interest work you pursue. State defenders employ an amazing group of committed attorneys and offer comparatively low salaries; however, people working for the federal defenders will probably start in the fifties and can work up to well over \$100,000. In addition, Yale's loan

repayment program (COAP) lightens the debt burden significantly and enables graduates to pursue public interest work. Having said this, the comparison to large firm salaries will always be dismal. If you choose the life of a public interest lawyer, it's best to stop comparing.

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## CHAPTER 4

# YALE LAW SCHOOL RESOURCES

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## D. Online and Print Resources

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### 1. Online Resources

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#### **[www.defendingimmigrants.org](http://www.defendingimmigrants.org)**

Founded in 2002, The Defending Immigrants Partnership is a collaboration of the Immigrant Defense Project (IDP), the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), and the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG). The Partnership offers defender programs and individual defense counsel critical resources and training about the immigration consequences of crimes, actively encourages and supports development of in-house immigration specialists in defender programs, forges connections between local criminal defenders and immigration advocates, and provides defenders technical assistance in criminal cases.

#### **[www.fd.org](http://www.fd.org)**

Website for the Office of Defender Services (ODS) Training Branch of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. The ODS Training Branch provides substantial training and other resource support to federal defender organization staff and CJA panel attorneys. The website provides a directory of all federal public and community defenders under *Defender and Panel Contacts* in the top toolbar.



**<http://arizonahandbooks.com/u/yalelawschool>**

CDO has purchased the rights for all students to access the *Government Honors & Internship Handbook*, a compilation of federal employment opportunities, including public defender offices. Please contact the Career Development Office for password information.

**[www.law.yale.edu/student- life/career- development/students/cdo- videos](http://www.law.yale.edu/student-life/career-development/students/cdo-videos)**

View Program Videos produced by the YLS Career Development Office, including *Being a Public Defender* and *Careers in Capital Defense*.

**[www.leadershipdirectories.com](http://www.leadershipdirectories.com)**

Yale Law School students have access to the online *Judicial Yellow Book* (also available in print in the Law School library), which contains the name and contact information of the Federal Public Defender for many districts. Students using a Yale computer or connected to Yale through a VPN can access the directories without a password. Simply click on the login box in the upper right corner of the home page. Anyone accessing the site from an outside computer without VPN will be taken to a login screen. In that event, contact CDO at (203) 432-1676 for a username and password.

**[www.nacdl.org](http://www.nacdl.org)**

A professional bar association founded in 1958, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) includes private criminal defense lawyers, public defenders, active U.S. military defense counsel, law professors, and judges committed to preserving fairness within America's criminal justice system. Under the *Criminal Defense* tab, access information about specific areas of criminal defense law, including the death penalty, indigent defense, and juvenile justice.

**[www.njdc.info](http://www.njdc.info)**

The National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC) was created in 1999 to respond to the critical need to build the capacity of the juvenile defense bar and to improve access to counsel and quality of representation for children in the justice system. NJDC offers a wide range of integrated services to juvenile defenders, including training, technical assistance, advocacy, networking, collaboration, capacity building, and coordination.

**[www.nlada.org](http://www.nlada.org)**

The National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) is the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit association of legal professionals and organizations dedicated to providing legal services to low-income people in America. The NLADA provides resources to the public defense community through support, training and professional development, establishing and implementing standards, engaging clients and community, in addition to monitoring reform and advocating on behalf of indigent defense systems across the nation. The website also offers a *Job Search* tool.

**[www.psjd.org](http://www.psjd.org)**

Through membership in PSJD, YLS students and alumni have access to the PSJD database, a searchable and current database of thousands of organizations and internships, fellowships, and post-graduate job listings in the public interest. For specific information and resources concerning careers in criminal defense, go to the *Prosecutor/Public Defender Careers* section under *Career Central*.

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## 2. Print Resources Available in the CDO Library

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### *Directory of Legal Aid and Defender Offices 2011-2012*

NLADA / 2012-13

### *The Public Defender Experience: A Student Career Guide Into the Heads and Hearts of America's Real Lawyers*

Bittan, Bradley / 1997

### *Public Defender Handbook*

NYU School of Law / 2013

## E. Other YLS Criminal Defense Resources

### Student Organizations

#### *Capital Assistance Project*

The Capital Assistance Project (CAP) matches YLS students with public defenders from around the country to provide research support for capital defense work. CAP also raises public awareness about death penalty and indigent defense related issues.

### Clinical Programs

#### *Capital Punishment Clinic*

The Capital Punishment Clinic assists members of the Capital Trial Unit of the Connecticut Public Defender Office in representing people facing the death penalty. Students make practical use of research and analytical skills, and may participate in conferences with clients, witnesses and experts, as well as observe court proceedings. Weekly class sessions include presentations and discussions of various aspects of capital cases such as mental health issues, jury selection, and scientific issues.

#### *Criminal Justice Clinic*

Yale Law School's Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization (LSO) offers a Criminal Justice Clinic, in which students represent defendants in criminal cases in the Geographical Area #23 courthouse on Elm Street in New Haven. Students handle all aspects of their clients' cases under the direct supervision of clinical faculty. Students learn how to build relationships with clients, investigate and develop their cases, construct persuasive case theories, negotiate with opposing counsel, prepare motions and briefs, and advocate for clients in court. Students also explore the legal framework governing the representation of clients in criminal cases, including the rules of professional responsibility. Throughout, students are encouraged to think critically about the operation of the criminal justice system and to reflect on opportunities for reform.

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# CHAPTER 5

## PERSONAL NARRATIVES

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### A. Faculty

**STEPHEN B. BRIGHT**

**Harvey Karp Visiting Lecturer in Law**

*Working in the Public Interest—Responding to Desperate Needs*

Public interest work provides an opportunity to help the poorest and most powerless people in society, the ones who have the greatest need for the protection of the courts. It involves meaningful and important work, not the mindless pursuit of money. There are men, women and children in jails throughout the country—many of them profoundly mentally ill or intellectually disabled—who may be held without bond because no lawyer has advocated for their release, who may have never talked to a lawyer about their plight and what can be done about it, and who may never spend more than 15 minutes with a lawyer before being sent to prison. There are people in debtors' prisons all over the country because they cannot pay fines or child support. There are people who face loss of their home, their children or their employment in the courts. Others face serious physical abuse. Children are denied educations and arrested for trivial things, ruining their lives. People from other lands seek asylum. These people need competent representation by capable and caring lawyers. And there are many more just as helpless and just as desperate in need of legal assistance.

The United States has never made good on the promise of equal justice under law, but there are public defender and legal aid offices throughout the country that struggle to provide justice for those who most need it but cannot afford it. You should ask some questions to see what offices are enthusiastically representing their clients and which are just going through the motions. You do not need a fellowship to do public interest work. Full-time employment is available at the many public defender and legal aid offices throughout the country. Fewer positions are available at various public interest projects simply because they are smaller and do not hire as many people. While public defender and legal services offices often do not know long in advance how many vacancies they will have, numerous positions become available each year. A good strategy for securing a job after graduation is to intern in an office so you learn about its work and how it operates and those in charge will see your talents and how you can contribute to the mission of the office.

I have been a public interest lawyer—working at a legal aid office, a public defender service, and a non-profit, public interest law office—since 1975 and never regretted a minute of it. I welcome any questions or concerns you may have about such a career.

2014

## **B. Attorneys**

**KATE BRANER '93**

**Public Defender**

**County of San Diego, Department of the Public Defender  
San Diego, CA**

I have been with the Public Defender's office for over twenty years and cannot imagine working anywhere else. As a brand new lawyer, I was assigned to misdemeanor cases. While not glamorous, these relatively simple cases were ideal for learning basic trial advocacy. Trying lots of cases is the only way to learn how to really litigate. While law school classes and mock trial teams are helpful, it is not until you are standing next to another human being whose liberties are actually at stake do you truly understand the reality of trial litigation. I handled my first jury trial within six weeks of starting with the office. Over the past twenty years I have tried everything from having an undersized lobster (yes, that is a misdemeanor offense in San Diego) to homicide. After fifteen years of trying cases for both adults and juveniles, I began supervising, training, and mentoring twenty-one of the offices' newest lawyers. For the last three years, I have supervised and mentored a team of fourteen felony lawyers.

The common perception of the career of the public defender is too many cases, too little time. While there is an element of truth to that perception, in well-funded offices there are many resources available to aid the trial attorney in representing their clients. For example, our office has a large staff of full time investigators to interview witnesses, track down documents, photograph crime scenes, etc. We are able to hire expert witnesses to testify about DNA, eye witness identification, and psychological issues. We have staff trained to find rehabilitation programs for our clients who need drug and alcohol treatment. The office also has a Writs and Appeals section staffed with brilliant attorneys to answer tricky legal questions on a moment's notice.

A day in the life of a public defender involves covering a variety of different court appearances. You could appear on settlement conferences and preliminary hearings in the morning followed by motions and sentencing hearings in the afternoon. In between court appearances, lawyers research and draft motions, write up tasks for the investigators, review new client files, visit clients in custody, prepare for trials, preliminary hearings, sentencing hearings, and all other court appearances. This is not a 9 to 5 job. Many lawyers work ten hour days in addition to putting in hours on the weekend. Particularly when the lawyer is in trial, the case is all consuming. You are always thinking about the case. Sleep is often elusive and eating sometimes becomes an afterthought. Once the trial is complete, and you have protected the constitutional rights of another human being to the best of your ability, the sleepless nights and hours of preparation are well worth it.

Being a quality public defender requires courage, creativity and compassion. It takes a tremendous amount of courage to advocate on behalf of an individual the rest of the community would like to see disappear. Given public defenders are typically out resourced by the prosecutor's office, it also takes a tremendous amount of creativity. You must be more inventive with your legal arguments, your investigation, and your trial advocacy. Finally, you must have compassion. You must feel a calling to want to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable members of our community—those with profound mental health issues, difficult substance abuse problems, those who suffer from educational deficits and often lack basic social skills. Finding the humanity within each client, regardless of how horrific their behavior may have been is what makes it possible to zealously advocate on behalf of criminal defendants.

While the salary of a county employee cannot even begin to compare to that of an associate in a law firm, the compensation package including health care benefits and retirement pension makes for a comfortable living. The hours can be long, particularly when you are in trial. Still, with appropriate balancing, it is

quite possible to have a quality family life in conjunction with a vigorous defense practice. At the end of the day, you feel a tremendous amount of personal satisfaction having helped those whom no one else deems worthy of assistance.

2015

**YASMIN CADER '92**  
**Deputy Federal Public Defender**  
**Federal Public Defender—Central District of California**  
**Los Angeles, CA**

I have been a public defender for almost 14 years. If I won the lottery tomorrow, I would want to do this work, every day.

The best part of my job is that I get to stand up for people who the whole world has often turned against. Indigent, young, people of color (primarily), accused of a crime are the least regarded members of our society. By working hard, I am able to ensure that my clients receive at least the same level of representation they would if they could afford an attorney, if not a better level. It is truly a privilege to stand next to my clients and ensure that the constitution applies equally to them.

In addition to being able to make a difference in people's lives, the secret of my job is that it is tremendously fun. A great trial lawyer is a great communicator, persuader, and performer. Gaining these skills involves study of psychology and acting, as well as mastering various subjects in forensic science. Because of this, it is impossible to have the same day twice.

The day-to-day work involves investigating cases, meeting with clients, preparing for trial and negotiating plea agreements. In addition to performing legal research and writing on constitutional issues and preparing opening and closing statements and direct and cross examinations, I also do a fair amount of sentencing work. This involves telling a compelling story to give the court an alternative to incarceration.

I am very fortunate to have found work that I would do even if I were not to get paid. Not many people, especially lawyers, are so lucky.

2015

**JENNIFER L. COON '99**  
**Solo Criminal Defense Attorney**  
**Law Office of Jennifer L. Coon**  
**San Diego, CA**

I have been a solo criminal defense attorney since 2010. The bulk of my practice consists of federal criminal cases appointed by the court under the Criminal Justice Act (CJA).

CJA attorneys are essentially conflict public defenders, paid on a contractual basis by the court. In the Southern District of California, where I practice, about half of indigent federal defendants are assigned to Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc. (the federal public defender's office), and the other half to an attorney from a pre-approved CJA panel. Additionally, in any multi-defendant case, at most one of the defendants can be represented by Federal Defenders, with the rest assigned to the panel. Applications to the panel are accepted annually, for appointment to a two-year term. In this district, minimum requirements include five years of federal criminal defense practice, with three cases tried to verdict, or two years of employment at either Federal Defenders or the U.S. Attorney's Office; other districts have more stringent requirements. The application process is highly competitive, however, and there are always more qualified applicants than spots on the panel.



CJA attorneys are paid at a fixed hourly rate (currently \$127 per hour) with reimbursement for case-related expenses such as postage, photocopying, and travel. Attorneys are responsible for their own overhead such as office space, secretarial assistance, equipment costs, health insurance, bar dues, etc., and cannot bill for administrative tasks. Attorneys must also make their own arrangements with investigators, interpreters, and experts, who are paid separately by the court. In this district, an attorney is generally paid only upon completion of each case, after approval of the bill by the federal judge assigned to that case, and possibly a second layer of review by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, meaning that the attorney could work several months or more before being paid. The number of appointments varies, currently averaging about 1-2 per month. The attorney is appointed at the client's first appearance, and is expected to represent the client through the conclusion of the case, including any appeal. Most attorneys cannot make a living exclusively on a trial-level CJA caseload, and diversify by joining CJA panels for the Ninth Circuit or other circuits, working on the state court conflict panel (which pays much less), or taking retained state and federal cases.

Although I have flirted with the idea of solo practice since law school, I took a long road to get there, first spending one year clerking for a federal district court judge, six years in private practice at a white-collar criminal defense boutique in Los Angeles (during which time I had two children), and three years as a trial attorney at Federal Defenders. Anyone interested in starting a solo practice should strongly consider working at Federal Defenders. The office is unusual among federal public defender's offices in that it hires attorneys directly out of law school or clerkships and trains them to first-chair federal criminal trials within 2-3 years. Additionally, attorneys who want to leave Federal Defenders to start a solo practice in this district are permitted to take their entire caseload with them and immediately convert it to a CJA caseload upon acceptance to the panel, allowing them to start solo practice with a full-time workload. Nevertheless, because of the delays in payment, new solo attorneys must be prepared to support themselves for at least the first few months of their practice.

My work as a solo practitioner is very similar to my work at Federal Defenders. The solo criminal defense community here is unusually vibrant and competent, with many Federal Defenders alumni who maintain strong connections to the office. Most attorneys share office space with other solo practitioners, and the environment is very collegial. In addition, because this is a small district, most attorneys know all of the federal judges and clerks. Because San Diego is a border community, the caseload primarily consists of border crimes such as illegal immigration, alien smuggling, and drug smuggling, but I also generally have several pending multi-defendant drug conspiracy or wiretap cases as well. A typical day is fast-paced and includes several court appearances and hearings, jail visits, and conferences with family members or witnesses, with the remaining time back at the office drafting motions, sentencing papers, and appellate briefs, as well as handling administrative tasks and other responsibilities relating to running a small business. I have also had to learn a fair amount of immigration law in order to advise my clients regarding the consequences of conviction and to mount technical defenses to immigration crimes.

I enjoy the variety in my daily work, but often struggle to juggle all of the competing responsibilities. I am hoping that, as my solo practice develops, I will eventually have more flexibility to spend time with my family, as well as more variety and choice in my caseload.

2015

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**JACLYN FRANKFURT '86**  
**Deputy Chief—Appellate Division,**  
**Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia**  
**Washington, DC**

I have been a public defender for over twenty years. I guess I have voted with my feet—I have never left because I cannot contemplate a job I would rather do. My work is intellectually stimulating, desperately important, and ever-changing. And I am lucky enough to be surrounded by engaged, talented, like-minded people. Some of my classmates from law school feel this passionate about the work they do, but not many.

After clerking, I started my legal career as a Georgetown Prettyman Fellow and then went to work as a trial lawyer at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. Both jobs are luxurious by public defense standards. Luxurious not in the traditional sense—neither the offices nor the salaries come anywhere close to what colleagues in the private sector experience—but luxurious because caseloads are manageable (by public defender standards), lawyers have the full support of the organization’s leadership to act as zealous advocates for their clients, and lawyers are expected, encouraged, and trained to provide the quality of representation—including expert services—that clients would have received had they been able to afford the highest priced attorney. I am in awe of my colleagues who took their skills and went to places such as Georgia and Alabama, Louisiana and Texas, where the situations are quite different, to say the least.

I spent about six years as a trial lawyer before switching to appellate work. As a trial lawyer, I loved the fact that I spent my days not merely with other lawyers in offices and libraries (I date myself), but interacting with clients and witnesses in court, at the local jail, and in neighborhoods of the city that others rarely visit. I loved being in the courtroom—a place most “litigators” never see. And I tolerated being asked at social events, “how can you represent those people,” because representing indigent clients charged with criminal offenses seemed to me then, and now, to be the most important work I could do.

I eventually shifted to appellate work, where the work is different but, for me, equally rewarding. The legal issues we tackle are complex and rarely repetitive, perhaps because as lawyers and writers we understand the power of facts, which are never the same. If our narrative of unfairness is not persuasive to our (judicial) reader, our likelihood of success is low. I don’t get the day-to-day client interaction that I used to have, but my work remains entirely client-focused. As public defenders we are not impact litigators; our strategies are entirely guided by our client’s goals. Occasionally as a byproduct of our client-centered representation we have a broader impact—either in the development of some good case law, or, perhaps more critically, in instilling in the prosecutors the sense that they are being closely monitored. Public defenders have a healthy distrust of the government—it is most probably a job qualification, and most definitely a byproduct of the work we do. Oh, and often we win—both in the traditional sense, with “not guilty” and reversals, and in the less traditional, when our clients are appreciative of the quality of representation they received, no matter the outcome.

*2015*

**CANDACE JACKSON '05**  
**Staff Attorney**  
**Federal Defender Program—Northern District of Illinois**  
**Chicago, IL**

I have been a staff attorney at the Federal Defender Program, Inc. in the Northern District of Illinois since 2010. I represent indigent people from across northern Illinois who are accused of federal crimes. I represent my clients in trial court (U.S. District Court) and appellate court (the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit).

Our office is the country's oldest federal defender office. When the federal defender system was created in the 1960s, each federal district court had a choice of creating (a) a federal public defender office staffed by federal employees and helmed by a Federal Public Defender appointed by the court of appeals for the circuit, or (b) a "community defender" organization, which is a government-funded nonprofit with a board of directors that elects an Executive Director. In our district, the court chose option (b). As a community defender organization, our office does the same work as a federal public defender office; we are just governed differently. Accordingly, our office is the "Federal Defender Program, Inc.," our Executive Director's title is the Federal Defender (not the Federal "Public" Defender) for the Northern District of Illinois, and I am a staff attorney (not an "assistant federal public defender").

I represent clients in all types of cases. About one-third of my caseload is fraud—ranging from bank fraud to bankruptcy fraud, to credit card fraud, identity theft, wire fraud, mail fraud, social security fraud, theft of government funds, and more. Another third of my caseload is guns and drugs: clients charged with possessing guns, selling or attempting to sell narcotics, and related cases. A final third of my caseload is simply a big mix ranging from bank robbery, to immigration offenses, to child pornography and other sex offenses. My office assigns cases in an extremely egalitarian manner that contributes to my job satisfaction: whatever cases come in on my monthly "duty day" —whether it is the biggest terrorism case or a minor supervised release violation case—become my cases. My average case, through sentencing, lasts about a year. I juggle approximately 30-50 cases at one time, all at various stages and of varying complexity and demand in terms of time.

I represent clients in all stages of their cases. I take their case from arrest (or from the moment the U.S. Attorney's Office notifies a client that he or she is under investigation) to trial or a guilty plea, and to sentencing. If a client wants to appeal, I handle the appeal. If a client wants to appeal again to the Supreme Court, I would work on that appeal as well.

There is more variety in criminal law than I imagined before coming to my job, and being able to do both trial and appellate work is incredibly satisfying. The variety does not end there. I am also a negotiator: because more than 95% of defendants choose to plead guilty, I am negotiating plea deals all of the time. I am a counselor, helping clients to navigate difficult choices. I am a strategist, trying to determine the wisest way to litigate a case and achieve the best resolution possible for my client. I am an investigator: hunting down facts and evidence as we prepare for hearings, trial, or sentencing. I am a teacher, introducing clients and their families to the federal court system, which is vastly different from the state court system with which they may be familiar. I am a lay social worker: many of our clients have disadvantaged backgrounds, extensive mental health histories, substance abuse issues, and other everyday challenges. We work with mitigation specialists and masters' level social work students in our office to thoroughly investigate our clients' backgrounds, present an effective mitigation case to the sentencing judge, and help our clients get the resources they need. (This is another type of variety my job offers: I work not only with clients, investigators, and specialists in our office, but also probation officers, pretrial service officers, prosecutors, expert witnesses, client's families, juries, and judges. I am constantly interacting with different people.)

My job is rewarding because it requires me to fill all of these roles at different points. My job is exhausting because it requires me to fill all of these roles! I work harder and longer hours than I did as a law firm associate. But I do not mind the harder work, longer hours, and lower pay because my job has meaning to me. I provide quality representation to people who would not be able to afford it, and I am there for clients at a most dreary and frightening juncture: when they are being judged for the worst day or days in their life.

Listening and communication skills, flexibility, good instincts, and compassion are valuable for defenders. Additionally, oral and written advocacy skills are even more important than technical trial and appellate skills. Only a fraction of cases go to trial or get appealed, and the government wins more than 90% of the few cases that do go to trial. This means that almost all of my cases end up at a sentencing hearing where sound oral and written advocacy is paramount in persuading a judge to impose a fair and appropriate sentence. One must also have thick skin and a penchant for pressing forward in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds: winning must mean shaving needless years and months off of a client's sentence, helping the judge to craft a sentence that might get a client the help he or she needs, or negotiating a smarter plea deal. We do not win trials and contested hearings often but we must keep trying. There are numerous examples of the defense bar fighting an issue over and over and losing all of the time, only to have the Supreme Court or Congress finally weigh in and right a wrong that the defense bar has been pushing against for years.

In law school I knew I would work in the public interest but I never gave any thought to criminal defense. After graduation, I clerked for a federal district court judge and then a federal appellate court judge. Afterwards, I joined a large law firm as a litigation associate for three years. As I began applying for public interest positions, I enjoyed hearing former federal defenders talk about their jobs. The job seemed to have many of the elements that I sought including the opportunity to protect rights, to fight for those in need, and to enjoy variety. I now have the dream job that I did not even know was my dream job.

2015

### **JOSH LEE '05**

**Assistant Federal Public Defender, Capital Habeas Unit  
Federal Public Defender—Eastern District of Arkansas  
Little Rock, AR**

For the past nine years, I have worked as an Assistant Federal Public Defender in Little Rock, Arkansas's Capital Habeas Unit. The Unit has four attorneys, three investigators, a paralegal, and two administrative assistants. At present, we represent about twenty-five prisoners on death row in federal habeas corpus and related proceedings.

The job has been more rewarding and intellectually challenging than anything else I've done in my life. One thing that distinguishes capital habeas corpus work from most other forms of legal work is the intimacy of the connections you establish with your clients. During my years here, I have done significant work for only about fifteen clients, most of whom I speak to by phone at least biweekly and visit in person at least bimonthly. I honestly count most of my clients as my friends, and I think that they consider me a friend, too. This sort of relationship is not just incidental to the work but is essential to securing clients' cooperation in uncovering and presenting the sorts of sensitive facts—such as Intellectual Disability or childhood sexual abuse—that may avoid the death penalty.

The emotional complexity inherent in the work is matched by legal complexity. The Supreme Court has accurately described habeas corpus law as byzantine, and to successfully litigate a habeas corpus case requires not only the ability to untangle the knots of habeas corpus law but also a familiarity with record-collection and witness-interviewing techniques, psychiatry and neuropsychology, forensic evidence,

constitutional criminal procedure, federal civil procedure and discovery (which governs most aspects of trial-level practice in habeas cases), federal appellate procedure, and Supreme Court practice. Moreover, once appointed to represent a client in his habeas corpus case, a capital habeas attorney may properly pursue any collateral litigation that may benefit the client. Accordingly, I have also had the opportunity to participate in executive clemency proceedings and to litigate state post conviction actions, § 1983 prisoners' rights cases, and even administrative law claims.

When I interviewed for this position, the Federal Public Defender told me that working for a Federal Public Defender was an opportunity to do good work and make enough money to live comfortably. The starting salary for an entry-level attorney at a Federal Public Defender is similar to the salary of a federal judicial clerk. Raises for experience and performance may triple the starting salary (in real dollars) over the course of a long career, and the maximum salary for federal public defenders is equivalent to the maximum salaries for United States Attorneys. While the salaries surely don't match those offered by the big law firms in New York and DC, they are more generous than the compensation offered by most public interest/public service positions.

My hours vary from about 45 or 50 per week (when things are under control) to 70 hours a week or more in a crisis. I travel overnight about once a month for investigation or training. In addition to excellent legal ability and good social skills, when hiring for entry-level positions, my office looks for evidence of commitment to public interest work generally and criminal defense work in particular.

There are only two warnings I can think to give about those interested in pursuing this work. First, because Capital Habeas Units operate on a small scale, there is no hiring season or formal recruitment. Openings may arise at any time and be filled within a month or two of being advertised. Second, the work is emotionally demanding and is not something that lends itself well to a leave-the-office-at-the-office mindset. As I enjoy being engrossed in the work, this hasn't been a problem for me. Overall, I am confident I have made the right career choice.

2015

**CHRISTINE LEHMANN '01**  
**Capital Defense Attorney**  
**Louisiana Capital Assistance Center**  
**New Orleans, LA**

I am a capital defense attorney working in New Orleans, Louisiana. I love my job, but it is not without its challenges.

I graduated from Yale in 2001 and clerked for one year at the federal appellate level. During my clerkship year, I applied for and won a two-year public interest fellowship from Equal Justice Works. The fellowship allowed me to return to the Louisiana Capital Assistance Center (LCAC), where I had spent my 2L summer, and focus on the representation of capital defendants with mental retardation in light of the U.S. Supreme Court case *Atkins v. Virginia* (prohibiting the death penalty for defendants with mental retardation). After the fellowship, I was hired on as a staff attorney at the LCAC. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, I moved temporarily to a management position at the New Orleans public defender office as part of an effort to reform that office. Soon after, I was appointed the director of the office. In 2008, having overseen significant structural reforms, I returned to the LCAC.

The LCAC is a non-profit that represents defendants charged with capital crimes at the trial level in Louisiana. We also do some capital post-conviction in Mississippi and Texas, and some federal capital work. The LCAC also functions as a resource office for capital attorneys throughout Louisiana, and pursues impact litigation related to issues such as race, indigent defense funding, and mental health.



My job involves administrative/management responsibilities, supervision of other attorneys and investigators, state-wide consulting, legal research and writing, training, client contact, and court appearances. On any given day I may be drafting pleadings or reviewing documents in the office, in court, travelling to see witnesses or experts, meeting with attorneys around the state, or meeting with clients or their families. It's very varied. It is also very creative. Because we are an independent non-profit organization rather than a state defender office, we can essentially chart our own path, choosing cases and projects so as to best confront the problems in capital litigation as we see them.

The job is also very demanding, particularly given that I have two toddlers, ages 2 and 4. Hours are quite flexible—I am currently working a 4-day week and leave early most days to pick up my children from childcare—but I make up the time working in the evenings. I appreciate that I've been able to structure a schedule that leaves me significant time with my children. Such flexibility is possible in capital work in large part because it does not require as much time in court as a traditional public defender job.

My salary is, I am quite certain, much lower than the average for Yale grads. Our salary ranges for attorneys is between \$42,000 and \$90,000. Capital attorneys in other areas of the country make more. The most challenging aspect of the job is perhaps the responsibility that one bears in this work. There is also a certain bleakness that can creep in due to the reality that life imprisonment without parole is often the best we can do for our clients. But the rewards are correspondingly great. The job, at its best, is an ideal combination of direct service and impact work. Because we have so few cases for such long periods, and because of the importance of pleas and penalty phase investigation, we develop very close and vital relationships with our clients and their families. At the same time, because of our (relatively) low caseloads and the heightened scrutiny applied to capital cases by the courts, we have the leeway and occasionally the resources to pursue cutting edge factual and legal issues.

2015

**ANDREA MARSH '01**  
**Former Executive Director,**  
**Current Senior Counsel,**  
**Texas Fair Defense Project**  
**Austin, TX**

When I moved to Texas after law school, I knew that I wanted to work on criminal justice issues but was much less certain that I could translate that goal into paid employment. Only a few Texas counties have public defender offices and other staff attorney positions in the field are almost nonexistent, so unless I wanted to hang out a shingle and start my own law practice immediately after graduation, I knew I would need to raise money and create my own position.

It was my frustration about the lack of public defender jobs and what I learned about Texas's indigent defense system in the course of my initial job search that led me to what I have been doing for the last ten years—working to improve access to counsel and the quality of representation in the Texas criminal justice system. The Texas Legislature passed significant indigent defense legislation the spring of my third year of law school and I knew it would be necessary to monitor the law's implementation. I was scheduled to begin a federal clerkship in Laredo, Texas in September and I was reasonably certain that I would not be able to remain in Texas after my clerkship if I did not get a public interest fellowship, so after graduation I put off taking the bar exam, moved to Austin, applied for Mary McCarthy funding from YLS that allowed me to take an unpaid internship focusing on criminal law and immigration issues, and devoted the summer to networking and finding an organizational sponsor for my indigent defense fellowship application. No organization was a perfect fit—the ACLU of Texas was rebuilding at that time and overflowing its two-room office space, and two other organizations that had worked on the indigent defense legislation were undergoing major transitions as their legislative campaigns ended—so I ended up

applying for a fellowship with Texas Rural Legal Aid (TRLA), even though the LSC restrictions pose particular challenges for criminal justice work.

I was a Liman Fellow at TRLA for the first year after my clerkship, and spent the bulk of my time meeting with judges and attorneys about counties' indigent defense procedures under the new law (which is known as the FDA), monitoring the FDA's implementation through court observation and review of counties' written indigent defense plans, and writing public education materials about the FDA's requirements and implementation. I stayed at TRLA as a staff attorney for about six months after my fellowship ended, but started to look for a new home because the monitoring I had conducted identified several major problems with FDA implementation that it was difficult or impossible to challenge while working within the LSC funding restrictions. The ACLU of Texas had grown significantly while I was occupied with my clerkship and Liman fellowship, so I applied for a second fellowship so that I could move my project to the ACLU and expand it to include a greater emphasis on enforcement of the FDA's requirements. I ended up securing a Soros Justice Advocacy Fellowship and founded the Fair Defense Project at the ACLU of Texas in February 2004. Since that time, my project has expanded to include three employees and has spun off from the ACLU, and now I am the Executive Director of the Texas Fair Defense Project.

Overall, I really enjoy my work. The work I do is extremely varied—I employ all kinds of strategies to improve access to counsel, including litigation, policy work, public education, and community organizing. I think that all legal jobs involve some amount of tedium, and even with its variety my job is no exception to that, but it's because that tedium is inevitable that I think it's so important to my professional happiness to be working on an issue that I really care about. My interest in the goal I am working toward and the people who are affected by the problems with the current system outweighs my frustration with any particular task.

Any concerns I have about my career path are mostly unavoidable consequences of my decision to work in a state with extremely limited public interest resources. Very few attorneys work in the criminal justice field in Texas, and I have never had anything other than a merely nominal supervisor. I have worked hard to build an informal support network among advocates working on related criminal justice issues, both in Texas and in other states, but that's not the same as working in an office with someone every day. I have not been able to focus all of my energies just on getting the work done because I also have had to create a space to do my work and devote time to all of the administrative tasks that entails. And because I worked so long on my own before I was able to build a team, I have not been able to focus on and specialize in one type of work, such as litigation, while relying on other specialized team members for other tasks. I have very broad experience in terms of the types of work I have done as a public interest lawyer, but when I talk to my law school classmates with more traditional career paths and closer supervision it becomes clear that I lag behind them in developing specific skills. I have no idea what my next job will be, and I may very well have to build it from scratch again because I'm not confident that many employers are looking to hire a jack-of-all-trades nonprofit entrepreneur who has done a little bit of everything.

There are lots of tradeoffs involved in choosing, in the words of one of my YLS classmates who also worked as a public interest lawyer in Texas, to go "off the grid." If I look at my career solely in terms of skill development, I probably would be a better lawyer if I had chosen to move to a locale where potential mentors are more plentiful, and where resources for public interest work, although still limited, at least support enough staff to provide for some supervision and specialization. At the same time, there are huge opportunities to do great work in places such as Texas that are far less popular with young lawyers, to fill needs that will not otherwise be met and to really strike your own path. I have built an organization that allows me to pursue my passion and created opportunities for other young lawyers to make their own contribution to transforming Texas's criminal justice system. I took my first lawsuit all the way to the

U.S. Supreme Court and ended a government policy that for years had been used to deny indigent defendants access to counsel, passed legislation that protects tens of thousands of indigent defendants who come to court without lawyers, and have been drafted by the fourth largest urban area in the United States to help it develop a new public defender program where none has existed before. I have had amazing opportunities and experiences that I don't think I could have had elsewhere, and they are even more rewarding because I got to them by striking out on my own. I recognize the tradeoffs involved in the path I have chosen, and I know there are deficits in my professional development that I need to pay attention to and try to address, but even with those in mind I would not choose to be anywhere else.  
*2014*

**CAROLYN WIGGIN '94**  
**Assistant Federal Defender,**  
**Federal Public Defender—Eastern District of California**  
**Sacramento, CA**

I have worked at the Federal Public Defender's Office in Sacramento since 1998. My path to this office was not direct. Although I took more criminal law classes in law school than is probably typical, it was not the only area of law I found interesting. After law school I clerked for a federal judge then spent a couple of years at a large law firm doing the lowest levels of civil litigation work. By the end of two years buried in discovery I was ready for something different.

Most Federal Public Defender's offices have a few "research and writing attorney" positions in addition to the more common "assistant federal defender" or "deputy federal defender" positions. The offices use these positions in different ways. In some offices they are used as long term career positions and in other offices they are used to bring in new lawyers for a one or two-year term. At the time I was on the job market, my office used the position to bring lawyers in for a two-year term. I was thrilled to be hired into one of these positions and moved to Sacramento to accept it. This job was my foot in the door to criminal defense and later I applied for and was hired into a longer term assistant federal defender position.

It just so happened that when I started my office had a need for someone to take on not regular criminal cases but habeas corpus cases involving persons who had been ordered deported and were in immigration detention (usually a county jail that had a contract with federal immigration authorities). These individuals, who were born in countries that did not have regular diplomatic relations with the United States, were spending years in detention because their home countries would not take them back because of the lack of diplomatic relations with the United States. Thus I did not start my criminal defense career in the usual slot of trying misdemeanor cases but instead started out learning about habeas corpus, immigration law, and the history of relations between the United States and the southeast Asian countries that most of my clients had been born in decades earlier. I loved my assignment! I went from spending my days and nights in a skyscraper to driving around county jails in the California central valley to meet with my clients, collaborating with other attorneys to craft constitutional challenges to indefinite civil detention, and actually making court appearances in my own cases. Although my colleagues and I suffered many defeats, in a few cases we were able to get people out of detention and reunited with their families.

Eventually I did spend a couple of years doing misdemeanors and then felonies. These cases also provided an opportunity for connection with clients and creative work. One thing that's been true in my career and believe in the careers of many public defenders is that although the all-out victories in court are rare, in almost every case you can make some positive difference for your client. Extra investigation or legal research presented in the right way to a prosecutor can improve a plea offer to your client. Also, in the course of my career, federal sentencing has changed in a way that allows defense counsel a greater opportunity for creative advocacy. When I started work in the federal system the Sentencing Guidelines

were all-controlling. Over the last decade or so a series of Supreme Court cases has changed the system so that now we can present arguments in federal court that question the fairness and legitimacy of particular Sentencing Guidelines or bring in evidence about our client to make the case that the Guidelines are too punitive in light of our client's circumstances.

For the last several years I have done mostly habeas corpus cases and appellate work. This entails spending most of my time reviewing case records, doing research, and writing briefs. This position within the criminal defense field is not for everyone—you have to be okay with spending a lot of time in the office in front of a computer. The position suits me well since I have always enjoyed research and writing. I still find this work intellectually and emotionally fulfilling. I think you do have to be able to connect with the underdog and have the ability to keep rallying despite lots of adverse rulings to stay in this career for the long term. I do not tend to count wins versus losses when I look at what I do but instead tend to look at months and years I was able to shorten my clients' sentences in the aggregate. In those terms I think most public defenders have great success.

Obviously you will not get rich being a public defender, but fortunately many federal and state criminal defense offices can pay a reasonable salary and it is a great relief not to have to drum up business and deal with collecting payments from clients. I feel very lucky to have landed in this field and recommend it highly.

2015

### **C. Summer Interns**

#### **ANNA ARONS '15**

##### **Bronx Defenders**

##### **New York, NY**

In my two summers, I had two jobs that represent the wide array of work encompassed by the label “public defense.” The summer after 1L year, I worked at the Office of Capital Writs, in Austin, Texas, which represents indigent defendants on death row in their state habeas proceedings. The summer after my 2L year, I worked at the Bronx Defenders, in New York, which does trial-level public defense, using a so-called holistic model. These two experiences showed me that indigent defense is a multifaceted concept, and that different versions of it may appeal to people with very different strengths and personalities.

The Office of Capital Writs (OCW) is a relatively new office, first funded by the Texas legislature in 2010. As a result, it is still a small office, with a small intern program. I was one of four interns, and when we showed up, we were immediately put to work. Because of the office's size, they rely on interns to do substantive tasks: for example, I got to go on several solo investigation trips to Fort Worth, searching for and speaking to mitigation witnesses, and I also had the chance to visit clients on death row on a few occasions. Those experiences aside, I spent most of the summer in the office, doing legal research, digging through volumes-long trial records, and drafting portions of habeas motions. I felt that my time at OCW gave me insight into the day-to-day experience of appellate indigent defense. It entails a lot of solitary time in the office behind a computer, even if it does give rise to occasional trips outside the office, and it does not involve much day-to-day contact with clients (though I did find that OCW attorneys made a great effort to get to know and to support their clients, even given the constraints of distance and time).

Having experienced indigent defense at the appellate level, I wanted to see it at the trial level, as well, so I spent my second summer at the Bronx Defenders, in their Criminal Defense Practice. I had previously been a member of YLS's Criminal Justice Clinic, so trial-level public defense was not totally foreign to

me, but I was excited to be immersed in the work full-time and especially to learn more about the Bronx Defenders’ “holistic defense model.” Unlike most public defenders’ offices, the Bronx Defenders employ family lawyers, immigration lawyers, and civil lawyers, in addition to countless non-lawyer advocates, and all of these people work together to flag and address any potential collateral consequences that could arise from a client’s criminal case. For example, if a person is arrested while his children are in the home, and the children are taken into state custody as a result, the Bronx Defenders will also represent him on his family court case.

The Bronx Defenders has a highly developed intern program: the summer starts off with a week of training for the 50-plus summer interns, and this training continues through the summer in the form of a weekly Trial Skills class (basically a crash mock trial course). In support of the holistic defense model, all of the interns receive trainings in every practice area, not just the practice area that they’re assigned to. After the initial training, I was given all kinds of tasks: in a typical week, I might write a motion for dismissal, meet with a client to talk about his immigration situation and to learn details about his life that might lead to a better plea offer, dig up information on witnesses for a trial, go out and look for a client who missed a court date, stand up at arraignments and make a bail application, and go to Rikers to visit a client in solitary. The variety of work meant that I never got bored—and unlike when I was doing appellate-level defense, I got to get out of the office frequently and meet with clients even more frequently.

I appreciated that my two summers gave me a view into two very different experiences of indigent defense, each of which presented its own challenges. For example, in capital work, the stakes are obviously high, which can be emotionally draining. But at any given time, the lawyers in the office had only a handful of cases each. On the other hand, at the Bronx Defenders, each lawyer had dozens of cases at any given time, and operated under the knowledge that a conviction in any case could have devastating collateral consequences for future employment, immigration status, or child custody—draining in its own way. In each of the offices I worked in, the stakes seemed even higher, because the attorneys formed close relationships with clients: the penalties for losing would befall not just an anonymous client, but a person with whom they had become intimately acquainted over the course of months, or sometimes, years. For me, it was this client-centric idea of public defense that drew me to it in the first place, and that keeps me engaged in it.

Either of these internships offers a great opportunity to do substantive work and to explore the many forms that indigent defense can take. I learned a lot about indigent defense, but beyond that, I also learned a lot about what I like—and don’t like—in a job. Both offices were supportive, and receptive to requests for certain types of tasks, giving me the chance to experience everything I had hoped to in each summer.  
*Summer 2014*

**SARAH CARUANA ’14**  
**Federal Public Defender—Middle District of Florida**  
**Orlando, FL**

I spent the summer of 2012 working at the Federal Defender Office for the Middle District of Florida. I decided to work in Orlando because I wanted to be in a mid-sized Federal Defender office with only a few interns so I would have a lot of flexibility to work with different attorneys and participate in all aspects of client representation. My family also lives in Orlando. I knew I was interested in criminal defense work and that I wanted to have extensive client interaction, and I made sure to clarify this in my phone interview.

I was extremely pleased with my internship. A smaller office like this isn’t structured to rely on its four interns for assistance. While some people prefer being in an office that really “uses” interns because they

feel they'll be given more substantive work, I appreciated that the focus was really on training us on all aspects of client representation. We had several formal training sessions covering sentencing issues, managing client meetings, etc. Each intern was assigned an attorney to work with for the entire summer.

I did not do as much legal writing as I had anticipated, but did complete a pretty lengthy appellate brief that tied in several issues of interest to me (procedural and substantive reasonableness at sentencing, etc.). We were often invited to work with the appellate attorneys as they prepared for 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit oral arguments.

The best part of this job was the opportunity to be with my attorney for absolutely every aspect of client representation. I was in the federal courthouse (just a few blocks away) almost every day (and often several times a day) for everything from initial appearances and bond hearings to trials and sentencing hearings. I spent a significant amount of time, also almost daily, in meetings with clients in jail or in U.S. Marshall lockup before and after hearings. I was also present for every meeting my attorney had with clients at the office. I was given the responsibility of supervising a client's presentence report interview with probation. One of the most interesting aspects of my internship was getting to observe proffers with prosecutors, DEA agents, and ATF agents (alcohol, tobacco, & firearms). Definitely make it a point to be part of these meetings if you are interested in defense work.

In terms of quality of life, the office was a really enjoyable place to work. Everyone was extremely kind and always had time to talk with the interns about an interesting case or issue. I worked between 35 and 40 hour weeks generally, but was usually home from the office before 5.

This internship wasn't difficult to get, and I highly recommend working at a mid-sized Federal Defender office with an open environment like this one if you want to have a lot of interaction with clients, judges (it wasn't unusual for judges to want to speak to "all interns" in chambers), prosecutors, and various law enforcement agents. I preferred this less formal "program" because I really felt like I was part of a team with my attorney and the investigator. Clients knew my name and expected me to be at meetings and hearings. While I wasn't writing memos every day, I really got a feel for the issues facing all parties involved in the federal criminal justice system. Additionally, getting to observe the entire series of interactions between our clients and various officers of the justice system (probation officers, U.S. Marshalls, prison officials, judges, prosecutors, and agents) was an invaluable experience.

*Summer 2012*

**DYLAN FAY '15**  
**Innocence Project**  
**Tallahassee, FL**

During the summer of 2014, I interned with the Innocence Project of Florida, a nonprofit legal organization that works to exonerate wrongly-convicted prisoners across the state. I am from Orlando and knew that I wanted to return to my home state to work, and the Innocence Project had a philosophy and track record that really attracted me.

The seven other summer interns and I were an integral part of the Project's team. Like any nonprofit, the Innocence Project is stretched thin, with far too many cases for its few staff members. I was responsible for reading files submitted by inmates who applied for us to take their case. That meant I read everything pertaining to their case and its procedural history: investigative reports, trial transcripts, depositions, appeals, and post-conviction motions.

Once I was intimately familiar with the details of a case, I wrote a memo summarizing the applicant and his case, along with a recommendation as to whether the Innocence Project should take the applicant as a

client. I based my recommendations on the strength of the applicant's claim, the availability of evidence, and the likelihood that objective examination of that evidence (e.g., DNA testing) could result in an exoneration. My memo was then used as the basis for a discussion with the Director and Intake Coordinator about whether to take the case. The Director made the final decision on each applicant.

The Innocence Project was a wonderful place to work. The office itself is a very relaxed environment: no dress code, flexible hours, and an open-door policy. We met once a week for a lecture on some aspect of criminal defense law, usually pertaining to how to work on DNA cases. We also had frequent discussions on the progress on ongoing cases.

I would certainly recommend the Innocence Project to any student who wants to work in criminal justice. The only improvement I could offer would be to add a little variety to the interns' work experience: we had few chances to meet clients, see litigation in action, or work with investigators. But the work we did was substantive, and it really mattered to the prisoners depending on us as their last resort. That is an experience I will not soon forget.

*Summer 2014*

**ELLIOT FRIEDMAN '15**  
**Federal Public Defender—District of Arizona**  
**Phoenix, AZ**

During the summer of 2013, I worked for the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Phoenix, Arizona. Born and raised in the New York-New Jersey area, I took the job without knowing anyone in Arizona. I took the word of a couple of YLS alums that the job was the best internship they'd ever had; I was not disappointed.

The Federal Defender's (FD) office has two units, and I worked for both. The FD's primary unit represents defendants charged with federal crimes during trial and appeal. The FD's other branch is the Capital Habeas Unit (CHU), which represents state prisoners sentenced to death in petitions for a federal writ of habeas corpus.

The attorneys and staff at the FD treated me and my one co-intern as full members of the team. When they had habeas petitions that they had to file and had claims that they did not have time to research, we researched the claims and provided the language that would be used in the petition. When another attorney's client raised a prisoner's rights issue that the attorney did not have time to research, the attorney tasked me with figuring out whether there was law on our side. He treated me as fully in-charge of that aspect of the case, making sure that I spoke with the client and having me lead a conference call with a lawyer at another organization working on a similar issue.

The best part of the job, even beyond the substantive work, was the people. The attorneys and staff took a deep interest in me and my co-intern. Our supervisor always read our work carefully, going through four or five drafts on each piece. She was deeply passionate about her work in indigent defense, an enthusiasm shared by every attorney I met at the office. This passion drives the FD lawyers to take their roles as mentors seriously. In fact, I still e-mail regularly with the Federal Defender, Jon Sands, who heads the office.

The Arizona FD's office gave me everything I could possibly want in an internship. I worked on fascinating issues that, for many of our clients, were literally matters of life and death. I met kind, smart, and passionate people who have dedicated their careers to representing poor people. I found mentors who I am sure I will continue to look to as I consider a career in indigent defense.

*Summer 2013*

## **GRACE KAO '15**

**ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project, New York, NY;  
Federal Defenders of New York, SDNY, New York, NY**

My path to criminal defense is not a straightforward one. When I first came to law school, I had intended to work in the field of international human rights. I had developed the human rights minor at Berkeley, and in my first semester here, I researched for the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia. However, the abstract legal questions I grappled with could not replace the realities of injustices that occurred closer to home. I grew up the child of immigrants, in a community of Asian and Latino immigrants, and within the cold and intellectual enclaves of Yale Law School, those were the people my thoughts turned to. Immigrants remain among the most marginalized in our community—as noncitizens, their rights remain tenuous at best. Fueled by my interest in immigrants' rights, I decided to work at the ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project my 1L summer, which showed me the scope of the law as a tool for advocacy and change through nation-wide impact litigation. I also joined the Workers and Immigrants' Rights Advocacy Clinic (WIRAC) my second year, drawn to their intuitive mix of direct representation and impact litigation.

It was through WIRAC that I developed my interest in criminal defense. By far the most fulfilling experience I had in law school is when WIRAC allowed me the opportunity to represent my client, M, at a bond hearing before an immigration judge (IJ). I had joined the case a mere week before the hearing, and in that one week, I plunged myself into the intricacies of M's case and the arguments we were presenting before the judge. I learned about his life before coming to America, the hardships he faced then and continues to face here, and the destructive behaviors he struggled with that had landed him in deportation proceedings. I visited my client in jail after reading his file, and was struck with the reality of the situation—M was charismatic, intelligent, and a well-respected leader within his pod who had assisted many others in their immigration proceedings. Within a week of learning M's life story, I stood before the IJ and presented my case. Never did I once forget the weight of what had been entrusted to me: the freedom of a man who faced a disproportionately heavy punishment for nonviolent crimes. And to paint that picture, I had to show M—not as a criminal or a saint, but as a man in all his fragile humanity.

The IJ granted M release on bond. And as M hunched over and began to sob with relief, I knew I had been made for this work. The marginalized, the foreign, the criminal—they are the forgotten. They have been told their lives, and consequently their humanity, are forfeit. I will always reject that. I knew I wanted to spend my life learning to tell others' stories, because I have been privileged enough to be born this side of the glass. With that experience in mind, I began my 2L summer at the Federal Defenders of New York. I was hired despite an almost total lack of experience in the field—all I knew about criminal law, I had learned in my Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure classes. Prior to starting my job, I asked a former FDNY trial attorney what she'd thought of the Federal Defenders. "It was the best job I've ever had, and I could only do it for five years," she responded enigmatically.

All expectations of what the job would entail flew out the window by my first day—after we introduced ourselves briefly, the intern supervisor launched into a lecture about what federal petty offenses were. We would be in court the very next day, representing clients and negotiating with agency representatives to reach a dismissal of the charge or, more realistically, an adjournment in contemplation of dismissal (ACD). "Nobody gets a conviction," said my supervisor fiercely. It was that exact attitude that had drawn me to FDNY, that belief that we would fight to the bitter end for our clients. It is hard to describe a typical day in a federal defender's office. One day, I might be running to court to listen to summations and wait with my attorney as the jury deliberates; another day, I may help interview potential witnesses, or accompany my attorney and client to the prosecutor's office across the way as my client makes a proffer. Or I might spend the day in the office, drafting a request for deferred prosecution or researching a substantive issue that will be turned into a motion to suppress evidence. Or I might clear the week in



anticipation of a lengthy trial, only to hear in court that the judge believes there may be a conflict of interest, and that my attorney may not be able to argue the case after all, and return to the office feeling bereft—but not for too long before new assignments start rolling in. The only recurring theme is that I never felt like I was being given busy work—there is too much work to go around in a federal defenders’ office to waste anyone’s time like that. One of my favorite aspects of the FDNY office was how any attorney could call an office-wide meeting where they would explain the facts of their case and the roadblock they’ve come against, and solicit feedback from all of their colleagues. Everyone in the office who isn’t busy, from appellate attorneys to paralegals, join the meetings, which sometimes devolve into a cacophony of shouting, but almost always give the lead attorneys the fresh pair of eyes they needed.

Inevitably, when you defend alleged child pornographers, terrorists, drug dealers, robbers and assailants and other unsavory elements, the question arises: “But do you think he did it?” And it is only natural that, in the course of attempting to reconstruct timelines and investigate the panoply of options your client may have faced at a certain moment in time, you may wonder. But—and perhaps this is obvious, but it bears stating—it is not part of your job to know. Something I’ve learned since immersing myself in the field of criminal defense is that you have to check your judgment at the door simply because your client’s life is not for you to judge. When I argued for M to be released on bond, I learned the intricacies of his life, and that life included a criminal past that he was not proud of. Many of the clients I met reminded me with a jolt of someone I knew in my own life—a client being prosecuted for illegal reentry reminded me of my own immigrant father, shoulders hunched with decades of back-aching work; another client had the wide-eyed vulnerability of one of my friends with a tendency to get involved with terrible men. That is the job: to remind the judge and the jury of the weight of the sentence they impose, the fallibility of humanity and the possibility of clemency for people who have made bad decisions. Your client may not be repentant; indeed, they may be irretrievably disturbed. What I have learned is that you fight to make others forget the dark blue jumpsuit and the shackles—you will have to fight to remind the jury of the dignity of the man or woman who sits beside you. You will have to fight the prosecutor’s presentation of the law as a maze of technicalities that definitively guides the hand of the jury, and in doing so, remind the jury of their own humanity.

It is easy to see why a job in criminal defense would be intoxicating. On an intellectual level, the job never gets stale. For those who still get a little misty-eyed reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the appeal is built right into the name: criminal defense. You are the shield, the defender. And when you truly comprehend the horrific and casual cruelties of a system that processes humans as numbers and papers, that calculates decades of a person’s life in sentencing guidelines, it becomes hard to walk away. But even in my short time in the office, I can see it is not for everyone forever. I can’t guarantee I’ll be practicing criminal defense for the rest of my career. Still, I hope I get the privilege to do so, even if only for a few years.

*Summer 2014*

### **MATTHEW LEE ’13**

**Office of the Public Defender, San Francisco, CA;  
Orleans Public Defenders, New Orleans, LA**

Many people decide to go to law school because they want to “help people,” or because they dream of defending constitutional rights, or because they’re excited by the idea of standing up in court. Few lawyers actually get to do any of those things. Public defenders are some of the luckiest members of the legal profession: they spend their days doing the kind of work that law school applicants dream about, and that most lawyers only ever get to see on TV.

I spent my 1L summer (2011) at the Orleans Public Defenders in New Orleans, Louisiana. I spent my 2L summer (2012) at the Office of the Public Defender in San Francisco, California. In one respect, the

public defenders' offices in New Orleans and San Francisco are very similar to each other: they're both full of smart, dedicated lawyers who have difficult jobs, and who do those difficult jobs well. In many other respects, the public defenders' offices in New Orleans and San Francisco find themselves at the opposite ends of a spectrum. In New Orleans, public defenders face astronomical caseloads with minimal resources. In San Francisco, caseloads are much more reasonable, and resources are much less scarce.

But—regardless of how much work there is to be done or how many resources are available to the people doing it—one of the great things about working at a public defender's office is that the work is always varied and never boring. On a typical day, you might appear in court throughout the morning, interview clients in jail after lunch, spend a few hours investigating a crime scene later in the afternoon, and then spend the rest of the day on legal research and writing. As a summer intern, I've had the opportunity to do almost everything that my supervising attorneys do: there's no shortage of substantive work experience to go around. Not all jurisdictions allow law students to appear in court (Louisiana doesn't; California does), but if you do get the opportunity to appear in court as a law student, take it: it's a valuable experience and a lot of fun. And even in jurisdictions that don't let you appear in court, you might still get the chance to argue motions in chambers or whisper in your supervising attorney's ear in trial.

In the same way that you can expect to do every kind of work that a case might require, you can expect to do as much (or as little) work as your supervising attorney's current caseload might require. Sometimes (especially in New Orleans) I found myself working more than 80 hours a week just to make sure we stayed on top of our most pressing cases. Sometimes (especially in San Francisco) I was expressly discouraged from working nights and weekends, and my supervising attorney wouldn't hesitate to have us leave the office early if we finished everything we needed to finish that day: after all, we knew we'd be swamped with work again at some point in the near future, so there was no sense in wearing ourselves out until then.

If you want to work at a public defender's office—whether for a summer or for life—the most important thing is to make it clear that you really do *want* to work for a public defender's office. Even as a summer intern, you'll be given so much substantive responsibility—over cases that matter so much to clients and the people in clients' lives—that it's only fair to approach that responsibility with the seriousness and dedication that it deserves. In my experience, public defenders don't really care about your grades. They may or may not care that you go to Yale Law School. If they do care, they'll care because YLS has a reputation for producing smart graduates who are committed to public service—they won't care about your pedigree for its own sake. They care about making sure that you're devoted to criminal defense and criminal defendants.

Fortunately, it's easy to want to work at a public defender's office. Every case you work on will be different: you'll need to approach each one with fresh eyes and an open mind. Every legal issue you work on will relate, in some immediate way, to questions of basic human freedom, due process of law, and fundamental constitutional rights. Not many other jobs will give you the opportunity to present arguments involving the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 14th amendments. Most importantly, every client you work for will have his or her own life and his or her own story; their stories are always richer and more compelling than other people in the criminal justice system will expect, and they'll always deserve more humanity and compassion than they'll receive from the criminal justice system without your help.

*Summer 2011 and 2012*

**MATTHEW PENNY '13**  
**Federal Public Defender—District of Maryland**  
**Baltimore, MD**

I spent my 1L summer (2011) at the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Baltimore, Maryland, and would strongly recommend this office to anyone interested in criminal defense.

I got the internship through the Spring Interview Program. The office requested writing samples, a cover letter, and a list of references. I also had a phone interview with Katherine Newberger (the office's intern coordinator, and a YLS alumnus) which lasted 10 or 15 minutes. I should note that the interview would have been in-person, but a major snowstorm led many employers—including the Baltimore FPD—to cancel their on-campus interviews that year. The office only offers a handful of summer internship positions. In 2011, there were three of us in the Baltimore office, and two more in the Greenbelt office. The Baltimore FPD looks for interns with a demonstrated passion for indigent criminal defense work. It helps if you can point to courses or extracurricular activities on your resume that reflect your interest in the field—or in public interest law generally.

The internship program lasts 8 to 12 weeks, with flexible start and end dates. The office keeps its interns busy, but the workload is not overwhelming. The entire office works 9 to 5. Interns will rarely, if ever, need to take work home with them or work on the weekend. In a typical week, you might be expected to write one to three legal research memos on various topics, such as what factors a court should consider during sentencing, the admissibility of certain types of evidence, or the legal effect of police or prosecutorial misconduct during the investigation and prosecution of a case. Interns might also do factual research. For example, I listened to police wiretaps so we could estimate the amount of illegal drugs that our client had distributed, and another intern reviewed a client's medical records with an eye toward asserting a mental retardation defense. Interns generally get to write one or two longer pieces over the course of the summer as well, such as an appellate brief or cert petition. These make for great writing samples.

Assistant Federal Defenders are given a lot of autonomy over how to handle their cases. The office usually staffs just one attorney to any particular case—unless it is going to trial, in which case at least two attorneys are staffed. This means that interns get to work directly with the one Assistant Federal Defender in charge of any given case. The attorneys try to keep you integrally involved in their cases, and they give you substantive work whenever possible. The intern coordinator also does a great job of making sure interns get the chance to work with most of the attorneys in the office over the course of the summer.

The work environment was very friendly and comfortable. There are only about 20 lawyers in the office, so interns get to know everyone very well. I found all of the attorneys to be extremely friendly and approachable. Many of the attorneys would even periodically stop by the interns' office just to chat. One of the more unique things about the Baltimore FPD is that the attorneys (and interns) all eat lunch together in a conference room, every day. These lunches are very casual and informal, and they help interns get to know everyone in the office very well.

Assistant Federal Defenders get to spend a lot of time in court, and so do their interns. This is, without a doubt, one of the greatest benefits of working at the Federal Defender's. The office strongly encourages interns to walk across the street and observe proceedings in the Federal courthouse whenever they have free time. I got the chance to sit in on everything from a suppression hearing to a very dramatic 5-day long felony drug distribution trial. On occasion, interns even get to sit second-chair at a hearing, such as an initial appearance.

Interns also have the opportunity to meet with clients. For example, I sat in on meetings with clients in our office and conducted the preliminary interview with a new client before his initial appearance in court. Interns are also given the chance to visit the federal prison and meet with clients there.

The office handles the full range of federal criminal cases—drug and gun offenses, bank robberies, Medicare fraud, even terrorism. Being located in a major city like Baltimore, drug and gun cases are particularly common. While all of these crimes are quite serious, I found that our clients were not nearly as “bad” as their rap sheets might suggest. Despite the fact that they might have done some reprehensible things in their lives, most of them were actually quite sympathetic characters—normal, friendly, everyday people who had made a few very bad decisions.

The vast majority of federal cases result in guilty pleas, so a lot of the legal jousting takes place at the sentencing phase. The battle is often not so much about guilt or innocence as it is about obtaining a fair sentence for your client. What typically happens is that the defendant is charged with dozens of offenses, most of which are dropped as part of a plea agreement, and then the FPD negotiates with the U.S. Attorney’s Office regarding the sentence. While the sentence is ultimately left to the judge’s discretion, in reality the judge will often defer to whatever sentence the FPD and USAO have agreed is appropriate. Interns can expect to research and write about sentencing issues quite frequently over the course of their summer. For example, I wrote internal memos for use in plea negotiations with the USAO, and other memos designed to persuade the judge to impose a particular sentence.

As a final note, prospective interns should be aware that rape and murder cases are usually tried in the state courts, and rarely go federal. So if you want the opportunity to defend death penalty cases, you might be better off at a state or local defender’s office. However, if you are interested in a career in criminal defense but are unsure if you want to defend those accused of rape and murder, you might consider working at a federal defender’s office.

*Summer 2011*



## Appendix A

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# List of Representative Public Defense and Capital Defense Offices



## **PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICES**

### *State Offices*

#### **San Francisco Public Defender**

555 Seventh Street

San Francisco, CA 94103

(415) 553-1671

Internship information available here: <http://sfpublicdefender.org/careers/interns/>

#### **Miami Dade Public Defenders**

1320 NW 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Miami, FL 33125

(305) 545-1600

Internship information available here: [www.pdmiami.com/legal.htm](http://www.pdmiami.com/legal.htm)

#### **Gideon's Promise**

101 Marietta Street, NW

Atlanta, GA 30303

(404) 525-4505

Public defense placements available throughout the South.

Internship information available here: <http://gideonspromise.org/law-schools/summer-law-clerk/>

#### **Louisville-Jefferson County Public Defender Corporation**

719 West Jefferson Street

Louisville, KY 40202

[info@metrodefender.org](mailto:info@metrodefender.org)

(502) 574-3800

#### **Orleans Public Defender**

2601 Tulane Ave., Suite 700

New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 821-8101

Internship information available here: <http://www.opdla.org/who-we-are/jobs-opd/89-opd-jobs/clerks-internships>

#### **North Carolina Public Defender District 26—Mecklenburg County**

700 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 400

Charlotte, NC 28202

(704) 686-0900

Internship information available here: <http://charmeckncpd.webs.com/internships.htm>

To apply, contact Jason St. Aubin, [jason.st.aubin@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:jason.st.aubin@mecklenburgcountync.gov); send resume, transcript, and cover letter.

#### **New Hampshire Public Defender**

10 Ferry Street, Suite 425

Concord, NH 03301

(603) 224-1236

Internship information available here: [www.nhpd.org/employment/internships.aspx](http://www.nhpd.org/employment/internships.aspx)



**Bronx Defenders**

360 East 161st St.

Bronx, NY 10451

(718) 838-7878

Internship information available here: [www.bronxdefenders.org/who-we-are/employment/](http://www.bronxdefenders.org/who-we-are/employment/)

**Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem**

317 Lenox Avenue, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10027

(212) 876-5500

Internship information available here: <http://www.ndsny.org/index.php/about-us/jobs/>

**Defender Association of Philadelphia**

1441 Sansom Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

(215) 568-3190

Internship information available here: [www.philadefender.org/summer-internships.php](http://www.philadefender.org/summer-internships.php)

**Nashville Public Defender**

Suite 2022, Parkway Towers Building

404 James Robertson Parkway

Nashville, TN 37219

(615) 862-5730

Internship information available here:

<http://publicdefender.nashville.gov/contact-us/interns-externs-volunteer-opportunities/> To apply, contact Jerrilyn Manning at [jerrilynmanning@jis.nashville.org](mailto:jerrilynmanning@jis.nashville.org); send a cover letter, resume, transcript and writing sample.

*Federal Defender Offices***Federal Defenders, Inc.,****Southern District of Alabama**

11 North Water Street, Suite 11290

Mobile, AL 36602

(251) 433-0910

Information found here: [www.federaldefender.org](http://www.federaldefender.org)

**Federal Public Defender—District of Arizona (Phoenix)**

850 W. Adams Street, Suite 201

Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 382-2700

Internship information available here: [www.fpdaz.org/lawclerk.html](http://www.fpdaz.org/lawclerk.html)

**Federal Public Defender—Northern District of California**

1301 Clay Street

Suite 1350N

Oakland, CA 94612

(510) 637-3500

Internship information available here: [www.ndcalfpd.org/employment.html](http://www.ndcalfpd.org/employment.html)

**Federal Defenders of San Diego**

225 Broadway, Suite 900

San Diego, CA 92101

(619) 234-8467

Internship information available here: [www.fdsdi.com/interships\\_legal.html](http://www.fdsdi.com/interships_legal.html)

**Federal Public Defender—District of Connecticut**

265 Church St, Suite 702

New Haven, CT 06510

(203) 498-4200

**Federal Defenders of New York**

52 Duane Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10007

(212) 417-8700

Internship information available here: <http://federaldefendersny.org/employment/summer-program.html>

**CAPITAL DEFENSE OFFICES****Equal Justice Initiative**

122 Commerce Street

Montgomery, AL 36104

(334) 269-1803

Internship information available here: [www.eji.org/node/476](http://www.eji.org/node/476)

To apply, contact Jennifer Taylor at [jtaylor@ej.org](mailto:jtaylor@ej.org).

**Southern Center for Human Rights**

83 Poplar Street, NW

Atlanta, GA 30303

(404) 688-1202

Internship information available here: [www.schr.org/about/internship](http://www.schr.org/about/internship)

To apply, contact Patrick Mulvaney at [pmulvaney@schr.org](mailto:pmulvaney@schr.org).

**Capital Appeals Project**

636 Baronne Street

New Orleans, LA 70113

(504) 529-5955

Internship information available here: [www.thejusticecenter.org/capships.php](http://www.thejusticecenter.org/capships.php)

**Louisiana Capital Assistance Center**

636 Baronne Street

New Orleans, LA 70113

(504) 558-9867

Internship information available here: [www.thejusticecenter.org/lcac/internship.html](http://www.thejusticecenter.org/lcac/internship.html)

**Office of Mississippi State Public Defender – Capital Defense Counsel Division**

239 North Lamar Street, Suite 604

Jackson, MS 39201

(601) 576-2316

**American Civil Liberties Union Capital Punishment Project**

201 West Main Street, Suite 402

Durham, NC 27701

(919) 682-5659

Information found here: [www.aclu.org/capital-punishment/aclus-capital-punishment-project](http://www.aclu.org/capital-punishment/aclus-capital-punishment-project)

**Center for Death Penalty Litigation, Inc.**

123 West Main Street, Suite 700

Durham, NC 27701

(919) 956-9545

Internship information available here: <http://www.cdpl.org/internships/>

**Atlantic Center for Capital Representation**

1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1331

Philadelphia, PA 19107

(215) 732-2227

Marc Bookman, Executive Director, [mbookman@atlanticcenter.org](mailto:mbookman@atlanticcenter.org)

**Philadelphia Federal Defender Office—Capital Habeas Corpus Unit**

601 Walnut St., Suite 545 West

Philadelphia, PA 19106

(215) 928-0520

**Texas Defender Service**

1927 Blodgett Street

Houston, TX 77004

(713) 222-7788

Kathryn Kase, Executive Director, [kmkase@texasdefender.org](mailto:kmkase@texasdefender.org)

Internship information available here: [www.texasdefender.org/intern-with-us](http://www.texasdefender.org/intern-with-us)

**Northern Virginia Capital Defender Office**

2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 201B

Arlington, VA 22201

(703) 875-0103

Ed Ungvarsky, Capital Defender, [eungvarsky@cdn.idc.virginia.gov](mailto:eungvarsky@cdn.idc.virginia.gov)

# Career Development Office

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Telephone:	(203) 432-1676
Fax:	(203) 432-8423
E-mail:	cdo.law@yale.edu
Website:	www.law.yale.edu/cdo

Mailing Address:	Career Development Office, Yale Law School, 127 Wall Street, New Haven, CT 06511
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Physical Address:	Ruttenberg Hall, Room 184, 133 Wall Street, New Haven, CT 06511
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Office Hours:	8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
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CDO Publications:	<b><i>Criminal Defense</i></b> <b><i>Criminal Prosecution</i></b> <b><i>Entering the Law Teaching Market</i></b> <b><i>Environmental Law</i></b> <b><i>International LL.M. Career Planning Guide</i></b> <b><i>International Public Interest Law</i></b> <b><i>Introduction to Career Development</i></b> <b><i>Judicial Clerkships in the U.S.</i></b> <b><i>Law Firm Practice</i></b> <b><i>Lawyers in Business</i></b> <b><i>Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts</i></b> <b><i>Public Interest Careers</i></b> <b><i>Public Interest Fellowships Vol. I</i></b> <b><i>Public Interest Fellowships: Sample Applications Vol. II</i></b> <b><i>The Fall Interview Program</i></b> <b><i>U.S. Supreme Court Clerkships</i></b> <b><i>Working on Capitol Hill</i></b>
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