

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alisa N. Benedict O'Brien, Board Liaison
FROM: Elizabeth Bernstein and Kathy Greenier, JD Career Advisors Section Chairs
CC: NALP Office (reports@NALP.org)
DATE: October 17, 2024
RE: NALP JD Career Advisors Section Second Quarterly Report

I. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The chairs are pleased to report that the workgroups are all engaged and active. In July, following NALP Board approval, the JD Career Advisors (JDCA) Section added two new workgroups: *Online JD Career Advising* (chaired by Alison Finn, Case Western) and *AI Topics and Trends in Student Advising* (co-chaired by Amy Kimmel, UC Law San Francisco and Jackie Russell, Chicago-Kent College of Law). Additionally, since our last report to the Board in June, the *First Generation College Students* workgroup now has two volunteers to serve as co-vice-chairs (Laurie Feldon, Georgetown Law and Robin Grieff, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law). In August, initiated by JDCA Section Board Liaison Alisa N. Benedict O'Brien, Kathy, Elizabeth, Laurie, and Robin met with Alisa to discuss the importance of this work, particularly in light of early recruiting, new OCI timelines, and just general stress around recruiting that may be more heavily impacting our First Gen students.

The JDCA Section endorsed six proposals submitted for consideration as presentations at NALP's next Annual Education Conference in Cleveland. Three of the six proposals were accepted.

The JDCA Section has 6 articles forthcoming (October 2024 - April 2025) in the NALP Bulletin+.

Our Section's second quarterly remote meeting took place on Tuesday, October 1 at 2pm ET/1pm CT, 12pm MT/11am PT. There were 23 attendees. The agenda was as follows:

- Welcome, ask if there's anyone new to NALP or new to our Section, and briefly review agenda
- Board Update (Alisa)
- Common Application for 1L Diversity Fellowships
- Work Group Reports with a special highlight regarding our two newly Board approved groups: Online JD Advising and AI Topics & Trends in Student Advising
- Webinar topic brainstorming (Erik)
- Environmental scanning and discussion on the summer/fall recruiting season: what went well and what were lessons learned for next time?
- Close, share that the next Section meeting will be on Jan. 14 (same time), and announce the next 30 min. are for any vice-chairs and champions that want to stay on the call

Immediately following the meeting, Kathy and Elizabeth facilitated a meeting for all work group vice chairs, to build relationships and solicit from them what kind of support they are looking for in the year ahead.

Since the last JDCA Section quarterly report, twenty-seven posts have been made in NALPConnect, with 2 replies.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

During our open forum discussion on the October 1, 2024 quarterly call, the membership engaged in an active discussion about pre-cruiting and this most recent summer recruiting season. Topics discussed included:

- Advisors stepping in more to help students with stress management.
- Students expressing stress over need to request time-off from summer jobs to do interviews.
- The application timing caused issues with the timing of final exams. Students face challenges keeping up their momentum.
- The pre-cruiting timeline has caused confusion with regional job fair timing.
- Some schools have created programming to help structure what is an otherwise decentralized system regarding timing.
 - Circulated spreadsheets
 - Weekly newsletters
 - Job postings
 - Creating a course in Blackboard, through which the CSO advertised opportunities
- Employers have said that direct applications worked out well in some cases, and therefore they are questioning future participation in OCIs. One school reported that 80% of their students who received offers came as a result of write-in and direct application.
- Some employers still like OCI and others do not. How do law school personnel manage the multiple needs of different employers? OCI cannot take place all summer.
- Students had 2L jobs before they had their 1L jobs.
- Students facing burnout after months of applying (January-August in some cases).
- Some employers were just going through the motions at OCI already knowing they had no spots left to fill.
- Decentralized recruiting has a big impact on students from marginalized backgrounds and first generation students.
- Questioning whether firms are thinking too much about efficiency and not enough about the value of students.
- The staggered opening dates for all the various recruitments made things chaotic for CSO personnel.
- Students who received offers reported that receiving offers early actually felt good—a relief after so much confusion over how to apply (online, OCIs, etc.).
- The process was not as stressful for students as the CSO staff thought it would be, but that was a red flag: students were not convinced they needed to move faster and should have been more panicked than they were.
- Schools questioned how students can develop professionally when there's no time to learn and grow before applying to and securing 2L summer positions.
- CSO personnel wondered how the lateral market will be impacted in a few years as a result of the change in summer recruiting.
- Advisors wondered if 1Ls should be pushed more to do 1L summer applications given that the 2L students who had previously applied to 1L summer programs were viewed more favorably for the 2L summer cycle (even if they had not secured a 1L summer position, the prior application itself showed their commitment to the employer).

III. JDCA WORKGROUPS

Annual Education Conference / Bulletin+ Article and Webinar Planning

Vice Chair: Erik Turkman, The George Washington University Law School

One of the Bulletin+ articles that was submitted on behalf of our Section was published in the October issue, "See the Student, Not the Data," by Laurie Feldon, which looks at AI use in the legal hiring context.

Despite setting aside time for group brainstorming on the Section's most recent quarterly call, we have not received any suggestions for prospective webinar topics. No one has reached out since that meeting with suggestions either. We might post in NALP Connect to the Section's discussion board to see if any suggestions come in.

CSO Employer Outreach

Vice Chairs: Amelia E. Curotto, Villanova University School of Law; Amy Roesel, University of Cincinnati Law

The CSO Employer Outreach Workgroup had a successful first meeting at the end of August, with over 20 people attending. There was interest in continuing to develop the "Employer Outreach Checklist" started by last year's workgroup, meant to serve as a "best practices" guide for planning and executing employer outreach. The goal of the expanded content is to provide more specific examples and options of how to "scale" outreach efforts depending on the size and resources of a CSO office. The meetings for the rest of this year will be focusing on a different section of the checklist, and the vice-chairs will be encouraging submissions and feedback. The next workgroup meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 19, at 3:00pm EST.

JD Counseling

Vice Chairs: Kim Underdown, St. Mary's University School of Law; Amy Rowland, New York Law School

The JD Counseling Work Group identified a list of questions to survey the NALP Law School Membership to learn more about early recruiting. The survey has been sent to our Board Liaison, Alisa Benedict, for Board approval. The goal is to get the survey sent out by the end of the month, so we can start compiling the data to create some best practices around early recruiting. We also continue to discuss hot topics in the JD counseling space.

AI Topics and Trends in Student Advising

Vice Chairs: Amy Kimmel, UC Law San Francisco; Jackie Russell, Chicago-Kent College of Law

Jackie and Amy had several meetings to prepare for the work group's first official meeting on October 9. They both advertised the new work group through NALP Connect and received numerous emails expressing interest in the group. The initial meeting was held on October 9. More than 25 NALP members joined the virtual meeting. Both law schools and law firms were represented. The group spent a portion of the meeting discussing how they each use AI in their work or personal life. Amy and Jackie then explained the current goals of the group and asked for feedback on the most useful product for the group to work on. The group will meet again in November. Jackie and Amy will send a follow-up email with a poll gathering information as to preferred projects and asking members to commit to joining the workgroup. Amy and Jackie made it clear that attending the first meeting was not a commitment to anything. Briefly, the current potential projects for the group are (1) NALP branded AI prompt guide for students, (2)

Handout for career offices on using AI in student advising, (3) Best practices for using AI, (4) Summary of legal industry opportunities and jobs relating to AI.

First Generation College Students

Vice Chairs: Laurie Feldon, Georgetown Law; Robin Grieff, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

The work group's first meeting will be held on Thursday, November 7 at 3pm EST and will be focused on discussing current issues, "hot topics," and trends that JD career advisors are noting with law students who are first generation college graduates, particularly in light of the expedited hiring cycle. Additionally, the group will discuss if there are any student and/or counseling needs that could be addressed by creating resources. Additionally, the Vice-Chairs are reaching out to the VP of DEI and the DEI Steering Committee to meet and discuss ways JD career advisors can support law students who are first generation college graduates, with a particular focus on potentially collaborating on a webinar and/or resources for the NALP community.

Finally, a Bulletin+ article proposal submitted by the workgroup was accepted for publication for the February issue. The article proposal summary is as follows:

In Early Hiring Race, First-Generation Students Likely to Stumble

Summary: Knowing who to talk to and where to apply at the outset of school has become the lynchpin to getting hired; something first generation law students will always struggle with. Firms should create transparent hiring timelines to even the playing field.

Marketing Summary: Starting the hiring race earlier means students who already know their marks are set to have an advantage over those who do not even realize that the race has begun. First generation law students need clear timelines and transparency to have a fair chance.

Online JD Advising

Vice Chair: Alison Finn, Case Western

The work group typically meets once a month on the first Tuesday of the month at 3 PM EST. Each month schools report on successes and challenges they have experienced in their programs advising online students. Members brainstorm and discuss potential solutions. The group plans to have a draft document of best practices or tips and tricks by May 2025.

JD Advantage Careers

Vice Chairs: Ellen Dolan, Suffolk Law; Cassie (Katherine) Butler, University of Massachusetts School of Law

The JD Advantage Careers Work Group has met twice: on August 21, 2024 and September 18, 2024. The group's full meeting schedule for the year ahead was announced during a Quarterly Meeting of the JD Career Advisors Section and on NALPConnect.

During the Work Group's initial August 21st meeting, group co-chairs welcomed a number of new members. Attendees and co-chairs reported being busy with counseling, programming, and

other responsibilities. Group co-chairs discussed recent changes to the group's charges, as follow:

1. Continue the collaboration with NALP and law school members to recreate an annual week focused on JD Advantage careers.
2. Continue the creation and distribution of a podcast series showcasing lawyer interviews for the career paths outlined in the JD Advantage Career Guide.
3. Update the 2020 [NALP JD Advantage Career Guide](#).
4. Explore the potential for JD Advantage careers in the emerging world of AI.
5. One or more educational webinar(s) open to the NALP community related to JD Advantage careers and career advising.

Relative to item 4, exploring the potential for JD Advantage careers in the emerging world of AI, there was discussion on what a useful outcome for that project would be. Members questioned whether it makes sense to create a tool, given that each law school already has its own cover letter template.

A group member asked what other members have done to provide deeper resources on JD Advantage positions to students. Group co-chair, Ellen Dolan, Suffolk Law, shared that she created an alumni network specifically for JD Advantage positions, including industry, title, and organization. Kathy Greenier, University of Richmond School of Law, shared a similar project, in which she enhanced the alumni list prepared by the school's alumni office by making it sortable. This allowed other counselors and offices within the school to include alumni who pursued JD Advantage roles in other career programs, so that JD Advantage students were well represented amongst other traditional alumni.

A portion of the group's discussion focused on the NALP Annual Education Conference (AEC), and the work of Celestine Oglesby, Ave Maria Law, on projects related to the AEC. Celestine suggested that some type of JD Advantage employer should be included as part of the AEC's vendor resource center. The group discussed what type of employer would be best suited, so as not to be too self-limiting. A suggestion was made that a professional association be represented, with possible industries being compliance, healthcare, tech, or governmental affairs. Since that meeting, Celestine has conferred with NALP leadership, and prepared a list of potential participants for NALP leadership to consider.

During the September 18th meeting, the group discussed charge 3, updates to the 2020 JD Advantage Career Guide. Thanks to Quaimee Lee, Northeastern University School of Law, and a number of other group members, a new draft of the Guide has been created. The Guide requires some additional formatting and an updating of salary data before it is finalized, and group co-chair Ellen Dolan solicited and received member interest in finalizing the draft. Group co-chairs will follow up with interested members in order to move that project forward.

The group also discussed the possibility of creating a handout/guide on consulting business careers, intended for students seeking internships that will lead to JD Advantage positions in compliance, risk, and consulting.

Members will be polled on which projects to prioritize, and will be asked to volunteer on projects of interest. The work group will meet next on Wednesday, October 30 at 1:30pm EST.