Interning at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San José, Costa Rica was one of the most formative experiences of my law school career. Not only did I get to live and work abroad, but I also had the opportunity to work with attorneys and interns from all over the world. All of the Court’s interns worked on a team of two attorneys and two interns. Each team was responsible for drafting the final judgments of several cases. These judgments were then voted on and eventually approved by the Judges of the Court. As an intern our daily responsibilities were extremely diverse. I spent most of my time researching the local jurisprudence of countries in the region related to specific issues in our case. Additionally, I reviewed the jurisprudence cited in the judgments our team was working on to ensure that each case was cited correctly. But my most challenging assignment was to draft a Resolution detailing a State’s compliance with a past judgment of the Court. This resolution explained how the State had complied with the Court’s judgment, issues that had arisen in the case after the judgment, and steps the State needed to take to be in complete compliance with the Court’s judgment.

I’ve always wanted to practice international human rights law, but this internship really solidified that desire. It inspired me to pursue an externship with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in Washington, D.C., where I was able to observe the initial stages of a case in the Inter-American System of Human Rights. Through these experiences I was able to observe human rights advocates in many different roles— as clerks for the court, as direct advocates for victims, and as judges. It was an incredible opportunity to learn the many facets of human rights advocacy and to be inspired by the amazing work of other human rights attorneys.