

Jared Neely

Wellman Hill Grant Recipient

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Through the generous support from the Wellman Hill Grant, I was able to intern in U.S. Senator Mark Kelly's office as well as at the Pima County Public Defender's Office. I was incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to intern in both offices, and all the knowledge I accumulated was invaluable. I was grateful to work in Senator Kelly's office, as he has been an Arizona staple for years and champions many of the causes that are close to my heart, such as supporting older Arizonans. At the Public Defenders' office, I was grateful to work closely with numerous attorneys and assist them with their complex case loads.

I was able to learn a great deal of crucial information from each office, and although both experiences were vastly different, at their core, they shared a genuine dedication to public service. At Senator Kelly's office, I developed a strong understanding of the issues that mattered most to Arizonans by fielding their calls, voicemails, mail, and email correspondence. Part of my responsibilities included compiling all of the opinions of constituents on a range of relevant issues to be shared with senior staff members who would then interpret that data. The other side of my primary responsibilities included assisting with casework.

I frequently assisted caseworkers who specialized in a range of federal matters, including veterans' issues, immigration, and tax matters. The office has the ability to help Arizonans as they navigate the federal government, and over the course of the summer, caseworkers had numerous big successes. During my time in the senator's office, his office assisted with everything from helping constituents leave countries engaged in war to business owners receiving substantial tax refunds. My experience also ventured outside of the office, as I

observed the Senator navigating the press and attended in-person meetings with constituents. I was also afforded the opportunity to explore even more of my home state when I visited the southern border with an environmentalist group. I also assisted with mobile office hours, where the office visits the community to provide help primarily to senior citizens.

At the public defender's office, I was able to witness their dedication to public service on a more individualized level. I assisted attorneys on a range of cases from arson to first-degree murder. My experience also clarified misconceptions I once had about public defenders. Even with larger case loads, attorneys still dedicate themselves to serving their clients and, at times, can enhance their defense strategies by hiring expert witnesses or conducting mock voir dire sessions to test different approaches. Public defenders ensure that clients receive their fundamental right to legal counsel and work diligently to provide their clients with a fair and adequate defense.

Over the course of my internships, I developed a deeper understanding of my intended career path, and I am grateful for the Wellman Hil Grant, which made this entire experience possible. I was able to learn so many valuable skills and make meaningful connections that will follow me throughout my future academic pursuits and eventually my career. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Hill family for creating this program and for their investment in public service in such a significant way. I would also like to thank Professor McMann for writing a letter of recommendation on my behalf during the application process. The CWRU Political Science department has always been incredibly supportive of me throughout my time at Case, and I am grateful for the many phenomenal professors I have had the opportunity to learn from. Last but certainly not least, I would also like to thank the selection committee for believing in my internship pursuits and selecting me.