

2025–2026

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING RECIPIENT



Deborah Chu

Deborah Chu is a senior at The University of Texas at Austin majoring in Plan II Honors and Government, with a minor in Business and Public Policy and a certificate in Core Texts and Ideas.

This summer, Deborah interned with the U.S. Department of Justice through the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, the largest such office in the country. Working in the Superior Court Division, she wrote legal research memoranda on contested issues, helped prepare arguments and trial briefings, assisted with grand jury training, updated hundreds of case files, and reviewed evidence, including body-worn camera footage, to prepare government exhibits. She also joined discussions with federal prosecutors and judges, among them national security professionals, which gave her insight into the challenges of investigating and prosecuting cases involving foreign actors.

Deborah was drawn in particular to how prosecutors develop legal theories to establish each element of a crime, and to how the government balances its responsibility to pursue justice against its heightened obligation to protect defendants' rights. The internship confirmed her aim of becoming a federal prosecutor with USAO-DC, ideally working on national security and cybercrime, and showed her how legal expertise intersects with cybersecurity and national security policy, a focus she plans to carry into law school.