

HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW 
OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

FALL RECRUITING AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST JOB SEARCH

Think positive! 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

Approximately thirty-five employers representing the government and public interest sectors will participate in campus interviewing. Follow bidding instructions in *the Fall 2011 On-Campus Interview Program Guide*. **The following list is current as of 7/12/11; check OCI under Symplicity frequently for updates.** Some of the participating employers are:

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania
Bronx District Attorney's Office
Central Intelligence Agency
Children's Law Center
Cook County State's Attorney's Office
Fairfax County Circuit Court
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Federal Reserve Board, Legal Division
Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Competition
Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection
Internal Revenue Service, Office of the Chief Counsel
Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts
Maryland Office of the Public Defender
Miami-Dade County State's Attorney's Office
Michigan Court of Appeals
National District Attorney's Association
New York City Law Department
New York County (Manhattan) DA
Indiana Office of the Attorney General
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Office of Chief Counsel
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Office of General Counsel
Philadelphia District Attorney's Office
Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
San Francisco District Attorney

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
U.S. Air Force JAG
U.S. Army JAGC
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Administrative Law Judges **(LIST CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)**
U.S. Department of Labor, Honors Program
U.S. Department of State
U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. Department of Treasury
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Government Accountability Office

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

√www.PSLawNet.org

4. Judicial Clerkships and Internships

Judicial 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. Graduating students interested in applying for 2012-13 federal clerkships must get clearance from the HUSL Faculty Judicial Clerkship Committee. Contact Professor Rhea Ballard at rballard@law.howard.edu; 202-806-8045. **Judicial 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. Equal Justice Works Career Fair

The 2011 Conference and Career Fair is October 21 and 22 at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, D.C.

The Equal Justice Works annual Conference and Career Fair is the largest public interest career fair in the country. It is the only event, solely dedicated to law students, where you'll find more than 1000 public interest-minded students representing 200 law schools from across the country coming together to explore career options with leading nonprofit organizations and government agencies. The Conference and Career Fair provides access to job opportunities for law students; connects employers with talented attorneys and law students; and offers a multitude of skill-building and career advising sessions with experts from around the country. Our conference continues to be an unparalleled networking opportunity for students, law school professionals and legal professionals.

Important Dates

August 16-September 12, 5 p.m. EDT: Student Registration Opens

September 14-October 6, 5 p.m. EDT: Cancel or register without interviews
(Student Registration only)

September 14-September 28: Employers View Applications/Choose interviewees

September 30-October 6, 5 p.m. EDT: Students Accept/Decline Interviews

October 6, 5 p.m. EDT: Last day to cancel registration with full refund

October 21-22: Equal Justice Works Conference and Career Fair

For more information, go to www.equaljusticeworks.org

6. General websites for public interest jobs:

- PSLAWnet - www.pslawnet.org (create your own account using your HUSL email address)
- The Idealist - www.idealists.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 - http://www.opajobs.com/login_subs.php (get password from Career Services)

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.