



BPDA Law School Fellowship Program





About Us

The Black Public Defenders Association (BPDA) is a movement-led organization that supports a national network of skilled Black defenders (trial-attorneys, social workers, investigators, civil defense, immigration, family defense, and client advocates) who fights against mass incarceration and other racist carceral systems. Building a pipeline of Black defenders is one of our core pillars.

About the Fellowship

The BPDA Law School Fellowship Program aims to provide training and support to Black law students who are passionate about serving their communities through a career in public defense. One of BPDA Law School Engagement Committee's central goals is to provide resources that ensure that Black law students are able to access and succeed in public defense as a profession that empowers marginalized communities. Each year, the Committee selects a number of promising Black law students to serve as BPDA Summer Fellows. Each Fellow receives mentorship, intensive skills training, and financial support that enables them to successfully complete a paid summer internship at a public defender office and be well positioned for post-graduate employment. Each fellowship host site provides their students with a stipend up to \$5,000.



CUYA HOGA

COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER C L E V E L A N D , O H

Law clerks with the Cuyahoga County Public Defender Office will have an immersive experience in one of our four divisions. The law clerk summer position will last 10-12 weeks.

Law clerks will have the opportunity to assist attorneys with motion drafting on a variety of important legal issues including suppression motions, sentencing memorandums, motions in limine, post-conviction motions and motions to eliminate collateral consequences from a prior conviction. Court observation is highly encouraged and is incorporated into our summer onboarding for full-time law clerks. Clerks will also gain experience working closely with clients and community service providers both in person and on the phone. In addition, clerks learn to navigate the labyrinth of the criminal justice system to find court records, historical information necessary for litigation support, journal entries from other courts regarding probate issues, and many other necessary items.

Third-year students with the office who have their certified intern license through the Supreme Court of Ohio have a unique opportunity to sit with a licensed attorney to litigate a case. Under the guidance of a supervising attorney, the clerk can handle pre-trials, arraignments, and even a trial. This hands-on experience helps prepare clerks for real world practice and helps them gain confidence in a courtroom setting.

Learn more at <https://publicdefender.cuyahogacounty.gov/>.



ORLEANS

PUBLIC DEFENDER

NEW ORLEANS, LA

The Orleans Public Defenders provide representation to indigent criminal defendants in Orleans Parish. OPD's mission is to fight for our clients by providing excellent client-centered representation, reforming the system and partnering with the community. OPD is committed to representation that respects the humanity and dignity of those within the criminal legal system.

OPD Summer Law 2024 Clerkship is an intensive 10-week, hands-on program. Law clerks assist attorneys in all aspects of criminal litigation including performing legal research, conducting factual investigation, drafting of memoranda and motions, analyzing discovery materials and preparing briefs. Law clerks are required to abide by OPD's confidentiality policy, and to act, at all times, in the best interest of OPD's clients. Law clerks may be asked to do everything a staff attorney does for a client on a case short of speaking on the record in court.

This may include, but not limited to:

- Legal research on a wide range of issues arising from the 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th Amendments;
- Writing memos, motions and writ application to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Louisiana Supreme Court;
- Visiting clients in jail, meeting with clients; families and/or defense witnesses both in and outside of the office;
- Investigating with the attorney, i.e. going to the crime scene, canvassing neighborhoods, interviewing complainants;
- Assisting attorneys at trial and substantive motions hearings;
- Digesting discovery and pretrial hearing transcripts;
- Observing during client counseling and plea negotiations.

Many schools also award academic credit for clerkships. If you are approved for academic credit, we will work with you and your school throughout the process. The Summer Law Clerkship program runs from June 4 to August 9, 2024.

OPD is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants for employment will be considered without regard to race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, national origin, disability, veteran status or sexual orientation.

Learn more at <https://www.opdla.org/>.

NASHVILLE

COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

NASHVILLE, TN

The Nashville Defenders' Summer 2024 Intern Program strives to create challenging but supportive educational environment for our interns. We want our interns to walk away from the program with:

- A thorough understanding of how we practice client-centered indigent defense,
- Knowledge and practical skills they can apply in the future, and
- The inspiration to pursue a career in public defense.

Quick Facts:

- Tentative Start Date: Tuesday after Memorial Day
- Tentative End Date: First week of August
- Number of positions available: Approximately 12
- Accepting applications from undergraduate and law students (1Ls and 2Ls)

What all interns can expect:

- Client and family contact, both in custody and out of custody
- Court shadowing and observation
- Research and writing practice
- Fact and mitigation investigation
- Trial and hearing preparation
- Individual feedback and coaching from experienced public defenders
- If you have a supervised practice license (2Ls): The opportunity to directly represent clients under the supervision of a practicing attorney

For more information, contact: Georgia Sims: Assistant Deputy Public Defender, Intern Supervisor, GeorgiaSims@jnsnashville.gov

Learn more at <https://publicdefender.nashville.gov/>.

MINNIE SOTA

BOARD OF PUBLIC DEFENDER

M I N N E A P O L I S , M N

The Board of Public Defense is an independent agency within the Minnesota Judicial Branch. Our mission is to provide excellent criminal and juvenile legal defense services to indigent clients through an independent, responsible, and effective public defender system. As the largest law firm in the state of Minnesota, Public Defenders provide service to indigent Minnesotans in over 150,000 cases per year including gross misdemeanor, juvenile, felony, and child protection cases.

We are committed to five major goals:

- Client centered representation
- Creative advocacy
- Continual training for all staff
- Recruitment and retention of excellent staff
- Being a full partner in the justice system

Fellows will be involved in providing direct services to clients from the many communities we serve, under the supervision of experienced attorneys. Some of the duties of the position include legal research, drafting briefs, assisting in trial preparation, and court appearances.

This fellowship will last 12 weeks in duration, and can work up to 40 hours per week.

Learn more at <https://www.pubdef.state.mn.us/>.



MONTGOMERY

COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

D A Y T O N , O H

The Montgomery County Public Defender's Office in Dayton, Ohio embraces the model that provides holistic defense services. The holistic defense model combines aggressive legal advocacy with a broader recognition that criminal charges are often not the only issues our clients face. To accomplish this, the Montgomery County Public Defender's Office boasts a team comprised of full-time social workers, case managers, client engagement specialists, attorneys, a paralegal, investigators, and legal professionals that work together as a team.

Each year, our office hosts law student interns that actively participate in the pursuit of justice. Throughout their time at our office, interns can expect to do a number of different tasks, including (but not limited to) the following: reviewing discovery, researching various legal issues, drafting briefs and other memoranda, and observing court proceedings. Additionally, any intern who is licensed in Ohio can provide legal advice and represent clients in court under the supervision of an attorney (including pretrials, motion hearings, and trials).

This internship is a full-time (40 hours per week) summer position lasting for 12 weeks beginning in May 2024 (exact start date is flexible).

Learn more at <https://mcpdohio.com/>.



MEET THE TEAM

BPDA Law School Fellowship Program

Mrs. Alaina Bloodworth is a fierce advocate for BPDA's mission. She attended Southern University A&M College where she received both her B.S. in Elementary Education and her Juris Doctorate. Previously, she served as a public defender and the Director of Students, managing the training and hiring of student law clerks and investigators.



ALAINA BLOODWORTH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



JONTEAL HASTY
LAW SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Ms. Jonteal Hasty attended Seton Hill University where she received a B.A in history with a minor in Legal Studies and International Studies. She then went on to receive her Juris Doctorate from University of DC, David A. Clarke School of Law in 2022. She currently serves as a public defender in Indianapolis, Indiana in the CHINS/TPR division working diligently with parents to get their children back from the State.



Thank You

For more information visit
blackdefender.org/bpda-fellowship-program

