



Legal Internship

ArchCity Defenders (ACD) is a holistic legal advocacy organization that combats the criminalization of poverty and state violence, especially in communities of color. ACD's foundation of civil and criminal legal representation, social services, impact litigation, policy and media advocacy, and community collaboration achieves and inspires justice and equitable outcomes for people throughout the St. Louis region and beyond.

ArchCity Defenders envisions a society liberated from systems of oppression where the promise of justice and racial equity is realized; communities where our approach to public safety prioritizes investment in well-being, health, and transformation without relying on criminalization and incarceration; and people living freely in their communities, thriving regardless of their race or income.

While continuing to provide holistic legal advocacy to the indigent in St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders is working on broad-based change to the St. Louis region's criminal legal system through legal teams. One way we advance this change is through the use of impact litigation brought by our **Civil Litigation** team on issues like debtors' prisons, police misconduct, cash bail, and jail conditions.

While impact litigation has become an effective tool for change, ArchCity Defenders remains dedicated to changing our clients' lives through individual representation. To this end, our **Direct Representation** team represents clients in the following legal practice areas, among others: housing, consumer, family, criminal, and municipal.

In the Summer of 2020, we created a **Special Projects** team to expand our systemic work beyond the St. Louis region and beyond the criminal and municipal legal abuses cases historically litigated by our civil litigation attorneys. The team also works to deepen our housing- and homelessness-related legal advocacy through class actions, individual representation, amicus briefs, and policy and media work as well as by supporting tenant organizing across the state.

Legal intern applicants select the team they prefer to work with but will have somewhat similar internship experiences across the board. However, an intern seeking more individual client contact will likely prefer to work with the direct representation team. All legal interns (regardless of team assignment) will perform fact and legal research to bolster our understanding of claims and issues; draft memos synthesizing findings as well as motions, pleadings, and other legal

documents; assist with discovery and investigation; interview and communicate with clients; and attend court proceedings with staff attorneys.

Legal interns function as a part of an interdisciplinary team and coordinate with attorneys and staff to support ACD's mission and expand our reach. A successful intern needs to be assertive, independent, persistent, empathetic, proactive, flexible, and self-directed. They will need to take initiative, use problem-solving skills, see projects through to completion, and become a strong advocate for themselves and others.

Undergraduate students participating in legal internships will not receive the same types of assignments as law students. The intern will be able to engage in some research and drafting but will spend more time on discovery, document review, investigation, and administrative work.

Qualifications:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent legal research and writing skills
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Detail-oriented approach to working in a team-driven organization
- High capacity for problem solving and self-direction and the ability to work independently within time constraints
- Flexible and able to respond appropriately to ACD's changing needs
- Commitment to racial and economic justice and systems change
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity toward diverse populations; awareness of structures of power, privilege, and oppression

Proficiency in Spanish or other languages is appreciated, but not required

At this time, all internships are unpaid, volunteer positions but there might be paid opportunities that become available. ACD will also work with students who secure funding from outside sources or to obtain class credit where available.

Summer internship lengths can vary from 8-12 weeks and are usually full-time positions. Our Spring program is more flexible.

ArchCity Defenders is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people who identify with historically underserved or underrepresented communities, people of color, persons with disabilities, women, LGBTQIA+, and gender non-conforming applicants. ACD encourages applications from all individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, citizenship, disability, military or veteran status, and record of arrest or conviction.