

Moving the Needle: The Case for Public Service Employers Paying Law Student Interns Session Worksheet

Nonprofit and government law offices routinely wrestle with scarce resources and hard budget choices. Paid internships should be budget priorities because they 1) improve recruitment and retention, 2) build goodwill, and 3) attract socioeconomically diverse interns. Paid internships do more than just allow interns to pay the rent. They evince a strong investment in student employees, and in attracting students who don't have independent or family funds to "subsidize" their summer. Both employers and career counselors can support students in making decisions about their public interest careers and paid internships give students more autonomy and space to make those decisions.

We encourage you to use this worksheet to prepare for discussions around paid internships for public interest law students.

What is your goal?

(example: I want to connect my students with employers who pay law student interns)

Who are the stakeholders?

(examples: law school administrators, employers, law students)

What are your talking points?

(example: paying interns sets students up for success in their public interest careers)

Other questions to consider when having these discussions:

What is your school's policy around public interest funding? Can students receive payment from an employer and public interest funding from the law school?

What are different set-ups of internships at organizations in your community?

What are the barriers in your community to paying interns in public interest positions?