Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center
Call for Applications

Research Assistant

The Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center is accepting applications for a Research Assistant for our GIDEON Project.

About the Project

The Center is seeking contractors to gather qualitative and quantitative data on indigent defense services in upstate New York, as part of our Gauging Improvement in Defense Efforts and Outcomes in New York (GIDEON) Project. The Project investigates the impact of new funding provided for these services in the region. It addresses the impact of the funding, challenges in improving indigent defense services, and the changes, if any, to the lives of people receiving those services. Findings will shed light on how New York counties provide the constitutional right of assistance to counsel to criminal defendants, and how those services can be improved.

About the Role

The Research Assistant’s work will involve interviewing public officials and recipients of indigent defense services, collecting administrative data, conducting surveys of attorneys, observing criminal court sessions, and attending weekly meetings with the research team. Research Assistants will be responsible for collecting data, following collection protocols rigorously, storing information appropriately, and reporting back to the project team on what they find.

The ideal candidate for this role will be excited about the area of criminal justice or justice research generally, will be detail-oriented, and will be able to have comfortable and professional conversations with stakeholders throughout the criminal-justice system, especially public defenders and public-defense clients. History working on
research projects and studying research methods is a strong plus. The position would be ideal for a current student in a graduate program.

Research Assistants for the GIDEON Project typically work 20 hours a week under an hourly contract. Work is focused on goals and milestones determined at weekly meetings. Research Assistants report to the research team, including the GIDEON Project director and other research project managers and coordinators, depending on the needs of the Project over time. The team is currently working remotely, though we expect that as safety guidelines change over time, there will likely be in-person work around the state of New York. Compensation for this position is $25/hour on a contractual basis.

To Apply

To apply, please send a recent CV, a writing sample, and a cover letter addressing: (1) any prior research experience related to criminal legal systems and/or the reform of those systems, (2) any prior experience with specific methodological approaches to research (whether qualitative or quantitative), and (3) any other ways that your strengths would add value to the project. Materials should be sent to sgoldmeier@mail.smu.edu and albdavies@smu.edu by 11.59pm on Friday July 30, 2021.