
Our 2020 clerk was the delightful Cadeau Makazanyo

Cadeau was born in Congo, and then following the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, moved to Zambia with her family where she spent her formative years.

Thereafter, she arrived in Australia in 2009 through the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Resettlement Program. Cadeau subsequently became an Australian citizen and (at the time of her clerkship) was enrolled at Griffith University in the third-year of study of a dual degree - Bachelor of Laws/ Bachelor of Government and International Relations.



Here are Cadeau's reflections on her clerkship:

For most law students, the anxiety of finding legal experience and work in the foreseen future is always looming in the background. For most of us, perfection is the standard we set for ourselves or assume is what is required of us.

Coming into this role, I was overwhelmed with my own assumptions of what I expected working in a criminal law firm would entail. I accepted the narrative that I was just another person working in the background and my role didn't matter.

As far as cliches go, I truly left a different person.

Not only was I valued, but I felt heard and seen. Everyone went out of their way to welcome me and make me feel comfortable. No one was expecting perfection from me but simply someone willing to learn, is opened minded and ready to put in the hard work.

This clerkship allowed me set realistic standards for myself. I learnt so much about life and the law by simply hearing everyone's stories and experiences.

My favourite aspect of this clerkship was the opportunity to follow different lawyers each day and watching how they work with clients and other lawyers. This coupled with many other things, showed me the reality of practising law outside what we are taught.

It allowed me to understand what type of lawyer I want to be and what type of mentorship I thrive in; and I left knowing exactly the sort of environment I hope to someday start in my legal career. Most importantly, to have people who genuinely care for your success and future is so profound; and I absolutely got that from this clerkship.

Cadeau Makazanyo