

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alison Ashe-Card, Board Liaison

FROM: Valerie Castelo & George Podolin, JDCA Section Co-Chairs

CC: Claire Nash

DATE: March 17, 2022

RE: NALP JD Career Advisors Section Quarterly Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

On March 3, 2022, we held our fourth and final quarterly meeting for 2021-2022. Approximately 35 members attended the Zoom meeting. We had members join breakout rooms so they could say hello to each other in smaller groups and share some of the challenges they have been facing since the start of the school year. This was followed by a broader share out among all members.

Following the discussion, board liaison Alison Ashe-Card provided an update from the NALP Board. Our JD Advantage co-vice chairs provided updates on their work group, including the JD Advantage Career Fair that was taking place that week. We spent the next portion of the meeting on environmental scanning discussing topics related to 1L advising and virtual programming. We ended the meeting with a quick brainstorming session around RFPs for the 2023 Annual Education Conference in Vancouver.

- **Breakout Room Discussion & Share Out**

During the breakout room discussions, many issues were surfaced by advisors. A few issues were the subject of additional discussion by the entire group during the subsequent share out. First, several members reported student disengagement with programs this semester. A public sector counselor reported that 75 students submitted RSVPs for a virtual government speed networking event but only 10 showed. A counselor from a different school stated that a recent Dean's Town Hall was held as a hybrid event. Previous Town Halls usually drew approximately 200 students but only 5 students attended this event and all opted for Zoom. While advisors identified many of the understandable reasons why students might be disengaged this semester, it did little to mitigate the frustration of planning events that only a few people attend.

Second, the issue of the Great Resignation/Realignment/Reshuffling and the impact on staffing was brought up. One counselor brought up the increased workload – and accompanying stress – as a result of a vacancy in their office. This was followed by a counselor sharing that, during a

local recruiting association meeting, law firm recruiters mentioned school-side advisors from law school CSOs as a potential source for talent. Within our own Section, we have found replacing vice chairs difficult with 2 of the 3 roles remaining open since late Fall 2021. Finally, we discussed the impact of changes to law school masking policies as a source of added stress on advisors with children too young to be vaccinated or with other vulnerable household members.

WORK GROUPS

- ***AEC / Bulletin+ / Webinar - Vice Chairs: Hallie Prest (Minnesota) & Angela Cruseturner (Baylor)***

Hallie and Angela have no updates for this quarter.

- ***CSO Employer Outreach - Vice Chairs: Amy Jones Mattock (Georgetown) & Cassandre Stumpe (NYU)***

The CSO Employer Outreach work group met for the last time on Wednesday, February 23. Cassandre and Amy had eight members in attendance (excluding themselves). The main topic of discussion was the Board charge regarding putting together a resource for CSOs to use to help advise students on how to handle background checks. They had asked work group members to share the survey with up to five of their recruiter “friends” so that they could get as broad a sense as possible of how these checks were handled. To date (March 14), they have received 16 responses from firms across the country. Cassandre and Amy are meeting this week to work on drafting a one-page resource (which will be sent to Alison Ashe-Card – our Board liaison – before the Board meeting in April) for posting on the NALP website. After discussing the Board charge, the work group spent time discussing virtual versus in-person events and what they anticipated seeing in terms of virtual versus in-person screening and callback interviews.

Cassandre and Amy reported that their members were very engaged and were always willing to chime in on topics that were brought up. The vice-chairs believe the small size of the group likely helped people feel comfortable sharing. They expressed their pleasure to be co-vice chairs of this work group and their gratitude for the opportunity.

- ***JD Counseling - Vice Chairs: Marti McCausland (Willamette) & Tami Diebel (Iowa)***

The JD Counseling work group is continuing its work towards preparing outlines for proposed content of several new Developing the Professional Lawyer videos, recognizing that NALP may have a budget to move forward now towards creating those videos. Topics under consideration, based in part on suggestions from Section members, include professional attire, the value of mentors, creating a professional reputation, high-quality writing, how to approach an employer

at an in-person or zoom networking event, project and time management, using honorifics in written communication, informational interviews, and networking strategies at attorney networking events. The immediate goal is to identify the two most promising topics, and to then outline content for videos on those topics and submit those outlines to NALP for further consideration. After that, the work group will evaluate the remaining suggested topics and identify which of those should be next to outline. These tasks will be continued into the 2022-2023 NALP year.

In 2022-2023, we recommend continuing outreach to the Solo/Small CSO Section to enlist their assistance in identifying topics for videos that would be particularly helpful for their Section's membership, since solo and small offices may benefit the most from having readily available pre-made student-facing resources.

- ***First Generation College Students / Professionals - Vice Chairs: Kate Harrison (Detroit Mercy) & Cindy Lopez (LEAP)***

Kate and Cindy have no updates for this quarter.

- ***JD Advantage - Vice Chairs: Quaime Lee (Northeastern) & Kathy Greenier (Richmond)***

At the time of submitting their update (March 14), the JD Advantage work group has not yet met since their last meeting on January 26, 2022. The work group did meet yesterday on March 16, 2022. The following is a summary of initiatives:

Annual Education Conference Proposals

As noted in prior reports, members of the Workgroup submitted two proposals, one of which was accepted for the 2022 Conference:

- Kayla Doiron (Oklahoma), Steve Grumm (Legal Aid of Western Michigan), Debra Henley (Florida State), Delanté Spencer Thomas (Case Western Reserve): "The ABCs of JDA: Practical Pathways Toward Rewarding 'Alternative' Careers" (accepted)
- Anton Pal Montañó, Delanté Spencer Thomas: "Cut from the Same Cloth: Navigating Emerging Legal Markets & The JD Advantage," (not accepted this year)

Most recently, the individuals working on "The ABCs of JDA: Practical Pathways Toward Rewarding 'Alternative' Careers" sought the wider workgroup's assistance for creating a resource list or hand-out for conference program attendees. They asked workgroup members to contribute to the hand-out by sending any favorite JDA resources they use with students: counseling techniques, programs, information sheets, links, documents containing information about JDA Jobs (including specific places that students can look for these types of jobs as well as what are job descriptions and titles students can use as keywords in searches).

Charges for 2021-2022

We established three subgroups within the Workgroup to accomplish three initiatives:

1. JD Advantage Podcasts

This subgroup is conducting 1:1 recorded interviews with JD Advantage professionals about their career paths, day-to-day work, and industries, with the goal of completing at least one interview representing each of the subject areas detailed in the 2020 NALP JD Advantage Career Guide. So far, the subgroup has covered six of the 10 topic areas from the Guide; they are currently firming up a plan for securing podcasts about the final four topics. The podcasts will be submitted to NALP for eventual release to the NALP community as resources for advising students.

2. JD Advantage Career Week

Using the JD Advantage Career Week Template submitted in 2020-21, this subgroup organized and hosted three 90-minute panels on March 1-3, 2022, respectively. Each panel focused on the following JD Advantage career categories:

- Business and Financial Services (194 Zoom attendees)
- Technology, Innovation and Intellectual Property and Privacy (176 Zoom attendees)
- Government and Regulatory (150 Zoom attendees)

Panel recordings are now live, [here](#), and [here](#) is a link to the results of surveys provided at the end of each panel.

3. De-Stigmatizing JD Advantage

This subgroup is working on three projects:

Project 1: JDA Survey to be shared with NALP members in order to better understand perceptions about using JDA terminology and whether we should consider alternative names or other ways to market these career paths.

Project 2: Assembling a library of successful JDA Program Titles and Descriptions

Project 3: Assembling resources providing JDA Salary Data

Most recently, subgroup members asked the wider workgroup for feedback on the survey design. Next, subgroup members will finalize the survey based on workgroup feedback and then will share the survey on NALPConnect. The subgroup has also reached out to the larger work group for assistance in collecting resources related to projects two and three; when finalized those will be shared with the wider NALP community.

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Professional Development

Work group members identified the following topics for professional development initiatives:

- Data Privacy careers and advising
- Working with recruiters in securing opportunities for students and graduates in JD Advantage Careers
- Career advisor well-being amid COVID

Each idea has at least one volunteer working on developing programming. The volunteer working on Data Privacy careers and advising has identified possible speakers for a Zoom panel or informal round table; they are currently ascertaining whether a May or June program is best. The volunteers for working with recruiters in securing opportunities are planning a meeting to discuss program format, intended audience, and potential timing. The volunteers focused on career advisor well-being are currently ascertaining whether to reach out to the Well-Being Section and possibly seek to incorporate a program into the Well-Being Week in May or hold a separate event just for the JD Career Advisors Section.

As noted in our last report, recognizing that it may not be feasible to deliver programming around all three topics, George Podolin advised considering them as potential Annual Conference session ideas for 2023 as well.

- ***Recruitment Tools Evaluation - Vice Chair: Maureen (Mo) Reilly (UPenn)***

Mo has no additional updates for this quarter.

Following Simona Suen's departure from NALP in November 2021, we ultimately were unable to appoint a new co-vice chair for this work group. Valerie and George recommend, particularly given the scope of the work group's charges, that an additional vice chair be appointed for 2022-2023.

- ***Member Relations - Vice Chair: Beth Lee (SMU)***

Eleven new members joined the Section and three left the group from January 14, 2022, to March 14, 2022. A welcome email will be sent to the new members with an invitation to join a Zoom meeting on Thursday, March 31, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. CST. This will be a good time to discuss the Section and answer questions about the upcoming AEC in April.

Twenty-four new members joined the Section and two left the group from October 1, 2021, to January 13, 2022. A welcome email was sent to the new members and an invitation was extended to a Zoom welcome meeting on February 10, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. CST. Several new members joined the meeting. The outreach was appreciated and well-received.

There are currently 473 members in the JDCA section.

Following Grace Roede's move to a law firm in October 2021, we had no volunteers to fill the open co-vice chair position.

- ***Knowledge Management and Resource Implementation - Vice Chair: Bev Ecklund (Willamette)***

Bev has no updates for this quarter. Bev has expressed interest in continuing her role as vice-chair for the 2022-2023 year.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

We decided to spend a longer portion of the March Section meeting on environmental scanning since most work groups provided recent updates to the Section during our January meeting.

- ***General topic: 1L Advising***

Some schools have seen an uptick in students renege on accepted offers. It appears that there may be sources online that indicate that this is acceptable behavior and students are following that rather than communicating with their CSO. Other times, when they do reach out to their CSOs, it is to ask permission to renege or to try to get an advisor to renege for them. There was some thought that students see lawyers shifting jobs quickly due to the hot lateral market and that suggests that students can look to better their position even with summer offers. Reneging on offers was not limited to 1Ls looking to switch jobs to BigLaw positions but spanned the gamut of 1L positions. This renege behavior is also being seen in upper classes at one school. One counselor noted a recent Wall Street Journal article on renege that advisors might find interesting.

Some schools have found their 1Ls to be needier compared to previous classes. For example, meeting repeatedly with the same students who want guidance at each step. Similarly, schools are finding that the anxiety level is high among 1L students. One CSO shared that they felt they had answers for 1Ls but their messages to 1Ls about coming in to talk were not being received. Another counselor working with anxious 1Ls looking for positions repeatedly reached out to offer support but had students say that they wanted to wait until Spring Break to look for a job.

Another CSO attributed some of the 1L anxiety in their class to BigLaw hiring (especially diversity hiring) where some 1Ls who are unsuccessful in their 1L applications are increasingly being given automatic callbacks and even offers for 2L summer. 1Ls who have not yet found their 1L summer job and now also stressed about being "behind" in their 2L summer job search. Again, the CSO's consistent message that most 1Ls do not work in BigLaw during their first summer was likely getting lost amid 1Ls' discussions with peers and with law firms.

- ***General Topic: Virtual Programming***

We raised the issue of moving from virtual career services to a hybrid environment. One school noted that they were working to figure out how best to support students who do not want to be in-person. That school determined that the best way to mix virtual and in-person programming was to do skill-building programs virtually, and save the in-person programming for networking events or other programming involving employers.

Another school noted that they have been conducting business in a hybrid manner since the Fall 2020. For those schools, this is not a transition period at all.

WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2022-2023

We recommend maintaining the same work groups for the 2022-2023 NALP year. Below are some recommendations for specific work groups, some of which were mentioned by George or Valerie in earlier communication with incoming President Karl Riehl.

- ***CSO Employer Outreach***

One possible charge for next year would be developing an internship guide/resource for employers who do not regularly hire law students – e.g. small firms, smaller PIPS employers, and in-house employers.

- ***JD Counseling***

Two possible charges for next year include (1) continuing this year's charge of working on new Developing the Professional Lawyer videos, and (2) evaluating the value of updating the 50-state survey on UBE admissions created a few years ago, and, if the project is of sufficient value, conducting the update.

- ***First Generation College Students / Professionals***

We suggest the vice-chair(s) of the group work with the Recruiting or Lawyer PD Sections to help identify issues that could be addressed by JD advisors and would help make First Gen students more attractive to and more effective with legal employers.

- ***JD Advantage***

We recommend that the charges listed in the above report be adopted for 2022-2023 to allow the JD Advantage work group to carry this work forward.