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Summer 2018

## Aspen Olsen - Iowa Legal Aid

Aspen Olsen

*University of Northern Iowa*

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# Aspen Olsen - Iowa Legal Aid

## Robert and Yvonne Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement

Instructions: Please work with your internship supervisor to fill out this form. Once completed, return to Kristina Kofoot [redacted] by August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

**Name:** Aspen Olsen    **Agency:** Iowa Legal Aid

**Intern's Phone Number and E-mail Address:** [redacted]

**Organization Contact Person and Phone:** Michelle Jungers: [redacted]

**Academic Advisor Person and Phone:** Sunny Potter: [redacted]

**Future Plans for student:** [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

### What did you accomplish during your internship?

I completed my Koob scholarship project, which was to create a system to more easily track reunification, re-entry, and re-abuse statistics for children who are part of the Parent Representation Project. I did this by creating an excel spreadsheet and collected data on the names of the clients, the date the case was opened and then closed, the date of the removal of the children if they were removed from parent custody, if the children were returned to the parent custody, how long they were removed from parent custody, if the children re-entered the child welfare system and if re-abuse occurred, and analyzed the various outcomes of the cases.

### How did the internship benefit the student?

I found interning at Iowa Legal Aid to be extremely beneficial. I learned so much about the intersectionality in social work and the law. I was able to practice the skills I learned in the classroom. I gained the valuable work experience and was able to broaden my network. Most importantly, I was able to improve myself. I became confident in my ability to effectively create change. Also, I was able to figure out my passion and what direction I want to take my social work degree in. I will be able to take everything that I learned from my internship and utilize it in my future endeavors.

### How did the internship benefit the agency?

Aspen was a wonderful addition to the Parent Representation Team. She was able to gain a great deal of experience observing court, family team meetings and client meetings but also made phone calls, drafted legal pleadings and letters and helped connect our client's to needed resources or services. She also helped to create a spreadsheet for tracking data on the work of the Parent Representation Project which will allow the tracking to be streamlined and not take so much of precious staff time.

**How does the internship benefit the community?**

For my Koob Scholarship project, I was able to create a document to help the team at Iowa Legal Aid further the goal of the Parent Representation Project to reduce the time kids spend in foster care unnecessarily, to reduce incidents of re-abuse of children, and to reduce the chances that children will re-enter the child welfare system. By creating this document, I was able to help staff identify ways that the project model has been successful in Black Hawk County.

**(Student to complete) One quote that describes the experience gained from completing this internship (to be used for promotional materials; please specify author of quote)?**

"Don't Just

Don't just learn, experience.  
Don't just read, absorb.  
Don't just change, transform.  
Don't just relate, advocate.  
Don't just promise, prove.  
Don't just criticize, encourage.  
Don't just think, ponder.  
Don't just take, give.  
Don't just see, feel.  
Don't just dream, do.  
Don't just hear, listen.  
Don't just talk, act.  
Don't just tell, show.  
Don't just exist, live."

— Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*

I always wondered why somebody doesn't do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody.

*-Lily Tomlin*

It is not enough to be compassionate. You must act.  
- Dalai Lama

**(Intern supervisor to complete) One quote that describes the impact the intern had on the community (to be used for promotional materials; please specify author of quote)?**

Aspen was not only a wonderful addition to the work we do each day, she demonstrated patience and resourcefulness with our clients who were experiencing horrible circumstances. Her positivity throughout her time here was refreshing.

**Please provide:**

- **A reproducible photo of the intern in action at their internship for media purposes**
- **If applicable, a copy of materials created by the intern including but not limited to: books, program materials, videos, promotional materials etc.**
  - **This is not possible due to confidentiality.**