

Impressions of a Law Practice Program student



Jonathan Smith

As part of the inaugural group of Law Practice Program (LPP) participants, I am pleased to have an opportunity to share my impressions with you. The LPP consists of four months of in-person and online training with Ryerson University and a four month work placement. There is also a French LPP run at the University of Ottawa.

Overall I thought the LPP gave me a good appreciation of what it is like to practice law. At the start we were split into “firms” of three to four people and we had clients” who were actors with whom we interacted via web conference to conduct client interviews. We dealt with files in many areas of law including civil litigation, criminal, real estate, business law, family law and administrative law. We managed client matters from inception to completion, which I thought was a great learning experience as we were afforded opportunities to gain hands-on practical experience. There were also weekly online meetings with firms and our mentor, who was a practising Ontario lawyer. This was helpful for feedback and guidance on the work we were doing on our files.

In addition to the distance education component of the program, there were three weeks between September and December in which we attended Ryerson to hone our

legal skills in person. We conducted a mediation in a family law matter, a real estate closing meeting with a client, and appeared at a landlord/tenant hearing. The highlight of the program, in my opinion, was when the program secured courtrooms at 361 University Ave. in Toronto for us to cross-examine a witness and subsequently conduct an examination in chief. I gained perspective by completing different legal tasks and I will use this perspective to steer my legal career in the right direction.

I am finding the LPP training component helped to prepare me for the work I am doing on my placement at LAWPRO. Conducting realistic assignments in different areas of law with strict deadlines ensured that I would be ready to work at any type of law firm or corporate environment. ■

Jonathan Smith is spending his LPP work placement at LAWPRO.



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Remember – the practicePRO program has a web page devoted specifically to the concerns of lawyers new to practice. You can find it at: practicepro.ca/newlawyers.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, we'd love to hear from you.

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