

Experiential Learning

EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

FALL EXTERNSHIPS

Participants in the fall 2010 Washburn Law Externship program more than doubled from 12 students in 2009 to the current participation of 27, a result of students understanding the importance of hands-on experience, and continuing communication by faculty and staff about the available externship opportunities.

Shawn Leisinger, '99, executive director of the Centers for Excellence, noted that Washburn has always been a skills-based institution, but as competition for jobs continues to increase, students are more aware of the need to showcase practical experience to the person who chooses candidates to interview.

“The students understand they need to get a leg up on the competition,” Leisinger said. He also said faculty members are encouraging students to look at externships and other practical work options to ensure the students are receiving a well-rounded education.

Not only does an externship provide law students with an advantage over other candidates, Leisinger said, but the experience will help define what the students really want to do in their careers. “It’s an opportunity to ‘try it on’ through the externship experience,” he said.

As an extern in the program, students assume the role of a professional in training, handling real issues and working on real assignments. The placements provide valuable hands-on experience in actual legal practice, which may help secure permanent employment after law school.

With the expansion of Collective Brands as an externship partner, which also includes Airwalk, Keds, Payless ShoeSource, Saucony, Sperry Top-Sider, and Stride Rite, Washburn Law students can learn the workings of an international company with international opportunities for employment. Currently, three Washburn Law students are participating in externships at Collective Brands.

“It’s a great opportunity for students interested in Intellectual Property Law and business placements,” Leisinger said. An additional new partner is the Kansas Department of Revenue, and Leisinger is looking into partnerships with other government agencies and possible placements with lobbying groups.

“We are expanding government agency work in tandem with the launch of the Center for Law and Government,” he said.

SUMMER EXTERNSHIPS

Fifty-three Washburn Law students participated in externships around the United States during summer 2010, gaining a wide-range of practical experience. Students served federal and state judges; state and local agencies and departments; private corporations; and non-profit organizations.



More information about the Externship Program is available at www.washburnlaw.edu/curriculum/externship