

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deborah Snyder, Board Liaison
FROM: Erik Turkman and Kathy Greenier, JD Career Advisors Section Chairs
CC: NALP Office (reports@NALP.org)
DATE: June 26, 2025
RE: NALP JD Career Advisors Section First Quarterly Report

I. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The chairs are pleased to report that the work groups are all engaged and active, and the section is making progress on its charges. In April and May, Erik and Kathy sought and secured new and returning vice-chairs for each of the section's work groups. Eight people are new vice-chairs and eight people stayed on from last year to continue to lead their work group. We received the Board's new charge, to review and suggest revisions to the Prelaw Webpage and Portal, and have kicked off our efforts by meeting with Nicole Netkin-Collins, the NALP Liaison to the Prelaw Advisors National Council. Thanks to the efforts of our section's AEC/Bulletin+ Article/Webinar Planning Work Group, the JD Career Advisors (JDCA) Section proposed 5 articles for publication in *Bulletin+* and has so far gathered 12 ideas for Annual Education Conference (AEC) proposals. Since the last JDCA Section quarterly report (March 20, 2025), 26 posts have been made in NALPConnect, with nine replies. Section Co-Chair Erik Turkman published two *Bulletin+* articles this quarter, one in the April 2025 issue, and another in the June 2025 issue, which was co-authored with Greg Miarecki and George Podolin.

NALPConnect discussion topics included the following: work group meeting announcements and reminders, calls for *Bulletin+* article ideas and conference proposals, solicitation of article ideas for the Newcomer's Corner, an invitation to read and discuss a book published by a Cleveland Annual Education Conference speaker, a request to hear thoughts about employers using behavioral assessments in the interview process, advertising funding available for student travel to the Nebraska Space, Cyber, and National Security Law Program conference in Washington, D.C. this fall, a request to share information about Professional Identity Formation course curricula, seeking guidance on a student questioning whether their employer plans to comply with an EEOC request for her personal information, advertising law school career service office job openings, and a question about issuing guidance to students re: listing participation in affinity groups on resumes.

We hosted a "post-AEC" remote meeting on Thursday, May 8, 2025. 34 people attended. The agenda was as follows:

- Welcome and introductions
- Recap of the in-person AEC section meeting
- Review of how to use our NALPConnect community page
- Introduction of work group vice-chairs, review of work group charges for the year ahead, and call for volunteers

- Open forum on hot topics
- Close meeting and announcement of the next meeting on June 12

Immediately following the meeting, Kathy and Erik facilitated a huddle 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.

We hosted a second remote meeting that took place on Thursday, June 12, 2025 (this meeting served as our first quarterly meeting because the May meeting focused on recapping the in-person AEC meeting for those who missed it). Forty-seven people attended. We used, and were quite pleased with, the NALPConnect feature that allows us to email community members to advertise this meeting. The agenda was as follows:

- Welcome and introductions
- Introduction of, and update from, Board liaison Debbie Snyder
- Announcement of the extension on deadline for Bulletin+ article idea submissions and review of process for submitting those and AEC proposal ideas to the AEC/Bulletin+ Article/Webinar Planning Work Group
- Report-out and call for volunteers from work group vice-chairs
- Open forum on hot topics
- Close meeting and announcement of the next meeting on October 9

Immediately following the meeting, Kathy and Erik facilitated a meeting, as we did after our May meeting, to build rapport with work group vice-chairs.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

During our open forum discussions at the May 8 and June 12 meetings, we suggested talking about topics surfaced in recent NALPConnect community discussion posts, like the federal hiring freeze, summer/fall recruiting timelines, or the use of AI behavioral assessments in job applications. But, we welcomed participants to talk about whatever was on their mind at the moment. Participants shared the following:

- Advice about how different schools are managing earlier recruiting and what's changed about the services offered to students.
- 1Ls accepting summer 2026 positions in January: what will happen in 1 1/2 years? Will they want to change their minds about committing so early?
- Ways for JD career advisors to define our value-add in ways that can't be replaced by some form of sophisticated AI agent within the next decade.
- Emerging JD advantage careers in technology: Which schools are hosting mandatory programs on using AI? How are we preparing our students to enter these new roles? What are law schools doing to train law students in technology and sustainability fields?
- Challenges of the increase in direct apply and resume collect, and less OCI/CSO involvement.
- How to deal with requests from students to stop posting jobs from an employer due to their negative experiences.

- "What's keeping us up at night," such as concerns about diversity opportunities disappearing in both the law firm government/PI fields.
- How student pressure is high this time of year given exams, journals, and the simultaneous 1L/2L summer job search.
- Challenges of the federal government hiring freeze.
- Employers using AI assessments in the recruiting process, pre-interview.
- We are seeing less student materials before they are applying to 2L positions.
- The challenges of keeping rising 2Ls motivated after an exhausting year.
- The challenges of the delay in learning the impacts of early recruiting.
- The difficulty of less funding for legal services and the impact on fellowships.

III. JDCA WORK GROUPS

A. Annual Education Conference, Bulletin+ Article, and Webinar Planning

Vice Chairs: Samantha Ciriaco, Director of Professional Development, CWRU School of Law; Brenda Smith Porter, Assistant Director of Career Services, Penn State Dickinson Law; and Ellen Oganessian, Southwestern Law

Since the Annual Education Conference (AEC) in Cleveland this April, we have reached out to members who submitted program or article ideas. We have given reports on the May and June section calls, and posted reminders in the JDCA section discussion board on NALP Connect. As a result, we currently have four *Bulletin+* article proposals ready for submission. With the *Bulletin+* deadline now extended, we are optimistic that additional proposals will be submitted. All article proposal information will be submitted by June 20.

We are also actively encouraging members to submit RFPs for the 2026 AEC. We have followed up with individuals who noted interest or entered ideas on the shared spreadsheet. So far, two groups have submitted their RFPs to NALP, and six other RFPs are currently in development by members.

In addition, a member is coordinating a webinar for August or September, featuring a doctor who will present on how career advisors can incorporate Psychodrama and Sociodrama into their work. The program will explore how these techniques can support law students in making difficult decisions and addressing self-doubt.

B. AI and CSOs

Vice Chairs: Amy Kimmel, UC Law SF and Jackie Russell, Chicago-Kent College of Law.

The AI work group met on May 8 to check-in on progress. At our March meeting before NALP we broke our best practices guide outline into parts and had members volunteer for which parts they want to work on. In May we got an

update from each group. We have not met again since May but will be meeting for another check-in before the end of June. Our best practices guide will be targeted at giving career offices accessible tips and guidance for understanding and using AI in their work with students.

C. CSO Employer Outreach

Vice Chairs: Veronica Elizalde, Director of Employer Engagement at St. Mary's University School of Law; Remy Cahn, Career Counselor at Penn Carey Law; and Becky Bossle, Director for Private Practice Programs at Maryland Carey Law

The CSO Employer Outreach work group will meet once a quarter this year, and its first meeting was held on June 10, 2025. The chairs started the meeting by letting attendees know that the work group's Employer Outreach Checklist from the 2024-2025 academic year will be published by NALP soon.

The hot topic at the June meeting was the current chaotic state of 2L summer recruitment and how it is going for our schools. Attendees report that OCI is still a useful program for schools where the largest recruitment comes from mid-size and small firms. For schools where BigLaw is heavily involved, OCI is changing dramatically. BigLaw firms are hiring primarily via direct applications. Some firms accepted direct applications and registered for OCI but then withdrew from OCI before the interview date because their summer classes for next year were full. Several attendees reported seeing low employer turnout for school OCI programs and regional consortia. The key takeaway is that law firm recruitment is changing significantly from one season to the next, which makes connecting with employers even more important.

This topic – best practices for outreach to employers regarding recruiting during this chaotic time – is one of the issues the work group plans to explore this year. Since last year's project has been completed, the work group is also soliciting other ideas from Section members as to how we can best support the Section and NALP members generally.

D. First Generation College Students

Vice Chairs: April Giancola, New England Law and Carletta Sanders-Chavers, U. Arizona

The work group's first meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2025. Nothing else to report at this time.

E. JD Advantage Careers

Work Group Co-Chairs Ellen Dolan, Suffolk University Law School, and Katherine (Cassie) Butler, University of Massachusetts School of Law, will

continue in their roles and will be releasing a new 2025-2026 meeting schedule of the Work Group this summer.

The JD Advantage Careers Work Group met three times: virtually on February 19, 2025 and April 23, 2025; and informally in person during the Annual Education Conference (AEC) in Cleveland on April 8, 2025. Five (5) new members have joined and been welcomed to the group during these meetings.

Notable developments include:

- A session presentation during the AEC on “Employment Beyond the Bar: Unveiling a Lesser-Known Perspective of JD Advantage Careers.” The session was the result of an RFP by Work Group member Celestine Oglesby, Ave Maria School of Law, who recognized the need to highlight insights into JD Advantage careers from the employer’s perspective. Celestine moderated the panel, which featured panelists Kimberly Kappler Fine, ex judicata (and also a Work Group member), Katherine Lowry, IncuBaker, BakerHostetler, and Elizabeth Grove, The Lubrizol Corporation. The session drew a packed room, and highlighted the need, and unfortunate gap, in knowledge of JD Advantage hiring processes and opportunities, which for most counselors should be a core piece of student advising. A substantive handout accompanied the presentation and further delved into understanding JD Advantage and JD Preferred roles, common misconceptions and the reality, why law firms should care, how law schools can support nontraditional paths, and action steps for advisors, coaches, and professional development staff.
- A 2025 version of the JD Advantage Career Guide has been sent to NALP leadership for final touches and publication. The Guide was originally created and published by the Work Group in 2020. A number of Work Group volunteers participated in a review and editing process to update the guide over the years. Most recently, seven (7) members of the 2024-2025 Work Group committed to a complete and substantive editing process from start to finish, involving the updating of information and sources, adding a new section, verifying professional associations and accreditations, adding more historical data including salaries, and more. The Work Group expresses its sincere thanks to the following members for their contributions: Kathy Greenier, Celestine Oglesby, Meredith Wiggins, Lauren McElroy, Kimberly Fine, Ellen Dolan, and Katherine (Cassie) Butler.
- Work continues on the prospect of including more JD Advantage vendors as part of future AECs.

Additional discussion during Work Group meetings included:

- Forecasts, impacts, and concerns on the impact on JD Advantage careers of the executive administration’s orders and policies. Members expressed concern regarding jobs related to diversity, equity and inclusion, and the possibility that the demand for JD Advantage jobs will grow while the supply could shrink. Relatedly, members expressed concern about the reputation of JD Advantage jobs as more or fewer students follow that path after graduation.

- The importance of effective programming, including on emerging careers, which often but do not always align with JD Advantage careers. Members discussed the challenge of balancing the need to inform but not overwhelm students on the value of nontraditional skills outside of legal skills, and continuing to find ways to make JD Advantage career programming appealing to students.

F. JD Counseling

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

The JD Counseling Work Group has almost finalized the Best Practices for Early Recruiting Guide. Once we do that, we will continue to refine it throughout this next year. We also remain engaged in discussing hot topics in the JD counseling space.

G. Online JD Advising

Vice Chair: Alison Finn, Case Western

No report at this time.