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**Entry-Level Law Firm Recruiting Activity Remains Brisk,
but May Have Peaked for Now**

Washington (DC) — The **National Association for Law Placement (NALP)** released its annual *Perspectives on 2016 Law Student Recruiting* report, showing that entry-level law firm recruiting remained robust, although flat compared to last year. The lack of additional growth after consistent increases over the last several years suggest that recruiting volumes may have peaked after a marked post-recession recovery. The full report is available [here](#).

NALP Executive Director James Leipold summarized the findings, saying, “After a period of considerable volatility marked first by a prolonged slowdown in law student recruiting volumes following the recession and then a rapid escalation in recruiting volumes for two years running, we have seen the recruiting market stabilize this year. Recruiting volumes remain at a high level, but the numbers were mostly flat compared to last year, and in some cases we saw some contractions, suggesting that the most recent period of growth has ended, or at the very least slowed.”

Significant Findings:

- For the first time in four years, half of the firms responding to NALP’s surveys reported that they made fewer offers for summer positions than they did in the previous year.
- The offer rate coming out of summer programs fell slightly, from 95.3 percent to 94.6 percent, but offer rates varied considerably by law firm size and by geography.
- The acceptance rate on these offers has hovered between 84 percent and 86 percent for six years in a row now, more or less flat and significantly higher than the pre-recession norm of acceptance rates which ranged from about 72 percent to 77 percent.
- Members of the Class of 2018 — those who went through the OCI process in the summer and fall of 2016 — began to experience the flattening of the curve in recruiting volumes.
- Across employers of all sizes, the median number of offers extended fell slightly from 12 to 11.5, still well below the high of 15 measured in 2007, but well above the low of 7 measured in 2009.
- The percent of callback interviews resulting in offers for summer positions moved only slightly from 53.8 percent down to 53.3 percent, still well below the figures of 62.7 percent and 60 percent measured in 2006 and 2007, and well above the low figure of 36.4 percent measured in 2009.

“From the 30,000 foot level it is clear that law firms continue to face pressure to carefully evaluate lawyer staffing levels at every juncture,” continued Leipold. “At the same time, law school graduating class sizes will continue to shrink through at least 2019, leaving fewer students competing for the remaining jobs.”

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The full *Perspectives on 2016 Law Student Recruiting* report details recruitment activity on campus and at job fairs in 2016; provides information on summer program characteristics ; and also provides information on the outcomes of 2016 summer programs and of fall 2016 recruiting for both second-year summer associates and entry-level associates not previously employed by that employer. New analyses this year include a look at the extent to which employers returned to campus post-OCI to solicit additional 2L candidates, and the extent to which employers invited 2Ls with an offer for summer 2017 to return for a “sell” visit.

The findings in this report are based on law school responses to NALP’s “Survey of Law Schools on 2016 Recruiting” and on legal employer responses to the “Survey of Legal Employers on 2016 Recruiting.” To read the full report, including its numerous data tables, go to <http://www.nalp.org/uploads/Perspectiveson2016Recruiting.pdf>.

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About NALP: NALP is an association of over 2,500 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 standards for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 40 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. For additional information about NALP research, contact Judith Collins (jcollins@nalp.org), Director of Research, or James G. Leipold (jleipold@nalp.org), Executive Director, at 202-835-1001.

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