Bureau of Consumer Protection
Internship

Overview:
The Bureau of Consumer Protection is a state agency governed by the Office of Attorney General. There are seven regional offices across the state and all focus on ensuring fairness in the marketplace through investigation and prosecution of unscrupulous businesses. There jurisdiction in investigating consumer fraud extends to all products and services with the exception of insurance in most cases. The Bureau’s single most important investigative tool is its broad subpoena power, which can be used to compel a business to provide possibly incriminating documents. The Bureau of Consumer Protection acts as a mediator between two parties that are unable to resolve the issue on their own. The Bureau serves a critical role in the state of Pennsylvania in that it provides relief to consumers who would otherwise have to pursue private civil litigation that can be both costly and take a long time to settle.

Responsibilities:
- Legal research pertaining to active and potential future cases
- Developing business memos pertaining to pending investigations
- Reviewing consumer complaints and evaluating the proper legal remedies
- Synopsizing large volumes of consumer complaints into excel spread sheets
- Analyzing pertinent laws and their applications to consumer complaints
- Participating in conference meetings with agents and attorneys
- Mediating complaints through telephone conversations with both parties involved
- Researching businesses through online data bases to determine their legitimacy

Experiences:
I actively participated in several large investigations of consumer fraud. For example, one of the largest and most interesting cases dealt with a home builder company that was taking consumers’ money to build their dream homes, but failed to finish building the homes leaving the consumers out of their money and with either an unfinished home or no home at all to show for it. The Bureau had accumulated hundreds of consumer complaints against this particular business and decided to bring a lawsuit against the company in order to redress the consumers’ grievances.

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