

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Jamie Shank



Graduation Semester & Year: December 2022

Semester & Year of Internship: Summer 2022

Major: Criminal Justice

Minor(s): Psychology & Sociology

Hometown: Jeannette, PA

Hobbies: Journaling, Crocheting, Yoga, Spending time with family & friends

Campus Activities: Psi Chi, CJ Club, Pitt Varsity Marching Band (Colorguard), Tau Beta Sigma (Oakland Campus)

Future Plans/Career Goals: I hope to work in the Juvenile Justice System!

- **Internship (company/your title):**
 - I completed my internship at CASA of Westmoreland, Inc., located on the fourth floor of the Westmoreland County Court House Annex. During my time there, I was considered an office intern.
- **How did you find your internship?**
 - I originally heard of this non-profit organization through an internship email that Dr. Holler sent to all the CJ students. This email had a list of places other CJ students have interned. I decided to do my own research and see if there were any current opportunities, and I was in luck!
- **What were your duties?**
 - During my time at CASA, I had various duties including:
 - Observing child dependency hearings, shelter care hearings, and permanency review hearings
 - Attending volunteer trainings, staff meetings, and outreach events
 - Practicing administrative duties related to non-profit management
 - Planning and executing various fundraising events
- **How many hours per week were you at your internship site?**
 - I worked roughly 10 hours a week
- **What did you enjoy most about your internship?**
 - I enjoyed every day at my internship, I never knew what the day was going to bring me. Whether I was out in the community (explaining the importance of the organization) or in the court room, I was learning things that will be very beneficial throughout my life. With that being said, I definitely enjoyed being in the court room observing the hearings the most.
- **What was the most difficult aspect of the internship?**
 - CASA's advocate on behalf of abused and neglected children in the courtroom, so hearing some of their stories was very difficult. To see and hear how poorly some parents treat their children is honestly so heartbreaking.
- **How did your experience at UPG and in the Criminal Justice department prepare you for your internship?**
 - Going into my internship, I was well prepared on the inner workings of the criminal justice system. I knew the basics of the courtroom, procedures, and policies. I learned of resources I often turned towards during my time at CASA. Without the help of the UPG professors and staff, I do not feel like I would have been successful during my internship.
- **How has your internship prepared you for a career?**
 - Coming out of my internship, I feel more prepared to go into the workforce. I have gained skills that are vital in the professional world such as, effective communication, networking, leadership experience, and organizational skills. I have gained a sense of confidence when talking to potential

employers and when asking others for help. In a criminal justice sense, I have gained an even deeper appreciation for child services that are available to help and the whole court process. Overall, I feel very confident and am honestly kind of excited to join the workforce.

- **What recommendations do you have for other students about doing an internship?**

- To any student who may be in the process of completing an internship or is going to be in the future, I highly recommend making the best of it. You will not always be given things that's you enjoy doing, but you are always learning important skills to take into the professional world. The internship is what you make of it! Have fun, enjoy your time, and learn as much as possible.

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