

I have always been fascinated by the criminal justice system. Indeed, I think that no other component of American society so starkly captures and portrays our societal values, strengths, and weaknesses. This fascination developed into a resolve to become a working member of the criminal justice system after a week-long visit to Louisiana State Penitentiary in the spring of 2014. Spending a week around men convicted of the most serious crimes in the book and hearing their stories increased my conviction that no career would be so fulfilling for me as to work to do justice every day in my community.

So, I applied for law school and am now eagerly anticipating graduation this coming May. Throughout my legal education, I have realized more and more just how privileged I will be to have a degree that will enable me to protect the rights of others, and I am determined to use it to do just that. After graduation (and that pesky bar exam), I plan to become a prosecutor, perhaps after clerking for a judge for a year or two. I believe that prosecutors are in a unique position to promote human flourishing by bringing accountability, mercy, and creativity to their local justice system. I will be a prosecutor who seeks to punish offenders whenever it is necessary and to restore offenders to their community whenever it is possible. I will seek to exemplify humility and restraint, and I will not be afraid to try new solutions to difficult problems.

Though I may not be a prosecutor for the entirety of my legal career, I am committed to working as a public servant in some capacity. My ultimate aspiration is to become a judge. I desire this position not for its prestige or pay, but simply because I cannot imagine having a better job than to try to do the right thing under law in each and every case that comes before me. Being a judge would be an incredible intellectual and moral challenge, but it is a prospect that really excites me.

Law school has not been easy; the competitive atmosphere can breed loneliness and anxiety, and not all of my classmates share my passion for the legal system. However, on the days when I did not think I could study one more element of negligence or do one more read-through of my appellate brief, I thought of the people in my community who will some day need a lawyer to stand up for them. And because those people deserve to have the best lawyer possible, I would get back to work.

At the end of my career, I hope that I will have encouraged other attorneys to think about how to use their skills to give back to their communities. I hope I will have found truth in difficult situations and admitted when I made mistakes. I hope that I will have worked to implement systems that improve access to justice, increase efficiency, and hold lawyers accountable to do high-quality work. Most of all, I hope that my community will be a place where a few more people can flourish because some lawyer did the right thing when it mattered.