

Federal Court Judicial Internships in San Antonio

Semesters: Summer 2009, Fall 2009, and Spring 2009

**Deadline:
Noon Monday February 23, 2009**

Applications are now being accepted for pre-graduation judicial internships with five federal judges who have chambers in San Antonio. This is the only time that applications will be solicited for internships with these courts during the next three semesters. A detailed pamphlet, entitled "*Pre-Graduation Judicial Internships*," accompanies this e-mail and is available on the website (law.stmarytx.edu) in the section on "Judicial Internships." Questions about the various internship programs can be directed to the faculty advisors listed in that handout.

The United States Court of Appeals

There are two different internships available with judges on the Fifth Circuit. One is a four-credit, graded internship; the other is a two-credit pass/fail internship.

The Honorable Emilio M. Garza, a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, will offer internship positions to two students during each of the next three semesters (summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010). Under the supervision of a law clerk in the judge's chambers (which are located in the Fountainhead tower on IH-10 near Callaghan), interns will assist the judge with the drafting of opinions in cases pending before the nation's second highest court. Interns can expect to work on perhaps three or more different cases. Interns are required to work 240 hours in chambers on a regular schedule during the semester, and may earn four graded credits toward graduation, for which tuition must be paid. It is possible for the student to meet this time obligation by working four hours every weekday afternoon (*e.g.*, 1-5 p.m. or 2-6 p.m.) for 12 of the 15 weeks in the fall or spring semesters. Other schedules are possible, but such arrangements must allow for intensive supervision of research and writing on a regular basis. *Judge Garza is particularly interested in candidates with demonstrated writing ability. High academic standing is essential.*

The Honorable Edward C. Prado, a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, will offer internship positions to one student during each of the next three semesters (summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010). Under the supervision of a law clerk in the judge's chambers (which are located on Rt. 281 near Trinity University), interns will assist the judge with pending cases. The work will involve research and writing. Interns are required to work 120 hours in chambers on a regular

schedule during the semester, and may earn two pass/fail credits toward graduation, for which tuition must be paid. It is possible for the student to meet this time obligation by working ten hours per week for 12 of the 15 weeks in the fall or spring semesters. Other schedules are possible. *High academic standing is essential.*

The United States District Court

At the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, one or two positions each semester are likely to be available with each of two judges (Honorable Xavier Rodriguez and Honorable Fred Biery) during each of the next three semesters (summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010). Interns will assist the judges with a variety of tasks, which may include rulings on motions, preparation of jury charges, and other forms of research and writing related to trial court litigation. While it is unlikely that interns will work on opinions that are published, interns at the U.S. District Court (in contrast to those at the U.S. Court of Appeals) will have the opportunity to observe courtroom proceedings on a regular basis.

United States District Court interns are required to work 120 hours during the semester at the federal courthouse at Hemisfair Plaza in downtown San Antonio. Interns will earn two pass/fail credits, for which tuition must be paid. *Successful candidates typically have a strong academic record.*

The United States Magistrate Court

At the United States Magistrate Court, one internship with the Honorable Pamela Mathy is available during each of the next three semesters (summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010). Magistrate Judges handle motions and other matters at the request of the United States District Court and may preside over trials with consent of the parties. The internship provides an excellent opportunity for a student to improve his or her research and writing skills while assisting the federal courts in their important work. *Successful candidates typically have a strong academic record.*

Pass/Fail Credit Limitations

Students may not count toward graduation more than eight ungraded (pass/fail) elective credit hours earned at St. Mary's.

Applications

Interested students should submit an application to Professor Vincent R. Johnson. Please give your application materials to Ms. Maribel Garcia on the second floor of the Raba Law Faculty Building. Questions can be directed to Professor Johnson at: vjohnson@stmarytx.edu.

An application should include:

(1) One federal court internship form, attached to this message in PDF format or available from

Ms. Garcia or on the website. (The form asks a student to indicate which judges the student would like to be considered by and which semesters the student is available to serve in an internship.)

(2) For each judge by whom a candidate would like to be considered:

- One resume, including cumulative GPA and current class rank;
- One coverletter in business-letter format (date; return address, judge's address (see below), proper salutation (*e.g.*, Dear Judge Garza). In terms of tone, the letter should be restrained, professional, factual, and confident.
- Please staple the cover letter to the front of the resume. Please do not use special folders or bindings; they will be removed before the applications are sent to the judges.

(3) Applicants for a U.S. Court of Appeals internship with Judge Emilio Garza should, if possible, furnish one writing sample (*e.g.*, a Legal Writing memo or brief, a copy of an exam essay, a law journal comment, etc.). Writing samples should not be included for the other courts.

Eligibility of Full-Time and Part-Time Students: Students may apply for any internship that will commence in a semester after the student has completed 31 hours of course work. Thus, a first-year full-time student may apply for an internship that will take place in the summer between first and second year, or during any subsequent semester. A first-year part-time student may applying for a judicial internship that commences in spring of the student's second year or later.

An ad hoc faculty committee will make recommendations to the judges, who are free to disregard (and sometimes do disregard) those recommendations in making decisions. *However, the recommendation of the committee is ordinarily such an advantage that if a student is recommended to one judge, his or her resume will not be forwarded to other judges, since judges do not want to spend time reviewing applications of candidates who have been recommended to other courts.* The resumes of students who are not recommended for a particular position are forwarded to each judge to whom the student applies. Once the committee learns that a student has been selected by a judge, the applicant will be notified (ordinarily by law school e-mail) that he or she has been offered a position. Normally, the decisions on U.S. Court of Appeals interns are completed before District Court and Magistrate Court interns are selected. The selection process takes several weeks. Students who are not notified of a decision before classes end in April may assume that they will not be offered a position.

In past semesters, interns from St. Mary's have been enthusiastic in their praise of the internship programs at these federal courts. The positions provide students with excellent opportunities for deepening their understanding of the federal courts, improving their writing skills, contributing to the administration of justice, and cultivating as potential references persons holding positions of great importance in the federal judiciary.

Addresses for cover letters:

(Please do not send letters directly to the judges; they will return them to the law school. Submit applications to Ms. Maribel Garcia on the second floor of the Raba Law Faculty Building.)

The Honorable Emilio M. Garza
United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
8200 I.H. 10 West, Suite 501
San Antonio, Texas 78230-3877

The Honorable Edward C. Prado
United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
755 East Mulberry Street
Suite 300
San Antonio, Texas 78212

The Honorable Xavier Rodriguez
United States District Court for the Western District of Texas
John H. Wood, Jr. U.S. Courthouse
655 East Durango Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas 78206

The Honorable Fred Biery
United States District Court for the Western District of Texas
John H. Wood, Jr. U.S. Courthouse
655 East Durango Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas 78206

The Honorable Pamela A. Mathy
United States Magistrate Judge
United States District Court for the Western District of Texas
John H. Wood, Jr. U.S. Courthouse
655 East Durango Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas 78206

In each case, the proper form of salutation is “Dear Judge _____” (*e.g.*, Dear Judge Mathy)