

MEMORANDUM

To: Mike Ende, NALP Board Liaison, Public Service Section
Cc: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director; Samuel Halpert, NALP Director of Public Service Initiatives
From: Susan Curry (UChicago) & Lilli Evans (NYC Law Dept.), NALP Co-Chairs, Public Service Section (2020-21)
Re: NALP Public Service Section Second Quarter Board Report
Date: October 21, 2020

This report contains updates on the activities of the NALP Public Service Section and its Work Groups for the second quarter. The 2020-2021 Public Service Section Work Groups and Vice-Chairs are:

Environmental Scanning Work Group:

- **Sharon Buckingham**, Villanova
- **Moriah Allen**, William & Mary Law School

LRAP/CCRAA Work Group:

- **Jennifer Geller**, Oregon
- **Aoife Delargy Lowe**, Equal Justice Works

Member Relations Work Group:

- **Diane Fears**, Wayne State

Mini-Conference Planning Work Group:

- **Claire Cusella**, Equal Justice Works
- **Glory McLaughlin**, Alabama

NALP Annual Education Conference and Webinar Planning Work Group:

- **Elyse Diamond**, Pace
- **Sharon Buckingham**, Villanova

Pro Bono Work Group:

- **Laura Burstein**, SMU Dedman School of Law
- **Jennifer Mencarini**, Elon University School of Law

PSJD Resources Development Work Group:

- **Jocelyn Brennan Witzel**, St. Lois University
- **Brent Page**, Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)

Publications Work Group:

- **Brooke Meckler**, Equal Justice Works
- **Rachel Kronick Rothbart**, University of Southern California

On October 6th, the Public Service Section held its quarterly meeting on Zoom. Co-Chair Lilli Evans introduced a new segment for this term's quarterly section calls— Employer Profile—and introduced our first speakers from Earthjustice: Gregory Whitt and Anika Gzifa. Each employer that will be profiled on these section calls are members of NALP. Featuring these employers will help them gain more exposure for their organization at

NALP, which will add value for them to continue to be members. It will also help career services representatives know more about the hiring practices of these organizations. Greg and Anika discussed the variety of work that Earthjustice handles, what the organization looks for in candidates, how they interview, and the professional development they offer their attorneys and fellows.

WORK GROUP UPDATES

Next, Co-Chair Susan Curry asked for the Work Groups to provide their reports:

Environmental Scanning Work Group

Work group members Moriah Allen and Sharon Buckingham convened in August 2020 and developed scanning questions and methodology. They have since been reaching out to PSS members from across the NALP regions for one-on-one conversations about our colleagues' observations of fallout and opportunities from the pandemic, best practices for remotely providing pro bono services, partnerships between private firms and public interest non-profits, and the impact of delayed bar exams. To date they have connected with ten of our fellow PSS members, three from the West/Rocky Mountain region, two from the Southeast, two from the Midwest, two from the Mid-Atlantic, and one from the Northeast. In addition to individualized outreach, they posted an announcement on NALPConnect, inviting PSS members to contact them.

In the environmental scanning conversations thus far, they are hearing positive reports about the public service sector. Most government and public interest employers were able to adapt to a remote internship setting for summer 2020; very few canceled their summer programs. In one instance (Detroit, MI), a partnership between a large private firm and a legal aid organization resulted in new summer public interest internship opportunities. Full-time, post-graduate positions in the public service sector have yet been difficult to gauge, as many graduates are focused on preparing for a delayed bar exam, and some employers – particularly those that traditionally wait until after bar results, like D.A. offices -- are not yet hiring. There is some anecdotal information that some public interest organizations may push back hiring until January, in response to delayed hiring by private firms, because they don't want new hires to renege in January when private firms make offers. The pandemic seems to have had little, if any, impact on federal government opportunities. State and local opportunities have been impacted in some states more than others. (For example, while many Pennsylvania state offices have hiring freezes, the New Jersey Office of Attorney General is moving forward with its hiring.) Some fellowship opportunities have been impacted, again more on a regional rather than national level.

For the current academic year, schools with a pre-established public service job fair or OCI are moving forward with their programs, with little to no change from prior years. On pro bono, there has been an increased focus and increased appetite from students, and many schools have been able to add remote pro bono opportunities, particularly those schools with dedicated pro bono managers/coordinators.

The Group will continue outreach and conversations and, after making additional connections with a broader swath of the PSS membership, try to identify issues ripe for further exploration or discussion.

LRAP/CCRA Work Group

This Work Group met on July 8th. Work Group Co-Chairs have embarked on an effort to request information from law schools that have adjusted their LRAP programs for alumna in light of the suspension of payments on federal student loans, and have also put together a short list of recent resources regarding student debt.

Member Relations Work Group

The Work Group met September 3, 2020 to brainstorm ideas to welcome, acclimate and engage new Public Service Section members; re-energize and boost engagement of existing Section members; and recruit new Section members.

Ideas generated include the following:

- Host beginning of the term virtual social or happy hour to reconnect with colleagues and introduce new members to seasoned members (NOT a business meeting)
- Encourage more use of NALP Connect as a quasi-social media platform by, e.g. offering periodic Section posts to prompt discussion by members
- Offer or promote short NALP Connect video tutorials
- Follow new member welcome email with personal phone calls to new members to reiterate welcome and gather information to help connect them with work groups and NALP initiatives aligned with their goals and interests
- Host a short quarterly new member orientation with Public Service Section Chairs and Work Group Chairs to acquaint new members with our work, Work Groups, and resources
- Challenge and incentivize Work Group Chairs to recruit at least one new member (1 year or less) to their respective Work Groups
- Member Spotlight (seasoned and new) – post in NALP Connect or incorporate section meeting agenda item to highlight a selected Section member (his/her work, background, rationale for joining the section, etc.)
- Periodic Member Tip – solicit and post in NALP Connect monthly member tip on making the most of NALP or the Section, or professional tip for public interest advising
- Section Mentors – Recruit seasoned section members to serve as guides/mentor to new members, and assign each new member a guide/mentor to help them navigate the Section and NALP
- Recruit new members via more cross-collaboration with other NALP sections, e.g. JD Advisors, Small and Solo, whose members may benefit from also joining our Section.

The Work Group plans to actively recruit additional members to help execute some of the more ambitious ideas. They also sought feedback from Section leadership to assess feasibility and desirability of the ideas discussed.

Mini-Conference Planning Work Group

Work Group chairs thanked all who filled out the survey regarding the Mini Conference. The Mini-Conference will be held virtually, keeping pace with Equal Justice Works' Conference and Career Fair. Based on the feedback, we will be spreading the Mini-Conference's programming across two events this year: On Wednesday October 21st, we will be holding Public Interest Advising 101 (an introduction to public interest counseling). On Thursday October 22nd, we will hold a meeting of NALP's Public Service Section, which will include breakout rooms where small groups can participate in topical discussions. Advising 101 will involve a registration fee (as usual), but the section meeting and breakout discussions will be free to attend for NALP members and other public interest and government employers who want to participate. On Monday December 7th, there will be the Mini-Conference keynote, along with panel discussion and an additional opportunity for breakout discussions. The Group is in the process of brainstorming panel discussions and keynote ideas based on member survey responses and welcome any additional input. Sam and the Work Group will soon be reaching out for additional volunteers to help support the December planning.

NALP Annual Education Conference and Webinar Planning Work Group

The following proposals have been submitted from the Public Service Section for the 2021 Annual Conference:

- Distance Lawyering: Working Remotely with Public Interest Employers [Leah Adams, Nikki Harris, Anne Sexton]
- Judicial Clerkships: A Strategic Stop on the Public Interest Career Path [Susan Curry, Michele Hoff, Alison Kennedy]
- More Than Finding The Job: Building and Fostering A Culture of Public Interest and Service In Your Law School [Rochelle McCain, Robin Thorne, Rashida West, Karine Laframboise]
- Our Virtual Reality – Public Interest/Public Service Hiring During and Post COVID-19 [Lillian Evans, Sara Malan, Claire Cusella]
- Virtual Public Interest Career Fairs – Standing out in the (Zoom) Spotlight [Lillian Evans, Samantha Kasmarek, Brooke Meckler]
- Who’s the Expert Here? Hitting the Reset Button on Peer Counseling [Susan Curry, Tony Waller, Leanne Shafir, Jennifer McGarr]

Pro Bono Work Group:

This Work Group’s Sep 17th Zoom meeting was unable to proceed because the NALP link was not properly functioning and Sam was unable to fix it in the time frame of the meeting. Instead, The Work Group solicited email updates from some of our members.

Goals for the year and progress made:

- Completion of the plug and play pro bono/public interest curriculum for law students
 - In process, no update.
- Creation of a pro bono/public interest resource bank
 - Jennifer Geller and Chelsea Dobleman – learned that the ABA has had a small work group focused on the same task for about a year. They have done some initial thinking about how to approach outreach and gathering of materials. We are exploring how we can collaborate rather than duplicate efforts.
- Identifying, creating and publicizing remote pro bono opportunities for lawyers and law students in the age of social distancing
 - Kiva Zytneck, Lauren Worssek, and Megan have created a DRAFT spreadsheet (using google spreadsheets) for remote opportunities for law students and have just started entering opportunities. We need to start discussing logistical matters with the data such as who should have editing access, the best way to add information, and how best to maintain it. The goal is that this spreadsheet last beyond the pandemic so that students can take advantage of all the virtual opportunities.
- Discussion of how the Work Group can support the racial justice movement to ensure equity and inclusion in our work with NALP, and in our respective work with students, attorneys and pro bono clients
 - No update

The tentative remaining schedule for this Work Group’s calls is as follows:

- January 14, 2021 – 3-4 p.m. EDT
- March 25, 2021 – 3-4 p.m. EDT

PSJD Resources Work Group

The Work Group is excited to welcome a new Co-Chair, Jocelyn Witzel from Saint Louis University School of Law. The Work Group has been continuing the process of evaluating and updating the current resources available on

PSJD. With Jocelyn now on board they will be regrouping to schedule a virtual meeting soon to discuss plans going forward and ideas for what the working group should tackle this year, as well as getting community assistance to revise resources that need updates.

Publications Work Group

The Publications Work Group has listed an updated slate of Public Service Section articles for the 2020–21 NALP Bulletin:

- September:* Improving Listening Skills for Counseling Diverse Students (Sharon Buckingham)
- October:* Career Counselors' Role in Supporting Students Fight to End Racial Injustice (Elyse Diamond)
- November:* Successes of a Pro Bono Veterans Clinic (Cybele Smith)
- December:* Effective Remote Supervision of Student Interns (Alexi Freeman and Kristen Hulse)
- January:* Intersection Between Law Student Personalities and Pro Bono Engagement (Kiva Zytneck)
- February:* Impact on Public Interest Hiring: NALP Principles, CCF, and COVID-19 (Claire Cusella and Rochelle McCain)
- March:* Lessons Learned from Civic Engagement Program (Anne Sexton)
- April:* NALP "Memories" Placeholder (TBD)
- May:* Racial and Sexual Harassment in an Internship: How to Help your Students (Jody Stein)
- June:* Fellowship Project Proposals in the Wake of COVID-19 (Brooke Meckler)
- July:* TBD
- August:* TBD
- September:* TBD

The Work Group put out a call out for ideas/proposals for the last few articles (July, August and September 2021).

Mike Ende provided a few reminders of upcoming deadlines. Sam Halpert weighed in with a request for topics on Mini-Conference breakout sessions. A Mini-Conference registration link will be sent shortly.

Upcoming Public Section meetings:

- Wednesday, January 20 at 3pm EST/ 2pm CST/ 12pm PST
- Thursday, March 25 at 3pm EST/ 2pm CST/ 12pm PST