At the end of the internship students have the option to voluntarily provide advice to future interns. Below is what was shared:

**Advice to future Criminal Justice Interns, from Summer 2022 Interns:**

* When it comes to first getting to your internship, I know it can be very daunting but you really need to try and get out of your comfort zone, this internship means you will spend the majority of your time in this place so you need to be able to make relationships. Supervisors notice if you put forth the effort and make yourself available when you finish the assignment they gave you and in my experience they are always ready to help you learn and improve your experience with them. The internship is a great time to learn about the field and try to figure out what you want to do moving forward after college. My best advice would be don’t be afraid to ask questions and insert yourself into situations if you can manage it. The more things you are a part of the more valuable the experience is. –James Watkins
* Start looking for internships in a field you really want to be in so it can help you decipher if that’s the route you actually want to take. Be diligent in your work and be open to new experiences, they will help you in the long run. -Skylar Parks
* Having the opportunity to work with NC parks was an extremely rewarding opportunity where I learned hands-on skills I would not have gained anywhere else. Having the freedom to choose your internship site is such an amazing benefit to your education and future! - Meredith Massey

Additional advice from interns who did not wish to share their names:

* If I had to give any student advice, it would be to start looking early and intern at a place you would not mind doing as your career because the internship might teach you this is not something you enjoy doing. However, throughout this opportunity do not take it for granted and use it as a stepping-stone because you’re one step closer to where you want to be.
* Finding an internship: If there is a career fair...GO. I was skeptical of the career fair, but attending it was the best decision because I was able to get an interview on the spot, and I had a job offer the next morning. Dress your best, bring your resume and do not be afraid to put yourself out there. Good luck!
* During The Internship: Speak to everyone. I have learned that networking is the best thing to do when looking for opportunities or to gain knowledge. You never know who knows who, so ask questions, and start conversations with everyone. Do not leave any stone unturned.
* My advice for future interns would be to be open when taking this opportunity. I never would have thought that I would have liked this internship as much as I did and now, I will be working their which is so exciting.
* The best advice I can give for finding an internship is to ask friends if they know any peers that have jobs in the criminal justice field. Networking can go a long way when attempting to find internships that fit what you’re looking for in a potential career. Networking can put you at an advantage for being chosen to intern or work at an agency or department. It doesn’t hurt to ask around your friend groups before using websites and other resources to help find an internship. Also, do not be afraid to take initiative at internship site. Waiting around to be told to do things can be counterproductive and can potentially make you a burden at internship sites. Making yourself useful while also learning from the internship site will impress supervisors and can open the door for employment in the future. I was able to gain permanent employment after the internship because I proved that I could be an asset to their team through showing initiative.
* I only applied to one internship, and lucky I got it. But I started applying early enough so if I didn’t get it, I still had time to look for another. I suggest scheduling as many interviews as you can and treat them all like your first choice. Even if you don’t get an offer from each of your interviews, you learn something from each one and can become a better interviewee. I fell in love with my internship, but you don’t want to go to a place that isn’t somewhere you can see yourself being happy.
* The advice I wish I had through the beginning of the process would be a few parts, the first one being to research your internship well. My mentor has a solo practice firm, in a building where he rents one office and I sit in the guest chair with my laptop on my lap every day. Secondly, pick a field and make sure you get that internship. Family law is interesting, but I would have much preferred doing something primarily with criminal law. The last piece of advice for this first paragraph would be to have patience and believe in yourself. I thought about giving up after 4 hard years of work, simply because I was struggling to get in touch with my [internship] mentor. Our education and time away from home must be worth more than minor inconveniences. Put yourself out there! Ask questions and speak to people who have information that you would like. I learned both the judge I spoke to and my mentor spent some time in the workforce before going to law school but they both recommended enrolling in law school directly after college. If your mentor gives you a responsibility, see to it and go above and beyond. There is a chance that I could be offered a job after this internship, and that is the way all interns need to think. My research will be a great memory to recall during a job interview with my mentor.
* This internship requires the focus level of full-time employment. You will not have less work or more free time because you are an intern. This is the last step (in conjunction with your classes) before graduation. Please dedicate your full attention to your courses and your internship, as it will fly by and if you are slacking, it will catch up with you.
* Always ask questions when you do not understand something, they know you are a student and do not expect you to already know everything. Talk to everyone and try to make as many connections as possible, these connections can be beneficial in your future careers or schooling.
* My advice on finding an internship is to contact agencies early and often so you can choose a place you think you may want to work in the future. Once you begin your internship, be punctual and professional. Even if you know nothing about the agency, being timely and carrying yourself appropriately means more than you think. Finally, go into the internship with an open mind and don’t be afraid to ask questions. Interacting with people during your internship is a huge part of the learning process. Don’t be hesitant to start a conversation with a stranger or ask them questions. Many people are more than willing to speak with you and help you learn more about the criminal justice field.