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## **The Class of 2024 Defies Expectations, Surpasses Last Year's Record Employment Gains**

NALP today released *Employment for the Class of 2024 — Selected Findings*, a preview of the upcoming annual report *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law School Graduates*, highlighting key outcomes that reveal a standout year for the Class of 2024. The new data, available at [www.nalp.org/classof2024](http://www.nalp.org/classof2024), shows that this graduating class defied widespread legal industry predictions — breaking numerous employment records set just one year earlier by the Class of 2023.

NALP Executive Director Nikia Gray said, “Congratulations are in order for the Class of 2024 and all those who supported them. When this class enrolled in 2021, many in the industry including NALP issued warnings about how its larger size would affect the entry-level employment market.”

Gray continued, “In the end, it turned out to be over 3,700 additional jobs they needed to source compared to the Class of 2023 but the 2024 graduates — and the NALP community — met that challenge, resulting in the highest overall employment rate as well as the highest employment rate in bar admission required jobs NALP has ever recorded. And with only 6.8% of those employed continuing to look for other positions, all signs point to graduates being satisfied with the jobs they were able to obtain.”

NALP measured employment and salary information for the Class of 2024 as of March 17, 2025 — approximately ten months post-graduation for a May graduate. More than 97% of U.S. law graduates from institutions that were accredited by the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association are included within the dataset.

### **Highlights:**

- The employment rate for the Class of 2024 reached a record high of 93.4% among graduates for whom employment status was known, marking a 0.8 percentage point increase over the previous year. NALP's tracking of employment rates based on all graduates with a known employment status

began with the Class of 1982.

- The unemployment rate, which includes both graduates seeking and not seeking employment, was just 5.1%, a new all-time low.
- The percentage of graduates securing jobs for which bar admission is required or anticipated (attorney positions) improved by 2.2 percentage points to 84.3% for the Class of 2024 — the highest level recorded since NALP introduced the job classifications in 2001.
- Among employed graduates, 58.9% secured positions in private practice — a 0.7 percentage point increase and the highest percentage since 1992.
- The national median salary for the Class of 2024 grew to a new record high of \$95,000, up 5.6% compared to the median of \$90,000 for the previous class.
- Salaries increased across all employment sectors, except in private practice where the median salary declined by 3.0% this year to \$160,000. However, few law firms have decreased their starting salaries. Rather, the lower median salary is the result of multiple factors, including shifts in the distribution of jobs across firm sizes, the heightened merger and acquisition activity that can change how firms are categorized from year-to-year, and better overall salary reporting from law graduates working in small and mid-sized firms.
- By firm size, median salaries ranged from \$80,000 in firms of 1-10 lawyers to \$225,000 in firms of more than 500 lawyers.
- Firms of 501+ lawyers accounted for 34.2% of all law firm jobs this year, down slightly from 34.3% for the Class of 2023. Meanwhile, the share of private practice positions at the smallest firms of 1-10 lawyers fell to its lowest level in 35 years, resulting in a greater concentration of law firm jobs in firms of 11-250 lawyers.
- Public service jobs, including military and other government jobs, judicial clerkships, and public interest positions, accounted for 32.7% of jobs obtained by employed graduates — a level surpassed only by the Class of 1975. With a larger class, all three public service sectors saw an increase in the number of graduates entering each employer type. However, the percentage of positions that were judicial clerkships declined by 0.4 percentage point to 10.0%, public interest held steady at last year's record high of 9.7%, while government employment grew by 0.9 percentage point to 12.9%.
- Just 6.8% of employed Class of 2024 graduates were seeking a different job than the one they are currently employed in, a record low.
- Nearly two-thirds of employed graduates (65.0%) were employed in the same state in which they attended law school.

Read more about the *Selected Findings* and related Class of 2024 resources at [www.nalp.org/classof2024](http://www.nalp.org/classof2024). The release of the full *Jobs & JDs* report is anticipated in October 2025. To request an interview, contact [media@nalp.org](mailto:media@nalp.org).

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### **About NALP**

NALP is an association of more than 3,000 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That's why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and ethical principles for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 50 years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve. NALP maintains an online archive of press releases at [www.nalp.org/pressreleases](http://www.nalp.org/pressreleases). For additional information, contact NALP at [info@nalp.org](mailto:info@nalp.org) or call (202) 835-1001.