

## 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:** Sharon Buckingham (Villanova), Chair, Public Service Section (2021-22)  
**Date:** October 20, 2021  
**Re:** Public Service Section – Second Quarterly Report

This report contains updates on the activities of the NALP Public Service Section and its Work Groups for the first quarter. The 2021-2022 Public Service Section Work Groups and Vice-Chairs are:

LRAP/CCRAA Work Group:

- Jennifer Geller**, University of Oregon School of Law
- Aoife Delargy Lowe**, Equal Justice Works

Member Relations Work Group:

- Diane Fears**, Wayne State Law School
- Susan Curry**, University of Chicago Law School

Mini-Conference Planning Work Group:

- Glory McLaughlin**, University of Alabama School of Law
- Melanie Rowen**, Berkeley Law

NALP Annual Education Conference and Webinar Planning Work Group:

- Katie Behan**, University of Windsor Faculty of Law
- Jana Matthews**, Seattle University School of Law

Pro Bono Work Group:

- Laura Burstein\***, SMU Dedman School of Law  
\*Laura's co-vice chair, Lauren Worssek, left her law school position and is now with Lawyers for Good Government.

PSJD Resources Development Work Group:

- Brent Page**, Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)
- Jocelyn Witzel**, Saint Louis University School of Law

Publications Work Group:

- Brooke Meckler**, Equal Justice Works
- Michelle Takagishi-Almeida**, Southwestern Law School

On October 14, the Section held its second quarterly call. We began with our public service employer spotlight, featuring Lauren Worssek, who recently joined Lawyers for Good Government, which is working on a number of human rights pro bono projects to create systemic change. The organization is fully remote. They plan to roll out remote clinics, including expungement clinics, which may bring possible pro bono opportunities for law students. They are starting by identifying harms that are ripe for intervention. They also are

working as the host organization with a Voting Rights-focused fellowship applicant. Lauren will keep us posted as opportunities arise for students.

Mike Ende followed with his report from the Board, which also recently has been presented in the regional section meetings.

The work group vice chairs participating in the call gave their reports. No new business was discussed.

Here is the information from the work groups:

**AEC/Webinar Planning:** Nine RFPs were submitted for the Annual Education Conference, and as of the last work group meeting, we were advised that two of the RFPs had not been selected. The work group is interested in ideas for webinars that will be of value to the Section. Teresa Schmiedeler and Katherine Mikkelson would like to put together a webinar on Federal Honors Programs, particularly those that don't receive as much attention as the DOJ programs, and Katherine made a pitch for volunteers to assist with that effort. Sam reminded Section members that as we collaborate on webinars and other resources, they can also become part of the PSJD resource library.

**Environmental Scanning:** The work group held its first regional networking call, via Zoom, on August 10, 2021, with Section members from the Mid-Atlantic Region, and had a lively discussion with 13 Section members, including the work group's co-chairs, Moriah Allen, William & Mary Law School, and Sarah Jasper, Equal Justice Works, and the Section chair, Sharon Buckingham. Discussion centered around three themes: the experience of students, schools, and public service employers during the 2020-2021 summer internship recruiting cycle; public service sector job outcomes, including internships and post-graduate positions; and the future of remote work.

We recorded the conversation to allow for a robust report at the end of our environmental scanning efforts. Discussion highlights include:

- Despite the close proximity in winter 2021 of private sector and public service recruiting (due to COVID-related recruiting delays at most law firms), our law school colleagues did not experience students renegeing on public service job offers in order to pursue opportunities in the private sector. As one colleague pointed out, the delay in private sector recruiting actually allowed students to figure out where they belong, and students seemed more confident in their pursuit of 2L summer opportunities.
- All participants reported hosting virtual job fairs and OCI in the 2020-2021 academic year. Many saw an increase in employer participation, and an ability to attract a wider geographic range of employers.
- In some markets, particularly Washington, D.C., public interest employers have started recruiting 2Ls earlier, in September and October.
- Public service employers seem to be understanding of the impact COVID had on Summer 2020 student experiences. They were not punitive if a student secured a Summer 2020 internship that was subsequently canceled, or had trouble securing a Summer 2020 position at all. In other words, lack of a typical law school summer experience in 2020 did not prove to have long-term negative effects for students or graduates. But, there was a noticeable change in student attitudes, particularly among

2Ls. Students were very eager for a meaningful 2L summer, and were insistent upon not having two bad law school summers.

- A virtual job fair, though beneficial for increasing employer participation, is harmful for development of student networking skills. It was really hard to recreate the organic networking conversations, and all the good that can come from them, in a virtual environment. An ideal model for the future would be a job fair that includes virtual interviews, but in-person networking opportunities. We're not sure what this model would look like on the ground, or how to implement it, but discussed whether it's a trend we may start to see.

The work group's next networking call will be with the Midwest Region, on October 26, 2021.

**LRAP Initiatives:** Aoife reported on the following public service loan forgiveness news:

- Big announcement from the Department of Ed on PSLF: <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/pslf-limited-waiver>
  - At this week's EJW Conference, there will be a session dedicated to PSLF at 10:00 am ET on Oct. 22, with Heather Jarvis, Frank Russo of the National District Attorneys Association, and Michael O'Neill of the ABA.
- Update on the Weingarten v. DeVos case: A settlement has been reached in this case. Millions of Americans will now have their loans completely forgiven or will be properly enrolled in a forgiveness program crediting their years of past payments, putting them much closer to full forgiveness: [https://finance.yahoo.com/news/student-loans-settlement-lawsuit-pslf-203224582.html?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xILmNvbS8&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAK6wqqngfUT6j2nr29bQrRJkyNNkrEellsfSVqHlKkEHw9I59XaLV1D6lsHdzmMP21CYuaO2o5dPLV99BlqX51ukwjfkG23yhmviKb3La9M2X2aCp6e0-lq17p5jflxVGwArkfykqSIZ2I\\_dW8NEk5gNjF\\_Hbsn4nInsUa4sNsH](https://finance.yahoo.com/news/student-loans-settlement-lawsuit-pslf-203224582.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xILmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAK6wqqngfUT6j2nr29bQrRJkyNNkrEellsfSVqHlKkEHw9I59XaLV1D6lsHdzmMP21CYuaO2o5dPLV99BlqX51ukwjfkG23yhmviKb3La9M2X2aCp6e0-lq17p5jflxVGwArkfykqSIZ2I_dW8NEk5gNjF_Hbsn4nInsUa4sNsH)
- An Update on Public Service Loan Forgiveness – a Note from Executive Director David Stern: <https://www.equaljusticeworks.org/news/an-update-on-public-service-loan-forgiveness-a-note-from-executive-director-david-stern/>
- The Education Department is planning to unveil a significant overhaul of the PSLF program: <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/01/1041872045/education-dept-plans-to-overhaul-the-troubled-public-service-loan-forgiveness-pr>

**Member Relations:** The work group has launched a new endeavor, a member spotlight, and at the quarterly meeting, Diane introduced Jana Matthews, who recently transitioned to a new position across the country. The work group also published its spotlight on Jana, on NALPConnect. The work group reported that it met on October 6, reviewed its list of projects and tasks brainstormed during the meeting in June, and began to make plans to execute the following:

- **New Member Welcome** - We've continued to acquire lists of new Section members periodically and will continue personalized welcome email and/or phone calls. New members will also receive a general welcome from the group during the quarterly Section meetings.

- **Member Spotlight** - During each quarterly Section meeting and periodically on NALP Connect, we'd like to feature one new or experienced member of the section. As noted, the work group launched with a brief feature of Section member Jana Matthews. Ideally, each member spotlighted will nominate a member for the next installment.
- **"Mentoring" Initiative** - The group worked on structuring an initiative to facilitate connections between new and experienced members, between members in disparate professional roles and settings, etc. We were reluctant to call it a mentoring program due to the formality and other connotations. We hope to facilitate pairing guide and advisor relationships. It was suggested that we consult NALP's marketing arm to identify a catchy and appropriate name for the program. Meanwhile, at the meeting, Diane made a soft request for interested potential participants to reach out to a work group member.
- **Best Practices Resource for Member Engagement** - Work group members will continue to confer with other NALP sections to learn more about general resources beneficial to our Section members, with a special emphasis on using NALP Connect as a member engagement tool rather than primarily as an announcement board.

**Mini-Conference Planning:** The work group presented Public Interest Advising 101 on August 25, led by Swati Parikh – this presentation was part I of the mini-conference. The work group then met on September 30, to begin planning part II, which will take place on December 13-14. Miguel Willis, Innovator in Residence at Penn Law School's Future of the Profession Initiative and Executive Director of Access to Justice Tech Fellows, will be the keynote speaker. As soon as RFP selections for the Annual Education Conference are announced, we can reach out to others for mini-conference sessions.

**Pro Bono:** The work group did not have anything to report for this quarter.

**PSJD Resources:** The work group has been on hold as NALP is auditing the current resources available on PSJD and internally developing methods for community-based updates to resources. We hope to get together and plan some future work soon.

**Publications:** Brooke and Michelle have commitments for the following upcoming Bulletin articles to run: December – Lessons Learned After First Year of Public Interest Counseling (Debbie Baker); January – Counseling Students on Opportunities in a Post-Covid World (Katherine Mikkelson); February - Best Practices for Virtually Engaging Law Students (Frida Coleman-Jackson); July – Environmental Scanning Report (Moriah Allen, Sarah Jasper). They are continuing to solicit authors for articles for Spring 2022. Brooke and Michelle reminded Section members that they do not have to have their own idea for an article, but can reach out to write on an idea we already have on our list.

Our third and fourth quarterly meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, January 26 at 2pm EST and Wednesday, March 2 at 2pm EST.