

October 2016

TO: Law School Career Services Offices

FROM: James Leipold, Executive Director
Judith Collins, Director of Research

SUBJECT: 2016 Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS)

We are writing to provide you with a complete set of the Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS) materials for the Class of 2016, including the ERSS form for the Class of 2016 that has already been posted to the NALP website.

Collecting and reporting this consumer information remains one of the most important things that we do together each year. As legal career professionals, individually and collectively, one of our professional responsibilities is to provide prospective law students and their families with complete and reliable information about their reasonable employment prospects upon graduation. That responsibility can only be met by reporting individual student employment outcomes to both the ABA and NALP on an annual basis. We were gratified that last year all but one of the ABA-accredited law schools in the U.S. provided employment status data on 38,627 graduates, providing information on over 96% of all graduates. With your help we look forward to the participation of all law schools in the U.S. which were ABA-accredited at the time that the Class of 2016 graduated and to being able to report an even higher percentage of coverage for the Class of 2016.

Due Date for Data

The due date for employment data for the Class of 2016 is April 13, 2017, to allow you time to submit your data to the ABA by its deadline and then submit your data to NALP before attending our Annual Education conference in San Francisco next April. . Note that the employed-by date for this class is March 15, 2017, and that per the ABA definition of employed, graduates must have commenced their employment by March 15, 2017, in order to count as employed. If they have accepted a job offer that will start after March 15 and they are not working in another

temporary job in the meantime, then they must be counted as “Unemployed, Start Date Deferred” in both the ABA and NALP data sets.

New this Year

- A new question that asks about graduates’ veteran status has been added. Graduates have the option of selecting “US military veteran” or “Military service from a country other than US” as appropriate.
- In order to better capture the range of jobs taken by graduates at law firms, there are several new or modified law firm job types, including “Patent agent,” “Manager/Administrator,” and “Other non-attorney position.”
- Healthcare has been added as a new employer type under Business.
- The job duration question has been simplified. It now provides for just two options: “Job is long-term (1 year or more)” and “Job is short-term (duration is fixed at less than a year).”
- Job 2 information is no longer collected.

NALP and the ABA

In a few instances NALP and ABA definitions will continue to diverge. We try to keep these variances to a minimum but in some cases the differences are unavoidable. In particular, starting with the Class of 2015, the ABA tied the definitions of short-term and long-term jobs that are school-funded to a particular minimum salary threshold. NALP did not follow suit, and retains definitions of short-term and long-term that are tied to how long the job is expected to last from the employer’s perspective.

General Instructions and Guidelines for the Class of 2016

The Class of 2016 will be the 43rd consecutive law school graduating class documented by NALP's annual ERSS. As you know, throughout this time, the ERSS has allowed NALP to provide comprehensive, reliable and authoritative information on the employment of new law school graduates. We are committed to continuing to provide this vital information and we understand that **you play the most important role in this process**. NALP’s extraordinary track record to date has only been possible because of your efforts to track down your graduates and your willingness to provide information — on a confidential basis — to the NALP office. **Your participation is necessary to ensure that the ERSS remains the premier source of information** on the employment experiences of new law school graduates.

Survey results will be published in *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law Graduates — Class of 2016*, in the *NALP Bulletin*, and on NALP’s website. Law schools, legal employers and attorneys, the media, and

prospective students all use the results. Your own information will also be available to you in your confidential School Report, which all participating schools automatically receive. Remember that your information is confidential. No information that identifies schools or individuals is published or released by NALP. To ensure the highest possible quality data:

- You should *read the instruction booklet and the separate enclosure*, “Guidelines for Surveying Your Graduates,” regardless of the format you use to submit your data. In addition to reflecting the questions and form being used for the 2016 data collection, the booklet provides important definitions and guidelines and answers most of your specific inquiries.
- *Submit a record for each graduate*, even if you have no information beyond demographics. This is vital to determining survey quality and coverage. The only exception is that you do not need to report on a graduate who is deceased.
- *Report employment status as of March 15, 2017*, using the most current information you have. For some graduates, this status will be different than at graduation. A December (or 6-month) survey is highly recommended, preferably for all graduates, but at a minimum for graduates for whom you have no information, for graduates who were not employed at the time of an earlier survey, and for those known to be in a temporary situation or position at the time of an earlier survey. Your own internal reports, of course, can be updated even after you report to NALP, and if so will then not correspond to the information submitted to NALP.
- *Please review all of the information provided by your graduates and follow up if you have questions.* Your critical review and professional judgment contribute to survey integrity. Please also review the final individual records (whether paper or electronic) for each graduate for completeness and accuracy before your submission to NALP.
- Refer to the enclosed data submission information sheet for instructions on how to submit your data. *Please return the data submission information sheet regardless of the method used to submit your data.* This sheet not only provides NALP with a contact should there be questions on your data, but also helps document survey response and coverage.
- You should read and refer to the enclosed *NALP Best Practices Guide for Managing Law School Employment Outcomes*. You can also find it on the NALP website by clicking on the Resources & Initiatives tab > For Career Services > Employment Report & Salary Survey (ERSS) Info > NALP Best Practices Guide for Managing Law School Employment Outcomes, or by going to <http://www.nalp.org/uploads/2015BestPracticesLSEmploymentOutcomes.pdf>.

If you have questions about how to create the file for NALP from your software, please contact your vendor for assistance.

***** Your survey data are due by April 13, 2017. *****

The importance of this deadline cannot be overstated!

Help NALP provide timely, complete data by submitting your data on time. NALP cannot guarantee that data submitted after the due date will be used.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Judith Collins at 202-835-1001, or email jcollins@nalp.org.