

LAWYER PD SECTION

February 1, 2024 Quarterly Update to NALP Board

Co-Chair: Carole Deeter
Co-Chair: Chelsey Parrott-Sheffer

As we begin the new year, we held a full section meeting focused on our professional and organizational goals for 2024. We as co-chairs met individually with all of our work group leads to understand any updates they have for us, what their planned next steps are, and how we as co-chairs can support their efforts.

Suggestions for Next Year

- In the coming year, we recommend removing **Member Relations** as a work group. Our vice chair was not able to be active this year, but that made us wonder if it is necessary to have someone reaching out to welcome new members to our section. We suggest combining the Member Relations and Communications work groups in the coming year and having someone reach out to all of our members on a quarterly basis with a NALP Connect post to point them to the materials available in the Library on our Connect site.
- We recommend adding a work group focused on **Performance Evaluation Best Practices**. That can work to educate our section on this important topic. Additionally, we have a request at the end of these notes for a detailed NALP study on performance evaluations.

FULL SECTION MEETING

January 25, 2024 Full Section Meeting

We used our full section meeting on January 25th to foster connections among our members. We split into breakout rooms to discuss our professional and organizational goals for 2024 and any roadblocks we perceive. We also heard from some of our work group vice chairs about things they are planning. Finally, we shared updates about registering for the Annual Education Conference by the early bird deadline and about registering for the March Mental Health First Aid workshop being offered by NALP.

REPORTS FROM OUR WORK GROUPS

Individual Meetings with Work Group Leads, January 24th and January 26th

Education Work Group: Annual Education Conference / PDI / Bulletin+ Article Planning (led by Anna Hanzelka and Rochelle Weiner)

They are about to begin the RFP process for both 2025 AEC conference and 2024 PDI conference. This year they plan to make a Google doc on NALP Connect for section members to drop in something they want to present on and ask for co-presenters or for someone to say they're interested in presenting but don't have a topic in mind. They will also create a separate Google doc to source NALP *Bulletin+* articles for the coming year.

At our section meeting in Boston, we will brainstorm upcoming conference proposals and Bulletin+ articles.

Lawyer/Law Student Professional Development Collaboration (Sarah Hadjimarkos and Susanne Aranowitz)

This work group has been busy, developing curriculum for law firms on teaching the business of law and presenting on same at the 2023 PDI Conference. They also published a January article in the Bulletin+ about things for law firms to consider when they have attorneys living outside of their firm's office footprint. They are also assisting with upcoming leadership development program panels with the Law Student Professional Development section.

They've collected materials about business of law and are housing those on NALP Connect in the library of the Lawyer PD section. We brainstormed about ways to continue driving our members to this resource so they know it is there. We'd also like to encourage people to continue adding their firms' resources to this library.

In the future, this work group would like to focus on the handoff from recruiting to PD and how to better prepare law students for a law firm environment, including teaching them about law firms and what it's like to be evaluated on your legal work.

Best Practices in Lawyer PD/PD For the PD Professional (Jessica Jacobs)

No new updates from this work group this quarter.

Member Relations & Membership Development (Heather DiFranco)

We propose disbanding this work group next year as we're not sure there is value to having someone reach out to new people as they join our section. To supplement such a reach-out, we propose having a Communications work group lead periodically email our entire section to point members to our various resources, including the documents housed in our Library.

Lawyer Career Coaching/Advising (Thea Klinker and Nicole Llorenz)

This work group is still brainstorming ways to collect information about the state of law firm coaching. We connected them with Jennifer Gallinson of Volta, which is about to publish its annual report on the state of law firm coaching. We think this would be a good first step to better understand the industry and how law firms are using their internal coaches and leveraging external coaches. They plan to build out a survey based upon what they find in this data.

In our June 2024 meeting, we'd like to focus on coaching and ask Volta to present on this annual report before leading a discussion with our full section on what trends they are seeing in law firm coaching and what other resources might be needed.

Knowledge Management and Resource Implementation (Kelly Ryan and Shannon Burke)

Knowledge Management was a task force for NALP to redesign the website, and they decided to mobilize people in each section to be in charge of the KM function. Going forward, our section can still continue this work group, but the charge will need to be more driven by the vice chairs. Kelly and Shannon put out feelers a couple of times this year around specific topics like First Year Associate Orientation resources. Next year they'd like to schedule more one-off calls with section members on subjects of interest, e.g. evaluations, First Year orientation, etc. They want to do more issue spotting and impromptu knowledge sharing.

DEI Liaison (Doug Ebeling)

No new updates from DEI this quarter.

Well-Being Champion (Pascale Bishop, Ice Miller, Chicago)

No new updates from Well-Being this quarter.

Communications, Social Media & Marketing (Hollis Alpert)

No new updates from this work group this quarter.

LAWYER PD SECTION REQUEST OF NALP

1. Detailed NALP Study on Performance Evaluations

Our section continues to have discussions about evaluation best practices. As in many other areas of what we do, we hear from our partners/firms that “law firms are different” when we try to share suggestions or make changes based on the talent industry’s best practices for evaluations. Most of the articles on “best practices” or “trends” (quotes used intentionally) come from AmLaw or Law360, where reporters interview partners or managing partners, and not performance management experts.

It would be a fantastic value add to our members to have something from NALP or lawyer-specific to turn or point to when having these discussions. This reference would help us make the case with backed up data to our firms. The last official NALP study on law firm feedback practices is a 2006 guide titled *How Associate Evaluations Measure Up*. The report is clearly very dated, and it did not anticipate the incredibly important role Professional Development Teams and DEI Teams currently (and rightly) play in law firm performance review processes.

We would love for the board and/or the Foundation to consider an updated study/report on performance evaluation best practices. Some of our work group leads have very enthusiastically volunteered to assist with this project (as have we as Lawyer PD section co-chairs). We recommend that partnership with both a NALP trusted advisor and a non-legal performance management expert to collect and combine the data be considered as well. All of this would be with an eye toward making sure HR/talent management industry standards are being considered.

We know this is something that would take significant time to be considered before even being approved, but we agree that this would be an invaluable tool for our members.