

## **Inside Justice: A Summer Interns Perspective**

### **Three Drinks and a Lesson: What a Mock DUI Taught Me About Justice**

#### **Section 1: Logistics of a Mock Arrest**

*Disclaimer: The following experience is not a valid arrest. I contacted a police officer at a local department, and we scheduled one as though it were a ride-along. I committed no crime before this event. I had three drinks to experience the breathalyzer test, but a family member drove me to the police department. My motivations lie entirely in understanding an arrest firsthand.*

Have you ever been told by a police officer to have a few drinks before your arrest? I hadn't until a few days ago, when I sat at my aunt's kitchen counter and drank three vodka sodas so I could be breathalyzed. As she drove me to the police department, I wondered, Is this what it's like to turn yourself in? I rationalized that the arrest was fake and the breathalyzer would come without consequence, but I couldn't help but feel a sense of dread over me. It's a strange feeling, driving to a location where you know your freedom will be limited, even if only for a moment. I can imagine that, for those heading for a real arrest, it would make them question their free will. Am I willingly giving up my freedom? Is this my choice?

We arrived at the station and met with our police officer contact, who brought another officer along to perform the arrest. I sat in the passenger seat (which we pretended was the driver's side), and he approached the door. He told me later that if

this were a real arrest, his reasonable suspicion, the component needed to conduct the field sobriety test, would have been my glossy eyes and the faint smell of alcohol on my breath. He requested my license, which I provided, and asked questions like, Are you on any medications? Have you had any drinks tonight? I answered honestly, yes and yes, and he prompted me to step out of the vehicle. We entered a garage that officers utilize when transporting potential inmates to the station, and he conducted the three field sobriety tests there. If this situation were real, I would have been more hesitant to answer his questions. Anything you say can be used against you in court, so confirming that I had a few drinks could negatively affect me down the line. I likely would have made a statement such as, "I'm not comfortable answering any questions." This would also remove confirmation that alcohol is involved from the assessment, meaning the results depend solely on the officer's interpretation.