

MEMORANDUM

TO: Timm Whitney, NALP Board Liaison, Experienced Professionals Section

FROM: Erin Springer

DATE: April 8, 2020

RE: NALP Experienced Professionals Section Board Report

Summary

The Experienced Professionals Section is wrapping up at a very interesting time! Our final quarterly call was held on April 7th with a robust agenda:

1. Work Group Update
2. Reminder about Antitrust
3. Soliciting Feedback for the NALP Board on the Town Halls
4. Exploring Online Resources for Collecting Market Data
5. OCI Questions to Consider
6. Fun Ideas for Engaging Students and Lawyers in Virtual Summer Programs
7. RFP Ideas and Solicitation for 2021 NALP Conference
8. Questions and Discussion

Work Groups

- **Strategic Planning Work Group.** The work of this group was completed upon the submission of their memo to the Board on September 13, 2019.
- **Annual Education/Bulletin/Webinar Work Group.** We reminded everyone that it's RFP season and encouraged people to resubmit their 2020 RFPs and brainstorm new ideas.
- **Experienced Professionals/New Professionals Collaboration Work Group.** Vice chair Sheryl Roberts provided an update on an upcoming webinar called "Communicating Post Interview," indicating both that a firm representative is still needed for the program and that it will likely be rescheduled for a later date.
- **Managing Your Own Professional Development.** I let the section know that I've provided feedback to Beth Moeller that this work group may not be a high priority for the section because it didn't get off the ground this year. Despite several attempts to solicit ideas and action, it never quite took off. It's possible that the section's next leadership team may have better luck!

Reminder about Antitrust

Before diving into agenda items centered around summer programs and OCI, I shared some basic tenets of antitrust that I've recently been reminded of from Alston & Bird's lead antitrust partner. Essentially, besides the obvious issues to avoid such as salary, benefits, employment terms, etc., it is important to avoid anything that could be perceived as signaling or implicit or explicit agreement when it comes to these issues. To play it safe, it was stated that our call would focus only on information that was already publicly available and that our discussions would steer clear of salary, summer program details, and the like.

Soliciting Feedback for the NALP Board on Town Hall Meetings

There was some confusion about the separation of the law school town hall and the general membership town hall. Most call participants appreciated that they were announced in the same email, while others didn't see that they were invited to both. Clara Solomon, Board Member from NYU, explained that NALP is trying a variety of formats and geographies to foster open communication between NALP members. One call participant inquired about whether NALP would be conducting polls outside of the Town Hall meetings and indicated that they would be very helpful. Clara reiterated that none of the polls conducted over the town halls are scientific and that NALP is committed to protecting the integrity of the data it presents publicly and to its members. Overall, it was widely acknowledged that the town halls are very helpful and truly appreciated.

Exploring Online Resources for Collecting Market Data

The purpose of this agenda item was to share online sources for gathering anecdotal information that isn't otherwise readily available. NALP has done a great job of creating a COVID-19 message board in order to serve as a formal repository for data. Other resources, such as anonymous message boards set up by law students and lawyers, however, can provide information in real-time and allow for less formal (and admittedly non-verified) environmental scanning. The following resources were shared on the call: Reddit, which has numerous message boards around law firm summer programs and fall start dates, among others; Top Law School Forum.com, which has more of the same; and of course, Above the Law. Most call participants were not aware of the Reddit boards, which have since been referenced as "very helpful."

OCI Questions to Consider

Most of what came up here has already been discussed in the town halls, but I've provided a recap below:

- An employer member raised concerns about not all schools moving to early 2021, expressing how difficult it will be to assess needs this fall.

- A school member shared that her school was grappling with questions around the time crunch around grades, and also how moving EIW to January/February will interact with other hiring (non-law firm, such as the DOJ Honors Program).
- Another school member raised the issue of all three law school classes interviewing at effectively the same time, sounding the alarm on space as well as the disruption this will bring to classroom learning.
- A [different] school member whose law school is considering February EIW dates expressed concern about being considered “late” if other schools hold their programs in January
 - Some employers chimed in to say that February is actually preferable if it increases the chances of getting grades
- A [different] school mentioned that even if they schedule OCI in January/February, they will still allow employers who request it the opportunity to come on campus in the fall.
- A [different] school member indicated that, for his school, it all comes down to academics and figuring out how to manage EIW, callbacks, and keeping students in class.
- Finally, yet a different school member asked if any firms were considering canceling OCI altogether for the upcoming year.
 - Several employers responded that this was not on the table and hadn’t been considered. No one wants to have an entire law school class missing from their pipeline.

Fun Ideas for Engaging Students and Lawyers in Virtual Summer Programs

Notwithstanding the fact that many firms have not announced their plans for the summer of 2020, it is clear from the message boards and town halls that virtual programs are being widely discussed. As such, this portion of the call was dedicated to sharing ideas for engaging summer associates and lawyers in a virtual program. There was nothing proprietary about it – just good, old-fashioned brainstorming. The ideas presented include:

- Working with an outside consultant (such as Grover Cleveland) to host a webinar for NALP members designed to assist in planning a meaningful virtual program.
- Hosting a movie-night using Netflix Party or some other resource
- Organizing pop-ins throughout the summer using a Zoom room
- Virtual karaoke
- Virtual trivia
- Sip and paint (a member indicated that some sip and paint shops will ship all the materials to the participants and then host the painting instruction)
- Ceramics and paint (like the above)
- Hosting a virtual murder mystery dinner
- Virtual bingo

- Some game shows will allow licenses to be purchased, such as Jeopardy, so custom questions and answers can be created
- Of course virtual happy hours were suggested, but with some creative twists:
 - Who has the most creative hair? Outfit? Hat?

RFP Ideas and Solicitation for 2021 NALP Conference

Call participants were reminded again to start thinking of RFP ideas for the 2021 conference. Because the AEC is typically where a lot of great ideas are generated, it was stressed that it's more important than ever to connect with NALP friends and colleagues to submit RFPs.

With Beth Moeller's consent, I introduced the section's incoming Co-Chairs: Nicole Oddo Smith from Dechert and Yvonne Denenney from UCLA. The section is in great hands and I know will thrive under their leadership.

Questions and Discussion

One question was raised at the very end by a member wondering when it will be announced (or otherwise known) which 2020 NALP programs will be converted to webinars. I would be happy to post an update on NALP Connect once there's more information to share on this.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the Chair of the Experienced Professionals Section this year. It has been a wonderful experience.

cc: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

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