

LAURA TAYLOR

EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, TN

J.D. Candidate, May 2023

Awards: George Barrett Social Justice Stipend; Justice-Moore Family Scholarship (awarded to a student who shows public service promise); Chancellor's Law Scholar; Dean's Leadership Award; Dean's List.

Activities: Law Students for Social Justice Community Outreach Chair; Health Law Society Secretary; Energy and Environmental Law Society Treasurer; Co-counsel First-year Student Mentor; Vanderbilt Ambassadors Diversity & Inclusion 1L Representative.

University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

B.A., *magna cum laude*, Criminology and Letters, 2019

Activities: Phi Beta Kappa; Regents Scholar; President's Honor Roll; Research Assistant with the Department of Sociology; Student Government Association; Medical Ethics and Issues Discussion Panel.

EXPERIENCE

The Bronx Defenders, New York City, NY

5/2022 – Present

Criminal Defense Practice Intern: Write research memos and trial-level felony motions and responses, attend hearings under supervisor who specializes in forensics, interview clients for and represent clients in arraignments, engage in trial practice skills and moot trial exercises and receiving evaluations from managing attorneys.

Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, TN

5/2022 – Present

Graduate Research Assistant to Dean Susan Kay: Research federal and Tennessee state criminal procedure to create a criminal defense practice manual for the state of Tennessee, which will be published on Lexis. Currently researching laws and statutes regarding confessions to create a chapter that will provide attorneys with both substantive law and best practice guidelines to be published in the fall of 2022.

Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C.

5/2022

Law Clerk: Worked with a supervising homicide-unit attorney on short-term trial projects. Drafted a letter requesting case dismissal for a child abuse case. Created an investigation plan in conjunction with supervising attorneys and investigators for a homicide case including witness interview plans. Attended a preliminary hearing and took notes to create an updated case analysis memo. Reviewed new discovery for multiple homicide cases, including BWC footage, to help build supervising attorney's defense plans.

Southern Center for Human Rights, Atlanta, GA

1/2022 – 5/2022

Legal Extern: Represented a client before the Alabama parole board, successfully creating a parole appeal packet and an oral argument to secure their parole. Worked within the Impact Litigation Unit, interviewing clients regarding human rights violations in prisons in the Deep South.

Laura Taylor

Vanderbilt Legal Clinic, Nashville, TN 1/2022 – 5/2022
Qualified Student Attorney: Represented clients directly in court on felony cases and successfully performed a cross-examination in court for a bail reduction hearing. Conducted client and witness interviews, researched case law and felony statutes, wrote and filed motions and petitions, and negotiated with prosecution to reduce or dismiss client cases. Serving as an advanced clinic student beginning in the fall of 2022.

Federal Public Defender, Middle District of Tennessee, Nashville, TN 8/2021 – 12/2021
Legal Extern: Represented federally death-sentenced individuals in the Capital Habeas Unit in federal habeas and state clemency proceedings, specifically focusing on capital appeals based on a new mental health law. Wrote research memoranda related to this new law.

Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, TN 5/2021 – 7/2021
Graduate Research Assistant to Professor Nancy King: Researched state statutes, federal law, case law, and secondary sources on joinder and double jeopardy for the Criminal Procedure treatise, the only comprehensive reference covering state and federal criminal procedure.

Midwest Innocence Project, Kansas City, MO 6/2021 – 8/2021
Legal Intern: Conducted investigation and legal research, managed cases, led counsel meetings with incarcerated clients, and drafted motions for DNA testing, ineffective assistance of counsel, and other post-conviction relief, including an appeal filed with the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Texas Center for Justice and Equity, Austin, TX 5/2020 – 8/2020
Policy Associate: Wrote and presented a research summary outlining the harms of Texas youth justice system, including the school-to-prison pipeline, the treatment of youth in schools, and the overrepresentation of minority-status youth in detention.

Tennessee Justice Center, Nashville, TN 5/2019 – 7/2019
Casework Intern: Investigated client eligibility for healthcare coverage under Tennessee's Medicaid program. Represented clients in administrative proceedings. Advocated for Medicaid expansion within the state of Tennessee by assisting with webinar presentations about the issue. Internship funded by the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation.

INTERESTS

Personal interests: Baking, yoga, tennis, pottery, photography, community organizing and activism, and the St. Louis Cardinals.

Volunteerism: Alumna Mentor with The Oklahoma Group, Volunteer at the Tennessee Justice Center, Pen Pal with Black and Pink PenPals.