Internships Influence Careers
By Tiyona Pariani

College students Grace Onuoma and Jean Marie Nshimiyimana enjoy investigating and analyzing. As Civic Center Volunteers (CCV) interns with the Marin County District Attorney’s Office, they’ve observed court hearings and reviewed proceedings. They have created summary reports based on original sources such as police reports, interview tapes, and medical records. Both now plan legal careers.

Most of the DA’s cases are interesting, but two stand out for Grace and Jean Marie. Grace was intrigued by a purse-snatching case that required her to read police reports, analyze information, learn to use the California Penal Code, and write a summary. Jean Marie’s most compelling case involved a hit-and-run collision in which a pedestrian was killed. He followed the case from the start, read all police and medical reports, analyzed facts, and learned the investigation process.

The students’ mentor is Deputy District Attorney Otis Bruce Jr., a long-time CCV supervisor and supporter of interns and volunteers. Otis provided resources and guidance to support successful learning about legal work. “I was really impressed with how Grace and Jean Marie both had the innate sense of service-above-self in their efforts to receive and complete their respective projects,” he said. “They exhibited true character, professionalism, and leadership.”

The idea of a county internship grabbed Grace’s interest when she met Internships Coordinator Joy Fossett at a career fair. Working with professionals, she learned about different areas of the law and discovered that the county is a good place to build a career. She plans to pursue a job in criminal justice.

Grace immigrated to the United States from Nigeria when she was in middle school. She now majors in criminal justice at San Francisco State University. While interning, she attended classes, worked as a teacher’s assistant, and served as president of her sorority. She enjoys mystery novels and loves playing soccer and tennis.

Jean Marie began his education in Rwanda, his home country. After high school, he continued at National University of Rwanda, then came to the U.S. and interned with Marin’s Health and Human Services Department before the DA’s Office. Jean Marie works as a Kinyarwanda language tester for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and at Smith Ranch Homes in San Rafael. He and his wife Danielle Aubin are new parents; baby Amira Rose was born in December. Currently a Santa Rosa Junior College paralegal student, his dream job is to be an immigration lawyer.
High School Ambassadors Boost Teen Girl Conference Success

High school interns serving as teen ambassadors helped make the 2018 Marin Teen Girl Conference a success. As they planned and organized the event, they built skills and bonded as a team. The girls gathered in-kind donations, found sponsors, invited speakers, and comminated with workshop facilitators. They also spread the word about the event at their schools and on social media. On event day, ambassadors greeted attendees, supported facilitators, and served as emcees. The conference is sponsored by the Marin Women’s Commission.

College intern Katie Smith helped coordinate the March 25 event. L to R, back row: Pilar Goodman, Caroline Herdman, Mia Tokarski, Audrey Tuck, Lily Carbullido, Molly Gibbon, Shannon Lafon, Liza Polysylkin, Sonia Saltzman, Maddie O’Keefe, Hannah Reiter. Middle: Samantha Newman, Makena Cussick. Front: Georgia Cox, Nicole Fuchs, Claire Stephens, Sophia Rocha, Leab Fullerton, Kathia Monterrosa, Georgia Lee, Sierra Cussick. The teen ambassadors and Katie are all student interns with the Civic Center Volunteers program.

Who’s New & Welcome!

Varun Aruldas (San Rafael), Children’s Room Teen Volunteer, Civic Center Library
ANYA Bodine-McCoy (San Anselmo), Student Service Intern, Fairfax Library
Joan Clemmons (San Rafael), Ombudsman Volunteer, Health & Human Services (HHS)
Zakhary Cunningham (Novato), Human Resources Intern, Human Resources (HR)
Sierra Cussick (Woodacre), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR
Stan Green (Greenbrae), Program Consultant, HR
Arlene Heitmer (Mill Valley), Ombudsman Volunteer, HHS
Caroline Herdman (Mill Valley), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR

David Hernandez-Deras (San Pablo), Administrative Intern, HHS
SALLY Hutchinson (Inverness), English as Second Language Tutor, Point Reyes Library
Shannon Lafon (Corte Madera), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR
Satvik Namburu (San Rafael), Children’s Room Teen Volunteer, South Novato Library
Karthik Raja (Menlo Park), Volunteer Attorney, Public Defender’s Office (PD)
Christina Reyes Loya (San Francisco) Post-Bar Law Clerk, PD
Hannah Reiter (San Rafael), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR

Sophia Rocha (Greenbrae), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR
Grace Rodriguez (San Anselmo), Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS
Kenneth Sharpe (San Anselmo), Ombudsman Volunteer, HHS
Claire Stephens (Novato), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR
Janice Stillman (San Francisco), Post-Bar Law Clerk, PD
Alex Thayer (San Francisco), Post-Bar Law Clerk, PD
Mia Tokarski (Mill Valley), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, HR
Bobby Wood (San Rafael), Graphic Design Aide, HR
Youth Volunteer Sets Sights High

By Shirley Trimble

Miller Creek Middle School eighth grader Satvik Namburu has a passion for volunteering at the Marin County Free Library and has earned high praise from staff supervisors in three library programs. He first came to the library summer reading program when he was just 9. “One day, I thought I could help other kids in the program,” he explained.

For three consecutive summers, Satvik, now 13, along with a dozen other students, has helped Children’s Librarian Kathleen Fitzhugh Remitz with the popular Summer Reading Challenge, which draws participation from 500 kids. The youth volunteers sign up children for the challenge at the Civic Center branch, explain the rules, and dispense prizes. “Satvik is totally professional, self-directed, inquisitive, and fun to work with. He is a great asset,” said Kathleen.

Satvik also belongs to the Library Teen Advisory Group, students in grades 6 through 12 who advise Teen Services Librarian Natalie Mallett about programs and services they’d like to see at the Civic Center branch. Members also organize summer crafts and movies, run the Teen Summer Challenge Program, shelve books, and write book reviews. Natalie said, “Satvik played a big role in coming up with and executing community service projects. He is creative, reliable, personable, and very ambitious in the projects he takes on.”

Recently Satvik began assisting at the South Novato Library Makerspace, where he sets up tools and materials for hands-on projects for children.
Youth Volunteer

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ages 2 through 12. Supervised by Librarian Adrienne Graham and Library Community Specialist Sara Bolduc, he helps teach participants. “Satvik is a resourceful and creative maker who inspires others with the fun and engaging projects he makes from recycled materials,” said Sara. “I like to help people. It gives me a sense of accomplishment,” said Satvik, who also volunteers with Miller Creek School’s Site Council. He is part of Youth Empowerment Service, which encourages student volunteering. He plays soccer, tennis, and chess, belongs to the Honor Society, enjoys reading, and loves to make balloon animals. With his parents and younger sister, he visits India on alternate years to see his grandparents and other relatives.

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