

Memorandum

To: Lynne Traverse
Board Liaison, Experienced Professionals Section
Fred Thrasher
NALP Deputy Director

From: Bill Chamberlain
Chair, Experienced Professionals Section

Re: First Quarter Board Report

I am writing to outline the activities of the Experienced Professionals Section (EPS) since the Annual Conference. The EPS has four Work Groups: The Annual Education Conference Planning Work Group, The Experienced Professionals and Newer Professionals Collaboration Work Group, The Writing Opportunities Work Group, and the Long Range Retreat Planning Work Group (new and approved by the Board).

The Annual Education Conference Planning Work Group (Christine Carlson, Chair)

Nine RFPs were submitted on behalf of the EPS for the 2010 Annual Conference:

Avoiding Burnout—Getting Fired Up instead!	Jennifer Powell, Gina Rowsam, Anne Hensley
Change of Face: How the Recruiting Professional Can Help Ease New Hiring Partner Transition	Christine J. Carlson, Charlotte L. Wager, Leslie Ripley, Patricia Patrick
Emotional Intelligence for Leaders	Paula Nailon, Ameer McKim
From Permanent Offer to Associate Start Date: Avoiding the “Black Hole” of Invisibility - Put new associates on the road to success BEFORE they even set foot in the door!	Joni Peet, Michelle Cotter Richards
Hot Topic: Management Practices During a Challenging Economy	Gihan Fernando
Legal Ethics & Professionalism	Brad Sprayberry
Reinventing Yourself: Changing Positions, Changing Employers, Changing Sides	Elizabeth Armour, Emily Leeson, Rachel V. Simmonds-Watson, Lynne Traverse
What’s holding you back? How can students and associates overcome barriers to success and move forward with their job searches and careers?	Diane Downs, William Chamberlain, Robert Kaplan

The Work Group also proposed a separate experienced professionals lunch similar to the one held so successfully in Washington, DC. We have received word that this activity has been approved by the Conference Planning Committee.

The Experienced Professionals and Newer Professionals Collaboration Work Group (Sarah Staup and Brian Lewis, Co-Chairs)

The Work Group has focused on two areas:

- Conference planning for 2010
- Staffing the “Ask the Experts” conference calls hosted by the NPs

Conference Planning:

The 2010 conference planning proposals include several of the items used at this past year’s conference with a plan to beef up the last item mentioned. We plan to again ask registrants who are NPs if they would like a *conference mentor*. EPs registering would be asked if they would like to be a mentor for purposes of the conference. We have again proposed a *Newcomers’ Table* near the registration desk. This would be staffed by EPs and have helpful information including Tips from EPs on making the most of the conference, a list of the breakfast roundtable topics and information for mentors and mentees. We have asked to repeat the *Breakfast Roundtables* covering hot topics for the NPs hosted by the EPs.

All three of these programs have been accepted for the 2010 Conference with some tweaks.

Finally, the EP/NP Work Group is working on several additional contact points for the two groups that are more informal in nature. One will be offering to join NPs on the trek over to the Member Celebration Dinner. This is the exercise that fell a bit flat last year. Others will involve meeting for coffee, lunch, drinks or even exercise (!) if enough interest is expressed.

Ask the Experts Series:

The NPs have scheduled six telephone conferences between the 2009 and 2010 annual conferences. The Work Group’s charge is to provide them with recommendations for staffing them with the experts. The Work Group has done so with *Judicial Clerkships 101* which will be held on July 16 and presented by Sheila Driscoll from George Washington and Melissa Lennon at Temple.

An email to the EP listserv will go out shortly regarding recommendations for the other five sessions. Those sessions are Counseling Alumni (11/19/09), E-Professionalism and Social Networking (2/25/10), Diversity Best Practices 3/25/10, The Art of Follow Up: Closing the Deal (10/29/09) and Law Firm Economics 101 (12/17/09).

The Writers' Work Group (Brad Sprayberry, Chair)

The Writers' Work Group has provided regular "Tips for Tough Times" for the NALPnow! newsletter.

Betsy Armour's article, "Forging Strong Ties with Employers and Alumni in a Down Economy" was published in the June 2009 Bulletin.

Gina Rowsam and Rhonda Beassie will be submitting an article based on their provocative 2009 Annual Education Conference program on Second Life.

Long-Range Retreat Planning Work Group (Mary Hoagland, Chair)

Mary has circulated information from Claudia Rizzo on the programs for the Leadership Legends / EP Forums for 2004 – 2008 and Karen Britton is circulating documentation from last year's Retreat Work Group.

Mary has scheduled a conference call for Friday, July 10th with the following plan:

My goal for our July meeting is to create a strategy and a structure that enables us to systematically progress toward a recommendation that we can make by a date certain. I'd like to limit our calls to 45 minutes max and at first I'd like to meet monthly. When we get underway, we may decide to meet every other month.

Environmental Scanning Conference Calls (June 17th and June 29th)

Two environmental scanning calls were held to take the pulse of members of the EPS on the impact of the economy on current and future summer programs and to provide input for the Long Range Strategic Plan. About 15-18 members participated on each call and there was some overlap in participants between the calls.

Uncertainty about the economy understandably made both school and employer members hesitant to share too much information.

We discussed advice employers had for students seeking jobs in the current market. The employer members focused on flexibility in terms of practice area and geography as well as the importance of soft skills, such as maturity, communication skills and emotional intelligence. Students need to exhibit ties to the employer's location. All employers emphasized how tough it would be this fall for students to obtain callbacks and offers given the anticipated decrease in the size of summer programs for 2010. Screening interview questions will be more pointed and substantive. Students should avoid

mentioning interest in transactional work. The slightest red flag will result in a candidate being dropped from consideration.

At the time of the calls, most firms were in the process of determining the size of next year's summer class. Most anticipated hiring fewer 2Ls for Summer 2010. Employers will make offers to 2Ls in tiers to control the yield.

According to the employers on the call, offers to the Class of 2010 will not be postponed but will be made at the end of the summer per usual. There will be no third-year hiring this fall.

The good news is that this year's summers are extremely well-behaved, with less of a sense of entitlement than in past years. They are requesting more feedback than ever. Generational challenges seem to have fallen by the wayside in tough times.

For those students who do not get jobs at large firms right out of law school due to the economy and/or due to less than top grades, short-term alternative careers or gaps will be excused by employers when the economy turns around.

There was some positive discussion about the new "articling" or apprentice programs for new associates at Howrey, Drinker and others.

Some schools are developing blogs to better reach students, particularly those 2L and 3L students and alums who are in the market.

A few suggestions were proposed for the Long Range Planning Committee (Cherie Conrad and Carol Sprague):

1. Short, frequent anonymous surveys to quickly take the pulse of the membership on hot topics.
2. NALP should find a way to become the thinking person's Above the Law.
3. NALP "road shows" (on the model of the End of Season series) or potential regional conferences. There was some fear that regional conferences would drain attendance away from the Annual Education Conference.
4. The overarching concerns were cost to NALP members and the need for immediate information about the market.
5. The Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee should not focus overly much on the current economy.