In 2005 the Law School created the Summer Public Interest Program, an initiative designed to assist students who wish to engage in public interest work during the summer between their first and second years. Last summer, fifty members of the class of 2008 took advantage of this resource and were able to participate in a variety of different projects. The diversity of legal disciplines, types of practice, and even geographical location represented by their summer employment choices was remarkable.

It is increasingly important for law students to use the summer between their first and second years to gain real-world experience. It is also a great time to explore the nonprofit and government sector. While not every student who participates in this program will ultimately choose to work in these sectors, the experience is invaluable. It enhances legal education, expands career horizons, instills a sense of public spiritedness that encourages future public service work, and students returning with these experiences have much to share with their classmates.

The Summer Public Interest Program guarantees financial support for every student who chooses qualifying public interest work. It is a loan, but if the student completes four or more weeks of service the loan is partially forgiven, and if he or she chooses to work in a qualifying position the following summer, it is completely forgiven.

The program was developed in response to concerns that while many students wanted this type of experience, they were all too often unable to take them for financial reasons. It is no secret that positions in the public sector generally do not pay nearly as well as similar positions in the private sector, and this is particularly true of summer internships. Since many law students must earn as much as possible during the summer, they were understandably reluctant.

"This program makes it possible for students to take these types of positions," said Abbie Willard, Associate Dean for Career Services and Public Initiatives. "We've seen a huge jump in the numbers of students who are choosing to spend at least some time working in the public-interest area."

University of Chicago Law School students interested in this type of work can now rely on several different sources to help them achieve their goals. Chicago Law Foundation grants will now be used primarily to support public interest work for students between their second and third years of law school, and upon graduation they can benefit from the Hormel Public Interest Program, the Law School's loan forgiveness program.

We asked students who participated in the 1L Summers Public Interest Program to write about their summer experiences. The following pages contain excerpts from these statements.
DANIEL R. FINE, '08
United States Attorney's Office.
Western District of Washington
Seattle, Washington

Most of my work last summer involved researching discrete legal questions. I had the opportunity to explore, among other topics, questions related to conspiracy, RICO, and the tolling provisions of the Speedy Trial Act. I drafted extradition requests for two defendants whose indictments were still under seal. The project involved legal research, poring over reports of federal agents, and talking with those same agents about details of their investigations. I also spent a fair amount of time in court. One day, I drafted a memo to an Assistant United States Attorney on whether or not the government could establish probable cause for purposes of a preliminary hearing in an ID theft case. The next day, I was in court to see how I did.

LAUREN B. KRAMER, '08
Public Defender's Office.
Juvenile Division
San Francisco, California

In California, minors are generally charged with felonies, so every case I worked on was significant. Many of the kids were facing strikes and because of their age, didn't necessarily understand the significance of their actions or the long term implications of something like a plea. I worked with a lot of youths that were involved in gangs, that weren't attending school or performing anywhere near grade level, that were drug abusers, and that were raising their own babies already. Being a public defender in an urban community isn't just about legal counsel—the office works with the families to set up counseling, to clear up criminal charges, and to get these families functioning again. This summer, I was part of that entire process.

GOWOON LEE, '08
Law Center for Families
Oakland, California

This summer I had the opportunity to help a diverse group of clients with a variety of family law issues, often handling my own client caseloads from the initial intake to closing. I helped clients file papers for dissolutions, child custody, visitation, and consumer cases, and assisted in drafting supporting declarations and attachments. I learned how to determine which courses of action would be most efficient or beneficial for clients. The most interesting aspect of working at the Law Center for Families was the depth and breadth of client interaction. On Fridays, the Center holds a free clinic—prospective clients come in for interviews designed to pinpoint their legal problems and determine if the Center can assist them. Conducting these interviews helped me learn how to make sense of vast amounts of disjointed information to find the underlying legal issues.

HOLLIN KRETZMANN, '08
Natural Resources Defenses Council
Santa Monica, California

Within a couple hours of arriving at the Natural Resources Defenses Council, an attorney asked me to see if there was any way we could protect whales from excess seismic air gun activity off the California coast. Throughout the summer, I found myself working on environmental causes that were interesting, challenging, and highly complex. I experienced the thrill of victory—an injunction against mid-frequency sonar activity by the Navy; I also felt the disappointment of losing an argument—a transfer of venue to a less favorable court. The internship gave me the chance to deal with both situations. I always felt I was working for the betterment of society, harnessing a real vehicle for change: improving water quality, reducing harmful emissions, and saving state parks from reckless development and suburban sprawl.
DREW GALVIN, '08
United States Attorney's Office,
Southern District of California
San Diego, California

As a law clerk, I was assigned to two Assistant
United States Attorneys who asked me to write
memoranda, perform cite checks, and assist in
drafting motions for summary judgment. I
wrote memoranda on a variety of topics including
the Feres doctrine, wrongful death claims, indemnity
agreements, damages caps, and the Federal Tort Claims
Act. I also helped draft a motion for summary judgment
regarding a suit against the federal government for denying a
citizen social security benefits. I also attended a sentencing
and a settlement conference. Once a week a different
Assistant United States Attorney spoke to the clerks during
a lunchtime presentation, on topics ranging from human
trafficking, cyber crime, personal injury, immigration law,
to employment law.

NOSSON KNOBLOCH, '08
United States Attorney's Office,
District of Montana
Great Falls, Montana

The range of cases at the United States
Attorney's Office provided me with a
wonderful introduction to legal practice—
I worked on civil cases ranging from medical malpractice to
immigration appeals, and criminal cases ranging from sexual
assault to murder. One of my first assignments was drafting
interrogatories for discovery in a medical malpractice suit
brought against a federally operated hospital. Not only did I
get to learn a lot about the adversarial process in civil cases,
my draft was sent to the opposing party in its entirety.
Subsequently, my level of responsibility increased and for
my final assignment I drafted a Ninth Circuit brief for an
immigration case.

KATIE MARKOWSKI, '08
Cook County State's Attorney,
Child Support Enforcement Division
Chicago, Illinois

Mornings were spent in a hearing room in the
expedited child support division, assisting an
Assistant State's Attorney as cases were heard.
Normally we would hear about twenty cases in our
room, but some days we'd hear closer to fifty. My
responsibilities in the hearing room included pre-conferencing
litigants to determine how they wished to proceed and
drafting orders. Every afternoon I would prepare the next
day's cases, assisting with discovery and determining, by the
evidence in the file, what course of action the state was
going to pursue in each case.

JEFFREY MEINEKE, '08
Cook County Public Defender
Chicago, Illinois

I was assigned to work with a team of three
attorneys who represent indigent clients charged
with drug crimes in one of the busiest court
rooms in Cook County. The attorneys I assisted
handle anywhere from three to twelve clients per
day. I was involved in almost every aspect of the cases, from
initial arraignments to bench trials. These attorneys varied
widely in their approach to their work. I spent the first few
weeks observing before I began handling arraignments and
client interviews. Eventually, I learned to spot weaknesses in
arrest records and vice reports. One of the most difficult
parts of the job was communicating with clients about the
elements of their cases. The majority of them knew little or
nothing about their rights, and many had only the vague
notion of what attorney/client privilege means. But it's
important work because often the public defender is the
first friendly face a defendant sees after spending weeks
or even months in jail.
GRANT FOLLAND, '08  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
Chicago, Illinois

The National Immigrant Justice Center provides legal services to immigrants and refugees. The Center advocates for asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking and domestic violence, in addition to engaging in precedent-setting litigation on behalf of immigrant's rights. My second day on the job I was handed a file with case notes and court records and told to write a Motion to Reopen and Rescind an Order of Removal, which is similar to a memo or brief, complete with Statement of the Case, Argument and Conclusion sections. It felt eerily like a Bigelow assignment. And after twelve weeks, I'm now a crash expert in Congolese proxy marriages, adoption law under Cameroon's bi-jural system, and how craniosynostosis and/or gastroenteritis relate to 8 USC § 1229(a)(b)(5)(C)(i).

KELLY LAZAROFF, '08  
United States Attorney's Office,  
Northern District of Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois

Last summer I worked on one civil and five criminal cases, doing everything from research memos—often inserted into motions by attorneys—to motions and an appellate brief. I researched and wrote on the legality of particular law enforcement practices used in narcotics and gang investigations, the use of bloodhound scent-tracking evidence, prosecution of unlicensed money transmitting businesses, and hearsay exceptions. I participated as a full member of a trial team, writing jury instructions, composing voir dire questions, and prepared witnesses and exhibits for a narcotics trial—this was particularly interesting as so much of the research and writing I did will go directly before a judge and opposing attorney.

SHERMON P. WILLIAMS, '08  
Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic  
Chicago, Illinois

My work last summer encompassed three primary areas of law: family law, housing law, and criminal law. I conducted intake interviews with low-income clients in crisis, ascertained the relevant facts, then presented the case to staff attorneys. I researched legal issues and wrote memorandum regarding applicable case law and shared in voting whether to accept the case. It was gratifying to share information with clients about their rights and to give them some reassurances—many of them face a difficult uphill climb legally when they have brushes with the law.

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ, '08  
Suffolk County District Attorney  
Boston, Massachusetts

I interned at the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in Boston, Massachusetts, where my primary duty was to prepare reply briefs for criminal appeals filed in the Massachusetts Appeals Court. Over the course of the summer I wrote two full briefs. The cases concerned convictions for child abuse and distribution of heroin, and the claims the appellants raised included issues of prosecutorial misconduct, sufficiency and admissibility of evidence, and jury selection. Most significantly, I will argue the cases I briefed in the Massachusetts Appeals Court later this fall.

HELEN GILBERT, '08  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
New York City, New York

I spent the summer working for the Center for Reproductive Rights, one of the few organizations in the United States that addresses reproductive rights issues using legal tools. I assisted with discovery and attended hearings for a lawsuit the Center filed against the FDA for not making a decision about an emergency contraceptive drug's over-the-counter status. The case was a stellar introduction to administrative law and strengthened my growing interest in litigation. I also wrote research memos to support parts of the Respondent's brief in the Supreme Court case Gonzales v. Carhart, which the Center will file this fall. It was an extraordinary opportunity to work with seasoned litigators, learn more about litigation strategy, and in a small way, contribute to a case that may very well change the landscape of reproductive rights.
CADENCE MERTZ, ’08
American Civil Liberties Union
Washington, DC

I spent ten weeks as a law clerk for the American Civil Liberties Union’s lead policy counsel on national security issues in the Washington DC office, the organization’s lobbying arm. My work on national security issues came as Congress debated the National Security Agency’s secret surveillance programs and the Hamdan v. Rumsfeld decision’s implications on the limits of executive power. Most of my time was spent researching and analyzing the impact of bills pending in Congress and the constitutionality of executive arguments in support of certain statutory interpretations.

ANGLEE AGARWAL, ’08
Department of Justice
Washington, DC

One of my favorite assignments was researching and drafting Senate testimony for the Assistant Attorney General in charge of our division. The testimony was for use in a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, and it elaborated upon the DOJ’s position regarding a possible split of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Another great assignment was writing an appellate brief for an immigration appeals case. The Office of Immigration Litigation has so many immigration appeals to deal with that they often let other attorneys in different divisions take over some of the cases. I was allowed to read the record and write the brief (subject, of course, to comments from my supervising attorney). It was a fantastic experience, especially because, as a 1L, I had never seen a real case record or dealt with real case documents before.