

NALP JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SECTION

Quarterly Report to the Board of Directors

February 12, 2010

Submitted by: Sheila Driscoll, George Washington, Chair

The section had a productive section-wide meeting on Wednesday, February 3rd via conference call. Approximately 26 members participated in the call. The main item on the agenda was to discuss the progress of the work groups and any new ideas for work groups or modifying charges for next year. The ideas that were discussed are incorporated into this report.

Conference Programs and Articles

The Section is looking forward to the three programs that were selected for next year's conference:

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

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

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

Recent articles that have been published are:

[Handling Alumni Applicants for Judicial Clerkships](#) (February 2010)

Identifying, assisting, and tracking alumni judicial clerks can seem a bit like trying to herd cats, but there are benefits both for the alumni and for the school. Here are some suggested strategies.

Authors: Susan Staab, Kirsten Solberg

[Lateral Judicial Law Clerks: A Brief Analysis of Current Trends](#) (January 2010)

Many judges are seeking experienced lawyers to fill clerkship positions, but law firms will not always be in a position to guarantee departing associates a position upon completion of a clerkship.

Authors: Deborah Kerker Herman, Jessica Heywood

[Tips for Increasing State Judicial Clerkship Applications](#) (October 2009)

With federal judicial application deadlines just past, now is the time to look at ways to encourage state judicial clerkship applications in the coming year.

Authors: Alisa M. Rosales, Cybele Smith

The section looks forward to the following additional articles that are scheduled for publication this spring:

The ABCs of Researching Judges: Why, How and What exactly are you looking for?
By: Lorri Olan (March '10 Bulletin)

International Students and Clerkships by Beth Wickwire and Chris Council Fritton (May '10 Bulletin)

OSCAR Work Group

The 2009-10 work group members are *chair Marilyn Drees (Yale) and members Rhonda Beassie (Houston), Sheila Driscoll (George Washington), Sonja Hayes (Stetson), Susan Staab (Chicago), Hanna Stotland (Northwestern), Katie Wilkinson (Tulane), and Matt Zimmerman (Georgetown)*. They report the following.

- The annual meeting of the Judicial Conference's OSCAR work group was held in Washington, DC, on November 5, 2009. Katie Wilkinson and Marilyn Drees are nonvoting members of the work group; Katie attended the meeting and Marilyn participated by conference call. The first part of the meeting focused on a review of the hiring season, including OSCAR participation and applicant statistics, all of which have subsequently been reported in various media. The remainder of the meeting concerned recommendations on revisions and enhancements to OSCAR for Version 6.0.
- The group has held one conference call to introduce the new members (Sheila, Hanna, and Matt) to the issues and upcoming developments for OSCAR 6.0. The group will resume its regular conference calls with the OSCAR staff the week of February 15. The most immediate topics will be communicating with schools, applicants and recommenders about the system archiving of old accounts and documents, along with the final Statement of Work negotiated with Symplicity for Version 6.0.

State Court Work Group

Melissa Lennon (Temple), and Michele Hoff (Connecticut) are co-chairs.

The group has made substantial progress on its resource guide that will be a companion piece to the Vermont Law School Guide with “tips and tricks” about what students can expect when applying to clerkships in various states.

The group has drafts from the following states: Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Iowa, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. And the following states are coming soon: Georgia, Indiana, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and West Virginia .

The resource guide will be published on the Clerkship Section of the NALP web site and will be distributed as part of the program on state court clerkships at the conference in Puerto Rico.

During the conference call, the goals for next year were discussed, and it was agreed that the work group should continue to expand coverage of this resource guide to include more states building upon the progress already made. It was also suggested that the group could in the future work on a more general resource for students about clerking in state courts.

Alumni/Lateral Work Group

Jessica Heywood (Catholic) is the chair.

The work group submitted an article published in the January NALP Bulletin about employer attitudes and practices regarding associates who leave a firm for a judicial clerkship. Jessica Heywood and her co-author Deborah Kerker Herman spoke to several law firms to collect advice and information about common practices.

Jessica reported during the section-wide conference call that they have had difficulty recruiting law firm volunteers to the work group, but she also noted that when she and her co-author conducted outreach for the Bulletin article, most firms were willing to share their practices anonymously. This sparked a more general discussion with the section members about the best focus for the work group, in light of the growing popularity among judges of law clerks with legal experience.

New Work Group

The possibility of forming new work groups was discussed. One proposal was a group focused on the use of technology for assisting with schools' clerkship programs. Many schools use the clerkship module in Symplicity, and members got together to share tips on using that system effectively during a conference call in late October. A work group focused on technology could work on providing training materials/tip sheets or share best practices for using technology, including Symplicity and other systems, which would help members when assisting students with applications and letters of recommendation.