

To: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director  
Lois Casaleggi, Board Liaison  
NALP Board of Directors  
From: Maureen Kieffer, Chair, Judicial Clerkship Section  
Date: February 2, 2017  
Re: Judicial Clerkship Section Quarterly Report

Below, please find information about the Judicial Clerkship Section's activities since our last report, including section communication and updates from work groups.

### **Section Communication**

On January 24, 2017 the Judicial Clerkship section held its second quarter conference call, during which members discussed work group updates and conducted environmental scanning.

### **Work Group Status Reports**

#### **OSCAR (Marilyn Drees, Yale):**

NALP's OSCAR Working Group (OWG) had a busy quarter preparing for and attending the annual meeting of the federal judges' OSCAR work group in Washington, DC, in January. The primary focus of the judiciary group is a complete overhaul of the OSCAR platform. OSCAR's technology is over ten years old, and it is not as mobile-friendly, tablet-friendly, or just user-friendly as it could be. The OSCAR program staff is in the midst of its market research to use as the basis for a contract solicitation. The OWG was able to review and comment on the survey that the OSCAR program staff sent to the OSCAR Law School Administrators in December 2016. In addition, the OWG sought feedback on the past year's clerkship hiring from section members, through a short questionnaire posted on NALPConnect and through individual outreach by each member of the OWG to section members from a cross-section of schools and regions.

The OWG participated in meetings at the Administrative Office of the US Courts in Washington, DC, on January 24-25, 2017. On January 24, the OWG met for a half-day with the OSCAR Program Manager and technology team leaders. This meeting provided a great opportunity to brainstorm with the staff about OSCAR's key features and modifications or enhancements that might be part of a new online environment. The OSCAR staff plans to continue gathering feedback and ideas in the coming months – including the NALP Conference in San Francisco, where they look forward to speaking with as many interested NALP members as they can at their booth in the exhibitor hall. The OWG attended the annual meeting of the federal judges' OSCAR work group on January 25. The OSCAR staff will share information related to the federal judges' work group meeting on the OSCAR website in due course. I can – happily – report that the judges expressed strong appreciation for this unique collaboration with law schools facilitated by NALP. The judges also noted the importance of continuing that collaboration in developing the next generation of OSCAR.

It is too early in the process to know when the next generation of OSCAR will launch, but the current version of OSCAR will operate through 2017. The OSCAR staff also made it clear that the current OSCAR will remain in place until the next generation is fully tested and operational. Throughout the coming months, the OWG will continue working with the OSCAR staff to coordinate information-gathering for a variety of OSCAR users (e.g., LSAs, applicants, recommenders) – and eventually some testing, too.

**State Courts (Roman Chaban, Catholic University):**

The State Courts Work Group will continue to update existing entries in the *Insight and Inside Information for Select State Court Clerkships*.

Roman Chaban was not able to join the call, but reported his progress on a unified state clerkship application database. He has reached out to the DC Superior Court Chief Judge to see if their court would be interested in posting clerkships on PSJD. Maureen Kieffer reached out to the HR Manager for the Minnesota Appellate and Supreme Court who expressed interest in posting clerkships on PSJD.

**Judicial Clerkship and Employer Relations Work Group (Michele Hoff, Connecticut):**

The work group held a joint conference call with the Recruiting Section on Tuesday, December 13, 2016. Members from both the firm recruiting side and the clerkship counseling side participated in a structured discussion during the call. The work group had a follow up conversation after the call to discuss a strategy for gathering additional information. The group's goal is still to create a brief publication/guide addressing common practices in the market with respect to clerkship hiring and counseling which will be available at the annual conference.

**Programming and Resources (Stephanie Powell, Mercer):**

For the 2017 Annual Education Conference in San Francisco, the Judicial Clerkship Section has four scheduled programs:

Wed., April 19 at 11:30 OSCAR Sneak Peek: A New Platform for a New Generation, Marilyn Drees, Laura Simon, Tyrus Manuel, The Honorable Timothy Burgess

Wed., April 19 at 2:15pm— Filling the Gaps in Clerkship Recruiting, Michele Hoff, Julie McLaughlin, Elizabeth Klein

Wed., April 19, 3:45 – 5:00 p.m. Section Meeting

Fri., April 21 at 10:30 am— Judicial Clerkships for (Nearly) Everyone! Best Practices and Resources to Market State Court Clerkships to the Skeptical Student, Diane Cross, Samantha Kasmarek, Bill Chamberlain

Fri., April 21 at 1:45pm— Mining for Gold: How to Find Hidden Clerkship Opportunities in California, Eric Stern, Mishkah Ismamil

Bulletin Submissions:

## Published articles

*Clerking as Career*, by Janet Siegel Brown in Nov. Bulletin

*How to Handle Judges' Questions on the Other Side of the Bench*, by Maureen Kieffer in Jan. Bulletin

Upcoming article in the Feb. Bulletin, Marilyn Drees and Liz Peck will be writing an article on applying to new appointed federal judges.

We are accepting ideas for webinars and brainstorming for RFPs for the next conference.

## **Environmental Scanning and Miscellaneous**

We discussed the federal hiring freeze and what potential impact it may have on clerkship hiring. The general consensus from the call was this freeze could potentially impact ALJ clerkships where the agency falls under the Executive Branch (for example DOJ Honors Program clerkships with Immigration Judges although it sounds like from what you gathered from the DOJ that extended offers would be honored) but would likely not affect judicial clerkships with Article III judges.

Our next quarterly call is scheduled for March 21, 2017, 2pm EDT, 1pm CDT, 11am PDT.