

MEMORANDUM

TO: Cybele Smith, NALP Board Liaison, Public Service Section

CC: Meghan Grenda, NALP Member Services Coordinator
Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

FROM: Samantha Z. Kasmarek, NALP Chair, Public Service Section

RE: **NALP Public Service Section 1st Quarter Board Report**

DATE: June 17, 2013

Please find below a report of the Public Service Section's activities during the first quarter of the 2013-2014 NALP year.

SUMMARY

The Public Service Section has been very active this quarter. The Section's first quarterly conference call was on May 14, 2013. By that time, the Work Groups with the most immediate deadlines had already made incredible progress and section members discussed current events that may have an impact on public service. For those who could not make the call, the meeting minutes were posted to NALPconnect as a resource and an announcement was made to that effect. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2013 at 2 pm Eastern.

NALPconnect and Changes:

According to NALPconnect, the Public Service Section has grown to over 250 members. It is great to have so much interest in this Section. In an effort to engage as many people as we can, a "Welcome" e-mail is sent to new group members with information about our work groups and contact information. Section members and Work Groups are encouraged to use the features of NALPconnect and the resources it offers as much as possible.

In addition, Christina Jackson, as the new Director of Public Service Initiatives and Fellowships, has been a wonderful addition to the Section and her transition after the departure of Steve Grumm has, in my opinion, been seamless. The Section and many others were grateful for the immediate return of the weekly "Public Interest New Bulletin." She is a wealth of knowledge and ideas, and her support of the Section and Work Groups has already proved to be invaluable.

WORK GROUP UPDATES

Once again, an impressive number of Section members volunteered for one or more work groups. I spoke with each Vice-Chair mid-May to discuss their vision for the group and what they hoped to accomplish during the 2013-2014 year. We also discussed benchmarks for each quarter and the use of NALPconnect – especially the sub-group feature.

Annual Education Conference Program Proposals (Seattle, 2014)
Vice Chair: Andrew Chapin, Fordham Law School

The Annual Conference RFP Workgroup shepherded 15 RFPs on behalf of the Public Service Section, including one geared towards mid-career professionals as requested by NALP President Stacey Kielbasa.

Proposals consisted of a wide-variety of topics. Some programs were submitted in collaboration with other NALP sections and others proposed unique instructional methods such as learning first-hand about local justice initiatives by touring Seattle. The following is a complete list of program proposals:

- Beyond the Public Interest Basics: Exploring “Low-Bono”, Access to Justice, and What it Means for our Students
- Supporting Presidential Management Fellowship Applications
- Financial and Career Management: Help Students Surmount the Burden of Debt
- Seattle beyond the conference—a Social Justice Neighborhood-based Tour
- International Public Interest Fellowships – Opening a World of Possibilities for our Graduates
- Current Issues in Public Service
- Correcting the Same Mistakes: Resume, Cover Letter and Interview Tips from the Experts
- Lawyers for America and other Two-Year Fellowship Programs
- Hypothetically Speaking 2.0: Taking Prosecutor and Public Defender Interview Preparation to the Next Level
- Leveraging Resources, Overcoming Obstacles and Building Connections to Experiential Learning
- Public Service Job Fairs: A Roadmap for Law School Professionals
- Charting a Public Service Career Path In Law School
- All Hands on Deck: Building Community & Support for Law School Public Interest Programs
- The Successful Government Summer: Preparing Students for Public Sector Legal Internships
- Pro Bono Coast To Coast : Mandatory Is the Talk of the Country

Publications

Vice Chair: Katie Dilks, Georgetown

During the Work Group call on June 6, 2013, Katie coordinated member suggestions and put together almost a full, year-long, slate of *Bulletin* articles. We are confident that the specifics for the few remaining months will be completed by the June 21st deadline. The following is summary of proposed articles:

- August – Ashley Matthews (NALP) on entrepreneurship
- September – Sam Kasmarek (Syracuse) on Public Interest Counseling 101 (with teaser for Mini-Conference in October) and Christina Jackson (NALP) quarterly article
- October – Katie Dilks (Georgetown) on Community Law Firms
- November – Jen Pollard and Teresa Schmiedeler (Maryland Law) on Networking (Part 1), and Christina Jackson (NALP) sidebar on PSJD Pro Bono Publico winner
- December – Jen Pollard and Teresa Schmiedeler (Maryland Law) on Networking (Part 2)
- January – Alisa Rosales (DePaul) on getting involved in NALP
- February – Diane Fears (Wayne State) on tech tools for student job search
- March – Rachel Rothbart (USC) and Danielle Sorken (Brooklyn) on Pro Bono update
- April – Author TBD (from LRAP Work Group) on something LRAP related
- May – Author TBD (from Diversity Work Group) on something related to Diversity and Public Service
- June – Christina Jackson (NALP) quarterly article
- July – Author TBD (post-Annual Conference program proposal selection process) on something related to an unselected RFP

We also brainstormed ideas on how to continue our mission to expand the audience for the Public Service Section's work product. She plans to collaborate with Ashley Matthews (current NALP fellow) on exploring blog posts because they are short and it may just be a matter of tailoring a *Bulletin* article. Some suggested industry-related blogs include Equal Justice Works (which posted a *Bulletin* article last year on its site) DC Legal Aid, Ms. JD, PSJD, NY Young Lawyers Section, Girl's Guide to Law School, Illinois Commission on Professionalism, and the Shriver National Center on Poverty.

Katie plans to follow up with Janet Smith to confirm the possibility of blog posts, discuss a "media kit" and outreach strategies.

NALP/PSJD Mini-Conference Planning
Vice Chair: Nicole Vikan (Georgetown)

The group began its planning during a conference call on June 4, 2013. This year, the Mini-Conference will take place on Thursday, October 24th. They are in the process of brainstorming new ideas for the conference agenda. In response to discussions about increasing programming for mid-level professionals, the group plans to have a Public Interest “201” at the Mini-Conference –designed for the more experienced members.

Their next conference call will take place in early July.

Diversity in Public Service Employment Sector
Vice Chair: Matt Gewolb, Columbia Law School

The group is interested in exploring diversity in the public interest and government employment settings. We brainstormed ideas on how to best research and compile the data. Based upon our discussions, this group plans to:

- Collaborate more with the Diversity Section (and its work group on Diversity in Public Service Employment Sector).
- Take steps to determine NALP’s role in encouraging diversity in public interest legal practice.
- Gather information on law school best practices – how to encourage diversity in public interest legal practice.
- Consider what other stakeholders should be included in such efforts and conduct appropriate outreach.

The work group will hold its first conference call over the course of the next few weeks.

Pro Bono Work Group
Co-Vice Chairs: Kim Bart, Duke Law, Danielle Sorken, Brooklyn Law

This group held its first conference call on Tuesday, June 11th. The group has grown in light of additional states proposing pro bono requirements on students. In addition to collaborating with other pro bono groups from AALS, ABA, EJW (a joint telephone call with people representing all of these groups was also held on Tuesday, June 11th), the Pro Bono Work Group plans to:

- Create a questionnaire to gather information on “hot topic” areas in law school pro bono projects such as medical/legal partnerships, transactional, international human rights, and veterans.
- Develop a “How-To and Best Practices” guide. It would share ideas and provide guidance on how to reasonably implement programs, and how to do that successfully in an efficient manner.

- To make better use of NALP and/or PSJD as a repository for pro bono-related guidance and information, for law schools and law students. Perhaps develop a resource that provides guidance on how law schools might connect with law firms for pro bono work.

The group's next conference call will be held sometime in July.

Loan Repayment Assistance Programs (LRAP)

Vice Chair: Kirsten Hill, UC Davis School of Law

This group will continue to monitor developments related to student loans and collecting substantive, but anonymous, data about different LRAP programs. The work group will hold its first conference call on June 21st. Some of the group's initiatives this year:

- Review and summarize the funding and CCRAA data collected last year and turn it into a resource for NALPconnect and possibly for PSJD by the October Mini-Conference.
- Monitor student loan legislation and identify opportunities to keep Section informed on relevant information.
- Begin research on the next step of substantive LRAP information such as how are funds distributed among applicants, type of employment, salary/benefit caps, etc. with the goal of eventually incorporating it into the existing "Best Practices" Guide on NALPconnect and PSJD.

Public Service Course for Mid-Career Professionals –201 Course

Vice Chair: Andrew Chapin (Annual Education Conference Program Proposal Vice-Chair)

After much discussion with Section members at the Annual Conference in Tampa and the 1st Quarterly Conference call, the group decided to put forth a program on a topic that counselors may not yet counsel on frequently – making it something that is beyond the basics of public interest counseling.

The proposal set forth is entitled, Beyond the Public Interest Basics: Exploring "Low-Bono", Access to Justice, and What it Means for our Students. The program would focus on how incubators, community law firms, modest means panels and other programs provide new entrepreneurial and public interest-minded graduates additional employment opportunities, while also increasing access to justice by providing affordable legal services for low- and moderate-income people.

The program would engage mid-career professionals and others in a discussion on incubators and similar programs (such as the Washington State Bar Association Moderate Means Program and the Chicago Bar Foundation Justice Entrepreneurs Project), models for serving low- and moderate-income clients, and the unique challenges and opportunities they present for students, graduates, and CSOs.

Understanding the importance of providing mid-career professionals with training and information, the Mini-Conference planning committee, as mentioned above, hopes to incorporate an additional program geared towards this audience in October.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

California Pro Bono Developments

In addition to New York, several states are discussing a skills/pro bono requirement on new lawyers. So far, it appears that the California proposal is the most far-reaching. The California task force is seeking comments now. Next, it will go up to Supreme Court for review and approval. Some have heard concerns from faculty groups that differing requirements state-to-state might make it overly difficult for law school counselors to advise students. The Pro Bono Work Group is closely monitoring and working with pro bono groups from other national organizations.

Student Loan Developments

There seem to be so many proposals from the Administration and Congress about student loans and interest rates – some good and some bad. Under the new federal programs, it appears that loan servicers are not doing a good job of keeping up and keeping students informed, among other things. There were examples of students paying more than they needed to be.

The Section will monitor these developments so that we are prepared to educate schools and others about these issues.

IN CLOSING

Even though the summer tends to be “slower” for most, I know that Vice Chairs and work group members have many other personal and professional responsibilities. Because of this, I am truly appreciative of their time and support in helping the Public Service Section accomplish so much in the 1st Quarter.