

"Current Challenges in Public Interest Careers - Let's Talk!"

Topic 1: Long-distance, semester-long externships: Who's doing them? What works and what doesn't work?

Talking Points:

1. Does your law school have a program where students can spend an entire semester off-campus working as externs with public interest or public sector employers?
2. If so, are these part of a formal program (i.e., Washington University in St. Louis's Congressional and Administrative Law Externship in DC) or on an ad hoc basis.
3. Are these programs actively encouraged by the law school or merely tolerated?
4. How are they supervised by the Law School? Is there a class room component and, if so, who teaches it?
5. Are these programs successful in encouraging law students to pursue careers in public interest/public sector law?
6. Are students being counseled about whether these program are the right choice for them?

Topic 2: Are tighter law school budgets squeezing financial support for public interest stipends for internships and travel to job fairs and conferences?

Talking Points:

1. Are law schools cutting back on career counseling for public interest/public sector?
2. Are law schools cutting back on funding for summer stipends or post-graduate fellows/bridge programs?
3. Are law schools cutting back on money to support students attending public interest conferences and career fairs?
4. What can public interest offices do to replace cut funds?
5. Can law schools in the same region team up on public interest programs to reduce costs?

Topic 3: self-motivation - keeping up my morale while "doing more with less" will be a fact for the foreseeable future.

Talking Points:

1. The trend is smaller budgets, smaller staff, greater demands.
2. Internal & external expectations.
3. Internal & external rewards.
4. Support & invigoration.

Topic 4: bridge programs - what works, what doesn't work.

Talking Points:

1. Variety of duration: from 3 months to 1 year.
2. Variety of financial support: from zero to \$60K with benefits.
3. Variety of availability.

4. The new ABA employment standards.
5. Student engagement.
6. Bridging to permanent employment.

Topic 5: Challenges posed by the move towards mandating pro bono by students prior to Bar admission

Talking Points:

1. Impacts on and constraints faced by entities hosting students
2. Impacts on and constraints faced by law schools
3. Are the benefits to be derived worth the costs
4. Are there creative ways to address and overcome the challenges

Topic 6: The movement towards incubators and the implications for student counseling

Talking Points:

1. Reframing the array of postgraduate opportunities in counseling public interest-minded students
2. Implications of the movement for school-funded summer fellowships and Irap programs

Topic 7: Attorney General's Honors Program Eligibility-Preserving Activities

1. Are law school graduates eligible for the Attorney General's Honors Program?
2. What are the requirements to preserve eligibility through a judicial clerkship?
3. What are the requirements to preserve eligibility through a qualifying, full-time legal fellowship?
4. Are there other activities that can preserve eligibility in addition to a judicial clerkship or qualifying, full-time legal fellowship?
<http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/honors-program-eligibility>

Residency and Citizenship Requirements

1. What are the Department's citizenship and residency requirements for Entry-Level and Experienced Attorneys?
2. What are the Department's citizenship and residency requirements for Volunteer Interns?
3. What are the Department's citizenship and residency requirements for SLIP hires? Entry-Level and Experienced Attorneys:
<http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/entry-level-and-experienced-attorneys-conditions-employment#a4>; Volunteer Interns:
<http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/conditions-employment#residency>; Summer Law Intern (SLIP) Hires: <http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/general-information-and-conditions-employment-hiring-process->

Security and Suitability (Background Investigation)

1. What is the difference between a Suitability Review and a Security Clearance?
2. What kind of background investigation is required? How long does it take?
3. What are the most common suitability issues or problems that arise during a background investigation?
4. Does Justice require employees to take a drug test?
5. What happens if serious concerns are identified during the background investigation?
6. Where can I find employment related forms? <http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/entry-level-and-experienced-attorneys-conditions-employment#d>