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The Language of Law

Law school represents, to me, both a solidification of my varied interests, and a substantial step forward in achieving my life goals.

I. The Importance of My Legal Education

I am grateful for the opportunity law school has provided for me to combine the skills I learned in college with my lifelong dedication to service. When I entered college, I only knew that I wanted my future career to be one which allowed me to help others address complicated problems. For such a job, I would at least need a firm grasp on research and writing; therefore, I majored in English. I also majored in German, where I sharpened these same skills in my second language.

Over time, my once blurry vision of my future plans began to focus. I looked seriously into the legal field, where I could utilize my reading comprehension, research, and writing skills in order to directly help clients. Law appealed to me as someone who can become engrossed in a dense text, but also as someone with a deep interest in a career dedicated to others. With such knowledge in mind, I applied to law school, eager to speed through the next three years so I could become a public interest attorney as soon as possible.

Admittedly, it is difficult to do anything with “speed” when ten pages of text take an hour to read, and entire class periods are spent discussing a single case. The importance of my law school education, then, lies in the details, and in learning to slow down.

To absorb the language of the law, I had to fully immerse myself in the cases I read and analyzed. To simply memorize the holding of the case was not enough; I needed to take the

time to comprehend exactly how the court came to make such a decision, the stances of the parties involved, and the policy arguments behind the cases, among other considerations.

I soon extrapolated the tenets of my law school education to my plans to become a public interest attorney. I first focused on details – a desire to serve the public interest at large would do little to help me find the specific area of law in which I wanted to devote my career. In addition, taking the time to seek out advice, speak with others, and really consider my career options helped me refine my future goals.

II. Future Contributions to My Community

My career goals are two-fold: first, I would like to primarily dedicate my time as an attorney to legal aid work, in particular in service to victims of domestic violence; and second, I would like to utilize my law degree to assist nonprofits in my local area, specifically those dedicated to community development.

Soon after entering law school, I realized that I wanted to pursue a career in legal aid. I was lucky enough to intern this past summer at Prairie State Legal Services, where I assisted clients in their Orders of Protection cases. The work was particularly meaningful to me in rising numbers of domestic violence incidents as a result of the pandemic. As an attorney, I am determined to help my future clients both during these tumultuous times and after the immediate threat of the virus has passed.

In addition, volunteering will always be an important part of my life. I plan on devoting time outside of work to a local nonprofit or two, especially one as service-oriented as the West Bloomington Revitalization Project. Ideally, I would serve such an organization in a legal capacity. Still, I would be equally as pleased to serve as an active board member.

III. Conclusion

Although it took time to understand the specificities of the legal language, law school has proven invaluable to my future as a legal aid attorney and as an active member of my future community.