

**From:** Sandee Magliozzi, NALP Law Student Professional Development Section Chair

**CC:** Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director  
Carol Sprague, NALP President 2010-2011

**Date:** 7/1/2010

**Re:** Law Student Professional Development Section Report

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## **Summary**

After a delayed start, due to personal circumstances, I am happy to report that the Law Student Professional Development Section is moving forward and gathering speed. We have submitted two RFP's for the Annual Education Conference and four proposals for section articles for the NALP Bulletin. We have not yet heard what will be accepted.

I have conducted conference calls with the section vice-chairs collectively and individually. In addition, we held our quarterly section conference call. The main focus of the call was to provide opportunities and to solicit help for our work groups to ensure we accomplish our goals this year.

Our next section quarterly call is proposed for October 13, 2010.

## **Work Group Updates**

### **1. E-Professionalism and Social Networking**

This work group is going strong and on the pace they set last year to launch its online E-Guide. The E-Guide contains guidance members can use in advising and training students and attorneys regarding Social Media and other electronic forms of communication. It is announced and discussed in their upcoming bulletin article "A Guide to E-Professionalism for Law Students: Five Steps to Create and Maintain a Professional Online Persona." The E-Guide will be in online chapters form covering how to train students on using the media, cover etiquette for using various social media, and suggest best practices for maintaining professionalism in the marketplace. The E-Guide is expected this fall.

### **2. Professionalism Standards**

The hope is to follow-up on the previous work done on law student professional development best practices and at the same time create additional tools. The group hopes to create two educational modules that can be customized for use with a variety of audiences that will allow member schools to expand their programming. The topics and content for the modules needs to be identified and we hope to work informally with several members of the law student development section to gain insight and input on how to make the modules most effective. There was also some discussion about the possibility of creating webinars out of the modules. Once we have finalized modules we will discuss submitting a proposal for a webinar where appropriate.

### 3. Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration

Our formal collaboration with the Lawyer Professional Development Section is moving forward. Here we hoped to tap into the strategic plan by focusing on gathering some data and conducting some research on lawyer professional development issues associated with bridging the gap from law school to law practice. With the ascendance of skills as the key to success and a general acknowledgement that students don't generally have what they need to practice, we thought more research needs to be done.

We propose a pilot survey to among other things look at the experiential learning courses new associates took in law school to see if they made them more effective in their positions as they entered practice. We would propose to ask newer associates what skills and experiences are serving them well in practice, and what relevant experiential learning they participated in during law school. Finally, we would also survey hiring partners and recruitment managers.

The hope is twofold: to pilot the survey to test whether it will yield the link we think exists and to begin a process that communicates the value of such skills and experiential learning that helps law schools focus students differently and law firms look at different recruitment criteria.

While we could envision this becoming more elaborate in the future, we were thinking of targeting a small cross section of firms perhaps through PDC. Meg Reuter from NY Law School has been working with Kris Butler and Gillian Murray from the Lawyer Professional Development Section and serving as an "acting" vice-chair. Pending the board's consent, I'd like to see her formalized as the new vice-chair for this work group.

Meg is in conversation with Judy Collins. We have outlined some sample questions and an action plan which will be converted in to a Research Project Proposal that we will submit before moving forward.

#### **Environmental Scan**

Several issues continue to emerge:

- OCI registration and participation flat to small uptick
  - Some schools in larger cities report seeing a small uptick in OCI registration and are planning to expand resume collections
  - Another school in a small market reported it was still slow and no change in OCI numbers
- Student professionalism and the need for better skills continues to be a concern
  - Firms are being more vocal about schools training students on professionalism and practical skills.
  - Specifically employers are complaining about work skills of summer associates and wanting to see summers exercising better judgment.