



Public Service Job Fairs A Roadmap for Law School Professionals

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Michelle Vodenik, Director, Public Interest/Diversity, Career Services Office, Chicago-Kent College of Law

Overview

- Panelist Introductions & Perspectives
- Public Service Job Fair Planning
 - Why create a job fair?
 - Steps:
 - Develop law school consortium
 - Details: budget, site, date
 - Administrators, systems and tasks
 - Employer list and outreach schedule
 - Student registration, outreach, preparation & follow-up
 - Include Additional workshops/panels?
 - Day of the event & wrap-up

Panelist Introductions & Perspectives

- **Hillary Exter**, Director of Student Organizations & Publicity, Public Interest Resource Center, Fordham Law School
 - Public Interest Legal Career Reception, in August, NYC at City Bar Assoc., Public Interest Legal Career Fair, in February at NYU Law School
- **Lauren Fuchs**, Program Manager, Law School Engagement & Advocacy, Equal Justice Works
 - Equal Justice Works Conference & Career Fair, in October in Washington, D.C. area at a hotel
- **Melanie Rowen**, Associate Director for Public Interest Programs, University of California, Berkley School of Law
 - Public Interest/Public Sector (PIPS) Day , in January at UC Hastings School of Law, San Francisco, CA
- **Michelle Vodenik**, Director, Public Interest/Diversity, Career Services Office, Chicago-Kent College of Law
 - Chicago Area Law School Consortium (CALSC) Midwest Public Interest Law Career Conference, first Saturday of February at Northwestern University School of Law

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Why hold a Public Interest Job Fair?

- Efficient, cost-effective way for:
 - Schools to pool resources to attract employers
 - Employers to meet with students
 - Students to meet with range of employers
- Build public service community with related events
- Provide opportunity for more educational and networking opportunities for students

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Develop a Law School Consortium

- Who will join the efforts?
 - Do you have an existing consortium?
 - Will this build on or coordinate with other efforts?
- Who will you offer the opportunity to participate in the job fair?
- Examples of national and regional models (metro area, state)

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Details: The Planning Process

- Budget:
 - Who will pay for the event? Schools, students, sponsors?
 - Breakdown of costs
- Site:
 - Neutral (bar association or hotel)
 - One of the schools
- Date: Fall v. Spring
 - Timing:
 - Weekday or weekend?
 - Same every year?
 - Holiday considerations

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Career Fair Administration

- Administrators: what role will each school play?
 - Will those roles rotate?
- Software systems: pay for Symplicity or other software?
 - Hire an outside vendor?
 - Needs: student/school/employer registration; cover letter/resume management; interview selection and timeslot assignments; waitlist management
- Set timeline and divide tasks

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Employer Outreach

- Develop target employer list
 - Local, regional or national?
 - How will the list be updated annually?
- Create and carry out employer outreach
 - Messaging
 - Save the date postcard/email
 - Mail, email of invite
 - Follow-up emails and phone calls
 - Interview information – especially for postgraduate positions
 - Will you have table talk?
- Employer registration
- Advertising participating employers to students and schools
- Can employers ship materials to the event?

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Student Outreach, Registration and Preparation

- Roles in student outreach
 - Generating posters & other materials
 - Publicity to students
 - Who serves as contact for students?
 - Reminders to the schools & to students
- Student registration
- Preparing students for the Fair
 - Programs and materials pre and post-Fair

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Workshops/Panels

- Reasons to include them (maybe not the first year!)
- Possible topics:
 - By practice areas, hot topics, geographic area of employers
 - Job search skills (resume review, mock interviews, networking)
 - Postgraduate Fellowships
 - Student Debt Management
 - Developing public interest programs at your law school or student –to- student roundtable

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Day of the Event & Wrap-Up

- Staffing the Fair
 - Student & Employer Check-In
 - Workshop/Panelist Setup
 - Weather/Emergency Contacts
- Surveys & request for feedback
- Reports to stakeholders
- Final budget and debriefing

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