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What I did on my summer vacation—UMM style!

Summary: UMM students Jessica Anderson '07, Mapleton, Kim Buffington '07, Mound, and Chris Omlid '08, Grand Forks, North Dakota, complete summer internships with Judge Carol Eckersen '80 and meet Justice Lorie Gildea '83.

(August 17, 2006)-Many University of Minnesota, Morris students completed exciting internships during the summer of 2006, and three of the most enthusiastic about their experience are Jessica Anderson '07, Mapleton Kim Buffington '07, Mound and Chris Omlid '08, Grand Forks, North Dakota. Their internships with the State of Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings allowed them first-hand experience in the field of law and the realm of public service. Two UMM alumni contributed greatly to their successful experiences, Judge Carol Eckersen '80, Office of Administrative Hearings, and Justice Lorie Skjerven Gildea'83, Minnesota Supreme Court.

Eckersen organized the internships. She states: "One goal of the summer intern program was to provide a broad experience to the interns, allowing them to see not just my work but others as well. They observed all types of worker's compensation proceedings, a crime victims' reparations hearing, and a public utilities hearing. They visited the Federal Courthouse and met the U.S. Attorney for the District of Minnesota and three Assistant U.S. Attorneys who specialize in civil litigation. They also spent a day at the Juvenile Justice Center with the presiding judge of Hennepin County Juvenile Court, Judge Tanya Bransford."

For the students, one of the highlights of their internships was meeting Justice Lorie Skjerven Gildea '83. She spoke to them about her law career and described the deliberation process of the court. Buffington, a political science and management major, is inspired by Gildea's words and affirmed in her decision to attend UMM: "Justice Gildea is a great inspiration. She explained to us that she encounters many different types of cases. Law covers so many areas of life—medical, criminal, family, sports, financial, administration. A liberal arts school that gives its students a broad base of knowledge to expand on in the future is a necessary stepping stone for students embarking on a legal profession or really any profession." In addition to Gildea, the students also met Chief Justice Russell Anderson and Justices Paul Anderson, Barry Anderson, and Sam Hanson.

All three UMMers are amazed by how much they as interns were able to contribute during their internships. In addition to observing pre-hearing procedures and trials, they also prepared orders and decisions, and conducted legal research. "I actually drafted decisions for Carol and some of the other judges," shares Anderson, a psychology major. "I was surprised by how much writing I got to do and how much of my work the judges actually included in their final decisions."

Writing was also a key learning opportunity for Omlid, a sociology and political science major. "This internship taught me many valuable lessons," says Ohmlid. "It made me think and write more like a lawyer, which was a hard adjustment to make, but something that I don't think I will ever lose. It gave me a sneak peak into what my life could be like after law school."

Anderson, Buffington, and Omlid plan to attend law school after graduating from UMM.

Photo from left: Paul Almen, William Mitchell College of Law student, Chris Omlid '08, Grand Forks, North Dakota, Kim Buffington '07, Mound, Jessica Anderson '07, Mapleton, Justice Lorie Skjerven Gildea '83, and Judge Carol Eckersen '80.

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