

## NALP JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SECTION

Quarterly Report to the Board of Directors

June 25, 2009

Submitted by: Sheila Driscoll, George Washington, Chair

We are off to a great year for the Judicial Clerkship Section with lots of proposed articles and programs. The section had a productive meeting at the NALP conference in Washington, DC in early April, and our last section-wide meeting was on April 23<sup>rd</sup> via conference call. Approximately 30 people participated in the call and minutes of the conference call were distributed via the Jud-Clerk listserv. We discussed the RFPs for the Puerto Rico Conference and proposed articles for the NALP Bulletin, as well as the work of the work groups. Special thanks go to all the volunteers named below, our Board Liaison Marilyn Drees, and Fred Thrasher and Janet Smith at the NALP headquarters.

### RFPs for 2010 Puerto Rico Conference

Members of the section submitted four RFPs for next year's conference. They are:

- **Judicial Clerkships: Increasing Applicant Interest and Deepening your Applicant Pool-**  
Submitted by: *Sonja Hayes, Stetson; Colleen Truden, Pacific McGeorge and Samantha Williams, Sandra Day O'Connor*

Students look to their career development advisors to educate them about the myriad of opportunities available – judicial clerkships being no exception. Why are clerkships often overlooked in the minds of students? What can we as clerkship advisors do to develop a greater understanding of the value of judicial clerkships and create a thriving “clerkship culture” at our schools? With the growing number of alumni clerkship applicants, what can schools do to maximize their outreach to these individuals?

- **Clerkships Off The Beaten Path --** Submitted by: *Beth Wickwire, Michigan; Hanna Stotland, Northwestern and Toni St. John, Maryland.*

Judges off the beaten path offer clerks the opportunity to enjoy rigorous legal challenges and close mentoring. Clerkships in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Alaska, Guam, American Samoa, Israel, India, and more can be a great way to start a legal career. Panelists, including current and former clerks, will discuss the benefits of clerking around the world, tips for learning about unusual clerkships, and application advice.

- **America The Beautiful – Exploring Our Country Through State Court Clerkships—**  
Submitted by: *Melissa Lennon, Temple; Lorri Olan, Washington & Lee and Michele Hoff, Connecticut.*

This program is designed to provide an overview of the state court clerkship application and interview process. It will focus on the benefits of state court clerkships, application strategy, tips for assembling successful applications and insider information regarding interview process. The program will introduce a new resource – a counseling guide for State Court Clerkships – which has been prepared by the NALP State Court Work Group on Judicial Clerkships as a supplement to the Vermont Guide to State Court Clerkships.

- OSCAR (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review): Season Review and Look Ahead – Submitted by: *Marilyn Drees, Yale and Sheila Driscoll, George Washington*

OSCAR (the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review) has experienced remarkable growth since its debut in 2005 and now serves as the single, centralized resource for federal clerkships. This past year saw judge participation pass 50 percent, as well as the introduction of a variety of new features. Come hear our panelists – from those who designed OSCAR to those who used it — discuss how OSCAR performed in its fifth season. The program will also explore what to expect from OSCAR in the coming years, and provide a forum for participants to voice their concerns, hopes, and expectations about OSCAR’s role in the judicial clerkship application process in the future.

### **Proposed Bulletin Articles**

The section submitted four article proposals. They are:

- Broadening the Clerkship Pool. Authors: *Cybele Smith (Ohio State) and Alisa Rosales (DePaul)* Target: 750 words in October.

Article will focus on state court clerkships and utilizing faculty to identify additional potential applicants. Authors will discuss ways to utilize current resources to make students aware of the various deadline focusing on developing internal judicial clerkship guides and instructions, the Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkships, and current programming. Authors will also discuss ways to use the faculty, both permanent and adjuncts, to identify and cultivate potential applicants.

- The ABCs of Researching Judges: Why, How and What exactly are you looking for? Author: *Lorri Olan, Washington & Lee with contributions from Eric Stern, Berkeley* Target: 1000-1200 words in March, April, or May 2010

As clerkship advisors and career counselors in general, we can encourage students to take research a step further. Are there courts and particular judges that have a high number of cases match their interests in specific legal specialties? Tailoring their search to the practice areas they are interested in and developing skills in these particular areas will greatly benefit (and launch) their long term career goals. With research and a little know how, advisors can encourage applicants to dig deeper to find a clerkship opportunity that will blend their talents, interests and long term goals to get the most out of their time with a judge.

- Requirements for International Students to Clerk in State and Federal Courts. Authors: *Beth Wickwire (Michigan) and Christine Councill Fritton (Pennsylvania)* Target: Feature length in Spring 2010 (between approximately February and May 2010)

Article will clarify the requirements for graduates of American law schools who are not United States citizens to clerk in both state and federal courts.

First, we hope to provide a centralized source of information regarding the requirements for international students to clerk in state courts. To accomplish this, we will research and compile information from currently available resources (for example, state court websites), where available. However, we anticipate that we will not be able to create a comprehensive list of such requirements from readily-available resources (as reflected by the fact that no such compilation is

known to exist). As such, we would also like to conduct a survey of state court policies on accepting international students as judicial law clerks. We have begun to draft questions to ask administrators of state courts regarding their policies and procedures for hiring non-citizens as judicial law clerks. We will begin by calling the administrative offices of each state's highest court and hope to complete a standardized survey via telephone. However, the survey will also be available for us to mail to the courts, if requested. We would of course conduct the survey in whatever manner NALP thinks is appropriate, or proceed without a survey if NALP thinks that a survey is not appropriate.

Second, we will review the current policies on federal employment of non-citizens. The article will briefly address the requirements of the Immigration Reform Act of 1986 and the Appropriations Act. In addition, we also plan to speak with two contacts in the Administrative Office of the United States Courts to clarify the process for non-citizens to clerk as authorized under F-1 visas, H-1B visas, and green cards. Finally, we hope to obtain copies of the hiring certifications and forms required to be completed by federal judges in the event non-citizens are accepted for employment. We believe that a better understanding of the paperwork required to facilitate employment will benefit international clerkship applicants.

- Tracking Alumni Hiring. Authors: *Susan Staab, Chicago and Kirsten K. Solberg, Harvard*. Target: Nuts and Bolts article in March or April 2010.

The number of alumni applying for clerkships has increased significantly. Law school clerkship advisors are scrambling for ways to identify and track their movement since alumni may not communicate with their Career Services Office regarding their clerkship applications, interviews, or acceptances. The article will focus on methods, best practices, and tips to track alumni applying for clerkships and identify alumni that accepted or are currently clerking for a judge. The article will touch on support provided to alumni in order to track and identify prospective clerks.

### **OSCAR Work Group**

The group consists of *chair Marilyn Drees of Yale and members Rhonda Beassie of Houston, Terry Galligan of Berkeley, Sonja Hayes of Stetson, Allison Heverin of Northwestern, Susan Staab of Chicago, and Katie Wilkinson of Tulane*. They report the following.

- OSCAR 5.0 was launched successfully on May 18, 2009. The work group disseminated via the listserv some supplemental instructions for Law School Administrators on updating faculty recommenders. In addition, the group hosted a conference call for section members on May 20 to cover any preliminary questions on the new version of OSCAR. The conference call attracted over 50 participants and led to additional fruitful discussion on the listserv.
- The work group revised the annual postcard mailed to federal judges; in addition to reiterating NALP's support of the law clerk hiring plan and listing the critical dates, the postcard focused on the importance of posting clerkship information in OSCAR promptly. Thanks to the great care and unbelievable efficiency of Janet Smith and Fred Thrasher, the postcard was turned around in a week and mailed out on May 28. OSCAR staff reported a spike in postings in early June, which they attributed to the postcard.
- Although the weekly conference calls have ended, the work group continues to report issues to OSCAR staff via email regularly.

- The work group will host a second conference call for the section on July 14. As third-year students will be increasingly active with OSCAR applications in July, the work group thought it helpful to provide an opportunity for members to ask questions and raise issues focusing on the creation and management of applications.

### **State Court Work Group**

The group consists of *co-chairs Melissa Lennon of Temple and Michele Hoff of Connecticut and members Eric Bono of Colorado, Mary Pat McInnis of Saint Louis, Tricia Burns-Hart of Gonzaga, Deborah Mosman of Willamette, Denise Carl of Richmond, Laurie Neff of George Mason, Trisha Fillbach of Drake, Lorriann Olan of Washington & Lee, Amy Killoran of American, Colleen Truden of Pacific, McGeorge, Maria J. Mangano of North Carolina, Ramona J. Sein of William & Mary and Greta Tackebury of Detroit-Mercy*

The goal of the state court work group is to produce a resource guide that will be a supplement to the Vermont Law School Guide to State Court Clerkships. The supplement will contain value added type of information for applicants on application tips, interviews, bar examinations and generally what to expect.

The work group has had a conference call with members. The co-chairs have also distributed a sample from Connecticut as a model for other jurisdictions to the members and assigned jurisdictions to volunteers. The state court work group has 15 volunteers that will cover the following jurisdictions (and perhaps a few more): CA, CO, CT, D.C. Local, IA, MI, MO, NC, OR, VA, W.VA., WA. They are aiming to have drafts for those jurisdictions to the co-chairs of the group on August 14. They hope to have the resource housed on the NALP website, and also hope to introduce the resource at a session at the 2010 Annual Education Conference.

### **Alumni/Lateral Work Group**

The group consists of *co-chairs Carla DeVelder of Creighton and Jessica Heywood of Catholic and members Diane Downs of Paul Hastings, Polly Lawson of Virginia, Amy Liu of Iowa, Laurie Logan-Priscott of Paul Hastings, Kyle Martin of Georgia, Ruth Payne of Virginia, and Alisa Rosales of DePaul.*

Jessica Heywood is currently out of the office, and I have not been able to get in contact with Carla DeVelder. I will be out of the office from June 25<sup>th</sup> through July 7<sup>th</sup>, but I will follow up with them upon my return, and send an update on this work group at that time.

### **Miscellaneous**

Members of the section, including myself and Melissa Lennon at Temple, will be presenting a program “Judicial Clerkships 101” for the Newer Professionals Section’s “Ask the Experts” conference call series on July 16, 2009.

Environmental Scanning: I have been monitoring articles about the ability and practices of state and federal judges hiring deferred associates as unpaid judicial law clerks. Steve Grumm and I have been in discussion with a state court judge in Oregon who is spearheading a program for hiring deferred associates with participants from many other state courts. I hope to share the details of that program to the members as soon as they are available.