

# THE JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Supreme Court  
of the United States

## ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE

Congress created the statutory position of the Counselor to the Chief Justice in 1972 to aid in the increasingly complex planning and leadership duties of the Chief Justice as head of the judicial branch of government. The major non-adjudicative duties of the Chief Justice include chairmanship of the Judicial Conference of the United States, chairmanship of the Board of Directors of the Federal Judicial Center, and general oversight of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. The Chief Justice also serves as Chancellor of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Office of the Counselor provides the Chief Justice with background materials and research memoranda for his formal addresses and publications, as well as for his informal speeches and other activities. The Counselor serves as a liaison for the Chief Justice not only with the judiciary, but also with the executive and legislative branches. The Counselor assists, and oversees along with the Chief Justice, the overall management of the Supreme Court, including coordination of organization and personnel policies and preparation of the budget.

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**“I never lost my sense of awe at just being here. And what I’ve learned — not just about the Court, but about myself and working with others — will benefit me the rest of my life.”**

**— AE JEAN CHA, 2000**

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## EXPERIENCE AND DUTIES

The Judicial Internship Program at the Supreme Court offers advanced undergraduates and graduating seniors who have interests in law, management, and social sciences a unique opportunity to gain exposure to the field of judicial administration through work in the Office of the Counselor to the Chief Justice.

The Program strives to offer its participants an experience that transcends that of other opportunities available to undergraduates. Its location within the country's highest court, combined with the intimacy of having only two Judicial Interns each term creates an environment of substantial responsibility, learning, and collegiality.

Interns work eight-hour days, five days a week. Thus, other employment is not feasible. Judicial Interns perform several routine but important office tasks, which include summarizing news articles and preparing memoranda and correspondence. Interns also conduct background research for speeches and briefings provided to visiting foreign dignitaries.

Additionally, interns may participate in the diverse research projects conducted by the Supreme Court Fellow and the Counselor. These projects require interns to gather, assemble and synthesize information from a wide range of sources. Such assignments demand experience with office and library resources, the ability to work under time constraints, strict attention to detail, creative thinking, and editorial skills.

Office research is completely unrelated to the case work of the Supreme Court. Interns **do not** work on cases pending before the Court or with the Justices. Circumstances permitting and with approval, interns may also take advantage of the Court's extensive resources to work on their own academic or other research projects.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Participants usually find the internship both interesting and educational. Since the judicial branch operates on a fraction of the scale of the executive and legislative branches, interns readily gain familiarity with the way the Court functions.

The Program also enables participants to become familiar with the various internal offices that support the Court. Recent interns have received tours of the Marshal's Office, the Clerk's Office, Data Systems, and the Library.

When time permits, interns may observe Court sessions and take advantage of outside lectures and conferences. The office occasionally holds educational luncheon meetings with individuals from government, academia, and private institutions. In recent years interns have attended luncheons with Associate Justices, the Counsel to the President, and the Solicitor General.

The internship is unpaid. Depending on funding, a \$1000 scholarship may be available based on the following criteria:

1. Interns must **successfully complete** the internship.
2. Within one year of completing the internship, students must return to an undergraduate program or enroll in a graduate or professional degree program.

Interns may receive academic credit through special arrangement with their college or university and consultation with the Supreme Court Fellow.

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**“The internship is one of constant learning. The opportunity for expanding one’s understanding of the Court is limitless.”**

**— MARCIE COHEN AND HEATHER DIETRICK, 2002**

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## QUALIFICATIONS

The Program selects interns from a highly qualified applicant pool; they bring to the Program a wide range of backgrounds, talents, and qualifications.

More than 400 individuals from over 100 colleges across the nation have served as Judicial Interns. Competition is keen, and a certain amount of self-screening is advised. College juniors and seniors, including graduating seniors, are encouraged to apply. In general, interns should possess the following qualities:

1. High intellectual development, including an ability to think clearly, speak articulately, and write cogently; substantial research experience; some course work on constitutional law or the Supreme Court; a demonstrated capacity to absorb complex information and to analyze, summarize, and derive conclusions from it.
2. Ability and willingness to work closely with others in a complex and sensitive organization. Interns work closely with fellow interns, the Supreme Court Fellow, and other office staff.
3. Capacity to undertake a variety of tasks as assigned and a willingness to shoulder one's share of less glamorous tasks; an ability to function with a low profile in a hierarchical institution in which interns are only temporary.
4. Unusual trustworthiness and discretion, maturity, and a non-doctrinaire approach to projects and issues. Good judgment is critical.
5. Self-sustaining motivation and initiative. The office is busy, and supervisory time is limited. Consultation with staff on specific questions and ideas is expected, but interns should carry research as far as possible and present their findings in succinctly written memoranda.

## APPLICATION

Students wishing to apply to the Judicial Internship Program must submit the following application materials:

1. A résumé;
2. An official transcript, sealed and sent directly by the institution;
3. Three letters of recommendation, from a variety of references, to be sealed and sent directly by the recommender to the Supreme Court Fellow;
4. A written statement presenting the candidate's reasons for seeking this internship and demonstrating that the candidate's experiences (scholastic and non-scholastic), skills, and personality meet the Program's criteria (*Please label this "Candidate Statement"*);
5. A writing sample, such as a short term paper, no longer than ten pages (*Please label this "Writing Sample"*);
6. An essay of not less than two pages giving the candidate's view of the importance of the American constitutional system from a personal, historical, national or international perspective (*Please label this "Constitutional Essay"*).

***Please double-space the candidate statement, writing sample, and essay.***

To help schedule internships, the candidate should list preferred alternative times when he or she will be available to participate in the program. Please note the term(s) you are applying for, your dates of availability, and your actual or anticipated graduation date. Telephone interviews may be conducted after receipt of a complete application. If selected, candidates will undergo fingerprinting and a background check before starting work.

Since interns often have access to sensitive information, anything they write about their experience must be reviewed by the Court's Public Information Officer. No papers or copies may be taken from the office except by express written permission.

## DEADLINES AND SUBMISSION

Application materials may be submitted in hard copy to the address below, or online at [www.supremecourtus.gov](http://www.supremecourtus.gov).

A candidate should apply well in advance of the prospective internship. **Because candidates are not notified automatically concerning the completeness of their applications, the candidate is responsible for ensuring that all portions of the application have been received, including transcripts and letters of reference.** Final deadlines for **postmark** (or online submission) of complete internship applications are as follows:

FALL (September-December):	June 10
SPRING (January-May):	October 20
SUMMER (June-August):	March 10

When these dates fall on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the next business day.

Interns selected for the Fall and Spring should plan to work for sixteen weeks. Summer interns are expected to work for twelve weeks, generally starting no later than the week of Memorial Day—preferably sooner.

The dates of an internship can be reasonably accommodated to an intern's schedule provided that the Intern Office is staffed sufficiently to meet its responsibilities.

Please address all application materials and further inquiries to:

Supreme Court Fellow  
Office of the Counselor to the Chief Justice  
Supreme Court of the United States  
Room 5  
Washington, D. C. 20543  
(202) 479-3415

All incoming mail undergoes a security screening process that can delay receipt of application materials by several days or even weeks. Therefore, to ensure that all applications are processed, intern candidates are urged to send application materials via a commercial delivery service such as FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE SUPREME COURT

### **Curatorial Internship**

The Office of the Curator is responsible for preserving the records and history of the Court including its collections of portraits, photographs and other memorabilia. The Curator's staff also provides visitor services and information on the history and architecture of the Supreme Court Building. Curatorial Intern projects include researching and completing photograph orders, conducting exhibit research and assisting with the management of visitor programs. In addition, all interns in the Curator's office conduct tours and lectures for visitors to the Court, staff an information desk, and perform administrative-support tasks. Interns will gain an understanding of museum practices as well as a thorough introduction to the history and functions of the Supreme Court. Internships are unpaid, except in the summer and during three weeks in December/January. All unpaid interns must be currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate students. All paid interns must have completed at least one year of undergraduate work.

For further information please contact:

Office of the Curator  
Supreme Court of the United States  
Washington, DC 20543  
(202) 479-3298

### **Summer Internships**

The Supreme Court also offers internships in various other Court offices during the summer. For more information please contact:

Supreme Court of the United States  
1 First Street, NE  
Personnel Office, Room 3  
Washington, D. C. 20543  
(202) 479-3404