

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Judicial Fellows named for 2018–2019: Ruby Harrington and Brian Polito

Ruby Harrington and Brian Polito have been named Judicial Fellows for 2018–19 school year by the Delaware Judiciary and the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Harrington, 26, of Pike Creek, and Polito, 26, of New Hope, Pa., are both second-year Master of Public Administration (MPA) students in the University of Delaware’s School of Public Policy and Administration. The pair are the fourth class of Judicial Fellows for the Delaware Judiciary since the program launched in January 2017.

This year, the program has changed slightly as fellows have committed to work with the Administrative Office of the Courts for a full school year. Previously, Judicial Fellows had only worked with the Courts for one semester at a time.

Prior classes of Judicial Fellows focused on researching how to help inmates with debt from court and other state fees, planning a new Delaware Courts’ Community Court initiative, and contributing to other Access to Justice issues. One of the first Judicial Fellows, Alexander Burns, has since joined the Administrative Office of the Courts as a Special Projects Analyst.

The Judicial Fellows Program (<https://www.sppa.udel.edu/ipa/student-opportunities/judicial-fellows>) is a joint effort between the Delaware Judicial Branch and the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA) and is modeled on IPA’s successful and long-running Legislative Fellows Program, which affords competitively selected students the opportunity to work with legislators and staff of the Delaware General Assembly. In the Judicial Fellows Program, two full-time graduate-level students work with the Delaware Administrative Office of the Courts, gaining on-the-job experience while assisting court staff in researching pressing government and legal issues and helping to implement solutions. The program is part of a larger, ongoing cooperative effort between the Delaware Courts and the University of Delaware that also includes the ten-year process improvement partnership with the Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics, where students work with court staff and the courts’ partners on ways to improve efficiency in court operations.

Harrington, a 2014 graduate of the University of Delaware, applied for the Judicial Fellows Program because she is interested in learning “how public policy can improve the efficacy of the judicial system.” She is interested in judicial programs as they relate to public health policy, particularly in “re-entry” programs for prisoners transitioning back to society.

Polito, a 2014 graduate of East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, said he was attracted to the program because of the Judicial Branch’s ongoing implementation of a Community Court program and its innovative focus on assisting and healing the community rather than just punishing individual acts. He said the program complements some of his prior public service experience with the United Way.

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