

FALL RECRUITING AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST JOB SEARCH

Think positive! It's easy to get discouraged in your public interest job search when OCI gets rolling, but by exercising patience, diligence and creativity, and focusing on practice areas and geographic areas of genuine interest, you should be successful in finding a rewarding and meaningful public interest job.

The public interest job market is substantially different from the private sector market, and in many ways, more competitive. First of all, most public interest organizations do not conduct campus interviews, but instead expect students to apply independently. Secondly, many public interest employers have separate hiring timelines, and fill job vacancies throughout the year. Thirdly, in addition to academic performance, public interest employers value different types of experiences and skills. Lastly, the public interest legal market offers fewer overall employment opportunities.

Keeping these factors in mind will help you plan a more focused and productive job search this fall. Remember – early planning is the key to success! You are encouraged to explore the following eight (8) options:

1. Participate in OCI

Over thirty employers representing the government and public interest sectors will participate in campus interviewing. Follow bidding instructions in the *Nuts & Bolts of the Fall 2010 On-Campus Interview Program* handout. Don't forget that bidding ends at midnight on July 30, 2010. **The following list is current as of 5/27/10; check OCI under Simplicity frequently for updates.** Some of the participating employers are:

Bronx District Attorney's Office	Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
Consumer Federation of America	Southern Coalition for Social Justice
Cook County State's Attorney's Office	Southern Environmental Law Center
Federal Defenders of San Diego	State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
Federal Election Commission	U.S. Air Force JAG
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Federal Reserve Board – Legal Div.	U.S. Army JAG
Federal Trade Commission	U.S. Court of Federal Claims
Internal Revenue Service, Office of the Chief Counsel	U.S. Department of Labor, Honors Program
Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts	U.S. Department of State, Office of the Legal Advisor
Maryland Office of the Public Defender	U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Michigan Court of Appeals	U.S. Government Accountability Office
National Labor Relations Board	U.S. Navy JAG
New York City Law Department	
New York County District Attorney's Office	
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	

2. Government Honors Programs & Summer Programs

Honors programs are one avenue by which federal government agencies hire law school graduates for entry-level positions. Several federal government agencies also have summer honors programs, which provide students with excellent training and exposure to agencies or departments and also increase their likelihood of obtaining permanent, post-graduate employment. Each program has a unique set of requirements, application procedures, and deadlines. Beginning this summer, you should carefully review each program's requirements. Many of these agencies have early application deadlines!

Best source: University of Arizona College of Law's website at www.law.arizona.edu/career/honorshandbook.cfm (obtain username and password from Office of Career Services)

Other sources: NALP's annual Federal Legal Employment Opportunities at www.nalp.org

General federal job website: www.usajobs.com

Google agencies' websites for information and applications

[Jobs] section on Symplicity

In addition, do not forget to explore non-federal government agencies for employment opportunities. Many state and local agencies hire summer interns and entry-level attorneys.

Sources: Google agencies' websites for information and applications

Review *State & Local Government Yellow Books* located in the Office of Career Services

3. Fellowships

Many public interest organizations that do not hire permanent entry-level attorneys often sponsor post-graduate fellows. Fellowships are short term positions (usually one or two years) designed to give new law graduates experience in their fields of interest. Hundreds of fellowships are offered each year, and collectively, they are among the best ways to enter into the public interest job market. All students with aspirations of practicing in the public interest sector should consider them. **Many fellowships have late summer to mid-fall deadline dates, so begin applying early!** For assistance in applying for fellowships, contact Claire Raj, Externship Instructor and Equal Justice Director at craj@law.howard.edu; 202-806-8119.

Best source: Harvard's *Public Interest Job Search Guide* located in the Office of Career Services & Externship Office

4. Judicial Clerkships and Internships

Clerkships are one or two-year post-graduate positions with federal, state, local or administrative law judges. Judicial clerks obtain great research and writing experience, knowledge of court or administrative agency procedures, and often develop strong mentor relationships with their judges. Contrary to popular myth, clerkships are not just for the top 10% of the class; many judges, particularly in some state and local jurisdictions, look beyond class ranks to fill their clerkship positions. **Internships** are part-time and summer positions. These positions also offer great opportunities to research, write, become familiar with the court systems, and develop an inside track to post-graduate clerkships.

Sources: Federal judges: <https://oscar.symplicity.com>
(Clerkships)

State judges: *Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures* –
http://www.vermontlaw.edu/blank_template.cfm?doc_id=94
Contact Career Services for password

Sources: [Jobs] section on Symplicity
(Internships)
www.internships-usa.com (check with Career Services for current password)

5. Career Fairs

Equal Justice Works Career Fair

Equal Justice Works will sponsor the 2010 Career Fair and Conference in Washington, DC at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center on Friday and Saturday, October 22-23, 2010. This event is the largest public interest recruiting fair in the country. Hundreds of public interest employers will interview students for summer and permanent positions. The site will be open later this summer (students will be notified by email). Once the site is open, students must **apply directly** to participating employers, who will notify students of their interview selections.

Public Service Career and Internship Fair

If you are in Washington, DC this summer, we invite you to register for the **2010 Public Service Career and Internship Fair** hosted by the Partnership for Public Service. This event will take place on July 14th from 3:00-7:00 p.m. at the National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001. Metro Stop: Judiciary Square. Admission is FREE! Registration opens on June 1, 2010. Last year's event connected 67 federal agencies with 3,000 students and young professionals. This year agencies will be recruiting for a variety of positions including program analysts, Foreign Service Officers, federal investigators, budget analysts, engineers and attorneys, as well as for internships and fellowships! Don't miss your opportunity to network with federal agency recruiters! As a bonus, registered

participants can view a list of participating agencies, receive event updates and learn more about how to make the most of this career fair. To register beginning June 1st, go to: <http://makingthedifference.org/careerfair>.

6. General websites for public interest jobs:

- PSLAWnet - www.pslawnet.org (create your own account using your HUSL email address)
- The Idealist – www.idealist.org
- Public Interest Clearinghouse – www.pic.org
- Environmental Law Internships by state – <http://www.internships-usa.com/grlawtoc.htm>
- Government jobs – <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>
- Department of Justice – <http://www.usdoj.gov/oarm/>
- Equal Justice Works – <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org>
- Non-Profits – www.ncna.org
- Internships (all categories) - www.internships-usa.org (get password from Career Services)
- Capitol Hill jobs - Directions to send to those who want to get on the Jobs list: To get on the jobs list, just e-mail TomManatosJobsList-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and you will get a return e-mail from Yahoo with registration instructions.

A complete list of public interest job websites is available upon request. Please contact Career Services.

7. Job Listings

Because public interest employers seek candidates who demonstrate a commitment to their issues, and place great weight on experience and dedication to public interest causes, students should take advantage throughout their law school careers of opportunities to volunteer or intern with public interest organizations, government agencies, and judges. Many such school-year, summer and permanent job opportunities are listed throughout the year in the [Jobs] section of Symplicity, so check these employment options frequently. Jobs are updated daily.

8. Externships (Summer & School-Year)

In addition to volunteer or paid jobs, there are also many excellent *Externship* opportunities (for credit) available through the Clinical Law Center; students should contact Claire Raj (202-806-8119; craj@law.howard.edu) for updated information and advice.