

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: NALP Members  
FROM: Thomas Schoenherr, Chair, Part V Task Force  
DATE: December 4, 2007  
RE: Recommended Changes to NALP's Part V Timing Guidelines

I am pleased to provide for your review the recommendation of the Part V Task Force for changing NALP's Timing Guidelines. If approved by NALP's Board of Directors in February 2008, these new guidelines will take effect for the 2008 recruitment season beginning in August 2008, on a provisional basis, and will be offered for final approval by the NALP membership at the 2009 Annual Education Conference in Washington, DC, in April 2009. Between now and the end of January 2008, we are seeking your considered review of this proposal and will be soliciting your feedback and reactions in a variety of ways, including email, telephone conference, and via an online blog.

**Part V Task Force Background**

In response to persistent concerns expressed by various constituents regarding Part V of NALP's current Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities (Part V Guidelines), the NALP Board of Directors voted to create and President Gihan Fernando appointed 11 NALP members representing a diverse cross-section to serve on an ad hoc task force to review the Part V Guidelines and make recommendations for improvements.

This Part V Task Force met briefly for the first time at our annual conference in Keystone, CO. Since then, the Task Force has held two meetings including all Task Force members on June 1 and 2, 2007, and on Monday, July 30, 2007, as well as numerous conference calls. In addition to these meetings, members of the Task Force hosted three widely publicized teleconference calls that were open to all NALP members to hear our constituents' views on what works well with the current system and what doesn't.

In total, approximately 185 NALP members participated in these conference calls in October. The Task Force was very pleased with the high level of participation as well as the informative discussions on all of the calls. Members from a wide variety of law schools and employers from across the country joined in the conference calls.

After careful review, the Task Force members incorporated general membership feedback into the framework of the Task Force's recommendation, as outlined in the Discussion Paper. This Discussion Paper reviews in detail the work of the Part V Task Force over the past nine months. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the NALP Board of Directors at their November 2007 Board meeting for their review and feedback. The Board voted unanimously to authorize the Task Force to present its recommendations to the general membership for feedback and report back to the Board at their next meeting in February 2008.

## **Recommendation**

The Task Force recommends replacing the existing December 1 deadline with a 45-day rolling deadline.

The proposal provides for a 45-day period for students to make their decisions about offers. This 45-day guideline would apply to all offers made to new student candidates on or before December 15, which the Task Force determined best estimated the end of the fall recruiting season. After that date, the guidelines suggest a two-week timeframe for offers to be left open. The proposed guidelines further suggest that offers to student candidates formerly employed be left open to November 15. In the Task Force's considered opinion, this 45-day rolling offer guideline, coupled with these dates, provides a fair balance between the need for student candidates to have sufficient time in which to make their decisions and for employers to be able to manage their yields to create maximally successful programs.

We strongly encourage you to review the Task Force's Discussion Paper in its entirety for a more detailed explanation of the Task Force recommendation as well as a detailed summary of the variety of other ideas that the Task Force analyzed and considered. The adoption of these guidelines by the membership would, of course, be accompanied by detailed interpretations, but in advance of that degree of specificity, the Task Force has attempted to address the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal in more detail through the Discussion Paper.

## **Timeline for the Adoption of New Part V Timing Guidelines**

If member feedback leads the Task Force to recommend adoption of its proposal by the Board, the following timeline would apply:

1. The Task Force would request that the Board vote at their February 2008 meeting for **provisional** adoption of the new Part V Timing Guidelines for the 2008-2009 recruiting season. The Task Force believes that provisional adoption of the new proposal in February 2008 would allow both employer and law school members time to inform law student candidates about the timing guidelines changes in advance of the beginning of recruitment for summer and post-graduate full-time positions which would commence in the summer or fall of 2009. Assuming an affirmative vote by the Board, the next communication to the general membership would take place as soon as possible after the February 2008 Board meeting to inform all members of the provisional adoption of these new timing guidelines. It would be clearly communicated to the membership that options for further feedback would be provided during the spring of 2008.
2. A February and/or March 2008 communication to the NALP membership would also announce a Town Hall Meeting which would be held at the Toronto Annual Education Conference in April

2008 to discuss the new provisional Part V Timing Guidelines. This Town Hall Meeting would provide an important forum for member feedback and discussion in person with members of the Board of Directors and the Task Force.

3. Further feedback would be gathered during and immediately after the fall 2008 recruitment season to assess the impact/success of the new provisional timing guidelines. This feedback would be summarized in follow-up reports to the Board as well as to the general membership. In February 2009, the Task Force would propose to the Board adoption of the provisional timing guidelines as permanent changes to the NALP Principles and Standards, Part V.
4. A final vote by the general membership would be slated for spring 2009, for permanent adoption of the new timing guidelines for the 2009-2010 recruitment season and beyond. For this vote, a separate majority of law school members and employer members would be required in order to adopt this proposal.

### **Member Feedback and Reaction**

The Task Force seeks reactions and feedback on this proposal from all NALP members. There are three ways to provide your comments and reactions.

1. First, you are invited to participate in the following teleconference calls which will be hosted by the Task Force to solicit feedback regarding these recommendations. Each of these calls will be hosted by members of the Task Force. These conference calls will be held on:

Tuesday, December 11, 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. ET

Monday, December 17, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. ET

Thursday, January 10, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. ET

Please mark your calendar now to participate in one or more of these calls. To participate, dial in by calling 1-888-346-3659 and then entering passcode 7394. Reminder broadcast emails will be sent out a week prior to each of the calls.

2. In addition, NALP members are welcome to begin to share their feedback now via a blog that the NALP office has set up specifically for the Part V Task Force at [www.nalp.org/partv](http://www.nalp.org/partv) and click on the link for the blog.
3. Finally, you are invited to call or email any member of the Task Force or the Board of Directors. We look forward to hearing your feedback.