

Summer Jobs. Summer School. They Aren't Just Work

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Jodi Varon '03

Each summer between semesters of law school course work, Cardozo students exchange their casebooks for case files and their classrooms for offices. The two summers are a prime time for obtaining experience that fattens the résumé and for gaining insight into various areas of legal practice.



Nine Cardozo students were summer associates at Weil, Gotshal & Manges



Carlos Diaz-Cobo '03

From law firms to public interest to studying abroad, numerous opportunities await Cardozo students. “The summer presents three solid months when a student can get opportunities for hands-on legal experiences that make classroom curricula come alive,” says Dean Jacki Burt of career services.

For those curious about experiencing law firm work and life, there is an abundance of large-to-small law firms from which to choose. Students can work for a firm located in and around New York City, work elsewhere in the country, or even travel abroad. With the help of the Office of Career Services, some second-year and first-year students find summer jobs with law firms.

Summer Associates

Weil, Gotshal & Manges, one of the largest and most eminent law firms in New York City, has a special relationship with Cardozo, recruiting many summer associates from its ranks. Weil gives students the opportunity to work with numerous partners and associates on a variety of significant cases in legal departments of their choosing.

Carlos Diaz-Cobo, 33, worked at Weil after completing his first year in law school and again after completing his second. A professional piano player in a Latin jazz orchestra prior to coming to Cardozo, Diaz-Cobo '03, knew that he was interested in litigation work. During his first year, he applied for the Association of the Bar of the City of New York Fellowship Program, which matches exceptional New York City law students with top law firms in the city. After a rigorous selection process consisting of

writing a memorandum of law and sitting for many interviews, Diaz-Cobo was one of about 20 first-year law students chosen by the bar association to work for a law firm, in his case Weil.

After rotating through four departments, Diaz-Cobo says he learned a lot about law practice and became even more convinced that litigation was what he wanted to pursue upon graduation. During that first summer, Diaz-Cobo researched cutting-edge cases, wrote legal memoranda for firm partners and clients, and worked on pro bono cases. His summer job taught him not only how lawyers think but also how lawyers act, key to his overall legal development. And if the cases and legal experience were not reason enough, the free lunches, events, and parties at New York City’s top restaurants and venues persuaded him to come back for a second summer at Weil.

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But what most struck Diaz-Cobo during his summer is how approachable and helpful the lawyers at Weil were. “I did not expect the people who work at a top New York City firm to be so great. They really taught me a lot and made me feel comfortable,” he says. Now he is confident that this productive and fun experience will greatly help him land a job after graduation.

Study Abroad Programs

But why stop at doing just one thing during the summer? For some Cardozo students, splitting their summer between different programs is very appealing. For instance, Peter Luneau, 25, a third-year law student, not only interned at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission but also spent two weeks in England learning about comparative corporate governance after his first year. Since 1998, The Samuel and Ronnie Heyman Center on Corporate Governance has been sponsoring an intensive two-week summer colloquium at Oxford University, which helps students understand the corporate structures and practices in Germany, Japan, France, England, and the United States. Cardozo also holds its two-week, not-for-credit Program in Comparative Media Law and Policy at Oxford, giving prospective law students insights into the critical issues in developing

media, telecommunications and Internet law, and policy around the world.

Professors Chuck Yablon and Larry Cunningham '88 designed and teach the corporate governance colloquium together. The interplay between these two professors is extraordinary, says Luneau. Professor Cunningham explains, "We are told over the years of our complimentary styles, outlooks, and backgrounds: Yablon is a litigator, I'm corporate; he's a Democrat, I'm a Republican; he's a philosopher, I'm a finance/business guy; he's laid back and I'm a bit more energized."

The students read the *Financial Times* each day, discuss how various countries allocate power between shareholders and managers, and visit London firms. Participating students complete a paper for academic credit during the following fall semester. "Being at Oxford brings home to students that there is business in other parts of the world," says Yablon. Also, because of the small size of the class—at most 15 students—there is a lot of interaction between the participants and the professors. "It is possible to get to know the students personally in a way you can't in a big Corporations class," he adds.

Living and learning for two weeks at the famous and

historic St. Edmond Hall, the only extant original Hall of the early Oxford colleges, is a perfect summer experience and looks great on your résumé, points out Luneau, who spent this past summer as an associate at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom. "Having this unique Oxford experience makes a student really stand out during job interviews," he says.

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Another popular program abroad builds on Cardozo's acclaimed Alternative Dispute Resolution program, which *U.S. News & World Report* ranks as one of the top 10 ADR programs in the nation. Students travel to Paris and Budapest in July on a four-week, six-credit program that examines global perspectives on ADR. The summer program is a joint venture of the Kukin Program for Conflict Resolution at Cardozo and the Dispute Resolution Institute at Hamline University School of Law.

Cardozo Students Max Rosenberg '04 (2nd from left) and Malte Pendergast-Fischer '04 (right) on the Donali River in Budapest. The Hungarian Parliament is in the background



Two weeks in Paris studying ADR



Faculty and students at Oxford, summer 2002

According to Prof. Lela P. Love, director of the Kukin Program, the intensive summer ADR program is designed to give students a good grounding in both mediation and arbitration. And instead of a US-centered view of conflict resolution, students get a broader, international perspective, she explains.

The first two weeks are spent in Paris, an outstanding venue for studying international commercial arbitration because it is home to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the world's most prestigious commercial arbitration organization. Students discuss international arbitration cases and issues in a classroom, and then take trips to the ICC to see how their new learning is applied in real life.

Moving from the heart of western Europe to central and eastern Europe's emerging democracies, students attend Central European University in Budapest to study mediation, as well as other consensual methods for addressing conflict and promoting understanding between peoples. Here, they learn side-by-side with students and faculty from more than 20 central and eastern European countries and exchange ideas about how mediation is used, not only in the United States but in Europe as well.

Philip Kimball, who participated in this program after finishing his first year at Cardozo, says, "I learned how people from abroad approach disputes and the law in general. Although I don't think I want a career in ADR, I know that this program is valuable background for litigation, which I want to pursue upon graduation."

Summer Institute

Cardozo students do not, however, have to go abroad to further their studies during the summer. Alisa Cahan '04, a journalism major in college, who interned with NBC in Miami, knew that she was interested in entertainment law from the moment she arrived at Cardozo. So to get acquainted with this area of law, she chose to do Cardozo's Summer Institute. With help from the Office of Career Services, Cahan secured an internship with NBC's legal department.

Created to enhance placement opportunities following graduation, the Summer Institute allows students to focus on one area of the law by combining academic study during summer evenings with a full-time summer internship. In addition to entertainment law, students can choose from such practice areas as bankruptcy, civil and criminal litigation, environmental law, family law, labor law, international trade law, alternative dispute resolution, and urban law and government.

Being able to learn an area of law in a classroom setting and then turn around and apply that knowledge in practice in NBC's legal department is what attracted Cahan to the Summer Institute. She helped NBC's law-

yers review scripts for news programs and talk shows by researching case law from all over the country and writing memoranda of law about her findings. "It's like working in a small law firm," she explains. "Regardless of what I do upon graduation, researching, writing, and observing lawyers at work are important skills that are transferable to any employer," she says.

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The perks are not so bad, either. It is not every office that has late-night show host Conan O'Brien or Olympic gold medalist Sarah Hughes walking casually around the halls. "This is a rare opportunity and I feel very lucky to do this. It is just what I was hoping for this summer," says Cahan, a second-year law student.



Alisa Cahan '04
with Katie Couric

Public Interest Summer Internships

Government offers another vehicle for hands-on practice. Madeleine Wolfe, a third-year student, came to Cardozo to be a criminal lawyer. After the September 11 tragedy struck New York, this former social worker volunteered her time to counsel families of victims. In doing so, she met many different attorneys, from the Corporate Counsel's office and the New York Police Department. One from the NYPD suggested that she intern at the NYPD's civil enforcement unit, which utilizes civil laws to address criminal activity. By litigating civil actions such as nuisance abatement and forfeiture cases, this division seeks to remove the economic incentive to engage in these offenses.

Wolfe, who started interning part time during the spring semester and full time during the summer, had her own forfeiture case to research, write motions, decide on witnesses, and bring to trial. "I learned all the civil procedure stuff in this internship that didn't really make sense in the book. Taking a case to trial start to finish is invaluable experience," she says.

However, without financial help, Wolfe would have had a hard time accepting this internship. After the 9/11 cutbacks in city government, the NYPD could not afford

to pay her. To help, Cardozo awarded her a summer stipend. The Public Interest Summer Stipend Program financially supports first- and second-year law students, enabling them to work in unpaid public interest internships, which they might not otherwise be able to do.

"This was my first opportunity since I started law school to really get my hands dirty," he explains. "It was great to be out of the classroom."

Lyonel Jean-Pierre Jr. '03 also spent the summer after the first year of law school in a public interest internship. Jean-Pierre, who is interested in pursuing a public interest career path, chose Cardozo because of its acclaimed clinical programs. After finishing his first year, he was ready to part with his casebooks to gain hands-on skills. After attending a public interest job fair, this Massachusetts native secured an internship at the Legal Assistance Corp. of Central Massachusetts. Although the internship was unpaid, he funded it through work-study,



Madeleine Wolfe '03 with coworkers, among whom was Tzivyah Weber '97 (below)



defending low-income clients evicted from their homes. Jean-Pierre interacted with clients and saw cases to their completion. “This was my first opportunity since I started law school to really get my hands dirty,” he explains. “It was great to be out of the classroom.”

Judicial Internships

Another excellent way to put case law into perspective is to intern for a judge. However, these positions are few, and they are highly desirable because they afford students a rare opportunity to see the law being argued and interpreted up close.

Stuart Riemer '04 wanted to see a case from behind the scenes. In February of his first year at Cardozo,

Riemer started to send out numerous résumés for the coveted few summer internships with federal judges. Eventually, it was his Cardozo connections that opened the door. With the help of an introduction from a Cardozo graduate, Riemer secured an internship with Judge Lawrence M. McKenna of the Southern District of New York.

Riemer observed trials, read lawyers' briefs, and researched case law and statutes. Sitting in on multiple trials and seeing which arguments and lawyers were effective and which were not taught him crucial legal argument skills. Reading many legal briefs, complaints and motions taught him about various legal documents and procedures, different writing styles, and how to properly weave a successful legal argument. “This is like watching the law behind the scenes,” says Riemer. “I got to see firsthand how lawyers argue, how judges decide, and how the whole trial process works. I saw how a case is filed, how it proceeds from motions to trial, and how it reaches a conclusion. No matter what I choose to pursue upon graduation, the skills and lessons I learned last summer will help me be a better lawyer.” ■

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