

MEMORANDUM

To: Alisa N. Benedict O'Brien, Board Liaison
Cc: Fred Thrasher, Deputy Director
From: Shawn Beem and Lauren Jackson, Co-Chairs, Law School CSO Chief Officers Interest Group
Date: June 2024
Re: First Quarter Board Report, NALP Law School CSO Chief Officers Interest Group

2024 ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE MEETING

At the AEC meeting, members were reminded of the 2025 AEC RFP and Bulletin article proposal due dates. It was discussed that additional brainstorming on ideas for both would reconvene on Zoom during the May 2024 meeting. (Also discussed the possibility of creating a Google document for RFP and article ideas.) Lauren mentioned that the chairs would set a mid-May meeting and also send out future meeting dates via NALP Connect.

Next, members in attendance had an open conversation about recruiting issues for summer/fall 2024.

- Discussed the mental health of law students with early recruiting and added pressures.
- Noted students are not taking “traditional” 1L jobs as much as in prior years – eyes on Big Law earlier.
- Firms are holding social events earlier to meet 1Ls
- Suggested we take students back to the basics – manage expectations that many amazing 1L summer jobs are unpaid and public interest – word outside Big Law.
- Some schools are just doing job postings for Big Law rather than OCI and resume collections with these dates moving so early (in May and June).
- Nikia Gray attended and shared the results of a recent recruiting trends survey:
 - Firms are still doing OCI but are using OCI to “top off” or fill the remainder of a summer class.
 - Firms are engaging in non-OCI recruiting – nearly 50% of firms surveyed noted they made hires before August but still participated in OCI to fill the remainder of the class.
 - Shared SBA/student letter from Harvard, Stanford, and Berkley to big firms asking them not to recruit before August – noted anti-trust issues here.
- Some schools are encouraging students to apply to Big Law early (June – once they have grades), but also apply via school OCI.
- Discussed that students are rushing to decisions and the result is students not staying as long with firms because of these rushed decisions.
- Suggested OCI should be throughout the year based on firm needs, good for employer relations.
- Public interest employers and judicial clerkships feel negative effects from early recruiting as they get less interest and applicants.
- Many schools are only doing virtual OCI.
- Some schools are doing Friday or Saturday interviews.
- Many schools offer firms options of virtual or in-person (seemed region dependent).

In addition, members discussed other important topics including

- US News rankings and the increased percentage of employment outcomes now – great case to grow your team!

- CSO Leadership and staff wellness and retention issues with this new recruiting cycle and seemingly no downtime – suggested as an RFP idea!
- LLM and master’s programs – does CSO also have responsibility for these students?
 - Staffing concerns
 - Concerns these students compete for JDA jobs
 - Delegate if you can!

MAY INTEREST GROUP MEETING

During our May 8, 2024, meeting, approximately 25 people attended throughout the one-hour meeting. We were happy to have NALP President, Rebecca Calman, join us and to thank everyone for their time and commitment to the NALP community.

Interest Group members will submit numerous AEC proposals collaborating with members in other sections, committees, and groups. Such proposals include topics on

- How to work across and with other law school departments
- How to write an effective job posting and promote such opportunities
- How to handle “employers behaving badly”
- How to fund public service fellowships
- Professional Development for 2Ls

In addition, the group brainstormed *Bulletin* articles and considered a managing office staff series. This series of articles would cover such topics as training new staff; transitioning established staff; salary issues that cause people to leave; retaining staff; managing the workload; establishing personnel processes; and managing staff burnout.

As co-chairs, we floated the idea of having a virtual speaker series for the group and other NALP members. We will explore finding speakers on the following topics:

- Designing a Professional Identity Formation (PIF) course and curriculum
- Select topics from the managing office staff (see above) as well as leadership training
- How to use assessment tools with students
- Tools people use to work smarter, not harder
- What should CSO chief officers know from the employer perspective – possible joint meeting with the Legal Employers Chief Officers Interest Group

The final portion of our agenda was an open forum for hot topics and general questions. We primarily discussed Suited, Pymetrics, and other assessment and timed cognitive tools.

- Curious about how and when employers are using these tools in the recruitment process
- Reported that Suited has been promoted to schools with smaller OCI programs as a method to help their students well-suited for big law to get noticed
- Some products suggest that these tools could promote DEI although there is no real data to support such a goal

To explore the two assessment tools discussed, visit <https://www.pymetrics.ai/> and <https://www.wellsuited.com/law-candidates>.

Additional open forum topics and questions included

- Workload – use MS Suite to the fullest extent possible including Planner
- For schools that have concentrations, how do you track them?
- Is anyone tracking early recruiting? Should NALP?

FUTURE INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS

The quarterly meetings for the Interest Group are set for 3:00 PM Eastern on

- October 3, 2024
- January 16, 2025
- March 6, 2025

Members will receive calendar invites with virtual links over the summer.

As noted above, we will also attempt to host a couple of events between the quarterly meetings focused on guest speakers and topics of interest to the group members. More details are forthcoming.