

To: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
Melissa Lennon, Board Liaison
NALP Board of Directors
From: Amy Killoran, Chair, Judicial Clerkship Section
Date: April 2, 2015
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

The Judicial Clerkship section held its quarterly call on Thursday, March 26, 2015. Approximately 30 members participated in the call, which went through upcoming programs at the 2015 Annual Conference, work group updates, brainstorming for the 2016 Annual Conference, and an open forum discussion that included programming for 1Ls and the need to reinforce with judges, students, and alumni that "OSCAR" is distinct from the Federal Law Clerk Hiring Plan.

At the 2015 Annual Conference, the Judicial Clerkship Section has four great programs on the agenda: *Advancing a Public Service Career through Clerking; Strategies, Challenges, and Guidance*, with Janet Siegel Brown, Northwestern University School of Law, Jen Pollard, University of Maryland, and attorneys from Legal Aid Foundation (LAF) and City of Chicago Law Department; *Clerking in the Windy City: Beyond Article IIIs*, Maureen Kieffer, Loyola University Chicago School of Law, The Honorable Young Kim, a federal magistrate judge, and Staff Attorneys from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the Illinois Appellate Court; *Impact of Early Clerkship Hiring on Summer Associate Programs and On-Campus Recruiting*, facilitated by Julie McLaughlin, The George Washington University Law School, Melissa Lennon, Temple University Beasley School of Law, and Natasha Zech, Director of Attorney Recruiting and Development, Williams & Connolly LLP; and *Federal Clerkships and OSCAR: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, presented by The Honorable Timothy Burgess, United States District Judge, US District Court for the District of Alaska, Laura Simon, OSCAR Program Manager, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, Marilyn Drees, Yale Law School, and Susan Staab, University of Chicago.

Work Group Status Reports

OSCAR (Susan Staab, Chicago):

The Judges' OSCAR Working Group met on February 25, 2015 in Washington, DC. The Judges' OSCAR Working Group invited the NALP Judicial Clerkship Board Liaison, Judicial Clerkship Section Chair, NALP OSCAR Work Group, and the NALP Federal Clerkship Hiring Timing Group to participate in the first half of the meeting. The Judges' OSCAR Working Group was provided memoranda submitted by the NALP board of Directors (*Law School Perspectives on Federal Law Clerk Hiring – July 25, 2014 & Law School Suggestions on Federal Law Clerk Application Best Practices – July 25, 2014*) and the NALP Judicial Clerkship Section (*Feedback on the Most Recent Hiring Season – January 26, 2015*). All memoranda were well received by the Judges' Working Group. The Judges' OSCAR Working Group and the NALP members in attendance had a very productive and open discussion regarding OSCAR, federal law clerk hiring, and challenges faced by law schools and clerkship applicants. The Judges' OSCAR Working Group is committed to expanding the use of OSCAR among the judiciary and continues to seek new ways to promote OSCAR amongst chambers. Since the hiring

plan has been discontinued, the Judges' Working Group is enhancing outreach to chambers to increase overall participation and debunking a myth that "OSCAR is dead" amongst a small group of judges. Although there are no major software changes on the horizon, the Judges' Working Group is also investigating various electronic options that would prompt OSCAR participating judges to keep their information current in the OSCAR system. The 100 finalized application limit was discussed but no decisions were made to remove it at this time. Also, the dates for student access will remain that June 1 all rising 2Ls will receive read only access to the OSCAR system and on August 1 all rising 2Ls will gain full access which includes applying to positions via the OSCAR system. The next Judges' OSCAR Working Group meeting was set for November 6, 2015. Although there is no official agenda set at this time, it was communicated that there is a strong chance the Judges' Working Group would like the NALP group to attend again to continue discussions.

This year is the tenth anniversary of OSCAR. The Judicial Clerkship Section is conducting a presentation at the Chicago NALP Conference, "Federal Clerkships and OSCAR: Looking Back, Looking Forward". The Hon. Timothy Burgess, chair of the Judges' OSCAR Working Group, and Laura Simon, OSCAR Program Manager, are on the panel in addition to Marilyn Drees, Director, Yale Law School Career Development Office, and Susan Staab, Associate Director of Career Services at The University of Chicago Law School. Marilyn Drees has been involved with OSCAR since its inception and Susan Staab is the current Vice Chair of the OSCAR Working Group and a NALP representative on the Judges' OSCAR Working Group.

State Courts (Molly Stafford, McGeorge):

The Section posted a request for additions to The *Insight and Inside Information for Select State Court Clerkships* for particular states on the Law School members' section of NALPConnect during the fourth quarter of this term. We received a renewed commitment for North Carolina, and a new commitment for North Dakota. Currently, this resource includes the following 27 states: AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, MA, MD, MN, MO, MS, NE, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, and VA. The Guide was edited and re-posted on the NALP website, under Professional Resources>Career Services>Resources for Judicial Clerkships. Additional volunteers to update or add the remaining states are welcome, and were solicited during the March conference call.

Federal Clerkship Hiring Timeline (Greta Trakul, Michigan, and Michele Hoff, Connecticut):

This quarter, the Work Group finalized the report that summarized the member feedback about the past clerkship term and incorporated the additional feedback provided on the 100 application limit on OSCAR. The report was then provided to the OSCAR Working Group at its annual meeting in February, where we were given the opportunity to discuss the report and answer questions. The OSCAR Working Group is committed to increasing transparency in the hiring process and improving the information available to applicants, and the Work Group will continue to provide assistance to the OSCAR Working Group as it looks for ways to improve the process for applicants.

Programming and Resources (Shannon Schaab, DePaul):

The remaining three of the Judicial Clerkship Section's four articles slated for publication this year were published in the February, March, and April 2015 NALP Bulletins. The articles were entitled *An Applicant's (and Counselor's) Quick Guide to Background Checks for Federal Clerkships, Mastering*

Judicial Clerkships: Just Part of a Day's Work, and Navigating the Judicial Clerkship Process and Public Interest Opportunities: 8 Quick Tips for Advisors.

During the March conference call, the Section continued the brainstorming process to develop RFPs for the 2016 Annual Education Conference in Boston. We began the RFP process early this year to allow members more time to fully develop ideas and line up potential speakers, and also to allow newer members to solicit feedback on proposals from more senior section members. Currently, the list of eight active proposal topics and their corresponding volunteers are posted in the Section's NALP Connect announcements.

Diane Cross, University of Chicago College of Law, has agreed to spearhead the initiative to update the *Guide to Administrative Law Judge Hiring*.

Long Range Strategic Planning (Kirsten Solberg, Harvard):

The Judicial Clerkship Section submitted the final version of our strategic planning report to the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee back in November. The Committee released its draft plan on March 24, which was generally big-picture in tone but included in its tactics library “[c]ollect data on judicial clerkship pathways.”

Hopefully the exercise of drafting our Section report will be helpful reference for the Section moving forward. To review, the report summarized two big challenges: (a) a growing trend of judges preferring clerkship applications with some-post law school experience, which impacts not only applicants and law schools but legal employers as well, and (b) uncertainty about the clerkship hiring timelines of judges after the discontinuance of the recent law clerk hiring plan that prescribed a central timeline. With that backdrop, we proposed to direct our energies over the next five years not only to maintaining our active projects but also toward three larger objectives:

1. Expand Data on “Later” Clerkships – including the gap year(s) scenario when students secure clerkships during law school but not for their first jobs following graduation, alumni securing clerkships, and pre- and post-clerkship jobs.
2. Continue Active Involvement in the Federal Application Process – at the very least, continue improving OSCAR to move the federal clerkship application process online as much as possible, but also participate in any discussions about a new hiring plan in the future.
3. Streamline the State Application Process – by exploring the creation of an online advertising and submission system similar to OSCAR for state court judges.

Environmental Scanning and Miscellaneous

Federal clerkship hiring was robust over the past quarter for the 2016 term, with a few judges still hiring for the 2015 term and others beginning the recruitment process for the 2017 term or beyond. State courts continue to proceed along their own timelines, with limited hiring for the 2015 term continuing into the spring semester in a few markets and with an increasing number of judges and courts in some states accepting applications for the 2016 term.