Adult Probation and Parole: District #12 (Staunton)

Placement Description

Interns will work under the direction of Probation/Parole Officers, and assist with the supervision of offenders placed on probation/parole.

Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- Court Observations
- Work with offenders and their families
- Home visits
- Employment contacts
- Observe interviews
- Assist with reports and paperwork

Contact Information

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Read about students’ experiences at this site below:
District 12: Staunton Probation and Parole follows the mission statement of the Department of Corrections, which is to “enhance the quality of life in the Commonwealth by improving public safety”. This is done in a variety of ways including “the reintegration of sentenced men and women in their custody and care by providing supervision and control, effective programs and re-entry services in safe environments which foster positive change and growth consistent with research-based evidence, fiscal responsibility, and constitutional standards”. D12 has their own personal vision of “We are here to make good things happen to other people”.

During my time at the site, I was able to have a diverse experience. I shadowed the mental health probation officer. Through this, I was able to meet and observe the supervision of people with serious mental illnesses. I got to watch several court hearings and learn about the different documents required for court as well as the different types of hearings. My time at District 12 allowed me to go to Western State, Middle River Regional Jail, and Cold Springs. I conducted urinalysis screens, fingerprinting, and presentence interview reports. Towards the end of my internship, I was able to supervise my own small caseload. This was very exciting and I think has prepared me for “the real job experience”. I scheduled my own appointments and met with offenders one on one. I conducted COMPAS assessments and helped offenders come up with goals to reach during their time on probation. I was able to log my notes and observations into CORIS, the database used for probation.

There are so many advantages to being at Probation and Parole. Every person in the office was helpful to me in some way, shape, or form. The officers and supervisors wanted to see me succeed in everything that I did. They included me in everything and treated me like a real part of the office. I was encouraged to give my opinions about the happenings around the office and I participated in the monthly staff meetings as well. There was something new every day that I went into the office. There was opportunity to get out of the office frequently as well. There are home visits to be conducted and other types of field work. At this placement site, a person has to expect the unexpected. It requires being able to shift gears and do something completely different at a moment’s notice. This was something that I really loved about the office. The internship is what you make of it. They will allow you to go above and beyond if that is what you’re interested in.

My contribution project involved creating a resource manual of local resources. This was distributed amongst all the officers. It included information about all the housing, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and food/clothing resources within the district. I put the applications for each of these resources in the manual as well. This allows the officers to be able to have help readily available for their offenders. This is important because the goal of probation is to lower recidivism rates and I believe that this will really help.

I think conflict management was one of the most important skills that I learned at this placement. No matter what a future job throws at me, I have learned how to be prepared for the unexpected. It might be that all your appointments show up at once, one of your offenders gets arrested, or an offender comes in and needs to be sanctioned. I have loved this experience so much that I have applied here. It really helped me shape what I wanted to do with my degree. This field placement has truly been the best part of my academic career thus far.
Spring 2017 – Allison Reese

The Staunton Probation and Parole Office’s mission is to enhance the quality of life in the Commonwealth and public safety. They do this through providing supervision and control, having effective programs and reentry services, and fostering positive change using evidence based practices.

My experience there involved a lot because I tried to make the most of it. I was able to help supervise a low risk level caseload through which I conducted my own appointments. I shadowed officers in appointments, court, home visits, and orientation. I was able to sit in with the sex offender peer group and learn about what that includes. A lot of what I did was make appointments for the caseload and home visits and to conduct the actual appointments. I also learned to take drug screens, finger print, and went through metal detector training. I got to participate in the staff meetings once a month as well.

This site is fantastic if you are interested in conflict management, criminal justice, or high risk populations. At first I did not think that I would want to be an intern here but after my interview and experiencing the atmosphere I knew it was a good fit! My advice would be that if you feel like you aren’t getting enough work or experience, then ask for more. The workers at the site are extremely helpful and friendly and want to make your internship experience as educational and useful to you as possible. This site will push you out of your comfort zone, but that is why you should want to be there. My supervisor never made me do things I was uncomfortable with and was always there to answer questions. I think everyone agrees that drug test are not very fun but they are a new skill and it is different. My favorite part was feeling like my contribution project was actually helpful. Work with your supervisor and be observant to determine something that you could contribute to the office; this makes the whole process so enjoyable.

Through my internship I learned more about evidence based practices and the important role that probation officers have in the community. It inspired me to work with high risk populations and to continue helping others. My time was so influential that I have applied for a job opening in their office. For incoming students looking at internships, if this site at all interests you, definitely try and get an interview and get a feel for it. You might find a hidden gem of an experience!