

Neuroscience & Public Policy Internships

Two Neuroscience & Public Policy students, Annie Racine and Princess Ojiaku, spent the summer completing internships as part of their dual-degree requirements.

Annie Racine

Annie completed an internship this summer at "Policy Matters Ohio," which is a non-profit research institute based in Cleveland, Ohio. Before her summer internship began, Annie worked with the executive director, a La Follette alum, to find a project relevant to her background and skills in neuroscience and public policy. Annie decided to collaborate with the Ohio Children's Defense Fund to develop a publication for school personnel to learn about the impacts of chronic stress on child development and about information resources they can draw on to help trauma-affected students succeed in school. Annie spent the majority of the summer researching trauma-informed care practices in schools across the nation, interviewing Ohioans about local care practices, and writing a policy brief on trauma-informed care in schools that will be published this fall.

Policy Matters Ohio employees and interns are encouraged to attend policy relevant events. Among others, Annie attended a meeting on child behavioral health held by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, a Policy Matters Ohio board meeting, and a Friday Forum at The City Club of Cleveland. These events informed her work and gave Annie a more well-rounded understanding of the diverse policy work in which Policy Matters Ohio is involved.

The best parts of this internship were the impromptu discussions, debates, and lessons on current events, history, policy, politics, and, occasionally, life itself, that often arose in the office common space amongst interns and staff. As a result, Annie has reconsidered her views on several policy issues and now know the meaning of "granfalloon."

Princess Ojiaku

The MacArthur Foundation has a myriad of programs, but Princess's internship focused on immigration policy, income and wealth inequality, housing policy, and civic media and democracy. Most of what she knew about the MacArthur Foundation before her internship was summed up in two parts the Foundation's support for public media and the MacArthur Fellows Program (also known as "Genius" Grants). But over the summer as an intern with the Policy Research team, Princess learned so much more about the MacArthur Foundation, philanthropy, and private foundations in general. She learned that MacArthur is one of the few private foundations that support research that informs policy decisions. In addition, She learned about the process of granting money to non-profit organizations that serve the public interest.

During her internship, Princess worked on civic media and democracy, immigration, housing rights, income inequality and demographic differences in wealth. Most of her time was spent researching the current political conversation surrounding these topics and writing policy briefs on the actions that other entities were taking in relation to them. She

also worked with the Justice Program to report on a judicial conference on juvenile justice. Throughout her internship at the MacArthur Foundation, Princess attended many staff meetings, special events, and intern-specific briefing on topics unique to the foundation and its operations. She learned how the Foundation operates, additional information on its many programs and overseas offices, and more about its overarching goals and ideals. Princess was very fortunate to work around so many accomplished people who also are extremely friendly, down-to-earth, and passionate about their work and making a difference.