

My summer as a legal intern at Farmworker Legal Services reaffirmed why I chose to go to law school and become a lawyer. I've always believed that the legal profession has an immense potential to be a service profession, and it is organizations like FLS that enable attorneys to realize that potential.

The attorneys at FLS give the interns substantive responsibility, and they make sure the interns have the tools necessary to excel and hone the legal skills learned in law school. However, the legal interns are not limited to improving their legal research and writing. There was ample opportunity to garner practical skills necessary to becoming an effective advocate. As a legal intern, I had extensive client contact. All of the interactions, both on the phone and in person, taught me how to get to the bottom of a legal matter, or to discover if there were any real legal issues in the first place. Once FLS decides to represent a farmworker, the attorneys allow the interns to stay with the case and see it through either to the end or until the internship is over.

The latitude given to legal interns not only makes them more effective advocates, but it also impresses upon us the importance of what we are doing at FLS. Meeting with the clients, ascertaining their legal issues, researching those issues, staying in touch with the clients, and taking the appropriate legal measures all make us aware of the people behind the legal questions. Witnessing the effects of the direct services you provide migrant farmworkers is a very rewarding experience.

Furthermore, the wide array of legal aid that FLS provides to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (immigration, wage disputes, public benefits, housing, etc.) and the collaboration with community groups and governmental agencies makes the FLS experience unique.

The work I did at FLS positions me to be competitive as I seek internship opportunities in different areas of law for next summer, but more importantly, I will not forget the faces of those individuals and families that I helped throughout my internship.