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### **Summer Associate Hiring Held Steady in 2024 as Law Firms Recruited Earlier Report Confirms Significant Changes in Recruiting Practices**

NALP released its annual *Perspectives on 2024 Law Student Recruiting* report today, available at [www.nalp.org/perspectivesonrecruiting](http://www.nalp.org/perspectivesonrecruiting). This year's report highlights a historic shift in recruiting — for the first time in decades, law firms are no longer primarily utilizing on-campus interviewing (OCI) to recruit students. As alternative methods like direct application and early interview programs (EIP) gained traction, the recruiting cycle moved earlier and extended longer into 2024, with most offers (78%) being made before August.

NALP Executive Director Nikia Gray said, “In total, law school interview programs (OCI and EIP) drove only 44% of offers. The majority of offers (56%) resulted from employers recruiting outside of law school interview programs, such as via direct application, resume collects, and referrals.” She continued, “It marks a change in how law firms are viewing OCI in their overall recruiting strategy. The pandemic-era shifts in technology and hiring practices facilitated direct engagement between employers and law students, without law schools being required as intermediaries, and gave law firms greater flexibility in crafting their recruiting strategies. We now know from the data that the market is coalescing around direct recruiting and other non-law school-based recruiting practices as being the preferred methods – or at least the most necessary – to compete for talent and OCI is taking a secondary or even tertiary role, used only to top off or round out summer associate classes as needed.”

In the 2023 report, for the first time, NALP broke out recruiting that took place via OCI from recruiting via all other methods (non-OCI). For the 2024 report, recruiting activity was reported separately across three categories: EIP, OCI, and recruiting via all other methods outside of a law school interview program. Firms were asked to provide office-level data to the extent possible within the survey, but in some instances, firms were only able to provide firm-wide or multi-office data.

## Key Findings:

### Summer 2024 Programs and Outcomes

- In 2024, the average 2L summer program class size was 12, down from 14 in 2023. This is the lowest average 2L program class size since the pandemic impacted the summer of 2021.
- The offer rate coming out of 2L summer programs (to return post-graduation as an associate at the firm) rose from 96% in 2023 to 97% in 2024.
- For the fourth summer in a row, offer acceptance rates soared, now reaching an all-time high of 90%.
- Overall, 14.6% of all entry-level associate positions were filled by students who spent both their 1L and 2L summers with the same firm, and 8.6% of these associate positions were filled by students who spent both summers with the firm and were also 1L diversity fellows.
- The offer rate to 1L summer associates returning for a second summer (in 2025) fell by one percentage point to 91%. The acceptance rate for those offers was 75%, the highest since NALP began tracking the 1L acceptance rate in 2020.
- In total, 79% of 1Ls who accepted a 2L summer return offer will spend the entire 2L summer with their firm.
- Firms reported that 48% of all 1L 2024 summer associates were diversity fellows, down from 57% in 2023.

### 2024 Recruiting for Summer 2025 Programs

- Direct application was the most prevalent method used by law offices to recruit 2L students (91% of offices), followed by OCI at 82%, and resume collects (72%).
- Most offers (56%) made in 2024 for 2025 2L summer associate programs resulted from recruiting that took place outside of law school interview programs. An additional 24% of offers came from OCI, and 20% from EIP recruiting. For comparison, in 2023 the majority (53%) of offers resulted from OCI.
- In 2024, 49% of callback interviews resulted in offers for summer 2025 positions, an increase of three percentage points from the previous recruiting cycle. However, this figure remains below the recent offer rate range of 50-58% from 2014-2022.
- Offer rates and acceptance rates for summer programs usually move countercyclically with one another, although that was not the case for this most recent recruiting cycle. In 2024, the acceptance rate for those offers also grew to 49%, an increase of two percentage points from 2023, and the highest acceptance rate that NALP has ever recorded.
- By method, offer rates were highest for EIP recruiting (55%) and lowest for OCI recruiting (39%). Offer acceptance rates were higher for OCI and recruiting that took place outside of a law school interview program (both 51%), and lowest for EIP recruiting (40%).

- Overall, total offer volume for summer 2025 programs was essentially flat, declining by less than 1% as compared to the prior recruiting cycle. However, OCI offers plummeted by 44%, while EIP offers increased by 26%, and offers made outside of a law school interview program increased the most, up 35%.
- Law offices extended a median of six offers to 2L students for summer 2025 programs, the lowest figure on record.
- In 2024, 78% of all offers were extended prior to August, as compared to 45% of all offers in 2023. July 2024 was the most popular offer month, accounting for 45% of all offers, followed by June (30% of offers), and then August (20% of offers).
- However, there were significant differences in the timing of offers by recruiting method. Offers made outside of a law school interview program were most likely to occur in June 2024 or earlier (45% of offers made via this method), while July was most popular for EIP recruiting (61% of these offers). The majority (59%) of OCI offers were still made in August.

Read the entire *Perspectives on 2024 Law Student Recruiting* at [www.nalp.org/perspectivesonrecruiting](http://www.nalp.org/perspectivesonrecruiting). 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.