



Judicial Clerkships: A Strategic Stop on the Public Interest Law Career Path

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Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Foundational Information
- Student Counseling Scenarios
- Alumni Counseling Considerations
- Closing Thoughts

Showcasing the Value of Clerkships

- Making the case for clerkships
 - Legal skill development
 - Public interest employers see value in clerking
- Connecting long-term goals with type of court
- Encouraging discussions with public interest employers



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Juggling Timing

- Discuss federal court timeline
- Recognize state timelines can vary dramatically
 - States may have deadlines prior to federal courts
 - State clerkship decisions may happen very early
- Identify timing clashes
 - Clerkship decisions may occur before application windows for other programs like EJW, Skadden, DOJ Honors
- Provide guidance on appropriate timing for candidates



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What this Means for Advising

- We do not always hold all of the answers
- Dispelling myths and giving permission
- We need to recognize that the clerkship search is not easy
- We need to reinforce that there is no one-size fits all strategy
- Clerking can happen a few years after graduation



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Resources

- ❑ Vermont Guide to State Court Clerkships
- ❑ NALP Insights Guide to State Clerkships
- ❑ PSJD
- ❑ OSCAR
- ❑ Law School Networks (Student, Alumni, Faculty, Staff)
- ❑ Almanac of the Federal Judiciary
- ❑ Bloomberg Law, Ravel Law, Leadership Connect and FJC.gov
- ❑ USAJobs and Congress.gov



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Meet Whitney 1L



Timing: Spring of first year

Profile: Decent grades in first semester
Really enjoys legal research and writing
Focused on public interest career path
Has not selected a practice area of interest

Meet Tracy 2L

Timing: Late Summer/early Fall of second year

Profile: Summer intern for a federal judge
Strong student
Focused on 2L summer job search
Does not know much about clerking
Passionate about community service





Meet Terry 2L

Timing: Spring of second year

Profile: Did direct legal services in 1L summer
Enjoyed transactional portions of the work
Accepted BigLaw spot for 2L summer
Afraid clerking is too academic and dull
Wants client contact early on
Concerned about salary and political views



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Meet Theo 3L

Timing: Early Fall of third year

Profile: Was a government intern in 2L summer
Wants a government career long-term
Just now considering clerkships
Questions the value of some clerkships
Only has relationships with clinical
faculty members and legal supervisors



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Meet Thornton 3L



Timing: Spring of third year

Profile: All public interest experiences

Did not secure a post-grad fellowship or Honors Program spot

Needs something interim to preserve eligibility for those options



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Meet Avery Alum

Scenario 1: Just took the summer bar exam and is still seeking first post-graduate position

Scenario 2: Just started a one-year fellowship

Scenario 3: Just started a two-year fellowship

Scenario 4: In a term-limited position ending soon

Scenario 5: Has worked in public interest for a while and is considering pivoting to a clerkship



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Tips for Avery Alum



- ★ All clerkships will preserve your eligibility
- ★ Try to be geographically flexible
- ★ Watch for new appointments and nominations
- ★ State courts clerkships are valuable
- ★ Substantively focused clerkships are valuable
- ★ Communicate with your current employer



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