

Dear Student,

The Office of Career Services once again welcomes you to \_\_\_\_\_. Our mission is to empower and give you the resources you need to develop your unique career in the law, as well as to broaden your job opportunities. As a means of beginning this process, we encourage you to complete the attached Individual Development Plan worksheets.

### **What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?**

Think of the Individual Development Plan or IDP as your own personal career road map. It puts into words your vision for your career and identifies goals and action steps you can take – both short- and long-term – to move closer to that vision. Although we have included a framework for your IDP here, it can be put into any format that works for you. This is for you! The most important thing here is to document it. Studies regarding goal achievement show that those who articulate their goals in a concrete manner (writing, typing, using a vision board) are much more likely to achieve them.

Setting goals is an essential step in creating and taking ownership of your career. For many, your current goal may simply be to learn as much about your career options as possible. Others may already have a career goal, but are open to exploring additional opportunities and experiences. You will be reviewing and adding to your IDP as you move through law school. By mapping out a plan and stating your action steps, you can manage the process in a more self-directed manner, reducing stress and increasing your likelihood of success.

The foundation of your IDP is self-awareness. The plan begins by asking you to complete several self-assessment inventories that you will use to identify career options that fit your unique set of interests, skills and values. Self-awareness is essential to a successful and satisfying career.

After completing the worksheets, make an appointment with one of the career advisors in the Office of Career Services. Your advisor will help you set goals and generate action steps relevant to your career aspirations, whether you have a specific idea of what you want to do or you are simply in the information-gathering stage. Taking a proactive approach to your career early in your law school education allows you to be directed in the types of opportunities you seek. In addition to providing career advising, recruiting programs and job listings, We also offer educational programming, resources and networking opportunities to help you gain the information you need to make informed career decisions. We're here to help you, so please come see us!

Sincerely,