

## Class of 2014 First-Year Professional Development Timeline

### Ongoing

- ✓ Check email, the Career Center webpage and the *Professional Development Resource Center* (PDRC) for updates at least weekly.
- ✓ Review and regularly re-assess your personal professional network.
- ✓ Review legal & business media sources, including market-specific publications, both for subject matter content and possible points of connection.
- ✓ Attend and participate in the Career Center's required first-year curriculum.
- ✓ Engage with the Law School and broader legal community to:
  - Master key laws and current challenges in your practice area of interest;
  - Strengthen core skills needed to demonstrate your commitment to qualification for a career in your desired field; and
  - Create advocates invested in your professional success by actively pursuing intentional relationships.

### October 2011

- ✓ Prepare your best legal resume, utilizing the guidance and resources provided in this Manual.
- ✓ Prepare your "baseline" cover letter for legal positions utilizing the guidance and resources provided in this Manual.
- ✓ Attend *Foundations of Professional Development* presentation to which you are assigned by LARW section.
  - Receive and review your copy of the *Class of 2014 Career Planning Manual*.
  - Receive and review the eight-session, required curriculum for all first-years.
  - Receive and review the list of summer opportunities accepted by members of the Class of 2013 as first-years.
  - Receive and review the abbreviated professional biographies of the Career Center's dedicated advisors.
- ✓ Attend *Writing Successfully: Resume & Cover Letter* workshop to which you are assigned by LARW section.
  - Receive the password to access the Career Center's online PDRC.
  - Sign-up for your initial meeting with a member of the Career Center team.
- ✓ Refine your resume and baseline cover letter as needed and provide copies to your career advisor via email twenty-four hours prior to your scheduled session.

## **November 2011**

- ✓ Explore practice areas and markets of interest, taking into account your current professional skills and geographic ties.
- ✓ Attend initial meeting with your career advisor as scheduled.
- ✓ Arrange and conduct informational interviews with recognized lawyer-leaders in your markets/practice areas of interest.
- ✓ Create and maintain a spreadsheet of all contacts made and track your follow-up.
- ✓ Join at least one state & local bar association, including a practice-specific section.
- ✓ Prepare targeted, personalized cover letters for employers to which you plan to apply in December.

## **December 2011**

- ✓ Prepare for exams.
- ✓ Mail/send those applications already prepared.

## **During Winter Break**

- ✓ Prepare targeted, personal cover letters for, and send applications to, all remaining employers of interest based upon your current research.
  - Call contact persons at employers to confirm receipt of materials & express continued enthusiasm.
  - Prepare and regularly update spreadsheet of applications submitted, principal contact, date and substance of last contact, referrals made to others, etc.
- ✓ Identify additional employers in diverse sectors of the legal economy (e.g., large firm, small firm, government, public interest, judicial internships, in-house opportunities, faculty research assistants, etc.) and in at least three distinct legal markets.
- ✓ Create a personalized application schedule to keep track of pertinent deadlines.
- ✓ Prepare and send your next wave of applications.
- ✓ Conduct additional informational interviews with local attorneys and/or attorneys with whom you have a “connection” (e.g., Duke Law alumni, attorneys affiliated with your undergraduate institution, former employers, etc.)
- ✓ If possible, arrange to be in your primary markets of interest during the break and notify prospective employers of your upcoming trip.
- ✓ Ask at least one Duke Law professor and other targeted individuals to serve as professional references throughout your 1L job search, and prepare a reference list following the format in the Manual’s appendices.
- ✓ Revise your open research memorandum from LARW (or other work that best demonstrates your skilled analysis and effective communication of a timely legal topic) to serve as your writing sample in the first-year search.
- ✓ Prepare your professional wardrobe for the upcoming interview season.

## **January 2012**

- ✓ Update resume with grades and other accomplishments.
- ✓ Send a supplemental letter to all employers with which you have an application pending, expressing continued interest in the employer/opportunity and including a copy of your unofficial transcript.
- ✓ Prepare your personal elevator pitch and practice its delivery.
- ✓ Review the key elements to successfully interviewing for a legal position, think carefully about your proposed responses to the most commonly asked questions, and identify those core attributes you most want to convey as evidence of your future success.
- ✓ Conduct a Mock Interview and practice incorporating feedback received.
- ✓ Identify additional networking and mentoring contacts, and reach out using the method outlined in the Manual.
- ✓ Arrange and conduct additional informational interviews.

## **February – May 2012**

- ✓ Follow up with employers (ongoing)
- ✓ Prepare and send additional waves of targeted, personalized application materials as needed.
- ✓ Continue building relationships with professionals in your markets and practice areas of interest.
- ✓ Send thank you notes and regular updates to all those with whom you have spoken to keep the connections alive.
- ✓ Attend Career Center programming, workshops and other Law School events to prepare for success “on the job.”
- ✓ Watch online seminars (see information about PLI in the Manual’s appendices for further information) on areas of substantive law and day-to-day practice, which will enhance your ability to add immediate value to the work of your summer employer.