

9 August 2018

Re: South Australian Law Foundation Scholarships – Human Rights Internship Programme

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to thank the Law Foundation of South Australia for generously granting me a scholarship of \$3636.00 to undertake the Flinders University Law School Human Rights Internship Programme in 2018.

For the month of July 2018, I undertook an internship with Projects Abroad Human Rights Office (“PAHRO”), a free legal clinic operating in Cape Town, South Africa. PAHRO’s aims are to help people realise their rights and access them, as well as rehabilitate incarcerated youth. PAHRO operates from its office based in Wynberg and has two weekly outreach legal clinics that operate in Vrygrond and Mitchells Plain. Interns at PAHRO work under the supervision of a Program Manager and three supervisors.

As an intern, I was delegated case files for which I was responsible. My main responsibilities in relation to the case files were conducting legal research, drafting documents, and contacting and conducting consultations with clients. I performed these tasks under the guidance of my two supervisors, Maria Mulindi and Danielle Fillis, experienced lawyers specialising in refugee and civil matters respectively. Through this one-on-one supervision I received constructive feedback and guidance on the processes and law in South Africa, as well as a broad context to the matters we were assisting clients with.

During my internship I worked on a range of legal matters, developing my research and drafting skills. I researched a range of matters including:

- International and South African refugee law and human rights conditions for journalists in the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- South African law on how a default judgment of a divorce order can be partially rescinded to alter the property and custody orders; and
- How a land owner can lawfully evict an unlawful occupant.

I also drafted a range of legal documents including summonses, a will, and a declaration for certification.

My internship with PAHRO allowed me to contribute towards the goals of the organisation by informing clients of their legal rights and assisting clients to access those rights, both in a legal and practical manner. With the assistance of interns, PAHRO is capable of offering a free legal service with a high case load. This is demonstrated by the number of clients, ranging from twenty to fifty, attending the weekly outreach clinics in Vrygrond and Mitchells Plain. All client consultations were conducted within the two hour clinic.

Personally, the internship was an invaluable experience that developed my legal skills and self-confidence, especially in conducting client consultations. It was also a deep cultural emersion through which I observed first-hand the challenges South Africa is grappling with after Apartheid. While the law was very similar to Australia, the context in which it was applied greatly differed. Three major challenges with legal implications I observed through my internship were the significant housing inadequacies, the lack of awareness about wills and estates, and the poverty and disadvantage experienced by those living in townships. Despite these challenges, the vibrancy and humour of South Africans was always uplifting.

I am very grateful to the Law Foundation of South Australia. Without the generosity of this scholarship I would not have been in a financial position to undertake this internship and would not have had this invaluable experience.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helena Errey-White', written in a cursive style.

Helena Errey-White

Photo taken at the Wynberg Office on the last day of my internship.

