

Andrew Colton

(555) 123-4567 ♦ 5555 University Avenue, Apt. 55, Madison, WI 53705 ♦ abcolton@email.edu

July 5, 2019

Wisconsin Department of Justice
Attn: Gerald Smith, Division of Legal Services
P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

Dear Mr. Smith:

As a rising second year student at the University of Wisconsin Law School, I am applying for the Wisconsin Department of Justice Externship in the Criminal Appeals Unit. I am applying for this externship because I am interested in working in criminal law for the public and analyzing specific arguments through appellate work.

During my internship this past summer with United States Attorney's Office in the Northern District of Ohio in the Western Division, I was exposed to a wide breadth of legal experiences. I attended witness interviews and completed a number of legal writing assignments. Specifically, I researched sentencing issues and drafted counterarguments in response to defense motions. As a result of this work, I am more efficient at narrowing my legal research, summarizing information, and creating a completed, thorough work product.

My summer experience also gave me some basic appellate experience. A highlight of this past summer was taking initiative to seek out appellate work within the office. I assisted in drafting an appellate brief, addressing two out of the three issues identified. One issue related to the admissibility of testimony, the other alleged prosecutorial misconduct through improper closing argument statements. I utilized case law and congressional reports to demonstrate that the district judge properly admitted the testimony, and precisely reviewed the trial record to show that the statements, if improper, only constituted harmless error. I also attended oral arguments in front of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. I enjoy the detail-oriented work of using case law, congressional reports, and trial transcripts to narrow arguments and strategically highlight the key issues.

My commitment to criminal defense and public interest work extends beyond my time as a law student. Prior to coming to law school, I worked as Programs Manager at Neighborhoods for Justice, a law firm that provides free or sliding-scale legal services to indigent litigants. I assisted in launching and running the Homelessness Defense Project, a legal clinic focused on decriminalizing homelessness in our community.

As a Wisconsin Department of Justice Extern, I would eagerly face new challenges, pay attention to detail, and focus on the key issues. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Colton