

Memorandum

To: Lynne Traverse, Board Liaison, Experienced Professionals Section
Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

From: Mary Hoagland, Chair, Experienced Professionals Section

Re: Third Quarter Board Report

Date: February 7, 2011

I am writing to outline the activities of the Experienced Professionals Section (EPS) since the Second Board Report of October 21, 2010. The Section has five Work Groups: (1) Annual Education Conference Planning Work Group, (2) Experienced Professionals and Newer Professionals Collaboration Work Group, (3) Talent and Interest Give Back Project, (4) Writing Opportunities/Bulletin Article Planning Work Group, and (5) Pathways to Leadership. Each of the section work group vice-chairs has done a great job this year. Here are the updates:

The Annual Education Conference Planning Work Group (Danielle Shannon, Chair, with assistance from Laurel Hajek)

Danielle held the first conference call in January to start the brainstorming process for 2012 conference RFPs. A number of assignments were made to reach out to people who submitted unsuccessful RFPs for the 2011 conference to see if they are willing to resubmit for 2012. Our next call is on February 25 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Danielle will circulate an email notice inviting all section members to participate in this work group.

The Experienced Professionals and Newer Professionals Collaboration Work Group (Brian Lewis and Kim Hensarling, Co-Chairs)

This work group is divided into two areas: Conference Mentoring and EP/NP Interface:

2011 Conference Mentoring – Kay Nash is overseeing the Conference Mentor Program Committee, and Brian and Kim are on this committee. The committee will match NPs with EP by region and affiliation (school / employer) so they can connect before the conference regarding how to get the most out of it. As of this report, there are more volunteers to do conference mentoring than there are EPs who have requested mentors, but the deadline for requesting mentors is still several weeks away. EPs are ready to volunteer if more mentors are ultimately needed. Also, Amy Perez, Lynne Traverse, and I have been invited to conduct the Newer Professionals Welcome & Orientation session on Tuesday evening of the Palm Springs conference, and we are collaborating on that assignment.

EP/NP Interface – EPs have continued to be invited to join the EP section conference calls and several were on the February 1 call. Also, the Newer Professionals are reaching out to our section for speakers to be interviewed on topics of interest to newer professionals. I was interviewed in January, and they did a great job of providing questions before the interview. They transcribe their interview notes and distribute them to NP members. Amy is doing a great job with her committee.

Talent and Interest Give Back Project (Laura Kanter, Chair)

Laura solicited EP feedback regarding the current specialties listed in the member profile section of the website and requested that we submit any missing specialties. The additional specialties that we submitted to the NALP office included:

- Counseling - Public Sector
- Counseling – Government
- Firm Alumni Programs
- Alumni Affairs (Programming, Database Management)
- International Mobility/Secondments
- Small/Solo Legal Recruitment Department/Office
- Alumni Relations – Law School
- Alumni Relations – Legal Employer

We think that our charges for this section are completed and that any additional work having to do with the directory will be handled by the Membership Services Advisory Group. We are, however, going to write a NALPnow! article which encourages members to join the EP Section, and we can suggest that members review their directory profiles and update their information.

Writing Opportunities and Bulletin Article Planning (Mireille Butler & Norma Cirincione, Co Chairs)

Norma and Mireille have done a great job of lining up members of the section to submit a wide variety of articles. Articles with an EP Section attribution line which have appeared in the NALP Bulletin since the last report include:

- *“Tips from Experienced Professionals: Counseling Those ‘Left Behind’”* by Charles Cramton and Clara Solomon (November)
- *“Tips from Experienced Professionals: December – A Time to Catch Up and a Time to Reflect”* by William A. Chamberlain (December)
- *“Tips from Experienced Professionals: Leadership – It’s Not Just for Managers”* by Vicki M. Huebner (January)
- *“Tips from Experienced Professionals: Managing Enrollment – Career Services Success?”* by Karen R. Britton (February)

Articles are in the pipeline from Gina Rowsam, Mireille Butler, and Ameer McKim for March through May. We asked for volunteers for June during the February 1 and 2 section calls.

Pathways to Leadership (Christine Carlson, Chair)

This work group has been charged with examining leadership and volunteer service experiences of current and former NALP members. Christine, Sarah Staup, and Joni Peet have interviewed the past presidents they chose and will be distributing their notes to each other for review. They are in the process of deciding how to compile their information for delivery to the membership. Format options include one or more NALP Bulletin articles, posting the interviews on the NALP website, etc. As mentioned in the last report, Christine and Bill Chamberlain (Leadership Advisory Group) are coordinating to insure no overlap in their charges.

Environmental Scanning Conference Calls (February 1 and 2)

We held two environmental scanning calls to take the pulse of members of the EPs. We had reports from vice chairs (see above), our board liaison, and other committees:

Board Liaison: Lynne Traverse reported that the board will meet at the end of the month. They will talk about the topics that are discussed in the environmental scanning calls that are taking place right now. They want to hear about member concerns and the important things that are going on in members' lives.

Nominating Committee: Betsy Armour, Leslie Ripley, and Beth Hansen reported that the Nominating Committee received applications from many qualified candidates for both elected and slated positions. The committee will meet later this month in Miami.

2011 Conference Committee: Cherie Conrad Beffa reported that everything is set for the Palm Springs Conference. Everyone who hasn't yet registered is encouraged to do so now.

We also discussed the following questions with these responses:

Questions for Schools

1. Are employers in your region doing more hiring? If yes, is it 2L, 3L, or laterals?
 - We thought summer classes would be larger, but didn't see that. Not much movement at all in the hiring department.
 - There is a glimmer of hope – waiting for good news about busy attorneys to translate into hiring – they generally see a 2-year lag between an economic uptick and hiring.
 - Up slightly for OCIs compared to last year, but last year was terrible.
 - A few firms have called to say they need someone.
 - Slowing improving for laterals in firms, but there are no jobs in the government arena, so students who want to go into government are now looking at firms.
 - Noticing a lot of switching around in who comes to interview (which means there is work that keeps them too busy to come). Firms are working associates hard – can't keep up with demand but firms are too conservative to hire. School gets under the table phone calls with job needs – but not OCIs.

- Students sense that things are getting better – career office is cautiously optimistic, although the numbers of OCIs haven't changed.
 - Students aren't focusing on their job searches because of the hiring stagnation.
 - When job search is slow, students focus more on school. It's hard to convince them to look more broadly.
 - Students who are at the top of the class are burned out because they had a bad experience with recruiting – will eventually get back to the job search.
 - Hard to motivate students to apply for fellowships (not talking about school-sponsored fellowships).
2. What services are you offering to unemployed graduates?
- Pushing non-traditional options: consulting firms, private wealth management, etc.
 - Going to main campus job fair to invite non-traditional employers to consider law students for non-law jobs.
 - W/RM school has started a graduate Public Service Fellowship Program this year. They have ten fellowships available – 20 hours a week for up to nine months.
 - Midwest school will be adding fellowships this year – they are feeling the need to jump start their unemployed grads with good experiences.
3. What, if anything, are you doing to help students/graduates enter solo practice?
- Solo Practice Seminar – 3 hours on a Saturday
 - Lecture Series presenters on solo practice topics
 - Encourage 2L/3L to work for a solo practitioner during school and/or summers
 - Suggest apprenticing for a solo or sharing office space with a solo to get mentoring
 - School sponsored curriculum on starting your own practice; state bar subsidizes students to attend a bar CLE conference on solo practice. Have a solo practice incubator for ten grads – on site attorney mentor.
 - Bar puts on a session each year about solo practice, but it's not well attended.
4. What are your greatest concerns at this point in the school year?
- Jobs for students and graduates
 - Push for law school transparency which affects what to put on the website and what to report.
 - The pinch of US News.
 - How to get students to apply to law school and accept offers of admission in a bad economy.
 - Student debt in light of poor job market.
 - Wonder what law firm structure will look like.
 - How can new law schools keep popping up when (1) applications are down, (2) it is so expensive to go to law school, and (3) jobs are down.
 - Unmotivated law students. They note that students are ignoring and not applying for paid positions – they have an idea of what the perfect job is and won't branch out to consider more things. Even though postings are up, students are not paying attention.

Questions for Firm Employers

1. Has the economy turned the corner, i.e., is work picking up and you need more attorneys? If yes, have your managing partners given a green light to hire? If yes, are you seeing the increase in 2L, 3L, or lateral hiring?

- One west coast office of a national firm reported that lateral hiring has picked up system-wide, especially in New York. This is true in both corporate, real estate, IP, and litigation – they are dealing with search firms again. They are primarily looking for mid to senior level laterals.
- Another west coast office of a national firm reported that things are picking up, but not across the board. They are adding partners, but hiring is still dormant regarding associates and summer programs where things are about the same as last year. They think things will pick up next year for summer associate hiring. The sun is visible on the horizon!
- Southeast firm (multiple offices, one state only) reported that the last two years have been the best years ever because more work is coming to the regional/state firms. They have lower billing rates and didn't have big practices in structured finance or real estate. They have increased lawyer hiring by 20%. This profile is similar for other similar firms in the state.
- Midwest firm said they may not be characteristic of other firms in the area, but it was one of their best years. They expanded into several international markets. Firms in their market were conservative. Their firm didn't rescind/defer offers or shorten summer programs. Programs were smaller for 2010 and 2011 summers than other years.
- Northeast firm noted that they didn't have big increases or dips in work—just steady stream of work. They go to 15 schools and collect from 15 schools for hiring 1Ls and 2Ls. They are interviewing partners and laterals at the mid to senior level. Their New York and Palo Alto offices are growing.
- Work is picking up in the SLC market. Lawyers are super busy and wish they could hire more people, but management is still very conservative and not ready to expand. Overworking associates, but no green light to hire.
- Phoenix is coming back with some hiring, but it is a slower market to recover – real estate work is especially slow.
- Boston work is up, but hiring is lagging behind.
- Work is picking up but reluctant to start hiring. Mentality is still very conservative – there is fear still there about increasing numbers – afraid that the other shoe will drop.
- They have been so lean the last few year that they now have a big bump in hiring – they have 50 open spots; 12 in San Francisco.
- Mid-west firm thinks things have bottomed out. They are replacing attorneys who leave in the course of regular turnover.
- Northeast: Things have certainly picked up in New York generally. The larger firms are becoming aggressive in their recruiting. Her firm is going slowly and just replacing attorneys who leave.

2. What concerns you most at this point in the hiring cycle?

- The fact that more west coast schools are going to the early interview model. Boalt, UCLA, and USC are all doing early interviews.
- The August OCI issue is coming to a head because firms are planning their summer programs.
- School noted that they are doing OCIs before school starts because it's nearly impossible to get interviewing space in the law school building once school starts.

- Concern expressed regarding all early interview programs and the fact that many schools are now canceling their fly back weeks. Makes the decision process very compressed in light of the 28 day rule. Hard for some firms to compete in this compressed time frame.
- 28 days worked OK although it was a bit of an adjustment and they missed having more time. Fly back weeks are on the radar screen. It's hard to be fair and see everyone in a timely manner.
- Regarding 28 days, urged NALP not to change the amount of time again. Give it at least another year or two. Nothing is ever perfect.
- More firms are doing phone screenings.
- Several firms using Skype with great success – another firm thinks there are security issues with Skype and doesn't use it.
- One firm uses phone or video conferencing for phone screening interviews when they get direct applications. Suggested that schools let firms know if they have video conference capabilities.
- One school tried to talk firms into doing video conferencing for resume collections, but the firms preferred phone interviews.
- Hiring partner at one firm loved video conferencing – we thought this would make a good Bulletin article.

Question for Government/Public Interest Employers

For public interest employers – how is the economy affecting you?

- Things seem a little better for public interest jobs.

Other:

Sarah Staup requested a call from anyone who has successfully spoken to someone on the BarBri Class Action hotline phone number.