

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jennifer Queen, NALP Board Liaison, Recruiting Section

FROM: Erin Springer

DATE: October 15, 2010

RE: NALP Recruiting Section Board Report

Please find below a report of the Recruiting Section's activities during the second quarter of the 2010-2011 NALP Year.

Summary

The Recruiting Section has gotten off to a very productive start. Our second section call was held on Wednesday, October 13 and included updates from our work groups, an overview of our upcoming NALP Bulletin articles, and an open discussion on trends and feedback from the fall, including a substantive discussion on the challenges we faced this recruiting season.

Work Group Updates

- **NALP Conference Programs.** Melanie Priddy (Katten Muchin) led the NALP Conference RFP Process this year. The Section submitted 6 RFPs this year, and three of them were accepted:
 - Best Practices for Branding Law Firms on Campus: What Works, What Doesn't
 - Bridging the Gap: Cross-Departmental Collaboration for Successful Hiring and Retention
 - Lateral Hiring in the "New Normal"

- **Cutting Edge Information and Analysis, and Real-Time Data Collection.** Randy Liss of Bryan Cave provided an update on his work group's progress. The first Real-Time survey will be going out this week, and will be distributed through NALPnow! The surveys will contain 1-3 questions and the first one will focus on providing a snapshot of fall recruiting, including whether any 3L hiring is taking place. There will be one survey that is geared towards employers, and one that is geared to school members. The surveys will go to all NALP members, but one key limitation of Survey Monkey is that only one representative from each organization will be able to respond, so NALP members will have to coordinate their responses within their organizations and have only one person respond. This may impact survey results because even within one organization data may vary widely by region or size of office. It raises a question of how useful the information will be to those who prefer to use NALP data to look reflectively at their own regions/markets.

- **Form Review Work Group.** Originally vice-chaired by Laura Cappiello (Sullivan & Cromwell). Laura left her position just as this work group's tasks were being completed. This work group completed Phase I by submitting updates to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form, the Open Letter to Law Students, the On-Campus Interview Form Student Evaluation of Employer, the Law School Career Services Request Form, and the Employer's Interview Outcome Form. I would like some guidance from the Board on whether there is anything more needed on this task.
- **NDLE Work Group.** Megan McGrath (McKenna Long & Aldridge) was appointed to serve on this work group as the representative from the Recruiting Section. Lisa Dickinson is chairing the work group and Susan Robinson is the Board Liaison. Megan advised that the group has had several calls and met in-person in the NALP office on October 15 to establish next steps. Megan provided the following update to me from the in-person meeting:

“Our NDLE committee met on Friday, October 15, for a full day meeting at the NALP office. The committee includes: Lisa Dickinson (Chair), Jim Leipold, Fred Thrasher, Lisa Quirk, Carol Sprague, Kay Nash, Eric Stern, Sandi Herbst, Kelly Voight, Ryan Burns, Kim Yagelski and myself. Our task is to create a new and more user-friendly NDLE website.

The meeting started with members reviewing and presenting our environmental scanning document research. Each member was assigned to a particular site prior to our meeting, and the research was summarized by the member to the group. The websites the committee reviewed included Above the Law, Lateral Link, Vault, MCCA, Chambers and CitiGroup. During each presentation, the committee discuss our likes/dislikes about the format and content of the site.

After the scanning document presentations were completed, we went through our current NDLE site to review the features, and to identify strengths and weaknesses. The committee then went over new sites with innovative search functions, graphics, and updated features.

The next task on the agenda included a discussion on our 8/5/10 survey results from students and employers. We had a total of 138 students, including 1L, 2L, 3L, and law school graduate students, complete the survey. Student feedback stated that most relied on our site and employer websites for the majority of their research. Students were most likely to access our NDLE site instead of using the hard copy directory. They typically turned to the NDLE for hiring information, compensation information, practice specific information and contact information. Under the comments section, students requested more specific info on compensation data, clarification on what an offer after the summer program meant (deferred for a year etc.), and also the ability to search for data by practice area. The students requested more recent hiring information, and did not like the static February 1 data deadline for forms. Students also requested updated hiring and salary data, billable and pro bono hours information, layoffs and deferral information, for firms to complete a firm form and an office specific form, and finally more public interest employer information.

The employer survey results included feedback from 98 employers, who also mentioned that they prefer to access the information on their computer. Many employers utilized the NDLE site for hiring data, diversity data, demographic data, compensation data, and contact information. Employers requested more comprehensive comparison charts, data on the length of summer programs, billable information, partnership track information, data on deferrals and secondments, and finally that all firms completed all

sections. Most employers indicated that they use the NDLE, the employer's own website, Above the Law, AmLaw, and Vault for research. Employer suggested we get rid of the print resource, require all employers to complete all fields, make the search and comparison functions more user-friendly, and the ability to update the form throughout the year.

After reviewing the survey data and comments, the committee brainstormed features to include in the new site, and prioritized those features in the event we needed several phases of creating the site. The NALP office is planning to use this information to send out an RFP to some web companies and get bids on the site work. Our committee has not yet focused on content changes to the site, rather just the formatting and features. We will be discussing the content and the timeline for the site at a later date."

- **Research Advisory Group.** Kathy Fox from Wayne State University Law School is serving as the Recruiting Section's liaison to the Research Advisory Group. She was able to participate in their call on September 23. The call focused on two key projects: the 2011 Conference, and the pre-law website project. She provided us some preliminary information about the pre-law website, its purpose and possible timeframe, and said that as the project progresses she may solicit volunteers from the section to help with content development.

NALP Bulletin Submissions

There has been a slight change to the schedule of the Section's submissions to the NALP Bulletin. The new timeline is as follows:

- For the December issue: Juliette Clark on planning non-traditional events (This should be a one-page article, e.g., up to 750 words.)
- For January 2011 issue: Erin Springer on the future of lawyer hiring (can be feature up to 1,200 words)
- For the October issue: Kate Reynolds on talent management and new interviewing techniques (can be a feature of up to 1,200 words)
- For the May 2011 issue: Amanda DiPolvere & school-side author on behavioral interviewing.

Additionally, Vanessa Dobson volunteered during our call to write an article on lateral hiring. Janet will put this in the February or March Bulletin depending on when Vanessa can submit it.

Feedback and Trends

We had a substantive discussion about what people experienced this fall, and much of the discussion centered on how difficult the 28-day deadline has been for employers. I did point out

more than once that a survey would be distributed by the Ethics and Standards group, but it was still a prime topic in our discussion. Some of the themes/comments were:

- The 28-day deadline was very challenging for employers.
- A lot of candidates withdrew; more than usual.
- There was a crunch to get back to candidates much quicker, which put a strain on the hiring process.
- NALP should consider changing the guidelines from “Employers of a certain size” to “Summer programs of a certain size.” Many comments were made about how mid-sized offices may only be looking for 1-3 summer associates and the compression created by the 28-day deadline made it particularly difficult for them to utilize wait lists, etc. Larger employers added that this was a difficult issue across the board.
- The schools mentioned that the students really liked having 28 days. Some students felt pressure from employers to respond to their offers sooner.
- One employer member commented about returning 1Ls and how difficult it was/is that they have until November 1 to respond to offers. It was requested that NALP reconsider the timing of offer deadlines to previously employed 1Ls.
- While some employers experienced a high number of withdraws, others had the experience of students holding onto their offers until the very last minute or not responding to their offers at all. One employer (Alston & Bird!) had two students who let their offers expire, and one who didn't respond to his offer until 4:57 p.m. of the expiration date.
- Lastly, we discussed whether employers should communicate with students whether they are on a waitlist and how that message is perceived by the students. The majority of participants agreed that communicating a students' status is very important, and it was suggested that NALP put together a guide or Best Practices piece for dealing with waitlists and communicating to students. This would be a great project for the Recruiting Section if the Board sees value in it.

cc: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

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