



## **2L Government and Public Interest Guide June 2009**

**Duke University School of Law  
Career & Professional Development Center  
Science Drive and Towerview Road  
Durham, North Carolina 27708  
Careercenter@law.duke.edu  
(919) 613-7031**

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## I. Introduction

This guide addresses the basic resources and strategies for finding government and public service jobs for your 2L summer. It is intended for use both by those students committed, in the short or long term, to public service work and those who are seeking public service work for the summer but are ultimately interested in private sector work upon graduation. The wide range of government and public interest jobs, and the resources for identifying these jobs, makes comprehensive treatment difficult, so this guide should be treated as an overview rather than a complete listing of available resources. In addition to your own independent research, previous manuals, the Career Center website, and career counselors should also be consulted.

## II. Frequently Asked Questions

### A. How does a 2L summer job relate to the future?

Your 2L summer is a way to position yourself for your post-graduation job search. Because most public interest organizations work on a tight budget, they do not typically bring in a class of summer interns expecting to be able to offer them a post-graduate job. Although summer internships with government and public interest employers do occasionally lead to interviews and post-graduation jobs, your summer position is important for many other reasons. Most significantly, it can allow you to explore the type of work you are interested in and develop your legal skills. As the skill sets for lawyers overlap, with many similarities between what lawyers do in private practice and in public interest work, even if you are not intending a public interest career, your summer experience can enhance your skills and marketability within the private sector. In fact, many summer public interest internships give you much greater responsibility and practical experience than you will get elsewhere as the rules of practice in some states will allow you to represent clients in court under the supervision of a practicing lawyer.

If you are pursuing a career in public interest or government work, your 2L summer is a critical part of enhancing your public interest or government “credentials” and demonstrating your commitment to a particular type of work. Do not worry if you are not yet certain what area of public interest law you want to go into after graduating. Instead, use your summer position to help you focus on what is important to you in your career, the types of jobs that suit you, and the causes that excite and motivate you. Employers will understand that your experiences are part of your developing focus and you will be able to explain changed interests as you more fully think them through. Additionally, your post-graduation job search will be much easier once you understand your interests and have developed your focus.

All 2Ls should also consider the following in pursuing options for the summer: (1) how to use the summer to demonstrate your commitment to a particular type of work and/or geographic location; (2) what skills you wish to develop; (3) what substantive areas of the law you want to explore; and (4) what kind of work environment you desire. If your long term plans are uncertain, you should focus first on things that you are certain about when deciding what opportunities to learn about and pursue; these can include geographic region, size of the organization, client contact, amount of research and writing, and substantive areas of interest to you.

### B. What is the timing of a public interest job search?

The public interest job search is quite different from a private sector search. The timetable for government and public interest employers varies for each employer. Public interest students need to have patience and the willingness to live with some anxiety, as they will likely obtain a job much later than those planning to work in the private sector.

*One thing for certain is that as a 2L, you will need to begin contacting government and public interest employers much earlier than you may have done as a 1L.* Generally, hiring begins in the fall for many government positions (federal government summer intern programs and criminal prosecutors in major cities) and large public defender offices. A few of these employers have deadlines as early as September of your 2L year. The appendix to the Government Honors and Internship Guide or Arizona Guide (see section on “Where to Find Public Interest Jobs”) lists many of these deadlines and positions. Others accept applications on a rolling basis, making it wise to get your applications in early. Many of the more competitive non-profits also have early fall deadlines. Yet, others will be hiring throughout the winter and early spring, which means that if you stay committed and involved in your job

search you can and will find a position of interest to you. Even if you apply early, you may not hear back for a long time, so just make sure you periodically check back in regarding the status of your application and continue to express your interest in the position.

As is true of all job searches, being engaged early and staying focused is the best way to ensure that you do not miss out on opportunities, as the passage of time means that some jobs are no longer available. Likewise, although many government and public interest jobs are posted, there are also many unadvertised positions that come open throughout the year. Some potential employers do not post positions because they are unable to fund them; for these, writing to them and expressing an interest in both paid and unpaid positions may help you obtain a summer internship for which you can get outside funding. The “Funding Public Interest Summer Work” section of this guide addresses many of the funding sources available for summer internships in government and public interest law.

### **C. What should I be doing now?**

The first step is making an in-person or phone appointment with a counselor to construct a job search plan. Further steps you should take now are: 1) becoming familiar with PSLawNet’s “opportunities” searches and signing up to receive Email Alerts (can select by practice area, geography, job and organization type); 2) reviewing the postings for summer government internship programs (those in the Government Honors and Internship Guide, noted below, as well as those on agency-specific or state-specific lists); 3) bidding to interview with public interest and government employers that attend On-Campus Interviewing; 4) considering attending the Equal Justice Works Career Fair in Washington, D.C., in October; 5) signing up for Duke’s Public Interest listserv, and, if you are interested in post-graduate fellowships, then also signing up for the Post-graduate Fellowships listserv; (6) networking to identify people that may be able to help you in your job search; and (7) beginning letter writing to apply for positions for your 2L summer.

We suggest that you keep detailed records of your job search efforts. Some students find it helpful to construct a chart with four categories: 1) date of application or contact; 2) group and position; 3) contact person; and 4) result/notes. Being organized will help you know when you need to follow up and when it is time to contact additional organizations.

You should also be aware that many public interest jobs are “hidden” or un-posted. Thus, writing letters and contacting organizations of interest to you, whether they have advertised a position or not, should be a part of your plan. If you are told that they are not currently hiring when you first contact them, make a note to check back in with them again in a month or two. *As there are many sources of funding for public interest jobs, it is wise to express your interest in both paid and unpaid positions when you contact potential employers* (see the “Funding Summer Public Interest Work” section of this guide).

As with private sector job searches, networking should be a significant part of your efforts. Networking is the process of using connections to people to gain information about careers and job openings. Some studies show that 70% of jobs are obtained through networking. One option to learn about particular practice areas and organizations is to set up “informational interviews” in order to ask practicing lawyers about their careers; these can be brief phone interviews or can happen in person over coffee or lunch. One way to set them up is by emailing a short note with your resume attached by way of introduction. You can tell them how you found their contact information (Were they recommended by someone else? Did you find them through an alumni directory? or Did you simply find them because you researched their organization?) and inquire whether they might be available to speak with you by phone or meet with you.

When networking, you should start with those you have a connection to, including professors, relatives and friends, former employers etc. You should also reach out to alumni from Duke Law or your undergraduate institution. In addition, you should contact others who do government or public interest work that interests you and/or is in locations of interest to you. All of these contacts can: 1) inform you about “hidden” or un-posted opportunities or positions that may come open; 2) put in a good word for you with those who are hiring 3) tell you about other organizations that do the work in which you are interested; and 4) highlight important tips for applying to these often unique jobs.

#### **D. Are there specific things that government and public interest employers look for in candidates?**

For many government and public interest employers, the most significant thing they look for in an applicant is an interest in and commitment to the mission and work of the organization. Although some of the national level non-profit organizations and some federal government agencies are concerned about academic standing, for most public interest employers, your interest in an organization's work is far more important and your academic record may be deemphasized. This does not mean that your skills and abilities are not important, but rather that grades may be less of a factor than with many other types of employers.

One of the ways you can demonstrate an interest in the work of an organization is through developing your "public interest credentials". Although you may have had the opportunity through pro bono and volunteer work to work with the issues an organization deals with or the types of clients it works with, engagement in other public interest activities is another good indicator for employers. Prior summer jobs and volunteer work in college can also help demonstrate your interest. Keep in mind that you can continue to develop your "credentials" throughout your second and third years by way of pro bono work, coursework, clinics and school year internships.

Government and public interest employers often give law student interns and entry-level lawyers significant responsibility. Thus, they are interested in candidates who have developed their lawyering skills through clinics, internships, journals, classes, moot court, and pro bono work. Another factor they look to is leadership experience. Depending on the work of the employer, some skills may be more important than others, but some of the more commonly emphasized skills are researching and writing; speaking; the ability to see the world through the eyes of others; integrity; negotiation skills; judgment; and creativity.

Within broad categories, it is possible to distill particular factors that certain types of employers look for, though these are clearly generalizations. The following summary provides some guidance regarding what to emphasize in your personal development and in your outreach to employers:

**Government employers (local, state and federal):** Require evidence of public service commitment and excellent writing skills. Though they prefer students with public sector work experience, they tend to see law firm experience more favorably than other public interest employers. The federal government honors programs and summer legal internship programs do consider good grades, but not to the exclusion of other factors.

**Prosecutors and Public Defenders:** Look for similar skills and hire in similar ways. Both tend to hire entry level lawyers in "classes" and often favor those who have interned during the summer or school year, either in their specific office or with another office. They value experience in direct advocacy and hire those with speaking experience (clinics, trial advocacy classes, and moot court), who have taken criminal procedure and evidence, and who have a commitment to public service.

**Direct services:** Value experience interviewing clients, working with community groups, negotiating with agencies, oral advocacy, and quality written work that is produced efficiently. Language proficiency, in languages that are the native language of many of their clients, is also highly valued.

**Law reform/policy:** Although they hire summer interns, many only hire entry-level attorneys through one or two year fellowship programs. Because they do complex litigation or policy work, they value the ability to conduct complex research and analysis and to distill information for use in a variety of formats. They value clinic experience, internships at impact organizations, journal work and judicial clerkships.

**International:** International public interest organizations are very hard to break into. Although they may have summer interns, they rarely hire entry-level lawyers except through fellowships. Networking is incredibly important in this field. Publishing a note or article on a timely international topic is a good way to make you stand out. It definitely helps to have contacts or expertise either geographically or in a substantive area of law.

**Public Interest Law Firms:** Value skills in advocacy and research and writing.

### **E. How widely should I be casting my net and for how many jobs should I be applying?**

The best advice is to apply broadly. You should try for your “dream” job, but you should also remain flexible and apply to jobs “outside the box” in broad geographic areas. For example, if you are interested in environmental work, do not restrict yourself to non-profits or the obvious government agencies, like the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior. There are many “lesser known” government agencies that do environmental work and deserve your consideration —such as the Department of Agriculture or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. There is no limit on the number of jobs you may apply to and, unlike the judicial clerkship process, there is no stigma to being offered a job and declining it. Thus, we advise you to apply for ALL jobs that may interest you; you will thereby learn about more opportunities and you may be surprised to discover a fantastic job along the way.

### **F. Is there a difference in cover letters and resumes for government and public interest jobs?**

Your cover letter is your “brief” for why you should be hired. Cover letters and resumes for government and public interest jobs are different than those you would use in the private sector. While we counsel all students that each cover letter needs to be unique to the specific organization and job, *this is particularly true for government and public interest jobs. For government and public interest jobs, it is critical that you understand the work and mission of the organization, including who the organization’s clients or constituents are and how the organization advocates for its clients or constituents. Also, is it focused on litigation, policy, legislation or a combination of these? You need to research the organization to learn these things. All government and public interest organizations that are hiring want applicants to show a commitment to the mission of the organization and a willingness to work within the challenges inherent in public service employment. This needs to be demonstrated in your cover letter and in your interview.*

When necessary to demonstrate the points noted below, you do NOT need to limit cover letters to one-page. When a cover letter is part of an application, as it almost always is for government and public interest employers, it should demonstrate a clear commitment to the work of the organization and its clients and should: 1) highlight particular skills or traits you possess that are necessary for the job (these may come out of the job description); 2) note any prior experience, whether through jobs, internships, coursework, a clinic, or volunteer and pro bono work, with the issues and clients; 3) express an interest in the geographical area (for public interest and government positions this is often secondary to showing a commitment to the organization’s work but, depending on the employer, may still be significant); and (4) may address additional public service work. Your cover letter is NOT a chronological repetition of your resume, rather it is where you emphasize your interest and commitment, as well as the skills and knowledge you have acquired that will serve the employer. Your resume may need to be reworked to emphasize public service experience, clinics, volunteer work, and leadership roles. For example, clinic experience might be set out separately in the “Experience” section of your resume, rather than simply being included in your “Activities” section under law school.

Unless it is clear that a job application can be sent by email or completed on-line, you should consider sending your materials via hard copy to many public interest employers. For organizations or government offices that have recruiting or hiring departments, email is most often appropriate. However, for smaller organizations that do not have the resources or staff to attend to emailed applications, your materials may be missed unless sent via hard copy. You can always call and inquire about the best way to send materials if you cannot locate this information elsewhere. As with other types of job applications and outreach, make sure that the subject line of an email clearly identifies the purpose of the email and your status as a Duke Law student.

### **G. Other than cover letters and resumes, what else should be included with an application?**

Most employers require a cover letter and resume. Others also ask for a list of three references with their contact information, including address, phone and email. For your references, you can use a professor, a summer employer, or a prior employer. It is not unusual that references are requested but not contacted for summer employment. It is also advisable to send a writing sample, though you do not need to send a transcript unless this is requested of you.

## **H. Are interviews different for government and public interest jobs than private sector jobs?**

The main difference between government and public interest job interviews and those in the private sector is the importance of clearly demonstrating a commitment to and passion for the work of the organization. If you have worked or volunteered with a similar organization or client population, you should be prepared to talk about your experience and connect it to your interest in the position. You should also have three key points about yourself or your experience that you want to convey, even if you are not asked about them specifically. As with any interview, you should be prepared to talk about any experience listed on your resume and know your key talking points about that listing. Certainly if you have had coursework or summer experiences on point, or written relevant papers or publications, you should be familiar with key lessons or concepts of each and be prepared to discuss them.

Some, though not all, public interest employers distinguish between candidates by asking substantive legal questions in the interviews. These include some public defender offices and environmental organizations. You may be asked questions about your approach to research and writing assignments or given a hypothetical to see how you might advise a client in a sensitive situation.

As with all interviews, it is important that you come with a list of questions for the potential employer or networking contact. Although you may not always get the opportunity to ask them, questions are a way to demonstrate your sincere interest in a position. If you do not have questions, a lack of interest on your part may be assumed. Do not ask questions that are readily apparent on an organization's website or that are answered in a job description, although you can ask for more detail about topics that are addressed in these places. Some typical question topics include: what you should anticipate working on with the employer?; what kind of supervision you will have?; what type of training is provided?; and what you can do to be prepared for the job?.

After the interview, you should always follow up with an email or letter thanking the interviewer.

## **I. How important are recommendations from a 2L summer job?**

Recommendations from your 2L summer employer will be very important, whether you ultimately decide to do the type of work the organization does or not. You should go out of your way to do high quality work and get along with everyone. Both your work and your professionalism are on display.

## **J. How should multiple offers be handled?**

If you are in the position of having more than one offer, or of having an offer while you are still waiting to hear back from other employers, you should consult with a career counselor about how best to handle your situation. You may always make an appointment, stop by the office or send an email.

It is important to always get back to an employer as soon as possible after receiving a communication from them. When receiving an offer, be appreciative and grateful but do not inadvertently accept it if that is not your intent. If the employer does not tell you how much time you have to decide, you should politely and confidently ask them. If they are not a NALP employer, you may need to ask for time; a standard request is two weeks, but this may not be granted.

If you have an offer but have not heard back from another employer which is your first choice, you should contact them and let them know that you have an offer but that you would prefer to work with them. This may convince them to speed up their process and make you an offer.

## **K. Can I hold a private firm offer open pending a public interest job search?**

Some students have private firm offers that "expire" before the public interest job search is complete. The NALP Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities provide that students may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's offer until as late as April 1 if the student is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Students may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.

#### **L. Can summer employment be split between a firm and a public interest organization?**

Yes, it is often possible to split a summer between a law firm and a public interest organization. Some firms have structured programs where the firm funds the student for the whole summer but the student spends part of the summer at a public interest organization. Each firm that does this has its own program and the details are different. Another way to do a split is to secure a law firm offer and then negotiate a split. Employers may or may not be open to this type of arrangement. If your firm will allow it, make sure that when you contact public interest organizations that you are clear about the time frame in which you are available as some do not allow partial summers.

#### **M. How does a 2L summer job relate to post-graduate fellowship applications?**

There are several types of post-graduate fellowships: (1) project based, where you develop a project with a sponsoring organization and then apply to a funding organization; (2) organization based, where an organization hires an entry level attorney for a one to two year period; and (3) academic, which are typically based at law schools and include working in a clinic or other public interest capacity as well as some teaching or writing responsibilities. Project based fellowships may be easier to develop if you have already worked with a sponsoring organization in the summer. In addition, your 2L summer job may provide you with excellent networking opportunities for obtaining a fellowship. Most fellowships are highly competitive, but the factors which are considered in selecting fellows vary by fellowship program. Almost all look closely at your commitment to the issues and your prior experience; your 2L summer is an excellent way to develop and highlight these. If you are interested in post-graduate fellowships, make sure to join the Post-graduate Fellowship Listserv at the law school, come to fellowship programs, and meet with a career counselor or the Assistant Dean for Public Interest and Pro Bono. Fellowship applications, particularly those that are project based, take significant time and advanced planning and we are available to assist you with this.

#### **N. Are judicial clerkships important for government or public interest work?**

Post-graduate judicial clerkships and summer judicial clerkships can be of great value in your professional development and to potential employers. Clerkships give you valuable skills in dealing with complex legal analysis and writing. Gaining an insider's view of the courts can also be tremendously helpful. Certainly, if your long term interest is in academia, a clerkship is one of the most important things you can do. Public interest employers value clerkships as preparation for entry level jobs. National level organizations focused on law reform strongly prefer to hire those with prior clerking experience.

### **III. Where to Find Public Interest Jobs**

Government and public interest jobs are widely varied. Government jobs are not only available at the federal and state levels, in every branch of government, but also at the local government level in places like city and county attorney offices and school systems. Public interest jobs exist within non-governmental organizations domestically and internationally and include a wide-range of 501(c)(3) organizations. They cover diverse subject matter, including civil rights, child protection, LGBT issues, religious issues, animal rights and environmental issues. Some organizations focus on litigation, others on policy or legislation, and others do a combination of these. Due to the diversity of government and public interest jobs, there is no one source where all jobs or organizations are posted. The following is a small sampling of the places you should look for both job postings and organizational information so that you may contact organizations of interest to you. For additional resources, please see the Career Center website and, in particular, its list of web sites for domestic and international job searches.

#### **A. Public Service Law Network Worldwide ([www.PSLawNet.org](http://www.PSLawNet.org)):**

This website not only has specific job postings, but also has one of the best collections of resources for public interest and government job searches anywhere. The Career Central section of the website offers numerous resources that are collected and easy to use, including job search resources, government job resources, and information about public interest organizations. This site is a great beginning place, or a refresher, as you work on applications.

Especially helpful for job searches is the "opportunities" search feature on the home page of PSLawNet, which allows you to search for current postings. To access the database, register at [www.pslawnet.org](http://www.pslawnet.org). Because Duke Law is a member school, the service is free to students and alumni. You can search the database by geographical region, type of organization, and practice area. Most summer positions are classified as internships.

To make searching even easier, if you are interested in receiving e-mails from PSLawNet that will inform you of job listings matching your interests, submit a personal profile.

You can also research public interest organizations through the Employer Organizations listed in the link on the home page. You can use these contacts to write to employers that do not have current job openings posted on the site, but which may have positions come open in the future or unadvertised positions. This section of the site is a good resource for networking contacts as well.

#### **B. Symplicity:**

Public interest employers routinely post job announcements on Duke Law School's Symplicity site. This includes summer internships, permanent positions and organizations seeking to host post-graduate fellows.

#### **C. On-Campus Interviewing (OCI):**

Several government and public interest employers will be participating in Fall OCI throughout the season. However, many will interview 2L candidates for summer positions on September 3-4, 2009. To interview with these employers, be sure to bid for interviews during the normal OCI sign-up process.

#### **D. Equal Justice Works Career Fair:**

Duke Law participates in the Equal Justice Works (EJW) Career Fair held in Washington, D.C. every fall. The 2009 Equal Justice Works Fair will take place on October 24-25 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. Some employers will be conducting interviews and others will simply have "table talk" (information tables). There are usually about 150 public interest and government employers. To register for the Fair, go to the EJW website, [www.equaljusticeworks.org/](http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/). Employer listings and job postings for the Fair have already begun. For the EJW Fair, students are required to submit resumes and other requested information directly to the employers. After you submit your resumes, the employers will contact you to schedule interviews. **Students are strongly encouraged to submit resumes to employers several weeks before the Fair to allow sufficient time for resume review and scheduling of interviews.** EJW recommends that students submit their resumes to employers **by August 31, 2009.**

#### **E. Government Honors Programs and other Federal and State Government Jobs:**

Many federal agencies have summer internship programs, often referred to as "summer legal intern programs" or "SLIPS". Students who complete a summer internship often gain preferential treatment when applying for post-graduate honors programs with federal agencies. For many agencies, the only way to obtain an entry-level position is through the honors program. However, other offices will hire entry-level employees.

If you are interested in applying for summer internship programs or government honors programs for a post-graduate position, you should read the Government Honors and Internship Handbook (also known as the Arizona Guide), available at [www.law.arizona.edu/career/honorshandbook.cfm](http://www.law.arizona.edu/career/honorshandbook.cfm). The Handbook also lists some state and local government positions. There is an appendix at the end that lists positions by class year and all post-graduate positions. The current username and password are available through the Career Center website at: [www.law.duke.edu/career/password/Websites\\_with\\_Legal\\_Job\\_Postings.pdf](http://www.law.duke.edu/career/password/Websites_with_Legal_Job_Postings.pdf). We will post an updated username and password in August 2009. *Note that applications may be due as early as Mid-August of 2009.* Be sure to check each agency's website, in addition to the Handbook, as deadlines and requirements are often changed.

For other federal government internships and entry level positions that are not part of an honors program, you will have to look several places for postings. Although many attorney jobs and some internships are posted on [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov), attorney jobs are exempt from mandatory posting here. This means that you need to go directly to the website for the particular agency. Helpful links to identify these jobs are: 1) [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov) which includes an agency index and individual agency links; 2) the U.S. Government Manual ([www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html)) which lists each agency's mission, locations and gives a brief description; 3) the Department of Labor which has information about completing federal applications

[www.doleta.gov/jobs/Federal\\_Application\\_Process/Knowledge\\_Skills\\_Abilities](http://www.doleta.gov/jobs/Federal_Application_Process/Knowledge_Skills_Abilities) ; and (4) OPM which has additional tips on the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) relevant to posted positions, and which will need to be demonstrated in your applications [www.usajobs.opm.gov/infocenter/resumetips.asp#tips](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/infocenter/resumetips.asp#tips).

The U.S. Department of Justice is one of the largest employers of summer interns and attorneys. The attorneys with the DOJ work in a wide range of subject matter areas. Summer internships are often paid. The deadlines for 2L summer applications are often very early in the fall, sometimes as early as the first week in September. Information about these positions is available at [www.usdoj.gov/oarm](http://www.usdoj.gov/oarm). Note that you will have to pass a security check if you are hired.

State government positions are generally listed on a state website with a search feature. These jobs include postings for assistant district attorneys, legislative lawyers, positions within attorney generals' offices, public defender positions and many others. Typically, the websites do not include summer internship postings, so you may have to contact the agencies directly. Some states, including North Carolina, have paid and unpaid summer internship programs that are run through the governor's office or elsewhere. It is certainly worth exploring whether locations of interest to you offer such programs. For many post-graduate state government positions, you must have already passed the bar exam before you will be offered a position. However, it is still a good thing to research the positions and make contact with offices in which you are interested. It is also wise to reach out to places even if there is not yet a posted position as your early contact and interest might make an impression that helps you get offered a position when one does become open.

For both federal and state government jobs, it is important to make sure you fully complete the applications, which generally require forms in addition to a resume and cover letter. The PSLawNet website has an excellent collection of resources to help with these applications, including the "Federal Legal Employment Opportunities Guide" which is a must read when applying to federal jobs.

#### **F. Post-graduate Fellowships:**

If you are interested in a post-graduate fellowship, you should begin looking into opportunities and planning to apply during your 2L summer. Postgraduate fellowships are a wonderful professional development opportunity for graduating students. There are many post-graduate fellowships available to graduating students for terms of one to two years. Some are hosted through and paid by organizations, law schools or other institutions. Although there is no one source to find these postings, PSLawNet.org is one of the most comprehensive sources. There is a "Fellowships" tab that collects many fellowships, with a wide range of organizations, by application deadline. You can also do an "opportunities" search and search for "fellowships." In addition, fellowship positions are regularly posted by employers on Duke's Symplicity site which has a separate category in the jobs section for "fellowships" as a position type.

Other fellowships, like the Skadden Fellowships, Equal Justice Works Fellowships, Fulbright Fellowships, or the Soros Justice Advocacy Fellowships provide funding for positions that students create or identify on their own. For these fellowships, students must develop a project in advance and generally must identify a host organization to sponsor them. If you are interested in this type of fellowship, it will require advance effort on your part to have all of the necessary details completed by the fellowship application deadline.

There are also a few government sponsored fellowships. Two of the most significant are: 1) the White House Fellows Program ([www.whitehouse.gov/about/fellows/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/fellows/)) where fellows spend a year as full-time, paid assistants to senior White House Staff and other top-ranking officials; and 2) the Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF) ([www.pmf.opm.gov/](http://www.pmf.opm.gov/)) which is a competitive two-year program offering graduates the opportunity to work for a federal agency of their choice and the possibility of converting to a permanent employee upon completion of the program. Students interested in the PMF Program must be nominated by Duke Law School. Additional information about the PMF program will be available early in the Fall Semester.

Duke has a listserv for posting notices about fellowship positions. To be added to the listserv, go to <http://mailman.law.duke.edu/mailman/listinfo> (you can also be added to the Public Interest listserv here) and look for the "Postgraduatefellowships" listing.

Duke's career counselors and the Assistant Dean of Public Interest and Pro Bono are happy to help you with your plans and applications for these and other fellowships.

### **G. Additional Resources:**

Please keep in mind the many additional resources for finding government and public interest employment that are available at the law school. In addition to career counselors and the Assistant Dean of Public Interest and Pro Bono, the clinic professors and many of the faculty members throughout the school can be of assistance. The Career Center also maintains a library of resources. A few of the best ones are:

*Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide Volume I – USA:* This handbook and directory, published by Harvard Law School, is for law students and lawyers seeking public service work, including government and non-profit organizations. This publication also provides information on funding for public interest summer internships, post-graduate fellowships, federal honors programs, entrepreneurial grants, and judicial clerkships.

*Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide Volume II – International:* Volume II of *Serving the Public* provides information on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations including the United Nations, opportunities within the United States Government, and international fellowships.

*Good Works – A Guide to Careers in Social Change:* This publication provides profiles of professionals with careers in public service and a national directory of public service organizations.

*Nonprofit Sector Yellow Book:* A who's who in the management of the leading foundations, universities, museums, and other non-profit organizations.

*Lawful Pursuit: Careers in Public Interest Law:* This publication is designed to give students and beginning lawyers practical information on choosing and following career paths in the practice of law.

### **H. Websites:**

Idealist (Action without Borders) ([www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)): Comprehensive listing of public service positions, both legal and non-legal, in over 140 countries. This is an especially good site for post-graduate job listings.

National Legal Aid and Defender Associations ([www.nlada.org/jobop.htm](http://www.nlada.org/jobop.htm)): This is the best site for post-graduate jobs in civil legal services organizations and defender organizations. Searchable by state and useful for finding contacts for summer internships as well.

Foundation Center ([www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)): Provides information about every foundation in the country and includes a jobs database.

Roll Call Jobs ([www.rcjobs.com](http://www.rcjobs.com)): Features jobs in government affairs, lobbying and other positions with organizations that do lobbying or other work with the federal government.

Elaw ([www.elaw.org](http://www.elaw.org)): Run by the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide, it lists worldwide organizations that do environmental work.

National Fair Housing Advocate ([www.fairhousing.com](http://www.fairhousing.com)): Lists positions with organizations and agencies dealing with fair housing issues.

Many additional internet-based resources are available on the Career and Professional Development Center website: [www.law.duke.edu/career/pdf/libraryinternetresources.pdf](http://www.law.duke.edu/career/pdf/libraryinternetresources.pdf)

## IV. Funding Summer Public Interest Work

### A. Paid Employment:

The first thing to know is that many government and nonprofit employers do pay! You will have to look at postings closely to determine which ones do or be clear in your communications with employers if there is any uncertainty. There are several sources of job postings with paying positions (most noted in the Where to Find Public Interest Jobs section). Briefly, these include postings through Career Center communications, Symplicity, PSLawNet job postings; many of the Government Honors and Internship postings; and some summer internships within the Department of Justice.

PSLawNet is the most comprehensive source for law student public interest jobs. Its many resources include a list of about 45 programs that fund summer positions at [www.pslawnet.org/summerfundingresources](http://www.pslawnet.org/summerfundingresources). Some of these are specific jobs and others accept applications to fund particular types of work completed at an organization of your choice. Examples of paid summer internships from past years include:

- Legal Services of New Jersey ([www.lsnj.org/internprog.htm](http://www.lsnj.org/internprog.htm))
- The Peggy Browning Fund for labor law positions for students ([www.peggybrowningfund.org/positions.html](http://www.peggybrowningfund.org/positions.html))
- The Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)-public interest organizations in Chicago ([www.pili-law.org/](http://www.pili-law.org/))
- The Center for Death Penalty Litigation in Durham ([www.cdpl.org/](http://www.cdpl.org/))
- The Center for Community Self-Help in Durham ([www.self-help.org/about-us/careers/careers](http://www.self-help.org/about-us/careers/careers))
- Legal Aid of North Carolina has paid summer internships called the MLK Summer Fellowship Program ([www.legalaidnc.org/Public/Participate/Jobs/Job\\_Announcements/365\\_MLK\\_Interns\\_Summer2009.aspx](http://www.legalaidnc.org/Public/Participate/Jobs/Job_Announcements/365_MLK_Interns_Summer2009.aspx))
- The NC Governor's Office runs a paid internship program for NC residents that includes among the internships a number of legal jobs for law students in various state agencies, the legislature and the courts.
- The Florida Bar Foundation's IOLTA program has well-paying internships and is interested in Duke Law applicants.

### B. Funding Specifically for Duke Law Students:

In summer 2009, nearly \$130,000 was awarded to Duke Law students, through a variety of funding sources available only through the law school; this included over \$73,000 in PILF funds, over \$45,000 in endowed and international funds, and \$9,000 in IOLTA funds. Specific information about these funding sources and the application process is set out below. Note that funding is not available through these sources for summer judicial clerkships.

The following three funding sources provide funds to Duke Law students for summer work. Students must complete an application (one application covers all three of these funding sources) in the spring semester which is generally due in the third week in March. The application will be available in late January on-line and in both the Career Center and the Office of Public Interest and Pro Bono. Recipients of the endowed fellowships, international funds, and IOLTA are selected by a committee of faculty and administrators. Prior to applying for funds, students must secure a letter from a qualifying employer stating that it will serve as the host organization.

- **Endowed Fellowships:** Duke Law School currently has three endowments that fund summer fellowships: Steckley/Weitzel, Burdman, and Carroll/Simon. They were established through the generosity of former Associate Dean Linda Steckley and her husband, Pete Weitzel; Duke Alumnus Richard Burdman '56; and alumni couple Candace Carroll '74 and Len Simon '73. From these funds, each year a number of Duke Law students are awarded fellowships. In summer 2009, 17 awards were made ranging from \$3000 to \$500, depending on the duration of the summer work and other sources of funding available to the student. Pro-rated grants may be available to students working partial summers.
- **International Development Fellowships:** This annual fellowship funds students working in developing countries. In summer 2009, three fellowships were awarded. The fund was originally established by the graduating class of 2004. Alumnae Sarah Dadush '04 and Sohini Chatterjee '04 spearheaded the fund and were the primary contributors for the first few years. For summer 2009, significant contributions were

made by Jane and Michael Tiger. Over the years, these funds have resulted in students working in Nepal, India, Vietnam, South Africa, Kenya, Paraguay, Romania, Cambodia, an international development organization in Geneva, Switzerland, and a human rights organization in the United Kingdom. Other students have received PILF funds to work in a number of other countries. Pro-rated grants may be available to students working partial summers.

- **IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts) Program:** Through a branch of the North Carolina State Bar, IOLTA awards each of the North Carolina law schools a grant to fund students working in selected North Carolina agencies and organizations. The list of selected employers is available in late Fall to Duke Law students in the Career Center, the Office of Public Interest and Pro Bono, and on-line. Each year IOLTA has given each school between \$9,000 and \$15,000 to be distributed in three to five grants.

### **Duke Law's Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF):**

PILF is a student-run organization with a primary mission of raising funds for summer public interest fellowships. Funds are raised through the annual Auction and Gala, Duke Law clothing sales, trivia night, pledge drives, and other activities. In addition, many faculty, administrators and staff donate money and auction items. PILF members decide who will receive PILF grants, set the criteria for selection and divide the money among all eligible, according to a formula. All students who wish to receive a grant must work a minimum number of hours (ranging from 16-20) to help raise funds in order to be eligible. In addition, each student must complete an application which includes a letter from a qualifying employer stating that it will serve as the host organization. This application is a different application than the application for the endowed funds, international funds and IOLTA. To find out about this year's program, visit the PILF web site.

In 2009, PILF awarded over \$73,000 in either full grants or smaller "thank you" supplemental grants. Unlike most fellowships, PILF awards grants for those working partial summers and pro rates the grants by the number of weeks worked. Also, PILF usually gives a supplemental grant to PILF members who receive other fellowships or funding. PILF also gives "bar grant" awards to graduating students who will work in public interest to defray expenses over the summer when they take the bar.

### **C. Funding Available Through Duke University:**

#### **Stanback Summer Fellowships for Environmental Placements:**

Due to the generosity of Fred Stanback T '50 and Alice Stanback WC '53, Duke's Nicholas School for the Environment provides fellowship funds for students working at designated environmental organizations. Most years, more than 40 environmental organizations receive placements, of which 10-14 offer projects with legal components. The award in summer 2009 was \$4500 per student. Anywhere from 4 to 10 Duke Law students have received these funds over the last several years. Students do not need to specialize in environmental law to be eligible. Information on applications and descriptions of the projects at each of the organizations are placed on the website of the Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences each December for the upcoming summer. The Career Center publicizes the information as soon as it is available and career counselors can assist you with applying.

#### **D. Summer Judicial Clerkships:**

Please note that none of the fellowships above cover judicial clerkships, and few clerkships are paid positions. North Carolina is an exception. Funding is available for some North Carolina Supreme Court or Court of Appeals clerkships (and other NC government agencies) through the NC State Government Intern Program. The American Bar Association also offers a program of paid clerkships for minority applicants.

#### **E. Equal Justice Works Summer Fellowships:**

Equal Justice Works offers several hundred "Summer Corp" fellowships of \$1000 for those working a minimum of 381 hours with a nonprofit organization of their choice anywhere in the United States. Recipients are free to add this award to other public interest funding they might receive. For more information on how to receive these education awards, visit Equal Justice Works or go to the section of its website on the Summer Corps program. Each year, several Duke Law students receive these. Once the program is announced for the new year, you may apply on-line.

The application period is typically at the end of March. The Career Center publicizes the information about these funds when it is available for the new year.

**F. Law Firm "Split Summers":**

For several years, a growing number of law firms have sponsored public interest summer fellowships. These programs allow students to split their summer between a law firm and a nonprofit organization or government agency, with the law firm paying students' salaries for the entire summer. The Career Service Office at Yale Law School shares a comprehensive list of split summer opportunities. See Yale Guide to Firm-Sponsored Split Public Interest Summers.

**G. Volunteering:**

Didn't find the paying job or fellowship you wanted? Keep your resume alive, have fun, make contacts, contribute to the public good, and do the work that you love most by volunteering. When you volunteer, you are not trying to fit yourself into someone else's box. You have a lot more leeway in your choice of employment and in your working hours. You could offer to work full-time, or work part-time in your public interest job and part-time in a paying job that may not be a legal job or a public interest job. In thinking about the paying jobs, remember all the things you can do - from tutoring kids in a foreign language to doing part-time legal research for a law school professor or administrator.

**V. Loan Repayment**

Law school is expensive, and we recognize that students go to great lengths to finance their legal education. There are a number of sources available to aid graduates in repaying their educational loans. Some programs, like Duke Law's loan repayment program, are designed to help graduates working in public service. Others, like the new College Cost Reduction Act, have provisions to aid graduates doing all kinds of work, so long as they qualify based on their income. Other programs are specific to particular employers.

**A. Duke Law School's Loan Repayment Program:**

Duke Law School wants its graduates to be able to pursue the interests and passions they have developed throughout their lives. Accordingly, Duke is proud to offer a generous loan repayment assistance program for graduates that enter into a life of public service. Below is a web link to information on the Duke Law School LRAP website, as well as the national and state LRAP programs currently available. For additional information and an individual counseling session on debt responsibility and LRAP, you can schedule a joint appointment with John Ahlers, Director of Financial Aid, and Stella Boswell, Career Counselor for public interest.

For information on the Duke Law School LRAP program, see [www.law.duke.edu/admis/financial/lrap](http://www.law.duke.edu/admis/financial/lrap).

**B. College Cost Reduction Act:**

There is also a new Federal Program available for many higher education loans. This program may reduce your monthly loan payments whether you have a public interest job or not, as it is income based. It also covers non-legal jobs and non-law school debt. Additionally, the program allows for full loan forgiveness after ten years of public service work, which is very broadly defined. For information on the federal College Cost Reduction and Access Act, and additional information on student debt, see [www.equaljusticeworks.org/resource/ccraa](http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/resource/ccraa).

**C. Other Loan Repayment Programs:**

For information on state LRAPs, see [www.abanet.org/legalservices/sclaid/lrap/statelraps.html](http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/sclaid/lrap/statelraps.html).

For a list of Legal Services Corporation grantee organizations with employer LRAPs, see [http://www.lri.lsc.gov/sitepages/management/management\\_lrap.htm](http://www.lri.lsc.gov/sitepages/management/management_lrap.htm).

For federal agencies with employer LRAPs, contact individual agencies and visit:  
<http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/studentloan/index.asp>.

## **VI. Acknowledgements**

In creating this guide, a number of resources were referenced and relied on, including:

- Significant use of information from handbooks created by the Public Interest Law Center of the New York University School of Law;
- The Government Honors and Internships Guide published by the University of Arizona School of Law; and
- [www.PSLawNet.org](http://www.PSLawNet.org).