

To: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
Lois Casaleggi, Board Liaison
NALP Board of Directors
From: Amy Killoran, Chair, Judicial Clerkship Section
Date: July 1, 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 annual in-person meeting at the NALP Annual Conference in Chicago, with good attendance and discussion. The conversation focused on ways to get more involved with NALP, RFPs for the 2016 Annual Conference in Boston, proposed Bulletin articles, and other issues facing the section.

The section held its quarterly call on Thursday, June 18, 2015. Approximately 39 members participated in the call, which included discussion of RFPs for the 2016 Annual Conference in Boston, proposed Bulletin articles, work group updates, and an open forum discussion that touched on technical elements of OSCAR.

Proposals for the 2016 Annual Conference

The Judicial Clerkship Section submitted seven proposals for the 2016 Annual Conference in Boston, as follows:

1. **Advance Your Clerkship Program: Plan the Perfect Judge Visit.** *The role of a judicial clerkship adviser has never been more challenging. With the absence of a federal law clerk hiring plan, judges are now hiring at all different times of the year. As a result, many 2L students feel dis-empowered and pessimistic about their chances of landing a post-graduate clerkship. Experienced clerkship advisers from Texas Law and Berkeley Law have utilized judge visits as a way to build invaluable relationships with the judiciary and to keep students motivated. Attendees will walk away from this program with a comprehensive checklist for planning the perfect judge visit at their law schools.* Eric Stern, Rémi Ratliff.
2. **Creating Clerkship Connections: Judicial Networking Strategies for You and Your Students.** *Networking with judges and law clerks plays a key role in increasing student chances for securing judicial clerkships in today's market. This is true for both the candidates and the law school professionals. This program will cover both tried-and-true as well as creative and new networking strategies for law school professionals and their students/alumni. Networking success stories will be shared by the panelists and from current and former judicial law clerks. Some ideas discussed will be: taking an active role in the right organizations, selecting events that provide the best bang for your*

attendance buck, volunteering strategically, and leveraging externship experiences.
Jocelyn Salvatori, Shannon Schaab, Ginna Galbraith Pastrano.

- 3. Externships as a Pipeline to Judicial Clerkships.** *The program will highlight externship programs from across the country and innovative ways to use these programs to build relationships with judges in both federal and state courts. The program will also discuss the classroom component and how it can be used to generate interest in judicial clerkships among qualified students, to identify clerkship candidates, hone their skills, and incorporate judges as speakers, instructors, and mentors. The panel will have representatives from the Midwest, Southeast, and East Coast to provide regional comparisons. Data will be provided regarding the success of such programs in leading graduates into judicial clerkships. Testimonials from alumni who have secured clerkships via externships will also be shared.* Linda Hale, Maureen Kieffer, Maura Kelly.
- 4. If At First You Don't Succeed, Apply Again! Motivating Students to Apply for Judicial Clerkships in a Post-Hiring Plan World.** *Recently, over half of the law schools reporting to the NALP Judicial Clerkship Section indicated an overall decline in clerkship applications, specifically from top students. This decline is occurring at a time when schools face increased demand from the judiciary and faculty for qualified candidates. Added to the equation is that the clerkship application process is not only earlier, but also longer – spanning multiple semesters. This session will equip you to engage students and maintain momentum for federal and state clerkship applications. Join us as we discuss mechanisms – programming, outreach, partnerships, and faculty involvement – to improve the clerkship talent pipeline.* Diane Cross, Julie McLaughlin, Erin Scherzer.
- 5. Judicial Clerks in the Job Market: Opportunities and Challenges for Employers and Counselors.** *Many judicial clerks are seeking a new job, or even a new career path, after their clerkship. Many employers are also eager to hire lawyers with clerkship experience. Between ethics rules, judges' policies, and potential conflicts of interest, it can be a challenge for clerks to communicate their interest in an employer or for employers to reach out to current clerks. Join a panel of experienced recruiters, law school counselors and members of the judiciary for an interactive discussion of effective practices, good timelines, and pitfalls to avoid in recruiting and counseling judicial clerks.* Marilyn Drees, Nicole Oddo Smith, Charlotte Wager. (A joint proposal with the Recruiting Section.)
- 6. Mastering the Rolling Federal Clerkship Process.** *Looking for new ideas about how to manage federal clerkship applications and effectively counsel your applicants through it? With no clear law clerk hiring timeline, applicants, recommenders and counseling professionals are tackling new challenges in the pursuit of federal court clerkships. This program will identify these challenges and highlight the opportunities that year-round hiring brings. Panelists will share best practices for counseling applicants and streamlining the application process, discuss how to partner with faculty and gather data for your office, and provide helpful perspectives on the “new” process from judges and faculty members.* Amanda Furst, Michele Hoff, Shana Hansen.

7. **Spotlight on Specialty Courts in the Northeast and Beyond.** *In a legal market requiring increased specialization, clerkships at state and federal specialty courts can provide valuable—but often overlooked—opportunities for law school graduates. Come learn about clerkships at environmental, family, immigration, tax, and numerous other specialty courts in the Northeast and beyond, including identifying these opportunities and hiring timeframes. Former and current specialty court clerks will speak about their clerkships and how clerking has positively impacted their careers. An interactive discussion regarding advising, programming, and written resources will help law school career counselors learn how to educate and energize students about specialty court clerkships.* Betsy DiPardo, Jaya Saxena, Katelyn Ellermann, Victoria Braga.

Bulletin Article Proposals

The Judicial Clerkship Section has submitted five Bulletin article proposals, all of which were approved and will be published as follows:

1. Diane Fears will author an article about diversity-related programs as they intersect with judicial clerkships in the September issue.
2. Janet Siegel Brown will write about behavioral interviewing for judicial clerkships for the October issue.
3. Shana Hansen will draft an article on “preparing for judicial clerkship application success” for the November issue.
4. Michele Hoff will author an article on the Pepperdine judicial clerkship preparation program and similar opportunities, which will appear in the January Bulletin.
5. Jaya Saxena and Amanda Furst will collaborate on a column for the March Bulletin about Gap Year Clerkships and Public Service Careers. This article is jointly written and sponsored by the Judicial Clerkship and Public Interest sections.

Work Group Status Reports

OSCAR (Susan Staab, Chicago):

This year is the tenth anniversary of OSCAR. The Judicial Clerkship Section conducted a presentation at the Chicago NALP Conference, “Federal Clerkships and OSCAR: Looking Back, Looking Forward.” The Honorable Timothy Burgess, U.S. District Court, District of Alaska, chair of the Judges’ OSCAR Working Group; Laura Simon, OSCAR Program Manager; Marilyn Drees, Director, Yale Law School Career Development Office; and Susan Staab, Associate Director of Career Services at the University of Chicago Law School participated on the panel. The program was well-attended and interactive. Both Judge Burgess and Laura Simon reported that they were pleased with the program. The PowerPoint from the session will be posted on the conference website and was also posted in NALPconnect in the Judicial Clerkship Section. OSCAR also posted some slides to the public side of OSCAR at https://oscar.uscourts.gov/celebrating_10_years_of_oscar for anyone to view.

Laura Simon, OSCAR Program Manager, is working with the Public Affairs Office of the U.S. Courts to develop communication that will be sent to all chambers about OSCAR's tenth anniversary, which will include information about using OSCAR and the importance of maintaining an updated profile. Ms. Simon anticipates the communication to be sent in mid- or late July. The OSCAR Working Group, with Board approval, will also be sending a postcard to all judges about the importance of updating and maintaining an active OSCAR profile to maintain transparency. The proposed postcard will be the same text used in last year's postcard. Laura Simon is aware and supportive of the NALP postcard and requested that NALP send the postcard after their communication. We anticipate the NALP postcard will be sent in mid-August.

The OSCAR Working Group also recently completed testing on Version 7.7. OSCAR released Version 7.7 on Monday, June 15, and conducted webinars on June 23 and June 24 for law school administrators to highlight the program updates. The information and registration information for the webinars was emailed by OSCAR to all law school administrators registered in OSCAR, and the OSCAR Working Group also posted it in the Judicial Clerkship Section of NALPconnect. The biggest changes for Version 7.7 were the elimination of fax as an application method and changing the field name for law school grades from "Minimum Number of Semester of Law School Grades Required" to "Minimum Number of Years of Law School Grades".

Beginning June 1, 2015, OSCAR allowed rising second-year law students to register for applicant accounts with read-only access. Read-only access accounts will allow these applicants to view and research clerkship and staff attorney positions, upload application materials such as resumes and writing samples to the system, identify their recommenders, make use of OSCAR's folder system, and access extensive online resources. Rising second-year law students will gain full system access on August 1, 2015. On this date, applicants will be able to build online applications and submit them for consideration to judges and staff attorney offices with available positions listed.

State Courts (Greta Trakul, Michigan):

The State Courts Working Group is in the process of obtaining updates for each of the existing entries in the *Insight and Inside Information for Select State Court Clerkships*, as well as conducting individual outreach to member schools in the states for which the Guide currently lacks information. Moving forward, the Working Group will be adding "last updated" dates to each of the state entries so section members will be able to gauge the timeliness and reliability of the provided information. Volunteers to assist with the updates and outreach to member schools are welcome, and were solicited during the June conference call. Volunteers are also sought to take on the new work group charge of exploring the use of PSJD as a forum for posting and applying to state court clerkships.

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

While continuing to monitor the clerkship posting activity on OSCAR, the Federal Clerkship Hiring Timeline Working Group turned its attention this quarter to preparing a membership questionnaire aimed at gathering information about the current clerkship hiring trends and best practices. The group hopes to finalize the questionnaire and send it to NALP members for feedback in early or mid-July. The data gathered from the membership will be analyzed and compiled into a report that will be shared with the Clerkship Section and with the Federal Judges' OSCAR Working Group.

Programming and Resources (Maureen Kieffer, Loyola, and Diane Cross, Cincinnati):

The work of the Programming and Resources Working Group related to RFPs and Bulletin articles are outlined in detail above.

Several volunteers are working to update the *Federal Administrative Law Judges Post-Graduate Clerkship Hiring Guide*, in both substance and format. The volunteers have contacted almost every office and have noted any updates. The Working Group We are currently in the process of compiling the updates, and reformatting to be as user-friendly as possible.

During the quarterly call on June 18, the Working Group sought volunteers to update the outward-facing portion of the NALP website related to clerkships, so students may access information there. Volunteers are also sought to compile resources related to clerkships and diversity, beyond what is already available on NALPconnect.

Environmental Scanning and Miscellaneous

The Recruiting and Judicial Clerkship sections have been collaborating to plan a joint call this fall to continue the discussion begun at NALP conferences about the intersection of judicial clerkship hiring and law firm recruiting, especially as it pertains to “gap year” clerkships, where judges hire students for a year or more after their graduation from law school, and to the hiring of experienced attorneys as law clerks.

Federal clerkship hiring continued over the past quarter for the 2016 and 2017 terms, with a few judges still hiring for the 2015 term and others beginning the recruitment process for the 2018 term or beyond. State courts continue to proceed along their own timelines, with a good number actively hiring or having hired for the 2016 term.