

NALP Small/Solo Section Quarterly Report

To: Andrew Chapin, NALP Board Liaison to Small/Solo
From: Jennifer Zwagerman, NALP Small/Solo Section Chair
CC: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
Date: June 18, 2014

I am excited to have the opportunity to serve for another year as the Chair of the Small/Solo Section. We have a wonderful membership that is active, engaged, and wholly supportive of each other. The willingness to share information, ideas, and expertise is what makes NALP wonderful, and that is clearly true in this Section.

We have lots of enthusiasm heading into this next year, and I've summarized our work since the conference below.

A. RFPS

I was excited last year when our section submitted seven proposals for the 2014 Annual Meeting. I was blown away when we realized that we had NINE proposals submitted for the 2015 conference. This just underscores our Section's desire for relevant programming that includes the perspective of offices with only a few members to do all the required work. Our RFP co-Vice Chairs, Alisa Rosales and Margann Bennett, did a great job of keeping everything organized and encouraging participation. This year's submissions, in no particular order:

a. **Be a "Force Multiplier" Through Partnerships with the Law School Community & Beyond**

"Doing more with less" is becoming a commonplace phrase. This program will provide CSO rookies and experienced veterans alike with ideas for creating successful partnerships with other school and community constituencies to increase CSO impact, as well as tips to encourage their involvement. These collaborations can help in obtaining student buy-in, expanding outreach, and *gasp* securing funding! The practices to be presented and discussed through facilitated interaction between speaker and participants allowed one small office to increase employer outreach by more than 200% and triple the student programming in only one academic year—all despite a 30% cut in funding! **Amber Brugnoli**

b. **Employer Outreach: Part-time Strategies When It's Not Your Full-time Job**

Although the employment market has increased the importance of employer outreach to all law schools, most career services offices do not have a single person solely dedicated to this effort. The reality is that most of us must juggle this very important work with other advising and administrative responsibilities. This program will explore specific techniques and tools law school career services professionals can use to block time for employer outreach, identify and prioritize employers for outreach, and identify opportunities for collaboration with others at the law school. **Chris Smith, Erin Guruli,**

Cinnamon Baker

- c. **Ending Reporting Nightmares: Collecting Information You Need Before You Need It**
In addition to its heavily scrutinized employment outcomes report, the law school career service portfolio also includes numerous other responsibilities; student and alumni counseling, programs, employer outreach, etc. A wide range of audiences and stakeholders including parent universities, state, regional and professional accrediting bodies, the media, prospective students and even political entities want information on our activities - often on extremely short notice. How can we find time to collect, analyze and produce relevant, useful data? How can we be more efficient and pro-active in reporting? How can we use our data to advocate for ourselves to these stakeholders? Learn concrete strategies from a panel of experienced CSO administrators. **Dena Bauman, Estelle Gaerig Winsett, Patricia Hodny, Joe Patrick**
- d. **Hot Topics: Small & Solo CSO**
This panel will address pressing and timely issues for smaller CSOs, including the new ABA audit protocols, possible new ABA externship rules, and other issues identified throughout the year. Part of the session will also be spent identifying potential partners for solving individual offices' challenges. **Alisa Rosales, Donna Gerson, Anne-Marie Fulfer**
- e. **Navigating Cross Currents: Challenges and Opportunities in Partnerships Between Career Services and Externship Departments**
Career services offices and externship programs often find themselves overlapping at law schools, but the differing missions of these departments can create tensions and challenges for those on both sides, as well as creating opportunities for cooperation and collaboration. In this presentation we will explore best practices for career services offices to work with their externship programs and better communicate between offices to give students the widest possible range of opportunities to gain legal experience. **Courtney Key, Cecily Becker, Amanda Rivas, Suzanne Hill Patrick**
- f. **Protocol This: Employment Reporting and Audits**
Employment reporting is one of the most stressful parts of the CSO's jobs. The stress level may have just risen a notch (or four) with the release of ABA's final draft of the Audit Protocol for Employment Outcomes Data. We will discuss employment reporting in light of the audit procedures: highlight key provisions of the Protocol; discuss strategies for meeting those provisions; provide tips and tricks for Symplixity and non-Symplixity users for collecting, storing and manipulating data; and leave time for brainstorming on areas of concern/ambiguity. If the Protocol is tested with volunteers as mentioned at the 2014 conference, we will include a discussion on the test, results, and ideally comments from a member who participated. **Jennifer Zwagerman, Susan Schell**

g. **Putting the “PRO” in Professional Development – Tactics for Maximizing Outcomes in PD Curricula and Programming**

You have obtained the green light from your Dean and faculty for a professional development curriculum or program. Now what? This panel will provide an open forum to discuss how to effectively navigate the vast sea of options when it comes to law student professional development. Be a part of this honest conversation on what is working with law students and what continues to present challenges. We will exchange ideas on how to effectively collaborate with faculty, employers, alumni and other resources to get the most leverage for your time and program and to maximize student buy-in. **Lauren Donald, Tasha Everman, Christine Guard**

h. **Sales 101 For Employer Outreach**

Maximize your employer outreach efforts by being prepared to sell the benefits of hiring YOUR students and graduates. This program is designed to give attendees the tools to strategize for outreach appointments as sales calls by preparing a pre-call sheet which identifies the employer’s needs and the unique talents of your students and graduates. Attendees will be taught how to prepare a universal call sheet which highlights key talking points for outreach appointments. We will discuss how to approach the most challenging outreach visits, including cold calls, difficult employers, and mending fractured relationships. Successful follow up will also be addressed. **Samantha Coyne, Sarah Haley, Robin Nackman**

i. **The Middle Child Syndrome: Engaging 2L Students**

Career Services personnel are forever lamenting the MIA 2L. 2Ls complain that they are too busy with classes, internships/externships, jobs, student organizations, and the myriad of other commitments they make with their time. This program will offer fresh ideas to (re)connect, (re)engage, and rejuvenate your 2Ls. By offering 2L specific programming, career services offices can draw students back in and ensure lasting relationships into the 3L and post-graduate years. Join this interactive session to learn ways to avoid the Marcia, Marcia, Marcia syndrome! **Sonja J. Hayes, Laurie A. Powers, Angela Cruseturner**

B. Bulletin Articles

Maria Comas, our Vice-Chair for articles, has been working to solicit proposals for this upcoming year. We have a few lined up at this point and will be making the official submissions on the due date.

C. Webinars

We are still hoping this summer to have a webinar or two for our section. Likely shorter webinars, a few topics were identified during the RFP process that would make good webinars moving forward. Sonja Hayes is our Vice-Chair and coordinator for this project.

D. Conference Calls

Our first quarterly call focused on the RFP process and soliciting ideas. While lightly attended,

the participation from those on the call was enthusiastic. By popular demand, we are having a Section call on Friday the 20th to talk about some of the concerns members have surrounding the ABA Protocol for Employment Data. This should be a well-attended and I'm sure active conversation.

E. Others News/Events

Our NALP Connect Board has been very active these last few weeks. It remains one of the best resources for sharing information and news. We are going to be working over the next few months to expand our resource section, including perhaps a section of online resources and programs that members are willing to share (particularly specialized topics where we have interest from students, but perhaps not enough to create a whole program). The ABA Protocol is a major focus and area of concern and will remain that way through the next year, at least. We will also be starting to think about Long Range Planning in the Section over the summer, with the goal of getting much of the work done before students return and OCI begins in the fall.