



ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LAW
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

2023-2024 STUDENT HANDBOOK



Career Development Office

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www.stjohns.edu/law/career-development

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I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Career Development Office at St. John's University School of Law. This Handbook is designed to acquaint you with the services our office provides, educate you on the various career options that exist for law students and graduates, and guide you in your search for a job that is consistent with your goals, interests, and lifestyle.

The Career Development Office can provide you with a wide array of resources, services, and programs to help you define and develop a plan to achieve your objectives. However, the responsibility of searching for and securing employment ultimately rests with you, and you must be prepared to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to these tasks. The skills you learn from your job search now will undoubtedly serve you well during the remainder of your career in connection with any future job search you may conduct.

While this Handbook is a useful starting point for your job search, your active involvement in the services this office has to offer is recommended to achieve your career objectives. We look forward to working with you during your years as a student at St. John's University School of Law and continuing to assist you with your career path after graduation.

II. THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

A. An Overview

The Career Development Office is dedicated to assisting you with your career planning and job search process. The office assists students and alumni with career planning and development through a wide variety of helpful services, including individualized counseling, resume and cover letter critiquing, and informative programs. The Career Development Office offers abundant opportunities to learn about career options and effective job-searching techniques, to meet attorneys in many areas of practice, and to receive advice and support from a team of caring, energetic, knowledgeable, and resourceful professionals.

It is very important to gain significant legal experience while in law school. Such practical experience is effective in clarifying practice areas of interest, providing networking opportunities with members of the legal community, and enhancing your legal skills. The Career Development Office continuously obtains information from a multitude of employers offering students part-time, full-time, and summer job openings, as well as internships, externships, and pro bono opportunities. Additionally, many employers annually recruit students for summer positions and for full-time employment upon graduation. Firms, corporations, and governmental agencies located in New York State and elsewhere participating in this on-campus recruitment program either interview at the law school/virtually or receive student resumes forwarded by the office.

The Career Development Office can also guide you on how you can select classes and participate in programs at the law school that can enhance the value of your legal resume, such as clinics, trial competitions, and advocacy seminars.

The Career Development Office also continues to assist graduates in finding employment. Alumni may access Symplicity, the Career Development Management System that houses job postings and events sponsored by the office. By request, recent graduates are granted specialized access to the LexisNexis research system, as well as to Westlaw, for purposes of conducting career-related searches. Recent graduates may also take advantage of our Reciprocity and Alumni Referral services, and various other career-related websites.

St. John's University School of Law's Career Development Office is a member of the National Association for Law Placement ("NALP"). NALP's Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process can be found at www.nalp.org. They are guiding principles, recommended by NALP, to law schools, students, and employers in connection with the recruitment process. The Career Development Office not only endorses adherence to the NALP principles but has also established more specific policies tailored specifically to fit the needs of St. John's Recruitment Program.

B. Our Staff

Our professional staff, which includes several attorneys and members with extensive years of experience in career development, encourages prospective and current students, as well as alumni, to contact them about any of the office's services or programs.

- **Jeanne Ardan, Esq., Associate Dean for Career Development and Externships** – ardanj@stjohns.edu
- **Tess Ann Abbazio, Associate Director of Employer Relations** – demuth@stjohns.edu
- **Thomas Blennau, Esq., Director of the Lexy and Samuel S. Lionel '40, '10HON Externship Program and Employer Outreach** – blennaut@stjohns.edu
- **Sara Drew, Esq., Graduate Career Advisor** – drews@stjohns.edu
- **Martha Grieco, Esq., Assistant Director** – griecom@stjohns.edu
- **Charlie Hill, Esq., Assistant Director** – hillc@stjohns.edu
- **Catherine Quinn, Esq., Associate Director of Career Development & Clerkships** – quinn@stjohns.edu
- **Helena Quinn, M.S. Ed., Director of Technology, Reporting & Employer Relations** – rojashh@stjohns.edu
- **Maria T. Rivero, Esq., Career Counselor** – riverom@stjohns.edu
- **Laura B. Schwartz, Esq., Director of the Center for Bankruptcy Studies and Career Development** – schwartl@stjohns.edu
- **Robert J. Sein, Director, Mattone Family Institute for Real Estate Law, and Co-Director, LL.M. in Real Estate Program** – seinr@stjohns.edu
- **Elyssa Shifren, Esq., Assistant Director** – shifrene@stjohns.edu
- **Bianca Mavrovic, Employment Services Coordinator** – mavrovib@stjohns.edu
- **Mei Chiu-Soo-hoo – Career Development Office Coordinator** – chiusoom@stjohns.edu
- **Main Career Development Office Contact** – careerdevelopment@stjohns.edu
- **Main Externship Program Contact** – externships@stjohns.edu

C. Office Hours & Contact Information

The Career Development Office is located on the third floor of the law school in Room 3-27. The office is open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Late appointments are available for part-time students and alumni.

St. John's University School of Law
Career Development Office
Belson Hall, Room 3-27
8000 Utopia Parkway
Queens, NY 11439

Telephone: 718-990-6614 ♦ Fax: 718-990-1918 ♦ E-mail: careerdevelopment@stjohns.edu

D. Outside Employment While in Law School

At St. John's University School of Law, we believe full-time students should be focused primarily on their law school studies. With that belief, we strongly recommend that first-year students not work outside of the law school and upper-class students work no more than 20 hours per week outside of the law school.

E. Procedure Regarding Complaints of Discrimination by Employers

St. John's University does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, gender or sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence), gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital or partnership status, alienage or citizenship status, disability, genetic predisposition, caregiver status, pregnancy, sexual and reproductive health decisions, status as a victim of domestic violence/sex offense/stalking, status in the uniformed services of the United States (including veteran status), arrest or conviction record, credit history, salary history, unemployment status or any other basis prohibited by law in its programs and activities as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Amendments Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies.

All employers using the services of the Career Development Office must provide affirmative assurance of their willingness to comply with this non-discrimination policy.

The facilities of the Career Development Office may be denied to employers whose behavior contradicts the Law School's policy prohibiting discrimination based upon the above-listed factors.

Pursuant to AALS Bylaw 6-3(b) and Executive Committee Regulation 6-3.2(b), the Law School will investigate any complaints concerning discriminatory practices against its students to assure that placement assistance and facilities are made available only to employers whose practices are consistent with the principles of equal opportunity stated in AALS Bylaw 6-3(b). To initiate a complaint, a student should contact, in writing:

Rachel H. Smith, Vice Dean for Student Success
Room 4-72, smithr2@stjohns.edu

After investigation and providing the employer an opportunity to be heard, the Vice Dean will determine whether the complaint has merit. If so, sanctions that may be imposed on an employer include, but are not limited to, warning, suspension, or a permanent bar from receiving placement assistance and use of the Career Development Office's facilities and programs. The Vice Dean shall notify, in writing, all parties involved of the disposition. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed as creating an affirmative legal right or privilege in the complainant or waiving any right or defense of the University or Law School. Records of complaints under this section, including their resolution, shall be kept on file in the Dean's Office for 10 years.

F. Services and Resources

The following section highlights in more detail the services, programs, and resources available through the Career Development Office. However, we invite you to regularly visit the office, log onto the Symplicity system (discussed in more detail below), review the weekly newsletter distributed by the office, and look for posters to find out about our programs and events scheduled throughout the year.

Please note, the services offered by the Career Development Office are for the advantage of St. John's law students only. All St. John's law students have a professional and ethical obligation to notify the Career Development Office of a dismissal, as well as an intended transfer or leave of absence.

Professional Development Class

You will begin the professional development process in your first semester of law school with the Professional Development course. As part of the course, you will attend the Student-Alumni Career Conference, where you will have the opportunity to attend panels on two practice area groupings of your choice. You will also begin learning about practical career development skills, academic success strategies, and developing your professional identity.

Career Counseling

One of the most important resources we offer is the opportunity to meet with a career counselor to discuss resume and cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, areas of potential practice, career opportunities, and any other concerns you may have regarding your legal career. Individual career counseling is provided by appointment or on a walk-in basis. Students are assigned a counselor at the beginning of their first year and are asked to schedule their first appointment beginning in October. Students are encouraged to build a relationship with their counselor and work together on a regular basis.

Critiquing Service

Another important service provided by Career Development is resume and cover letter review. After you have thoroughly read the resume guidelines and drafted a resume, your counselor will review and critique it. You simply e-mail your resume to your career counselor. The turn-around time is generally 3-5 business days, sometimes earlier. After reviewing the suggestions regarding your resume, you may make an appointment with your counselor to go over the suggestions. Career Development will also review and critique cover letters after you have reviewed the cover letter guidelines. The same procedure applies.

Whenever possible, please avoid submitting your resume or cover letter the day before, or the day of, a major deadline, since documents are reviewed in the order received and there is no guarantee that materials will be critiqued prior to the deadline.

Workshops/Panels

The Career Development Office sponsors programs to assist students in career preparation and planning.

In both the fall and the spring, Career Development offers a Mock Interview Program, which brings together students and alumni for practice interviews, with detailed feedback from the interviewer.

Other examples of programs sponsored by Career Development include career panels, which showcase alumni and other professionals from different areas of practice and various legal settings, as well as a variety of career-related interactive workshops.

Technology

The Career Development Office utilizes technology as a means of providing students with a convenient method to communicate with the office. The main source of technology used is the Symplicity site.

The Symplicity system, located at <https://law-stjohns-csm.symplicity.com/students>, is a web-based computer management system that is used by the office to administer employer job listings, programs and events, as well as recruitment programs coordinated by the office. New students will be e-mailed a log-in ID and password to their St. John's e-mail account in October, along with the "Guide to Symplicity." The office uses the Symplicity system to send e-mails to students, so be sure to follow the instructions in the Guide to set your e-mail address to where you want to receive career-related messages. Students are encouraged to check the site, as well as their e-mail accounts, regularly to view important announcements and updated job listings.

Please note, St. John's Symplicity system is exclusively for the use of St. John's law students. Students are prohibited from sharing their Career Development account information with anyone.

General information is available on the Career Development section of the law school website: [Careers | St. John's University \(stjohns.edu\)](#), as well as the Online Student Center at [School of Law Online Student Center | St. John's University \(stjohns.edu\)](#).

Additionally, the School of Law may be found on these social networking websites:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stjlaw>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/StJohnsLaw>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StJohnsLawOnline>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/stjohnslaw>

Employment and Law School Opportunities

The Career Development Office offers programs, information, and various resources to help you take advantage of several different employment and law school opportunities. See sections III and IV below for examples of the types of opportunities available.

Resources

The Law School Library has a dedicated section of books, periodicals, newspapers, directories, and handouts to assist you in developing your career path and to prepare you for your job search. Many Career Development programs are available at the law school's media server. Each week, the Career Development Office sends out a weekly newsletter, highlighting important job postings, advertising upcoming events and providing helpful resources. Myriad career-related handouts, guides, and directories are available in the Career Development Office.

G. Reciprocity

St. John's is part of a network that permits our students and alumni to utilize the Career Development facilities of other law schools outside the New York City metropolitan area, from approximately November through July. We can obtain reciprocity for you from one law school within the network in any geographic location/city. Stop by or email the Employment Services Coordinator at careerdevelopment@stjohns.edu if you need this service. Our policy of reciprocity is similar to the other law schools in the network and is set forth below.

Policy of Reciprocity

The Career Development Office of St. John's University School of Law provides reasonable access to its resources to students and alumni of law schools outside the New York City metropolitan area, as follows:

1. Services are available to students and alumni of law schools that allow St. John's students and alumni to use their services.
2. St. John's grants reciprocity to students and alumni from other schools provided they have not already been granted reciprocity by another New York City metropolitan area law school.
3. Services are available to the students and alumni of a particular law school solely on a one-to-one basis; that is, St. John's will accept a second referral only if able to refer one of its students or alumni to that particular law school.

4. Students and graduates requesting reciprocity should not contact our office directly. Requests for reciprocity must be made in writing by a law school career office official and sent via mail, fax, or e-mail.

5. Available services include access to St. John's Symplicity system, including on-line job postings, handouts, and the ability to participate in Career Development sponsored events. Participation in Recruitment Programs, including on-campus interviewing and resume collections, is not included.

6. Services are available to a particular student or alum for a three-month period of time, commencing from the date reciprocity is granted. Individuals granted reciprocity must bring with them the letter approving the grant of reciprocity. Reciprocity is available from November 1st through July 31st.

III. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A. Recruitment Program

On-Campus/Virtual Interview Program

The Recruitment Program allows legal employers to interview St. John's University School of Law students for summer and permanent legal positions. Through our On-Campus (OCI)/Virtual Interview Program, representatives from law firms, corporate legal departments, and government and public interest agencies can interview a schedule of candidates via live video conference (or in-person when permissible).

In brief, the OCI/Virtual Program functions as follows:

- (1) Students upload their resumes, writing samples, unofficial and self-prepared transcripts or electronic transcripts, cover letters, and specific resumes through the Symplicity system, and then conduct research on and bid for (apply to) the employers in which they have an interest. Students also sign off on our Statement of Confidentiality and Academic Release Form.
- (2) Resumes are checked for accuracy by the office, and ultimately sent to participating employers, who then select those students they wish to interview. Resumes will be checked for accuracy of GPA and class rank, journal and moot court status, and division designation, i.e., part-time division. Students are required to put their designation if they are not in the full-time division. Students must correct all inaccuracies within a designated time set by the office in order for their resumes to be included in the mailing sent by the Career Development Office to employers.
- (3) Employers contact the Career Development Office with the names of selected interviewees. This information is recorded in the Symplicity system, and students will be provided with specified dates as to when they may view their selection status and schedule their interview time. The first and last interview slots will be reserved, in accordance with the number of part-time students selected to interview, to best accommodate their schedules. In the case of scheduling conflicts, students are required to contact the Career Development Office so that conflicts may be resolved.
- (4) The interview program is broken down into a series of sessions. Different employers participate in each session.

We strongly encourage students to carefully select their bids for the OCI/Virtual Program by checking the employers' hiring criteria, practice areas, geographic location, etc., before bidding. **Students are required to accept the interview, if selected by an employer, for which they bid, unless they have accepted another job offer.**

The majority of the employers that participate in the OCI/Virtual Program use academic excellence as an important criterion in choosing students to interview. However, do not be discouraged if you are not selected for an on-campus/virtual interview. A majority of students obtain permanent or summer employment through other recruiting means.

Employer Resume Referral Services

For employers who are unable to interview through the On-Campus/Virtual Interview Program, the Career Development Office also provides Resume collections. Employers utilizing this service are referred to as “**Resume Submit**” employers. Another sizable group of employers ask that students contact them directly by sending a cover letter and resume. These employers are referred to as “**Resume Send**” employers. “Resume Submit” and “Resume Send” opportunities can be found in the OCI portion of Symplicity. Students are encouraged to access this information regularly to keep apprised of these opportunities, as well as changes and/or additions, throughout the recruitment season.

A detailed guide providing important information about the Recruitment Program, including OCI/Virtual Interviews and Resume Referral Services, is available to all students.

B. Student Career Opportunities Listings

Employers, including alumni, continuously notify Career Development of summer, part-time, and full-time career opportunities. This information is entered daily onto the Symplicity system, which students can access on-line. Internship, Clerkship, Fellowship, Pro Bono Service, Externship, and Alternative opportunities are also posted on the Symplicity system. If any of these opportunities require immediate action, they will be sent to students in a separate e-mail as soon as Career Development receives the information. We will also highlight certain listings and collections in the weekly newsletter. All of these postings are number coded and categorized according to their position type.

St. John’s participates in a number of internship and fellowship programs. For instance, St. John’s participates in the New York City Bar Association’s Summer Diversity Fellowship Program, which provides first-year full-time students and second-year part-time students with summer positions at participating New York law firms and corporate legal departments. Information on this program, and programs like this, is regularly posted on Symplicity.

Detailed information regarding the navigation of the Symplicity system and accessing the career opportunities listings is provided in the Guide to Symplicity.

Please note that advertisement of a job posting by the Career Development Office is not an endorsement of the employer or the career opportunities published. It is imperative that students investigate the employer and opportunity to which they are applying. It is the responsibility of employers and students to ensure that the work arrangement is in compliance with federal and state labor and employment laws. Law students may perform legal work only under direct supervision of an attorney. The attorney must be ultimately responsible for the work and to the client. A student who performs legal work without attorney supervision risks engaging in the unauthorized practice of law.

C. Judicial Clerkships

A judicial clerkship is a post-graduate, full-time, paid position working for an individual judge or a group of judges in a federal or state court. For detailed information on the mechanics of the application process, instructions on the technology used for targeted applications, and the role that the Career Development Office plays in the process, please visit the office and obtain copies of our Judicial Clerkship Handbook and our Applying for Federal and State Court Clerkships tip sheets.

D. Government Jobs

The Career Development Office works to educate students on government employment opportunities. Listings by the office are posted on the Symplicity system and many resources are available in the office. Additionally, the office subscribes to, and provides students with access to, the University of Arizona College of Law's 1) *Government and Honors Internship Handbook*, which includes descriptions, application information, and deadlines for federal and state internship and post-graduate programs; and 2) *Public Policy Handbook*, which provides resources for internships with think tanks, advocacy organizations, federal agencies, and other institutions engaged in policy analysis and implementation. These handbooks are available in web versions. NALP's *Federal Legal Employment Guide* supplements the Honors Handbook and is available at the Public Service Job Directory (PSJD) website (<https://www.psjd.org>). PSJD, discussed in more detail below, is also an excellent source for information and postings relating to the government. Students are also encouraged to consult websites such as USAJobs.gov, or www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/students/, and the Federal government "Pathways" Program (www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/students-recent-graduates/). The Career Development Office also advertises state and local government opportunities and has resources on state and local government job posting sites.

E. Public Service

In addition to working with their career counselors, students interested in public service careers should get involved with the Public Interest Center for additional guidance, resources, training, and support. Students and graduates may receive fellowship grants to fund their public service careers. St. John's funds several programs and provides information on many other fellowship and grant opportunities.

Summer Funding Programs

The Federal Scholars Program, made possible by the donation of several St. John's alumni, is for students who intend to serve as federal clerks. It provides stipends to qualified candidates for unpaid summer internships with the Federal Judiciary, the United States Attorney's Office, or other organizations within the Department of Justice, and federal public defenders.

The New York State Court of Appeals Fellows Program is intended to encourage students to follow in the firmly established St. John’s tradition of serving the legal system of the State of New York. Designation as a New York State Court of Appeals Fellow carries with it a stipend to qualified students for uncompensated summer internships with the New York State Unified Court System, including traditional and problem-solving courts, the Office of Court Administration, and the Center for Court Innovation.

The Summer Public Interest Fellowship Program at St. John's School of Law builds on St. John’s Vincentian mission of serving those in need, as well as the ethical obligation of lawyers to promote social justice, to encourage and facilitate St. John’s law students’ participation in the delivery of legal services and/or legal advocacy to traditionally underrepresented clients, groups, or interests. Fellowships are awarded to qualified students for full-time summer positions with non-profit organizations and governmental agencies representing traditionally underrepresented clients, groups, or interests. For purposes of the Summer Public Interest Fellowship Program, the definition of “public interest” is any entity — public (i.e., government) or private — that provides legal assistance and/or legal advocacy for low-income, underserved, or disenfranchised people and communities.

Information on other funding opportunities can be found on <https://www.psjd.org>.

Post Graduate Funding

Loan repayment assistance programs (“LRAPs”) provide loan repayment or forgiveness, lower interest rates on loans, or postponed payment of law school loans to graduates entering specific types of employment, usually law-related public interest jobs. Most LRAPs contain limits on the amount of income a recipient can earn while participating in such a program. There are various types of LRAPs, administered by organizations including state bar associations and foundations and federal and state governments, providing debt relief to some law graduates. Alumni are strongly encouraged to contact your lenders to discuss repayment options.

Additional Resources:

Equal Justice Works Resources: <https://www.equaljusticeworks.org/law-students/student-debt-resources/>

Federal direct consolidation loan information and applications: <https://studentaid.gov/>

See <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/student-loan-repayment/> for information on the Federal Student Loan Repayment Program.

www.askheatherjarvis.com – a website listing educational resources from student loan expert Heather Jarvis

Resources

The Public Service Job Directory is the nation's largest clearinghouse of public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. St. John's University School of Law students and graduates are eligible to use this website, located at <https://www.psjd.org>. PSJD's database contains nearly 12,000 organizations with thousands of internships, student and post-graduate fellowships, paid attorney positions, and pro bono positions. It also includes listings of non-profit organizations, plus government agencies, courts, and private law firms with public service practices. The PSJD site also contains information on summer funding and grant sources.

Harvard Law School has put together some *Specialty Guides*, which may be obtained, at no cost, off of their website, including: Children's Rights, Civil Rights/Civil Liberties, Conservative Public Interest Law, Environmental Law, Human Trafficking, Labor and Employment, LGBT Rights Law, and National Security Law. The website is located at: [Career and Application Guides - Harvard Law School | Harvard Law School](#)

F. Job Fairs & Conferences

St. John's participates with other law schools in a number of regional and national job fairs and conferences. Students will be notified of fairs, and the specific dates and deadlines for registration, as they become known. You can also check the Events section of Symplicity. A comprehensive list of job fairs is available at <https://www.psjd.org>.

G. Building Your Professional Network and Informational Interviewing

Networking is a very useful method of learning about different practice areas and various opportunities for employment. Our online Mentoring Program, Mentor Connect, will assist you in developing your networking skills, locating St. John's amazing alumni, and creating your network.

Additionally, alumni will often take the time to speak with students about their jobs and areas of practice so that you can learn more about what they do in order to determine if it is something that you want to pursue. This is called an informational interview, and it is one of the best forms of networking, as well as a great opportunity to assess different legal positions and fields. Asking for information and advice should be at the forefront of any outreach to alumni regarding your career. Students should be wary of contacting alumni to "ask for a job" – depending on the context of the communication, this can be inappropriate and off-putting. A great resource for how to conduct informational interviews can be found at: <https://www.livecareer.com/resources/interviews/prep/informational-interviewing>. Your career counselor will be able to assist you locate alumni in your areas of interest.

Social Networking Websites

Social networking websites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) can be useful tools to research and network with employers when used correctly. However, students should be mindful that employers have made it a regular practice to conduct online searches as part of due diligence checks on prospective employees, and the results of these searches may be used to deny interviews and job offers. Students should take efforts to maintain a professional online presence including using privacy tools of websites, reviewing online content, and keeping in mind that items posted may continue to be available long after deletion.

H. Targeted Mailings

While an unfocused mass mailing will likely prove to be very costly, time consuming and ineffective, a targeted mailing is an important job search technique. After conducting research on Lexis, Westlaw, Martindale-Hubbell, the NALP Directory or any other sources you choose, you can create a list of firms that meet your practice area, size, location, and lifestyle criteria. It is helpful to call the firms that you are interested in to assess their hiring needs and to obtain the name of their recruitment coordinator or hiring partner before sending out your resume and cover letter. This type of targeted mailing may assist you in getting interviews with firms that genuinely interest you.

I. Resume Books

Resume Opt-In Books allow the office to easily identify students seeking employment and facilitate the process by which employers procure qualified candidates for semester, summer, and permanent positions. Resume Opt-In Books are created in response to employer requests for applications and/or Career Development administered marketing efforts and are often categorized according to specific practice areas and legal settings.

Candidates will be informed of new Resume Opt-In Books and will be provided specific information and instructions associated with that particular collection.

J. Alumni Assistance

Alumni are welcome to continue using the office's counseling and resume and cover letter critiquing services.

Alumni job listings from law firms, corporations, public interest organizations, and government agencies, as well as other opportunities, are posted on the Symplicity system. Alumni are provided with registration instructions and a password and can conveniently and efficiently access the latest available positions on-line. Alumni also have limited access to Lexis Advance and Westlaw. If you have any questions about these services, please call our office or e-mail careerdevelopment@stjohns.edu.

The Alumni Referral Service is a service that allows the office to expedite the hiring process for both employers and candidates. Graduates who are seeking post-graduate employment should notify the Career Development Office and make their updated resumes available to the office via the Symplicity system. When an employer contacts the office requesting candidates, individuals are contacted according to employer hiring specifications and personal interests (e.g., experience, practice area, location preference, rank/GPA). Prospective applicants are then provided with information pertaining to the employer's application process and marketed accordingly. This service is also used to advertise unique employment opportunities that may be listed in our Job Bank or other websites. The Career Development Office also sends Alumni Referral members a newsletter on a regular basis, highlighting relevant opportunities, programs, and resources.

Job fairs in which alumni are eligible to participate are posted on Symplicity. Additionally, the Career Development Office assists alumni with the judicial clerkship application process in the same manner that students are assisted. Alumni can also take advantage of St. John's Reciprocity Policy, whereby they can utilize the Career Development facilities of other law schools, outside the New York City metropolitan area, from approximately November through July.

IV. LAW SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

St. John's offers a variety of programs, courses and publications that focus on the development of practical legal skills. These law school opportunities provide excellent legal experience for resume building and allow students to make useful professional contacts and obtain references. Please visit and speak with a member of the Career Development staff to discuss the different opportunities available through St. John's which focus on the development of your lawyering skills.

A. Clinical Programs

Clinical Programs enable students to participate in a wide range of professional real-world experiences while learning the essential skills needed to practice law successfully. Supervised by clinical faculty, students gain hands-on experience by representing clients. Students conduct interviews, counsel clients, investigate facts, research law, plan case strategy, draft pleadings, appear in court and other forums, and negotiate settlements. A Clinic Information Session is held each semester, and interested students are highly encouraged to attend. To learn more about the clinical programs currently offered by St. John's, please visit: [Clinics | St. John's University \(stjohns.edu\)](http://stjohns.edu/Clinics).

B. Externship Program

Externships provide an opportunity for students to observe and participate in "real lawyering." Experiential learning helps students to gain perspective on entering the profession by getting a sense of the kind of lawyer they wish (or wish not) to become. The Externship Program grants academic credit to students who work unpaid in legal organizations, law offices and judicial chambers under the supervision of a mentor-attorney (sometimes referred to as field-supervisor) while participating in a designated externship seminar. **With limited exceptions, students cannot receive credit at a placement site where they have worked, interned, or externed previously.** The Externship Program endeavors to establish placements in a wide a variety of legal settings to meet the diverse interests and capabilities of St. John's students. The two-hour seminar class is devoted in part to the discussion of the respective placements.

Externship students will receive a total of 4 credits (fall and spring semesters: 2 pass/fail placement credits and 2 letter-graded seminar credits) and 3 credits (summer session: 2 pass/fail placement credits and 1 letter-graded seminar credit) for the successful completion of the course requirements. Advanced Externship options are also available.

C. St. John's Pro Bono Program

Building on St. John's University's Vincentian mission of serving those in need, the law school recognizes the ethical obligation of lawyers to promote social justice. As such, the law school encourages and promotes its students' participation in pro bono service. Pro bono work grants students the opportunity to provide legal assistance and access to justice to unrepresented clients, groups, and interests. In addition, students will gain practical skills in areas such as client interviewing, advocating in court, and preparing legal forms and memos. The law school partners

with many organizations and legal services providers to provide students with a range of pro bono legal experiences and opportunities in various practice areas.

Through the *Pro Bono* Program, St. John's also formally recognizes the work that our law students are doing in service of the public. At commencement, students who have completed at least 500 hours of qualifying service are recognized with the Public Service Award. Students who demonstrate an exceptional level of pro bono service, including dedicated service to specific pro bono projects (including student run programs), will be eligible for additional awards at Commencement.

For the purpose of tallying pro bono hours toward the Public Service Award, students will be required to record their pro bono hours. Hours need to be logged through the [Online Student Center Pro Bono Reporting Form](#). Please submit all other hours by September 30 (for summer hours), December 31 (for fall hours), and May 31 (for spring hours). **Graduating students must submit all pro bono hours by May 1 of their graduation year.**

The *Pro Bono* Program has adopted the same definition of *pro bono* as the Court of Appeals in its rule 22 NYCRR §520.16.

What constitutes qualifying *pro bono* service?

Law-related work performed under the supervision of an attorney, judge, or law faculty, including:

- All St. John's Law School clinical programs (excluding seminar time)
- Government placements – legislative, executive, judicial, or other government entity
- Placements that assist in the provision of legal services without charge for:
 - Persons of limited means
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Individuals, groups, or organizations seeking to secure or promote access to justice, including, but not limited to, protection of civil rights, civil liberties, or public rights
- Most summer public interest fellowships
- Pro bono work as a summer associate at a law firm
- Any of the above, even if for compensation or for externship credit (excluding seminar time)

What does not constitute qualifying *pro bono* service?

- Community service
- Mock trial coach for high school or college students
- Partisan political activities (even if law-related)
- Not supervised by attorney or judge (e.g., student-run projects)

While not required for graduation, the New York State Bar does have a *Pro Bono* Requirement for Admission to the Bar. Applicants who seek admission to practice in New York after January 1, 2015, must demonstrate that they have performed 50 hours of qualifying pro bono service before applying for admission to practice. An affidavit confirming the qualifying service is

required to be submitted with the Character & Fitness application following the bar exam. Additional information is available through the NY Courts website:
[Pro Bono Bar Admission Requirements | NYCOURTS.GOV](#)

D. Elective Courses

In addition to the clinical programs, St. John's offers a number of elective courses that can provide students with practical legal experience in various areas, including appellate advocacy, litigation, arbitration, legal interviewing, counseling, negotiation, pre-trial advocacy, trial advocacy, and numerous drafting courses.

E. Faculty Research and Teaching Assistant Positions

If you have completed the course in Legal Research and Writing, and have a minimum 2.1 grade point average, you may be eligible to work for a faculty member as a research assistant or teaching assistant. Interested students apply directly to the professor with whom they would like to work. Once accepted by the professor, students should complete the appropriate application form, [STJ Law RA-TA Fillable Form 23-24.pdf \(stjohns.edu\)](#), also available in the Career Development Office, and return it to the Career Development Office.

F. Directed Research

By selecting Directed Research as an elective, students have the opportunity to prepare a major research paper under the direction of a faculty advisor who has expertise in a particular area of the law.

G. Student Publications

Editorial or staff membership on one of St. John's student publications provides an opportunity to further enhance your research and writing skills.

St. John's Law Review/ Journal of Catholic Legal Studies

St. John's Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development

American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review

New York International Law Review

N.Y. Real Property Law Journal

H. Co-Curricular Programs

The School of Law is the center of a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities which provide our students with various opportunities to develop and hone their advocacy skills. These activities also demonstrate that the value of the law school experience lies not only in the classroom.

Moot Court Honor Society

The Moot Court Honor Society is the law school's only co-curricular appellate advocacy honors program. Members sharpen their written and oral advocacy skills, argue cutting-edge legal issues, and compete in a range of internal and external competitions. Students participating in the Moot Court Honor Society regularly engage with legal profession leaders, including celebrated St. John's alumni and state and federal judges. They also build relationships with future colleagues and mentors.

The Frank S. Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute

With a focus on excellence in trial advocacy, the Frank S. Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute (PTAI) offers the law school community trial training programs, internal and external trial competitions, and trial-related legal forums and events. In all their initiatives, PTAI promotes and supports the law school's reputation as a leader in trial advocacy by providing students with opportunities to build their courtroom advocacy skills and to learn to think, act, and speak like trial attorneys.

Dispute Resolution Society

The Law School's Dispute Resolution Society (DRS) is the student division of The Hugh L. Carey Center for Dispute Resolution. Formed in 2007, DRS seeks to meet the demand for practical education in the constantly developing field of alternative dispute resolution. DRS specializes in negotiation, mediation and arbitration through events, seminars, intra-school competitions held at St. John's, and external competitions locally, nationally and internationally.

DRS hosts two internal negotiation competitions open to St. John's students each year, one for 2Ls and 3Ls in the fall and a second for 1Ls and 2Ls in the spring. Following the spring competition, students are invited to apply for positions on DRS to compete externally the following year.

I. Student Organizations

Leadership roles and participation in various student organizations available at St. John's is a great way to network, learn more about an area that interests you, and build an impressive resume. For a listing of student organizations available at St. John's, please visit:

[Student Groups | St. John's University \(stjohns.edu\)](https://www.stjohns.edu/student-groups).

V. CAREER PLANNING

The first step in planning your career should be to take the time to reflect on the type of position that is right for you. You must really think about your interests, goals, skills and personality, the type of legal setting that you want to work in, and the area of practice that you want to focus upon. This will not only help you to decide where you want to focus your post-graduate job search, but it will help you to determine how you should be proceeding in law school with respect to which courses you should be taking, what activities you want to get involved in, and where you want to obtain your legal work experience.

A. Self-Knowledge

Determining what you want in your professional life and your personal life, as well as what you are good at and like doing, can be integral in finding a position that brings you both career satisfaction and personal enjoyment. In order to assess your work values, lifestyle needs, skills, and preferences, consider what is important to you:

Work Values and Lifestyle Needs:

- Geographic Location of Employer
- Earnings Potential
- Work Hours
- Employee Benefits
- Vacations
- Job Security
- Advancement Possibilities
- Challenging Work
- Creativity
- Variety of Work
- Training Availability
- Responsibility and Supervision
- Client Contact
- Work Atmosphere and Environment
- Personalities of Co-workers
- Support Services
- Power and Prestige

Skills and Preferences:

Research
Analytical
Managerial
Organizational
Counseling/Negotiation
Oral Communication
Written Communication
Creativity
Interests
Likes and Dislikes
Grade-Point Average/Rank

Once you have pinpointed your professional and personal interests, goals, and abilities, you can begin to consider which legal setting and which practice area is right for you.

B. Legal Settings

Private Practice

Most attorneys in the United States are engaged in private practice, ranging from law firms of hundreds of attorneys to solo practitioners. A basic research tool for examining the nation's private practitioners is Martindale-Hubbell. This resource is also available on LexisNexis, which allows you to conduct various searches in an efficient manner.

Large Law Firms - Large firms in New York City and other urban centers are known for their high salaries, close supervision of the work of new associates, opportunities for specialization, and extremely professional work product. They are also known for heavy workloads, long hours, and the need to live in, or near, a metropolitan environment. Large firms frequently specialize in areas like corporate and commercial law, tax, trusts and estates, and litigation.

The number of attorneys that constitute a large firm varies from city to city. In New York City, some large firms have more than 100 attorneys, and in other cities, the largest firms consist of fewer than 50 attorneys.

Large firms generally place heavy emphasis on academic performance in their hiring criteria; however, some will balance this factor against extracurricular activities and prior legal employment. Because of their size, such firms have highly structured recruiting programs and do the bulk of their hiring during the fall for the following year.

Small and Medium-Size Law Firms - Many law students and graduates are attracted to small and medium-size firms. As in the case of large firms, there is a problem of definition. In New York City, a firm ranging in size from 50 to 100 attorneys may be classified as a medium

size firm, and any number less than 50 would be regarded as a boutique or small firm. Outside of New York City, the small to medium-size firm might range from two to 25 attorneys.

As for hiring practices, small to medium-size firms seldom conduct on-campus interviews. They usually notify the Career Development Office of job openings as they become available or depend upon receiving unsolicited resumes in the mail. In hiring new associates, many small and medium-size firms are interested in practical experience and personal communication skills and place less emphasis on grades than large firms do; however, other small and medium-size firms, particularly in New York City, are just as demanding as large firms with regard to academic achievement.

The work environment of small and medium-size firms usually allows beginning attorneys to have the opportunity to assume responsibility at an early stage of their employment. However, the workload may be just as demanding as that of a large firm.

Solo Practice - Graduates who enjoy autonomy and independence and who can tolerate the ups and downs of running a small business, may find that solo practice is a satisfying career. The solo practitioner must learn a great deal about not only general law practice but also the economic concerns of managing a law office.

Since you cannot enter into solo practice until you have been admitted to the bar, if this is the route you want to take, you should use the time before admission to acquire some practical experience by clerking with an admitted solo practitioner or small firm, district attorney's office, government agency, or corporate legal department, or by doing some pro bono work with a public interest agency.

Government

Federal - The United States Government offers a wide variety of legal careers in diverse parts of the country. For example, the Department of Justice, which has a special honors program for second-year students and graduating seniors, has offices in Washington, D.C. and there are United States Attorney's Offices throughout the United States. Administrative agencies, e.g., Securities and Exchange Commission, National Labor Relations Board, Federal Trade Commission, Federal Communications Commission, Department of Transportation, are usually headquartered in Washington, D.C., but frequently have regional offices. Attorney positions with the federal government are exempt from the requirement of Civil Services examinations. Each agency does its own hiring, and many provide the Career Development Office with brochures describing their legal departments. You should visit the office or the agencies' websites to determine if any special application forms must be submitted along with your resume and cover letter.

State and Local - State and Local governments employ a large number of attorneys as prosecutors or as counsel to various agencies or departments. The qualifications and procedures for applying for such positions will vary from state to state and community to community.

Some state and local government employers may participate in the on-campus interviewing and resume referral programs, while other employers may send announcements of job openings to the Career Development Office. Finally, there are many more state and local government employers throughout the country that you may contact on your own. Given the vast possibilities, the best approach is to target a geographic location, determine the type of work you would like to pursue, research available opportunities, ascertain the hiring criteria, and then send out a cover letter, resume, and any other required material.

Corporations

Very few corporate law departments hire their lawyers directly out of law school. The law departments of major corporations, banks, financial institutions, and insurance companies typically hire lawyers with at least three, and often more, years of law firm experience. However, in recent years, with the escalation of legal fees, corporations started taking a closer look at the costs of using firms to handle their legal matters. As a result, there is a trend for corporations to handle more of their legal matters in-house and expand their capabilities. Therefore, even entry-level lawyers should investigate this career option to ascertain which business employers might hire directly out of law school.

Corporate legal departments vary in their styles of practice, as do private law firms. Attorneys in large legal departments often become specialists while those in small legal departments generally handle a broad range of matters. A corporate attorney is a legal advisor to the officers and management of the corporation. Thus, the attorney is involved with the everyday business of the company, assists with business planning, and tries to prevent future legal problems. Corporate attorneys also ensure compliance with federal and state regulations, serve as lobbyists, and supervise outside attorneys.

Corporate lawyers are involved in every substantive area of practice from environmental law to patent work. In recent years, they are also handling more and more of the corporation's litigation.

Corporate practice is different from firm practice in terms of clients, level of responsibility and workload. Corporate attorneys do not have to become involved with attracting new clients since the corporation is the client. In addition, corporate attorneys generally are given greater responsibility early in their careers. While the workload varies from one corporate legal department to another, corporate attorneys usually do not work as many hours as private practitioners who often must bill a fixed number of hours per year.

In recent years, compliance positions have become more prominent in corporations. Compliance departments work to ensure that the corporation follows the relevant laws, rules, and regulations governing the particular industry the corporation is engaged in. While a compliance analyst is not a practicing attorney position, many corporations prefer candidates with a J.D. and also prefer some post-graduate experience.

Public Interest Law

Public Interest encompasses a variety of legal settings, including non-profit organizations and law firms. When we use the term “public service,” we include government agencies in the mix, as well. Legal issues covered by public interest attorneys vary as well, and include housing disputes, child support recovery, public assistance eligibility, and immigration issues, among others. Students considering public interest law must consider their personal financial situation, as most public interest summer positions are unpaid, and post-graduate positions generally do not offer high salaries. The rewards associated with public interest law stem from working toward the public good, and, to many attorneys, are worth sacrificing economic gain.

St. John’s provides a broad array of public interest and public service opportunities for its students through its clinical and externship programs, student organizations and Public Interest Center. Students interested in public service should also visit the Career Development Office to learn about these opportunities, as well as the job fairs, fellowships and grants available to them, as discussed earlier in this Handbook.

Judicial Clerkships

As noted earlier, a judicial clerkship is a post-graduate, full-time, paid position working for an individual judge or a group of judges in a federal or state court. A federal clerkship is considered one of the most advantageous and prestigious ways to begin a legal career. Although accepting a clerkship may require an initial economic sacrifice, the long-term benefits of such a position are many and enduring. Major law firms value the experience gained by judicial clerks, and when hiring them as associates, generally place them at the same salary level as their graduating classmates who joined the firm upon graduation. Sometimes, they are even given a bonus to make up for the salary differential during the years of clerkship. However, students should check with individual firms regarding their policies in connection with clerkships. In addition, students are responsible for consulting with judges to determine whether employment offers at firms may be held open during clerkships.

Applying for a post-graduate clerkship is an extremely competitive process. An excellent academic record and strong research skills are required, and students should expect to apply to a large number of judges. If practical, applications should be made to judges outside of New York, as well as in New York, because of the very stiff competition in the New York area. However, you should give careful consideration to the jurisdictions to which you apply, and you should not apply to any area where you would not be willing to live for 1 or 2 years. Applying for clerkships, especially at the federal level, is different from a typical job application in one crucial way: applicants should understand that “To apply is to accept.”

Each year, the Career Development Office publishes a Judicial Clerkship Handbook and Applying for Federal and State Court Clerkships tip sheets which describe the timing and mechanics of the application process, offer helpful tips to students, and provide information on judges who have hired St. John’s alumni as clerks in the past. Students interested in a judicial clerkship should meet their counselor during their second year of law school to begin preparing for the application process.

Alternative Careers

A law degree is a prestigious credential, and some law school graduates decide to put that degree to use to pursue a career other than in the practice of law. Such possibilities include investment banking; legal research, editorial, and publishing work; academic positions; and legal recruiting, among others. Additionally, some students use their law degree to move ahead in the position they held prior to beginning law school. The Career Development Office has a variety of resources on alternative careers for lawyers, and students considering this path should meet with a counselor to learn more.

VI. PRACTICE AREAS

The following brief descriptions should help to familiarize you with the various practice areas that attorneys may decide to focus upon. The Career Development Office also has resources that will educate you on additional practice areas.

A. Admiralty: Much of admiralty and maritime law practice revolves around litigation, either defense work or representation of plaintiffs in cases involving collisions, cargo loss or damage, personal injury or wrongful death, charter party disputes, general average salvage, marine insurance, and limitation of liability. Other areas calling upon the expertise of admiralty attorneys include ship financing, drafting and interpreting bills of lading, charter parties, stevedore contracts, towing contracts, and pilot contracts. Additionally, because international shipping is often involved, conflicts of law issues are likely to arise. Admiralty attorneys may practice solo or in firms. Some firms are devoted entirely to admiralty practice, others may have a separate admiralty department, and still others may include admiralty as a specialized area within their litigation departments.

B. Aviation: Attorneys practicing in this area of law may be involved in litigation, both domestic and international, as well as enforcement proceedings or rendering advice.

In litigation, the cases may revolve around crashes of commercial or private airplanes, helicopters, military aircraft, or space shuttles; lost, damaged, or destroyed baggage; or injuries incurred during a flight, such as baggage falling on a passenger's head, or a hot drink being spilled by a flight attendant on a passenger. Clients may include manufacturers of aircraft and components, airlines, individual owners of airplanes, mechanics, or pilots. Manufacturers may be sued for property damage, personal injury, or wrongful death based on claims that their products were defective in design or manufacture, they failed to warn of the defect, and the defect caused a crash. Many lawsuits involve the crash of small privately-owned airplanes, and these suits may be brought against not only the manufacturer, but also the pilot and mechanics responsible for servicing the aircraft. Airlines may be sued for injuring passengers or losing, damaging, or destroying baggage; these claims are generally governed by the language in the ticket and Tariff regulations, which constitute the contract between the passenger and the airline.

In Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) enforcement proceedings, attorneys may represent and give advice to corporate clients with respect to the purchase or leasing of aircraft, the construction of an airport, the creation of a subsidiary for purposes of owning and operating company aircraft used by employees for business purposes, or the promulgation of rules for use of corporate aircraft.

C. Bankruptcy: Bankruptcy attorneys may represent the debtor, creditor, and other parties in interest such as landlords, tenants, and contracting parties in situations where the debtor is unable to meet its obligations. The debtor seeks to work out its debt to rehabilitate and reorganize its business, while creditors seek to maximize how much they will receive from the debtor's estate. Several scenarios are possible: direct negotiations between the debtor and creditor, where one creditor is involved; multi-party workouts, where the debtor and a number of creditors try to restructure the debt obligations so that creditors receive full repayment of a portion of the debt

and forgive the rest; or bankruptcy proceedings under the Federal Bankruptcy Code. These proceedings include Chapter 7, where the debtor is given a fresh start after distribution of assets to creditors; Chapter 11, under which the debtor is reorganized and creditors are given interests in the reorganized entity; and Chapter 13, where an individual debtor with regular income can agree to devote portions of future income to creditors while retaining existing property.

Bankruptcy practice involves various other areas of law, including corporate, litigation, commercial, real estate, and tax, as well as skill in conducting negotiations.

D. Civil Rights: Civil rights attorneys handle matters related to discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics, including, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, ancestry, or age. Discrimination may arise in a number of areas, including employment, housing, credit matters, and access to and use of public areas. Action may be initiated before a city or state's civil rights or human rights commission, a federal agency, or in state or federal court. Attorneys practicing in this area may work for city, state or federal agencies, firms, corporations, or legal services organizations.

E. Computer Law: Attorneys in this area of practice may represent not only high technology companies that are vendors of computer goods and services, but also the users of such computer goods and services. The practice involves the negotiation and drafting of agreements, including software licenses, hardware purchase agreements, software development agreements, and equipment leases. Often, attorneys in this area have a background in computers and have previously worked as systems analysts, software developers, and computer consultants.

F. Corporate: Corporate attorneys provide a wide range of legal services to publicly-held and privately-held businesses. These services include rendering advice and preparing documents with respect to, among other things, formations and startups of companies, directors' and shareholders' meetings, annual meetings, annual reports, securities filings, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, leveraged buyouts, contracts for sale of goods or services, employee contracts, restrictive covenants or covenants not to compete, proxy solicitations, reports to state and federal regulatory agencies, and dissolution of companies. Attorneys also negotiate business transactions, such as mergers and acquisitions, for their corporate clients. Corporate attorneys may work for a law firm or in-house at a corporation, and often, with time, may become involved in strategic business planning.

G. Criminal: Attorneys engaged in the practice of criminal law either prosecute individuals accused of crimes or defend those individuals. District Attorneys prosecute those who are accused of violating criminal statutes. Defense attorneys may represent anyone accused of any crime, regardless of whether it involves federal, state, or local law. Their clients may be accused of crimes ranging from the pettiest of thefts to highly publicized drug deals or securities frauds. The District Attorneys' Offices, as well as firms and Legal Aid/other Defender Offices that are engaged in defense work, hire attorneys who have just graduated from law school. The U.S. Attorneys' Offices usually consider only those attorneys who have had at least several years of experience.

H. Defamation/First Amendment: This area of practice involves questions of whether written or spoken statements harmed a person's reputation, as well as constitutional questions regarding the rights of free speech and free press. Attorneys may represent media companies, such as newspapers, magazines, and television networks, individuals employed by media companies, individuals who are considered public figures, or any other individuals claiming harm to their reputations or infringement of their rights of free speech or free press.

I. Elder Law: This is a unique area of practice which requires an attorney to integrate a broad knowledge of the law with an understanding of the needs of older persons. Practitioners become involved in a variety of matters including life planning and the use of directives such as powers of attorney and health care proxies, Social Security and Medicare benefits, Medicaid planning, spousal support, treatment of income and resources for institutionalized individuals and legally responsible relatives, appointment of conservators, admission into nursing homes and nursing home residents' rights, estate planning and administration, and estate and gift taxes.

J. Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation: Attorneys in this area of law represent corporations, public and private employers, unions, banks, and trust departments with respect to the creation and administration of employee benefit and retirement plans. These attorneys are often referred to as ERISA attorneys because a great deal of their work involves compliance with the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA). They also must make sure that their clients' benefit and retirement programs comply with the Internal Revenue Code. Another aspect of this practice is determining what to do with benefits and retirement programs when a merger or acquisition has taken place. Benefit plans include qualified pension plans, profit sharing plans, stock bonus plans, health benefit plans, and disability plans. Executive compensation includes incentive compensation plans, stock option plans, and capital accumulation plans.

K. Entertainment/Sports: Attorneys engaged in this type of practice represent entertainers and professional athletes in a variety of ways: negotiation of employment contracts; negotiation of endorsement or other marketing agreements; interpretation of contracts and other relevant rules and regulations in grievance or arbitration proceedings with respect to issues such as salary, working conditions, discipline, equal employment compliance, drug testing or injuries; preparation of tax and estate plans; and review of investments or development of investment strategies.

L. Environmental: Environmental attorneys may find their niche in either the public sector, working for federal, state, or local governments, or the private sector, representing businesses engaged in real estate development or industrial or manufacturing activities that bring into play environmental and citizens' groups seeking enforcement of environmental laws. The work of environmental attorneys includes providing advice regarding the requirements of federal, state, and local environmental laws; providing representation in actions charging violations of environmental laws, as well as in Superfund cases whereby the federal government, the states, or private parties can bring suit for injunctive relief from the release of hazardous substances and for the cost of cleaning up already released hazardous substances; engaging in negotiations with respect to permits for construction of industrial or other facilities impacting on the environment; providing representation at administrative hearings in the event of challenges to the granting of

permits; interpreting the results of environmental assessment; and providing advice with respect to environmental clauses in contracts in connection with the purchase and sale of businesses.

M. Family Law: To practice in the area of family law requires knowledge of not only domestic relations, but also litigation, tax law, contract negotiations, drafting, estate planning, and, at times, some psychology and sociology. Attorneys may become involved in the most personal aspects of their clients' lives, particularly where custody is in question. Much of the practice revolves around dissolution of marriages and the economic partnership created by marriage; however, attorneys are being consulted increasingly for pre-marital advice and planning. Marriages may be dissolved by agreement of the parties or through litigation. Regardless of whether the dissolution is contested, attorneys are often concerned with matters of property distribution, alimony, child support, and child custody and visitation rights. After dissolution of the marriage, attorneys may become involved in negotiations or proceedings to modify or enforce the divorce decree and/or separation agreement.

N. Health: Attorneys practicing in this area may represent hospitals and physicians, as well as other healthcare entities, such as nursing homes, HMOs, and facilities for ambulatory cases. In representing hospitals, attorneys may become involved in corporate, tax, and labor matters; capital financing; medical staff disciplinary matters; Medicare and Medicaid issues; contracting for services and equipment; and physician recruitment and acquisition of physician practices, among other things. Attorneys who represent physicians handle various matters, including formation of professional corporations, estate and tax planning, and third-party reimbursement.

O. Immigration: Immigration practice appeals to lawyers who enjoy extensive client contact. Good interpersonal skills are required, and knowledge of a foreign language is an asset, although certainly not required. Attorneys deal with the legal and administrative problems encountered by aliens who have entered the United States legally and illegally and the employers who wish to legally hire aliens. In addition to individuals seeking to enter the United States for economic or personal reasons, immigration attorneys work with refugees and those seeking political asylum. Opportunities exist for employment with the federal government in enforcing the immigration laws, as well as private practice in small and medium-sized firms. A few large corporate firms hire experienced immigration attorneys to meet the needs of their multi-national clients.

P. Insurance: Attorneys in this area are often called upon by insurance companies to defend an insured party in lawsuits where liability may be covered under an insurance policy. There are many different types of policies and, as might be expected, many more different types of lawsuits that may arise under them; for example, individuals carrying automobile insurance may find themselves as defendants in lawsuits involving property damage or personal injury caused by an accident. Additionally, insurance attorneys may represent insurance companies in connection with various types of claims, such as eligibility for benefits or enforcement of surety bonds.

Q. Intellectual Property: This area includes trademark, copyright, and patent law. No special training is necessary for a trademark or copyright practice; however, for a patent practice, attorneys generally must have an engineering or science background and to prosecute patents must pass a Patent Bar examination. Attorneys prepare and file applications for registration of

trademarks company logos, copyrights novels, plays, songs, choreography notes, and patents (e.g., mechanical inventions). They also handle any problems or objections in connection with such applications, as well as counsel clients and draft and negotiate licensing agreements. If an infringement occurs, attorneys engage in settlement negotiations or litigation to seek court orders directing the infringers to stop their infringing activities, pay damages, and, in some instances, relinquish or destroy the infringing items.

R. International: Attorneys engaged in international practice handle a variety of matters for U.S. and non-U.S. clients in connection with activities that extend beyond U.S. borders. They may provide representation with respect to international mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, or other investments; international development projects, such as mining or other resource development; international licensing, sale, or enforcement of intellectual property rights; international trade and trade finance, such as shipping disputes, sales agency, and letters of credit; international trade regulation; international tax; international arbitration of business disputes; and international real estate transactions. In addition to representing businesses in the above matters, attorneys may also represent individuals and their families regarding such matters as immigration, residency, investments, estate administration, and taxes. Finally, attorneys may also represent U.S. government agencies and non-U.S. governments and their agencies in matters such as trade and government contracts.

S. Labor and Employment: Attorneys practicing in this area may represent employers, employees, or unions; they may be engaged in private practice or work for a government agency, such as the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). This practice may involve labor relations matters, such as collective bargaining negotiations, affirmative action compliance, and strike litigations; matters relating to employee health and safety; litigation of employment matters, such as Title VII claims of discrimination; ERISA claims; wrongful discharge claims; unfair competition and breach of employment contract claims; and matters arising before administrative agencies, including the NLRB, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

T. Legal Aid and Public Interest: Legal service attorneys represent the poor, the elderly, the disabled, or those deprived of their civil or human rights with respect to civil or criminal matters.

U. Litigation: Litigation is probably the most familiar area of practice since courtroom drama seems to epitomize the practice of law on television and in movies. Simply put, litigators are trial attorneys. Their practice may involve criminal matters or a wide range of civil matters, from admiralty to workers' compensation. Some litigators specialize in one area of civil law, such as aviation, intellectual property, personal injury, or securities, while others handle a mix of cases.

Litigators must know how to handle a lawsuit from beginning to end, which means they must understand not only the area of law governing the dispute but also the rules of criminal or civil procedure. Their work includes all aspects of trial preparation such as legal research; drafting memoranda of law, pleadings, and discovery documents; conducting and defending depositions; producing documents and examining documents produced by the opposing side; preparing and arguing motions such as motions to dismiss for failure to state a cause of action, motions for summary judgment, or motions for a change of venue; and, of course, conducting trials.

Litigators also must be skillful negotiators to achieve successful settlements of cases before or during trials.

V. Medical Malpractice: This area of practice involves litigation of claims brought by patients against physicians, dentists, or other healthcare professionals who are alleged to have been negligent in providing medical services, and by insurance companies representing both types of parties. Accordingly, attorneys may engage in plaintiff's work, representing injured patients, or defense work, representing accused healthcare professionals. Given the nature of these lawsuits, expert medical testimony plays a significant role in determining the outcome. Each side relies on its own experts and, therefore, attorneys work closely with their experts in analyzing the claims, gathering medical information, and preparing for depositions and trial. In this way, attorneys develop an understanding of complex medical information which they simplify and put in everyday terms when they present their cases. Although a medical background is advantageous, attorneys do not need it to start in this area of practice; they develop medical expertise, just as they develop their litigation expertise.

W. Military (JAG Corps): Each branch of the Armed Forces -- Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines -- has its own Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG Corps). To become a member of the JAG Corps, an attorney must enter active duty in one of these branches. Practice involves not only representation of officers and enlisted men and the command in matters of military justice, but also, as required and permitted, representation and assistance of soldiers and military dependents in other types of matters. JAG Corps attorneys prosecute or defend soldiers charged with violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The other areas in which JAG Corps attorneys practice may involve claims, legal assistance, or administrative law. Claims attorneys investigate and settle claims for damage by or to government property or for injury to recipients of medical care from the military. Legal assistance attorneys counsel soldiers and their families with respect to all matters other than military justice, such as taxes, trusts and estates, and family law. Administrative law attorneys handle many diverse matters involving, for example, labor law, contract law, environmental law, the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, access to military installations, or interpretation of military regulations.

X. Personal Injury: This area of practice involves the litigation of claims brought by individuals who suffered physical injury against parties who allegedly caused such injury, and by insurance companies representing both types of parties. Attorneys may engage in either plaintiffs' work or defense work. Several solo practitioners and small to medium-size firms specialize in this area.

Y. Products Liability: This is another area of practice that involves litigation. Individuals bring claims against manufacturers or suppliers of products that allegedly caused physical injury to those individuals. Through research and the discovery process, attorneys must become thoroughly familiar with the product, its manufacture, and how it is supposed to work, and must also ascertain the manner in which the plaintiff used such product.

Z. Public Sector/Municipal: Attorneys working for state or local governments and attorneys working in law firms for private clients may be engaged in this type of practice which involves many substantive areas of law including litigation, public finance, environmental, labor, education, elections, real estate, and intergovernmental relations. Generally, attorneys specialize

in one or two areas. They may represent state and local governments and their agencies, as well as private sector entities dealing with such public entities.

AA. Real Estate: This area of practice includes both commercial and residential real estate, equity, and mortgage investments. Real estate purchases, sales, project development, mortgages, sale leaseback, syndication and joint venture financing are part of the work of the real estate practitioner. In troubled times, the real estate lawyer functions often in the area of default, workouts, foreclosures, and bankruptcy. Attorneys may work for firms, corporations, banks, or other financial institutions and represent buyers, sellers, developers, lenders, and borrowers. Often, solo practitioners handle real estate matters primarily in the residential area.

BB. Securities: This area of practice centers on all matters related to common or preferred stock, bonds, notes, debentures, or any other form of investment in a business. Attorneys may represent corporations offering securities for sale, investment firms, broker/dealers, underwriters, or the exchanges on which securities are traded. Additionally, attorneys may work for the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) which oversees registration of securities pursuant to federal law and brings enforcement and other proceedings against parties who allegedly violate those laws.

The work of securities attorneys involves, among other things, determining whether securities must be registered under federal or state “blue sky” laws or whether they fall within an exemption; negotiating agreements with underwriters or any other parties involved in the financing; preparing registration statements for public offerings, which statements disclose the history, business, and financial condition of the company making the offering; filing registration statements with the SEC and answering any questions the SEC poses before it allows the registration statement to become effective when the sale of securities may take place; preparing and filing with the SEC quarterly and annual reports; proxy statements soliciting votes at a company’s annual meeting; complying with state “blue sky” registration laws; preparing disclosure documents that need not be filed with any governmental agency but must be provided to investors in the case of a private placement of securities, i.e., the sale of securities to a limited group of investors or a group of investors who are sophisticated purchasers of securities; and litigating when something goes wrong in the purchase or sale of securities.

CC. Tax: In this area of practice, attorneys provide counsel to many different types of clients regarding federal and state tax laws and regulations. Clients may include publicly-held and privately-held corporations, not-for-profit organizations, partnerships, and individuals. Questions may arise with respect to income taxes, gift and estate taxes, tax-exempt status for healthcare institutions and not-for-profit organizations, public and private financings, and employee benefits plans such as pension, profit-sharing, and 401(k) plans. The practice of a tax attorney may involve business planning with clients, handling audits and other matters before the I.R.S., and litigation of tax matters brought before the courts. Tax attorneys often work closely with attorneys in other areas of practice; for example, attorneys handling divorces consult with tax attorneys to determine the tax impact of the financial arrangements between the parties; corporate attorneys, similarly, need to know the tax implications of corporate transactions. They also often work closely with accountants, financial planners, and persons in other business-related fields.

DD. Trusts and Estates: Attorneys in this area of practice typically represent wealthy clients in all areas pertaining to ownership of property. Attorneys play a particularly specialized role in planning for the effective transfer of assets either at the owner's death or otherwise. In this capacity, an attorney will analyze a client's assets, elicit and develop the client's wishes for the eventual disposition of such assets, educate the client about the effect of substantive and tax laws on such assets and disposition, and make appropriate modification as necessary. The attorney will then prepare appropriate documentation--most typically wills and trust instruments -- to effectuate such wishes and will monitor future developments of both the client and the law to ensure that the planning remains current. After a client's death, the attorney will usually be retained by the client's executor to render advice in connection with the administration of the estate including the probate of the will and preparation of appropriate tax returns for the estate and the executor's accounting and release. The attorney will also usually be retained to render advice to trustees of trusts created by the client either inter vivos or at death. Although each stage of estate and trust administration can be routine, each can involve litigation and almost every matter has some unique aspect. The practice is typically unhurried but requires great care and involves a lot of client contact.

EE. Workers' Compensation: Attorneys represent employees and employers with respect to claims for benefits to compensate employees for work-related injury or disease. These matters start as administrative proceedings and may work their way into the state court system when there is an appeal from an administrative decision. Attorneys representing employers may also become involved in matters relating to workers' compensation premiums, self-insurance arrangements, and establishment of safety programs.

VII. TIMETABLE FOR STUDENTS

The career development process will start in the first semester of law school, beginning with your Professional Development class, and followed by the preparation of a legal resume, and one or more cover letters. It will continue throughout law school with career counseling sessions that focus on summer job opportunities and a three-year or four-year (in the case of part-time students) career preparation plan.

A. First Year

During the first semester of law school, we encourage first-year students to focus on adjusting to law school and concentrating on their academics. This is the time when you should learn the language of the law and begin to develop the theoretical foundations that you will need throughout both law school and your legal career.

First-year students begin their relationship with the Career Development Office by attending a Professional Development course beginning in September. During the class, you will draft a resume, and one or more cover letters, conduct a practice interview, and become familiar with various practice areas, legal settings, and job search strategies. You will also be assigned a career counselor and will be able to make your first appointment beginning in October. The Professional Development course will also cover academic success strategies and professionalism.

In addition to individual counseling, the Career Development Office offers training for interviews through mock practice sessions and programs.

Students, as well as alumni, work in many different practice environments. Some work in law firms, some in government or public interest agencies, some with judges, and some in corporations. If you are ultimately seeking a job with a large law firm, it is critical for you to perform well academically during your first year. Most large law firms use grades as the prime criterion by which they select those students whom they will interview. Therefore, doing well academically will expand the number of options you have for this type of future employment. Journal participation, particularly *Law Review*, is also given great weight by large firm employers. The writing competition to earn membership on one of the journals takes place at the close of the first-year full-time, or second-year part-time program.

Regardless of what type of position you eventually seek, having some type of summer legal experience on your resume is very important to your success. We therefore urge you to get legal experience during the first summer so that your work can be reflected on your resume before you apply for a second summer position. As a first-year student, however, you must be realistic about the available job opportunities for someone with only a year of law school under their belt.

While some employers will accept applications from first-year law students in the fall, your job search will primarily take place over winter break and into the spring. Since most small firms do not know their hiring needs far in advance, opportunities for summer employment with

them may not become available until February or later. While the office continuously receives such job opportunities and makes them known to the students, if you are interested in a small law firm, in order to get a jump on the market, we suggest that, beginning in January, you send your resume with a cover letter (after each has been critiqued and revised) to a select group of firms (based on size, practice area, location, etc.), in which you have an interest.

While it is true that some large law firms hire first-year students for summer associate positions, these positions are limited and extremely competitive. If you are interested in applying, you should apply in the fall and can obtain contact information from the NALP National Directory of Legal Employers online at <https://www.nalpdirectory.com/>.

Because finding paid employment your first summer can be challenging, many students choose to volunteer in a legal setting, on either a part-time (i.e., splitting the work week with a paid position outside of the law) or full-time basis. Volunteering for a federal or state court judge is a popular option, as is working for a government agency, such as a district attorney's office. If you intend to apply for a judicial clerkship upon graduation, working as a law intern in a judge's chambers is an ideal way to gain the necessary experience to support your application.

Some first-year students work as research assistants for professors at the law school. This can be an excellent experience, as it will allow you to further develop crucial research and writing skills and, at the same time, allow you to get to know a professor in a context outside of the classroom. Some research assistants become teaching assistants for the following semester, another impressive item to list on a resume.

Students interested in public interest law need to show a commitment to that type of work prior to seeking permanent employment. Many public interest organizations rely on student assistance both during the summer and the school year. Although many such positions are without compensation, grants or fellowships may be available. The Career Development Office will advertise information pertaining to public interest job fairs held during the fall and spring semesters.

B. Second Year

Students hoping to work at large firms after graduation should be aware that large firms tend to hire most of their entry-level associates from their summer associate class. During your second year, many large firms conduct interviews for their summer associate programs through the law school's Recruitment Program which includes on-campus/virtual interviews. It is very important to remember that the Program only includes a small percentage of the private and public sector employers. Only those employers who know their hiring needs almost a year in advance, i.e., the larger firms and some government agencies, participate in the Program.

Toward the end of your first year, the Career Development Office will provide you with information about the recruitment process, and the employers who will be participating in the Program. You must take time to research employers, and to decide with whom you would like to interview. You must submit your resume to the Career Development Office for review prior to applying for the Program.

If you don't obtain a job through the Recruitment Program, there are other avenues to find employment. Students interested in working with many government agencies and public interest organizations must be sure to start their job search early, as many of the deadlines for these positions are in the early part of the Fall semester. Review the *Government Honors and Internship Handbook* and www.psjd.org for opportunities and related deadlines. The Career Development Office continuously posts job opportunities on the Symplicity system throughout the year. Think about gearing your efforts to a small or mid-sized law firm job search and use Career Development to assist you with a targeted mailing. You may also consider attending job fairs and becoming actively involved in bar associations, particularly if one exists that is specific to your field of interest (e.g., a person interested in practicing intellectual property law may consider joining the student member division of the New York Intellectual Property Law Association). Take every opportunity to network with attorneys and people who know attorneys. Attending programs presented at the law school is a great method of networking.

Second year is the time that you will start thinking about applying for both federal and state judicial clerkships. You should pick up the Judicial Clerkship Handbook and the Application Tip Sheets from the Career Development Office and start researching the judges you are interested in working with.

It is critical that you do some type of legal work during the summer after your second year of law school, so you should not discount volunteering if you are unable to obtain a paid position. You may even be able to earn school credit by volunteering via the externship program or by doing an independent study project with a professor. You can also look into working with a professor as a teaching assistant or a research assistant, either during the summer or during your second year of law school. Your second year of law school also provides you with the opportunity to build your resume by participating in journals, clinical programs, the Pro Bono Service Project, and trial activities, such as Moot Court and the Polestino Trial Institute (PTAI).

C. Third Year

Do not panic if you do not have a position for after graduation when you begin your third year of law school. There are still many opportunities and options available for you, and you should visit the Career Development Office as early in the year as possible to discuss which path to take.

If you did not obtain ample legal experience during your first and second years of law school, there are still many opportunities within the school environment to build your resume, including the clinical and externship programs, practical courses like trial advocacy, research and teaching assistant positions, and independent study with a professor. If you feel that your course schedule allows, a part-time or volunteer job during the semester can also boost the experience listed on your resume.

Some employers that come on campus for the Recruitment Program are interested in interviewing third-year students. Although many large firms tend to hire their permanent associates from their summer associate class, some of these firms do want to meet new candidates from the 3L class, as do some other firms. Additionally, many government and public interest employers who participate in the Program interview third-year students.

In your third year, you will continue researching and applying to federal and state judicial clerkships. Again, be sure to consult the Judicial Clerkship Handbook and the Application Tip Sheets.

As noted earlier, many small and mid-sized firms do not know their hiring needs until late spring, summer or even the fall after graduation. Many of these firms post their jobs with the Career Development Office, so you should continue to check our job listings. Additionally, you should continue to send out targeted mailings, network, and attend the various job fairs that are available. Oftentimes, passing the bar exam increases the employment opportunities available to you.

Searching for a job is a time-consuming process and requires a lot of commitment. However, it is very important to remember that many of the job searching skills that you develop during your law school career will assist you throughout your legal career.

VIII. JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

A. Preparing Your Resume and Other Documents

Your resume reflects you: your accomplishments, your skills, your writing ability, your personality, and your potential. It is your calling card. However, most employers generally look at each resume for less than a minute, perhaps even less than 30 seconds. Accordingly, you should present a clear, eye-catching picture of yourself. That does not mean you should use flashy graphics or other gimmicks, as they will only distract the reader, rather than enhance your background and experience. With this in mind, you should use simple, clean typefaces in a format that is easy to read, with your most important achievements positioned on the page to catch the employer's eye. Your resume and cover letter should be printed on good quality bond paper.

Your resume generally should be limited to one page. If you are a second career law student, or if you intend to pursue a public interest or government career, you may use two pages. This will give you the ability to list all prior work experience and/or community service positions.

In order to compose your resume, you should take a written survey of yourself without worrying whether it fits into resume format; the format comes later and is much easier once you have completed the survey. Your first step is to list education: St. John's and the colleges or universities from which you graduated or which you attended; the degrees you have received and those you expect to receive; the honors you have achieved; and the activities in which you have participated at each school. The next step is to list your experience: the jobs you hold or have held (including part-time, full-time, paid or non-paid positions, internships and externships, and, where appropriate, non-legal positions); your duties and responsibilities at each job; any civic, social, and military achievements; organizations in which you are or were a member or an officer; your special skills and interests; and all persons who are in a position to vouch for your experience and abilities. After preparing this survey, you must condense, edit, and capsule the material into a resume. Ultimately, only the most essential data should be included.

Your resume should maximize your assets and minimize your liabilities. The manner of presentation and scope of coverage obviously will vary somewhat with each student; however, there are some basic guidelines all should follow. Below you will find guidelines regarding substance and format, as well as sample resumes.

Substance of Your Resume

Every statement on your resume must be accurate; accuracy means being absolutely precise and correct. For instance, if you list your class standing, it must be the mathematically correct percentage based on your class rank. After new ranks are issued, you must include your new rank, even if it is not as favorable as your old one. It is stated policy with many employers that they discontinue consideration of any candidate whose resume contains inaccuracies relating to class rank, class standing, or any other matter. You also will be subject to disciplinary action by the law school and/or the New York State Bar.

Personal Data

Personal information that you may list on your resume include your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address which should appear at the top of your resume. We recommend using your St. John's e-mail address. If you decide to use a personal e-mail, make sure the address is professional (e.g., elvis-was-here@24xyz.com will not be viewed as professional by an employer). Incidentally, make sure you have a functional answering machine or voicemail with a professional message. Do not include date of birth, marital status, height, weight, health condition, or spouse's name or occupation. Do not attach a photograph or include a personal website.

Education

Although some students who come to law school may have substantial work experience, we strongly recommend that all law students begin their resumes with the Education section. Information regarding scholastic background should be set forth in the following order: legal education; graduate education, if any; and undergraduate education. You should use the heading "Education" for the entire section.

It is not recommended that you include your high school information on your resume. However, there are three possible exceptions: 1) if you are applying for employment in an area, outside of the tri-state area, where you attended high school; 2) if you received significant awards and honors, AND you do not have much work experience to include on the resume; or 3) if you attended a competitive high school with a very well-developed network of alumni. You should list the school, its location, and your date of graduation; do not include any other details (aside from exception #2). Your high school information should drop out of your resume after your second year of law school.

For all levels of education, indicate the name of the institution, city and state where it is located, month and year of graduation, and degree obtained. The designations *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *summa cum laude* should be included along with your degree entries, e.g., B.A., *magna cum laude*, English, June 20___. If you have not yet graduated, indicate that you are a candidate for a degree, in a specific month and year, e.g., Candidate for J.D., June 20___.

You may use "Juris Doctor" instead of J.D., but do not use Juris Doctorate. Do not state that you are a "second-year student." If you attended but did not graduate from an institution, after listing the name and location, indicate dates of attendance. If you use "J.D.," be consistent when describing your undergraduate degree, i.e., use "B.A." or "B.S." Accordingly, if you use "Juris Doctor" then write out your undergraduate degree, e.g., "Bachelor of Arts."

Class Standing or Rank: As a rule of thumb, if you are in the top 30% of your law school class, you should include that information in the first subheading under your law school entry. Class rank may be reflected as a fraction (i.e., 24/249) or a percentage (i.e., Top 10%). Please note that ranks **may not** be rounded to the higher percentage (even if you fall outside of a percentage by mere hundredths). So, 25/249 (which converts to 10.04) is not within the top 10%; it can be reflected on your resume as 25/249 or as Top 11%. Accuracy is important.

Stating a cumulative grade point average, e.g., 3.2, is less meaningful to an employer; competitive standing (Top x%) is far more important and allows them to compare students from different schools on a similar measure. If employers are interested in actual grades earned, they will usually request a transcript. If you do not put your rank on your resume, and you have a 3.0 or above, you should put your GPA on your resume; most employers will assume you have below a 3.0 if you do not put a rank or GPA on your resume. If you do decide to put your GPA on your resume, it must be exact, to the nearest hundredth. For example, 3.120 — 3.124 = 3.12, and 3.125 — 3.129 = 3.13.

Although grades are an important criterion to some employers, students in the middle to lower half of their class should not be discouraged. Those students can improve their class standing over time or they can augment their academic information with law school activities, employment experience, and a good undergraduate record. Participation in the law school's externship program is very important, particularly if you have a limited legal employment background. Furthermore, if you have excelled in a specialized area of legal study and have targeted your job hunt towards that particular market, it might be effective to indicate grades or class standing in relevant courses in your resume or cover letter.

If your rank or GPA in your undergraduate school or other graduate institutions was high, you should list it under the appropriate schools.

Honors: If you received honors at any school, set forth a separate subheading entitled “Honors” under the school where you received such honors. List each honor separately, in order of importance, not alphabetically or chronologically. For any honor that is not explanatory, e.g., Pi Sigma Alpha, include a brief parenthetical description, Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society).

Include among your undergraduate and graduate honors: Dean's List (indicating number of semesters), honor societies, and any scholarships or awards based on academic achievements.

Among the law school honors you may list after the end of your first year are *St. John's Law Review*, *American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review*, *St. John's Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development*, *New York International Law Review*, *N.Y. Real Property Law Journal*, Moot Court Honor Society, Frank S. Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute (PTAI), Dispute Resolution Society (DRS), Dean's List, Dean's Awards, and any scholarships or other awards based on academic achievement. After your second year, you may list Moot Court, PTAI, and DSR executive board status and editorial positions on publications. If you are invited to join a journal or Moot Court, PTAI, or DRS, we encourage you to accept, because each of these activities can be very beneficial to your career.

Publications: You should cite, using “blue book” form (the accepted “style sheet” in the legal profession), any writings of yours that have been published. Any writing which is scheduled to be published should be indicated by at least the title and name of the journal. If you have the information, indicate the volume and page of the publication, and the date e.g. (“to be published [date]” or “forthcoming [date]”).

Activities: If you participated in any activities at any of your schools, set forth a separate subheading entitled “Activities” under the school where you participated in such activities. As with honors, list each activity separately, in order of importance, not alphabetically or chronologically. If any activities are not self-explanatory, include a brief, parenthetical description, e.g., *The Forum* (law school newspaper).

All law school activities should be listed, along with positions or titles held in a particular organization and, possibly, any significant contributions made to the work of the organization. You should include *The Forum*, clubs, and student memberships. Your list of undergraduate and graduate activities may include student newspapers and yearbooks, special interest clubs, fraternities or sororities, athletics, and community activities.

Experience

This portion of the resume is devoted to your work experience. If you have had legal and other work experience, you can either separate them into two headings, one entitled “Legal Experience” and the other entitled “Other Work Experience,” “Other Professional Experience,” or “Non-Legal Experience,” or keep them together under “Experience.” However, if you are only listing legal experience, you should use one heading, entitled “Legal Experience.” If you have only had work experience unrelated to law, you should use a heading entitled “Experience,” “Professional Experience,” or “Business Experience.”

List your employment in reverse chronological order, i.e., the most recent first, setting forth the employer’s full name, the city and state where the employer is located, the title of your position, and dates of employment. If you have separate headings for legal experience and other work experience, you should use reverse chronological order under each heading. Since job titles provide no detail regarding what your job entailed, you should describe your tasks.

Your descriptions should emphasize your responsibilities and contributions, rather than your routine duties. Most importantly, you should focus on those tasks that use skills relevant to the practice of law. Such skills include research and writing, negotiating, analyzing data, decision-making, communicating, and supervising. Action verbs, such as “directed,” “managed,” and “negotiated,” are effective in creating the image of an achiever. See Appendix A for a list of useful action verbs. Use past tense verbs for former jobs and present tense verbs for current jobs. Never use “I,” “my,” or any other form of first person in describing your tasks; use third person phrases, e.g., “negotiated real estate contracts.” Avoid phrases such as “Duties & Responsibilities included.”

When describing your legal experience, make sure you give some specific details, so that the employers can see more fully the breadth of your experience. As one illustration of this, rather than simply saying “conducted research and drafted memoranda,” you should give them an idea of the substance of that work, e.g., “conducted research and drafted memoranda regarding copyright issues, including works-for-hire, payment of royalties, and injunctive relief against infringers,” or “conducted research and drafted memoranda regarding bankruptcy and securities issues.” As you can see, you need not provide a long, involved discussion of legal issues in your resume descriptions.

With respect to non-legal employment, you should exercise discretion in listing past jobs. It is not necessary to set forth every part-time or summer job ever held. Legal employers are particularly interested in experience gained with institutions frequently requiring legal services, such as banks, insurance companies, real estate offices, accounting firms or corporations, particularly when that experience requires you to utilize those skills that are relevant to the practice of law.

If you can list real substantive experience and also have had a variety of part-time or summer jobs which did not require any skills of major significance to the practice of law, e.g., lifeguard, clerk-typist, baby-sitter, athletic trainer, it might be prudent to describe those jobs in a general statement such as “Employed part-time during the semester and full-time during the summer, while in high school and college, to defray educational expenses. Positions included lifeguard and clerk-typist.” In addition, if you received promotions in those positions, you should highlight your promotions in the description. This is especially true if the promotions put you in supervisory positions.

Military service may be indicated in this section, including any noteworthy service and any citations or commendations. If you are presently in an active reserve unit, you should indicate that information.

Skills or Special Qualifications

Some employers find it important to learn that you are fluent in a second language or have computer expertise. These items should be included under the heading “Skills,” “Special Qualifications,” “Computer Skills,” or “Language Skills.” With respect to languages, you should indicate if you are fluent, proficient, conversant, have working knowledge, or have writing ability. As far as computers, you may list the particular programs in which you are trained or experienced. We encourage students to take advantage of the advanced research training provided by the Lexis and Westlaw representatives at the law school. Your training “certifications” should be listed with your computer skills.

Interests

The extracurricular activities in which you participated in law school and college, as well as past non-legal employment, will usually suggest what your outside interests are, e.g., drama, tennis, political organizations. There may, however, be times when the education and employment sections of the resume do not seem an appropriate place to mention some important aspect of your background. Employers often find it helpful to see a section labeled “Interests.” Try to be specific in describing your hobbies and interests; entries such as “reading and travel” are too general. Remember that the purpose of these entries is to make a connection with interviewers and spark lively conversation in your interviews. However, you should realize that any interest that you list is “open game.” So, if you list “reading” as an interest, be prepared to answer questions such as what kind of books you like, what you have read recently, etc.

Community Service or Volunteer Service

If you are, or were, involved with any community organizations, you may include them under a subheading entitled “Community Service.” Other types of volunteer work that are not community-based may be listed under a heading entitled “Volunteer Service.” Those considering careers in public interest areas should be especially mindful to include such a section. Caution should be exercised in dealing with controversial affiliations: differences of opinion, unless fundamental, can be resolved after you are hired.

References

Employers often want independent verification of a job applicant’s abilities. However, it is *not* necessary to include the statement, “References will be furnished upon request” at the bottom of your resume. Summer employers rarely consult references because of the temporary nature of the job. The hiring of a full-time attorney is a more serious matter and references are frequently consulted before commitments are made.

In any event, you should know who would serve as your references in the event a prospective employer requests you to furnish that information. Before starting your interviews, you should make sure that the individuals that you intend to use as references are willing to serve as such. (You never want references you list to be unaware that you will be relying on them, and you never want to use anyone as a reference who is only willing to give “faint praise.”) When a prospective employer asks for references, be ready to furnish the names, titles, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of your references. Your references should include a law professor who is familiar with your work. Other references should be from employers listed in the employment section. Relatives, doctors, or clergy are not appropriate references. Three references should be sufficient, in most situations, and can be listed on a separate sheet, using the same stationery and masthead used for your resume and cover letter:

NAME
STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP CODE
PHONE
EMAIL [remove hyperlink]

(The heading of your reference list should be identical to the heading of your resume & cover letter)

References

Reference #1 First/Last Name
Title
Employer
Address of Employer
Phone:
E-mail:

Reference # 2 First/Last Name
Title
Employer
Address of Employer
Phone:
E-mail:

Reference #3 First/Last Name
Title
Employer
Address of Employer
Phone:
E-mail:

Writing Samples

You should have a writing sample ready at all times and bring it to every interview. You should *not*, however, indicate “writing sample will be furnished upon request” on your resume. If your writing sample was prepared in conjunction with a course, make sure that it is reprinted so that instructor’s written comments are not included in the copy submitted to employers. If you are using a writing sample developed during employment, you must first obtain your employer’s permission to do so. Be sure that the names of the parties, along with any other identifying information, are removed (unless the names are essential for the employer reading the sample to understand the document; but you must get your employer’s permission here also.)

Employers today appreciate (and often specifically request) writing samples that are brief. Five to six pages is ideal. Ten to twelve pages should be the upper limit. The exception to this rule may exist with writing samples for judicial clerkship applications. You should begin with a cover sheet (formatted consistently with your resume, cover letter, and reference list) containing a brief introduction:

NAME
STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP CODE
PHONE
EMAIL [remove hyperlink]

WRITING SAMPLE

The attached writing sample is excerpted from a memorandum that I prepared for my Legal Research and Writing course. The point addressed involves an analysis of whether a particular act constitutes discrimination under applicable federal and local laws.

Writing samples must consist only of your own writing. Law journal articles are not recommended if they are heavily edited. You might offer such an article as an additional writing sample but must explain any editing. ***Make sure there are no typos anywhere in your writing sample!***

Transcripts

When applying for jobs on-line, if a transcript is requested, you can: order an electronic transcript (<https://www.stjohns.edu/law/student-services/office-registrar>); scan a copy of your official transcript as administered by the University (not the web version); or create and upload an “Unofficial and Self-Prepared Transcript” (See Appendix C). Please note, an “Unofficial and Self-Prepared Transcript” may not omit any information and must be a precise replica of the information contained in your actual transcript.

Whether or not you offer to provide a transcript during an interview, many interviewers will inquire about your grades. So, you should always have a transcript available for the interviewer. You should never produce an “Unofficial and Self-Prepared Transcript” at an interview. You must obtain the most recent copy of your transcript (official or electronic) from the Registrar’s Office, and you can make copies of it to distribute at your interviews.

You should also always have a copy of your undergraduate/graduate transcripts, as well, since some employers require them, and they can sometimes take a long time to obtain.

Material You Should Omit

Do not include an “Objective” statement since employers will already know what it is based on the position they are offering, or from statements in your cover letter regarding your interests (objective statements are generally frowned upon within the legal profession). Do not include a “Summary of Qualifications” as this information should be contained within your cover letter. In addition, do not include salary requirements on your resume, as this should also be in your cover letter, and only when requested.

Format of Your Resume

You should use an outline approach, listing your education and experience under the appropriate topic headings, as described above. Brevity and simplicity are essential since employers are too busy to wade through an ocean of text. On the other hand, do not be so brief that you do not give the employer enough information. The key is to strike a balance. You can be your own best critic: look at your resume and ask yourself what impression your resume would make on you if you were the employer. You should do this to determine not only whether your text is clear and concise, but also whether the overall appearance of your resume will make a good impression. Keep in mind the effective use of white space, headings, spacing, indenting, italics, underlining, and capitalized and bold lettering. Job descriptions should be in paragraph rather than bullet format.

Your resume should be on 8 ½” x 11” paper of good quality, 20-25 lb., that is at least 25% cotton. The color of the paper should be white, off-white, or cream (forget the pastel greys & blues); the ink should be black. The lettering should be one of the various fonts of block-style such as Times New Roman or Arial, 12- or 14-point font for your name and 11- or 12-point font for the remainder of the text, and you should avoid going smaller than a 10-point font. *Never* use the Courier font. If your resume is more than one page, it must be stapled, and your name and the page number must appear in the top left- hand corner of each extra page. To give your resume a professional look, you should use a laser printer, such as those available in the Law Library. When emailing, be sure to convert to PDF.

Your resume is a formal document. Accordingly, spell out the names and months, e.g., June 2023 instead of 6/23, and avoid abbreviations generally, excluding the names of states, unless space becomes a problem. When abbreviating state names, use the post office designations, i.e., two capital letters with no periods.

Consistency in format is essential. Once you choose to format a section of your resume in a particular way, you must format all other sections similarly. For example, if you use bold lettering for St. John's University School of Law, you must use bold lettering for all other schools and the names of your employers; if you indent the headings "Honors" and "Activities" under St. John's, you must indent those headings the same way under all other schools; if you abbreviate a state name anywhere on your resume, you must abbreviate state names throughout your resume. Consistency is very important.

Accuracy, too, is essential. Not only must the data be accurate, but the resume must also be free of typographical, grammatical, and spelling errors. Such errors can be fatal. Attention to detail is an important element of the attorney's craft. Although no one is perfect and everyone makes mistakes, it is inexcusable to have an error on your own resume. If employers detect an error in a resume — a highly personalized document, which you have unlimited time to prepare — they may conclude that you will be equally sloppy and careless about impersonal work, prepared under time pressure. Accordingly, you are urged to review your resume with the greatest care. In addition to having it critiqued by the Career Development Office, give it to a friend or relative to review.

SAMPLE RESUMES

NAME
STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP CODE
PHONE
EMAIL [remove hyperlink]

EDUCATION

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, New York

Candidate for J.D., June 20__

Academics: This information includes class rank. While it is not necessary to list both your class rank and G.P.A., it is certainly not prohibited. You may however want to list your G.P.A. if it is at least a 3.0 or better. You should include your class rank if you are in the top 30% of the class or better. This may be expressed as a percentage, *e.g.*, top 20%, or as a number, *e.g.*, 68/350.

Honors: Include anything that you are competitively selected for in order of importance. Examples include Dean's List (indicate semesters); *St. John's Law Review*; *American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review*; *St. John's Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development*; *New York International Law Review*; *N.Y. Real Property Law Journal* (**NOTE: Should your journal status change, and you are no longer a member of your journal, you MUST indicate dates of participation**); Moot Court Honor Society; Frank S. Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute; Dispute Resolution Society; Moot Court/Mock Trial/DSR Competitions (if you "placed", and at what level); Dean's Awards; and any fellowships and scholarships you may have received.

Publications: List published work, using official citation blue book form.

Activities: List most impressive first and indicate any leadership position before the organization. If you are selected as a Research or Teaching Assistant, and do not have room to list it in the "Experience" portion of your resume, you may list it here.

***Transfer students must list their previous law school and dates of attendance.**

UNDERGRADUATE INFORMATION: Same format as above.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

NAME OF EMPLOYER, City, State

Your Title, Dates employed using month and year

Describe responsibilities briefly, beginning each statement with an action verb (*e.g.*, conducted research, drafted memoranda). Use the correct tense (past, present, or future) for each job description.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Same as above. If you have had a variety of part-time and summer positions which are not germane, it might be prudent to incorporate all positions in one statement (*i.e.*, Worked part-time

to finance college education) **However, if you have little or nothing to include in the previous section, then provide detail on these jobs.**

SKILLS & INTERESTS (together or separately)

State abilities with languages and computer software.

Set forth interests that you can discuss comfortably. Do not put vague/broad subjects, *e.g.*, reading, sports. Instead, use specific statements, *e.g.*, reading short stories or World War II history.

NOTE: Resumes should *never* be photocopied. Use a laser printer on good quality paper.

SAMPLE 1L LEGAL RESUME
(Limited or No Legal Work Experience)

SARAH A. STUDENT

100 Main Street, Bedford Falls, NY 11111 ▪ (555) 555-5555 ▪ sarahstudent@xyz.com

EDUCATION

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

Candidate for J.D., June 20__

G.P.A.: 3.22

Honors: St. Thomas More Scholarship (full tuition)

Activities: *Member*, Women's Law Society

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, Pittsburgh, PA

B.A., *cum laude*, History, May 20__

Minor: Psychology

G.P.A.: 3.69

Honors: Dean's List (six of eight semesters)

History Honor Society

George Bailey Memorial Scholarship

Study Abroad: University of Dublin, Dublin, Ireland (Fall 201_)

Activities: *Vice President*, Future Business Leaders of America Club

Captain, Softball Team

WORK EXPERIENCE

MARTINI'S BAR & GRILL, Bedford Falls, NY

Server, August 20__ – Present

Provide excellent customer service to diverse clientele in high volume restaurant. Responsible for visual appearance of dining area. Received outstanding employee award for month of May 201_.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH ADMISSIONS DEPARTMENT, Pittsburgh, PA

Student Representative, August 20__ – May 20__

Conducted tours of campus for students interested in attending the University of Pittsburgh and their families. Compiled and mailed press kits. Answered telephones and scheduled appointments.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

BAILEY PARK BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT, Bedford Falls, NY

Team Leader, January 20__ – May 20__

Responsible for clean-up of a large public park that had fallen into disrepair because of cut funding. Organized group of fifteen volunteers to refurbish basketball court by resurfacing the blacktop and repainting court lines. Successfully solicited the donation of new rims from local sporting goods store.

SKILLS

Fluent in Spanish; Conversational in French

Proficient in Microsoft Office and LexisNexis

INTERESTS

Playing guitar, snorkeling

SHAWN A. STUDENT
730 East 40th Street, Apt. 9W
New York, NY 10172
(212) 555-2112
students@xyz.com

EDUCATION

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

Candidate for J.D., June 20__

Academics: G.P.A. 3.69 (12/281; Top 5%)

Honors: *Staff Member, St. John's Law Review*
Member, Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute
Dean's Award for Excellence in Contracts

Publication: *The Use of Alliteration in Law Review Article Titles: Trite and Troubling Trend or Shallow and Shady Sham?* 29 ST. JOHN'S L. REV. 627 (forthcoming Spring 20__).

Activities: *President, Black Law Student Association*

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO, Buffalo, NY

B.A., *cum laude*, History, May 20__

Academics: G.P.A. 3.75

Honors: Phi Beta Kappa
Dean's List (all semesters)

Activities: *President, African-American Students Club*
Treasurer, Student Government

EXPERIENCE

CONCORDE, BRESS & FIELDING, New York, NY

Summer Associate, Summer 20__

Conducted research and drafted memoranda of law on issues related to unfair competition and trademark infringement. Reviewed and summarized experts' depositions in class action toxic tort cases. Analyzed documents to determine whether they were responsive to discovery requests.

PROFESSOR SAMUEL GRIVNER,

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

Research Assistant, February 20__ to May 20__

Summarized changes in the Federal Barter Act for forthcoming treatise on federal trade regulation. Proofread, cite-checked, and edited article on the history of libel law in Idaho.

SNIDERFOURD BROKERAGE, New York, NY

Purchase and Sales Clerk, Summer 20__

Input and coded trade tickets. Calculated brokers' daily profits and losses. Investigated payment disputes.

LICENSES

New York State Real Estate Broker

INTERESTS

Nineteenth century French history, snorkeling, theatre

SEAN B. STUDENT

111 Cherry Street, Apt. #8
Jamaica, NY 11439
(718) 555-1111
students@xyz.com

EDUCATION

St. John's University School of Law, Queens, NY

Candidate for Juris Doctor, June 20__

Class Rank: Top 30%

Honors: *Member*, Moot Court Honor Society
Dean's List (Fall 20__)

Activities: *Member*, Corporate and Securities Law Society

Boston University, College of Arts and Science, Boston, MA

Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, Economics and International Relations (double major), May 20__

G.P.A.: 3.5

Honors: Dean's List (seven of eight semesters)
Beta Gamma Sigma (National Business Honor Society)

Study Abroad: Boston University /London Internship Program, London UK, Fall 20__

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

St. John's University School of Law, Securities Arbitration Clinic, Queens, NY

Legal Intern, Fall 20__

Will counsel and interview clients, conduct investigations, perform legal research, analyze financial statements, and form legal strategies in connection with securities arbitration cases.

Merrill Lynch, Office of General Counsel, New York, NY

Summer Intern, Summer 20__

Responded to regulatory inquiries from the SEC, NASD, NYSE and other self-regulatory organizations. Corresponded with regulators, gathered and organized documents and information, and coordinated production. Investigated unusual trading and prepared memorandum regarding various strategies to prevent regulatory and /or policy violations.

Small & Wright, Mineola, NY

Paralegal, Summers 20__ and 20__

Interviewed clients and gathered factual background for misdemeanor cases. Drafted corporate by-laws and minutes of annual shareholders' meetings. Analyzed contract provisions and determined discrepancies. Assisted attorney with trial preparation for securities fraud case.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Goldman Sachs International, Inc., London, UK

Intern, January 20__ to October 20__

Analyzed daily security trades, produced trade summaries, and drafted market reports for presentations in team meetings. Assessed the eligibility of potential corporate clients by evaluating applications.

COMPUTER SKILLS

LexisNexis Certified; Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint; and WordPerfect

INTERESTS

Playing drums, black and white photography, and cross-country skiing

MARIA C. STUDENT
222 Cherry Street, Apt. #12
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 555-2222
mcs@xyz.com

EDUCATION

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY
Candidate for J.D., June 20__
Rank: Top 10%
Honors: *Staff Member, St. John's Law Review*
Member, Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute
Activities: *President, International Law Society*
First Year Representative, Student Bar Association

CORNELL UNIVERSITY,
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, Ithaca, NY
B.S., Biology, May 20__
Honors: Albright Scholarship (academic scholarship)
All-Star Tennis Scholarship
Activities: *Vice President, Sigma Delta Tau Sorority*

EXPERIENCE

SMITH & SMITH, New York, NY
Law Clerk, June 20__ to Present
Draft legal papers for general practice firm including memoranda of law in support of motions for summary judgment, complaints, answers, bills of particulars, and stipulations. Conduct research and draft memoranda regarding various civil issues including strict liability, breach of express and implied warranties, comparative negligence, equitable distribution, and custody and visitation rights. Interview clients and witnesses and assist in preparing them for depositions and trials.

HON. JUDITH B. JONES, NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT,
NEW YORK COUNTY, New York, NY
Intern, Spring 20__
Conducted research, drafted memoranda and assisted in the preparation of orders with respect to contract, real estate, and matrimonial cases. Attended trials, pre-trial conferences, and hearing proceedings.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION, Ithaca, NY
Volunteer, March to October 20__
Coordinated fund-raising activities. Tutored elementary school children participating in after school program in math, science, and history.

LANGUAGES

Fluent in French; conversant in Spanish

INTERESTS

Enjoy rock climbing and golfing

PETER BANKRUPTCY LL.M. STUDENT

111 Cherry Street, Jamaica, NY 11439 · (718) 555-1111 · peterstudent@xyz.com

BAR ADMISSION

Awaiting results of the July 20__ Uniform Bar Examination (for New York Bar Admission)

EDUCATION

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

Candidate for LL.M. in Bankruptcy, June 20__

G.P.A.: 3.68

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

J.D., *cum laude*, June 20__

G.P.A.: 3.57 **Rank:** 26/233 (Top 12%)

Honors: *Executive Articles Editor, American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review*

Dean's Award for Excellence in Consumer Bankruptcy

Dean's List (Spring 201_, Fall 201_)

Publications: *Title of Article*, 29 AM. BANK. INST. L.REV. 284, (June 201_).

Title of Blog, posted to: ABI Bankruptcy Litigation Listserv, <http://insert website> (Feb. 18, 201_); posted to: ABI Bankruptcy Case Blog, <http://insert website> (Feb. 23, 201_).

Title of Research Memorandum, 1 ST. JOHN'S BANKR. RESEARCH LIBR. No. 10 (201_), http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/graduate/law/journals/abi/sjbrl_main/insert specific location.

Activities: *Participant*, National Civil Rights Trial Competition

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, Stony Brook, NY

B.A., Political Science, May 20__

Activities: *Vice President*, Community Service Organization

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

BANKRUPTCY ADVOCACY CLINIC, ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Queens, NY

Student Intern, Fall 20__ and Spring 20__

Provided bankruptcy support to low-income New Yorkers by preparing and filing Chapter 7 bankruptcy petitions. Conducted research and drafted memoranda on issues including a trustee's obligation to appear for a deposition in a bankruptcy proceeding.

HON. A. KATHLEEN TOMLINSON, MAGISTRATE JUDGE,

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, Central Islip, NY

Judicial Intern, Summer 20__

Conducted research, drafted memoranda, and assisted in drafting decisions and orders on habeas corpus petitions.

HON. IAN PONEN, NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT, NEW YORK COUNTY, New York, NY

Judicial Intern, Summer 20__

Drafted bench memoranda regarding pending motions. Assisted in drafting jury charges. Attended trials, pre-trial conferences, and hearings.

LANGUAGES

Fluent in Japanese

ANGELA C. ALUM

333 St. John's Street
Queens, NY 11439
(718) 999-9999
angela_alumni@xyz.com

BAR ADMISSIONS

New York, March 20__
Will sit for February 20__ California State Bar Examination

EXPERIENCE

Law Offices of Jones and Smith, Ridgewood, NY

Associate, Trusts and Estates, September 20__ - Present

Summer Associate, Trusts and Estates and Real Estate, June 201_ - August 201_

Prepare federal and New York State estate tax returns for estate assets. Draft affidavits for probate proceedings. Prepare and file probate papers with the Surrogate's Courts. Prepare real estate deeds, contracts of sale, and closing statements.

The Door's Legal Services Center, New York, NY

Legal Intern, September 20__ - December 20__

Conducted client intake interviews. Researched rights and responsibilities of teens in New York and their eligibility for public benefits. Drafted work authorization and emancipation letters. Created guide for obtaining travel documentation from embassies and consulates in New York.

Mental Hygiene Legal Service, Nassau University Medical Center, East Meadow, NY

Intern, June 20__ - August 20__

Interviewed patients hospitalized in New York State licensed psychiatric centers. Assisted attorneys in hospital chart reviews and preparation of clients for hearings under Article 9 of the Mental Hygiene Law. Followed cases through several stages, attending administrative hearings and pre-trial conferences.

EDUCATION

St. John's University School of Law, Queens, NY

J.D., June 20__

G.P.A.: 3.21

Honors: Dean's Award for Excellence in Constitutional Law
Recipient, Summer Student Public Interest Fellowship

Adelphi University, Garden City, NY

B.A., *magna cum laude*, Psychology and Liberal Arts, May 20__

Honors: Phi Beta Kappa
Dean's List (six out of eight semesters)

Activities: *Member*, Adelphi Platform Players (theatrical organization)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hicksville, NY

Youth Counselor, 20__ - Present

B. Preparing Your Cover Letter

When you send your resume to a prospective employer, either in response to a specific job listing or as an unsolicited request for an interview, you must also send a cover letter. You may be asking: “How important is a cover letter? Can it really make a difference? Don’t all cover letters sound alike?” Your cover letter is just as important as your resume; like your resume, it serves as your calling card. It also affords you another opportunity to catch the employer’s attention, demonstrates your interest in the firm, gives you an opportunity to highlight particular aspects of your background and experience, and shows the quality of your writing. You should not assume that an employer will disregard or cursorily read your cover letter. If your cover letter is poorly written, you could lose an opportunity. If your cover letter is well written and the employer does not read it, you have lost nothing; if the employer reads it, you have everything to gain.

Substance of Your Cover Letter

There are three sections to a cover letter: first, the introductory section; second, the “sell” section, in which you market yourself by focusing on your accomplishments as they relate to the prospective job; and third, a concluding section. If law is a second career for you, you may want to use one or two additional paragraphs in your letter. All others should probably limit their letters to three to four paragraphs.

Introductory Section

In this section, you should state that you are a student at St. John’s University School of Law. Indicate your year in law school, or your year of graduation, and express your interest in a position with the employer. If you are applying for a specific job opening, you should state how you learned of it. When you are applying to a geographically distant employer, you should point out your connection to the area, if any. If possible, end this paragraph with a succinct “sell” sentence, explaining why you would be an asset to the employer. You then substantiate that assertion in the next paragraph.

“Sell” Section

We call the second part of the cover letter the “sell” section, because it is your opportunity to show an employer what in your background makes you an irresistible candidate for employment. The most important thing to remember is to focus on your objective. Keep in mind the type of employer you are addressing and the experience that best illustrates the skills and abilities that the employer is seeking. You should never simply rehash the information already in your resume; you must elaborate upon that information and supplement it with additional information. Before you begin to draft your letter, consider the tasks completed and skills you gained at each prior job. This will enable you to draft a cover letter that illustrates your talents and shows qualities that will set you apart from other candidates. Have in mind a theme or several themes as you start your cover letter. For example, you may decide that your best-selling point is that you have a significant amount of research and writing experience; then you can illustrate that point by describing specific experiences.

Usually, the information in your resume can serve as an outline for this section of your cover letter. Prior experience in the field, high academic performance or related law school activities, or coursework, will be selling points. For example, if you are applying for a position with a tax firm, you should describe your accomplishments which relate to tax, such as an undergraduate degree in Finance or Accounting, an internship or summer associate position with the I.R.S., or any other employer where your work encompassed tax matters. You should also highlight positions, such as prior experience as an accountant, where your work required skills that readily translate to skills used by a tax attorney. If you are sending letters to several different types of employers, you should stress different points, depending on the type of employer involved. If you are applying to a general practice firm, you should focus on experience that a general practice firm will find useful, such as strong research and writing skills.

Do not feel constrained by the contents of your resume. For example, if your resume is general in approach, but you want to stress your qualifications for specialized areas, such as intellectual property, admiralty, estate planning, or tax, you should provide more details about your experience in this area than appear on your resume. If you have had no prior experience in an area, you should briefly describe your relevant law school coursework. You should mention good grades achieved in those courses, particularly if the grades were the highest or one of the highest grades awarded.

You should always avoid self-serving statements about your abilities, such as, “I am an aggressive self-starter” or “I am better qualified than other candidates;” instead, you should provide facts that will lead the employer to such conclusions. For example, if you state in your letter that you started as a clerk in a major department store, and in one year rose to the position of manager, an employer will see that you are an aggressive self-starter without you stating it. You should also avoid defensive statements or excuses about your abilities. Never apologize for your accomplishments or for what you perceive as a lack of accomplishment. Focus on the positive. One way to make certain that your cover letter stays on a positive track is to avoid statements that start with “although” or “despite”, because when you use these words, you are highlighting your flaws. Employers want to see your good points. Let them.

Always watch your language in a cover letter. Keep it simple, clear, and concise. You should show some personality, but do not use wordy, stuffy legalese, inappropriately long words, jargon, jokes, or gimmicks. A serious, straightforward, and confident approach is best. You are applying for a job as a professional, so show you are a professional.

You may be wondering how to find the right language, the right tone. It usually takes a number of drafts. Start out by being over inclusive and don’t worry about how it sounds. Then, edit — cut it down, organize it — and strike the right balance in language and tone.

Remember that the “sell” section should highlight what you bring to the employer, not what you would get out of the position. While you will gain invaluable experience from your work, that fact is not what will make you attractive to the employer. It is not what the position can do for you, but what you can do for the employer, that is persuasive.

Concluding Section

Your letter should always close with a request for an interview to discuss your background and experience in greater detail. If the employer is located in another city or state, you may say that you are planning to visit that city during a certain time and request an appointment at the employer's convenience. You should also state whatever documents you are enclosing with your cover letter, e.g., resume, transcript, as opposed to writing a list at the bottom of the page next to the word "enclosures." You may also indicate that you look forward to hearing from the employer and thank the employer for considering your application.

Format of Your Cover Letter

You should print each cover letter individually, in black ink, on the same type of good quality stationery that you use for your resume. When emailing, be sure to convert to PDF. The format is the same as any business letter. A sample format is included at the conclusion of this section.

You should address your cover letter to an individual member of the organization, e.g., a law firm's recruitment coordinator or hiring partner. You should confirm the correct contact person for each organization by consulting the organization's website or materials, or lists and publications, available in the Career Development Office. You may also telephone the employer's office and ask for the name of the contact person. Be certain **that the name of the individual to whom you are addressing it and the firm/organization name are spelled correctly**. Check for typographical errors and other misspellings and make certain that your grammar is correct. Remember: when mailing your cover letter, resume, and any other documentation, print the mailing and return addresses on labels—never address an envelope in your handwriting: it is not professional.

Follow-Up on Your Applications

You *must* keep track of all employers to whom you have sent cover letters and resumes. You should maintain a list of names, dates, responses, and results of interviews. By doing this, you can avoid confusion, duplication, and possible embarrassment.

If you have not received a response from an employer after two or three weeks, you may telephone to inquire about the timing of the employer's decision-making, the status of your application (including making sure that they received it), and whether they need any additional materials. If the employer is not currently interviewing, you may ask when you should contact the employer in the future. A follow-up call demonstrates real interest in the employer, suggesting to the employer that it was not just another name on a mass-mailing list. Furthermore, this approach suggests that you are assertive, a desirable trait for most attorneys. *Follow-up calls are not always desirable or practical for every application, so you should reserve this technique for employers in whom you have an intense interest. Do not continue calling on a regular basis. Assertive is good, aggressive may not be viewed so kindly.* Follow-up emails are an alternative means of inquiring as to the status of your application. This is a good way to keep your name in front of a decision maker. If the follow-up email produces no response, then a telephone call might be in order.

SAMPLE **COVER LETTERS**

YOUR NAME IN BOLD CAPS

Your Street Address
City, State and Zip Code
Telephone
E-mail

Date

Full Name of Contact Person*
Title, if available
Firm Name
Street Address
City, State and Zip Code

Dear _____:**

Introductory Paragraph: Identify yourself and the type of position you are seeking.

“Sell” Paragraph(s): Emphasize the skills you have to offer, so that an employer can see that you are qualified for this particular position. Use a theme, or themes, to set up this paragraph [and the one that follows if one paragraph is too unwieldy] and then provide specific examples about your coursework, past employment, clinical experiences, internships, or publications which are relevant to this type of employer. Be careful not to rehash your resume; there should be just enough detail to pique the employer’s interest and set you apart from the crowd. Phrases such as “As you can see from my resume,” or “As my resume indicates,” should be avoided, as they are unnecessary uses of valuable space. Do not discuss what a valuable experience the potential job will be for you. Your letter should discuss how you can fill the employer’s needs, not the other way around.

Concluding Paragraph: Restate your interest in the particular position. Mention the enclosure(s) you have attached, *e.g.*, resume, transcript, as opposed to listing that at the bottom. Express your desire to discuss your qualifications during an interview. Be sure to thank the reader.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name (typed)

* An attorney should be addressed as follows: Full Name, Esq. (Ms./Mr. Full Name, Esq. is *wrong*.) Then, on the line below, include the appropriate title; recruitment coordinators are known by various titles, and it is important to be accurate in addressing them. Judges should be addressed as follows: The Honorable Full Name. Then, on the line below: Full Name of the Court.

** Generally, the salutation is as follows: Dear Mr. [Ms.] Last Name:
A gender-neutral option is: Dear First Name Last Name:
In the case of a judge, the salutation is as follows: Dear Judge [Justice] Last Name:

SAMPLE 1L LEGAL COVER LETTER
(Limited or No Legal Work Experience)

THOMAS L. JOHNSON
245 Smith Boulevard, Apt. 9E
Queens Village, NY 11429
(917) 555-9898
TJohn5@xyz.com

November 12, 20__

The Honorable Joshua M. Jackson
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3

Dear Judge Jackson:

I am a first-year student at St. John's University School of Law. I am writing because I am interested in a judicial internship with your chambers for the summer of 20__. I am confident that my research, writing, and communication skills are strong qualifications for the position.

After graduating *cum laude* from the University of Pittsburgh, I was awarded a full academic scholarship to attend St. John's. My first-year coursework included Legal Writing, and I had the opportunity to draft a memorandum on security fraud claims for this class. The research and writing skills I developed as an undergraduate History major served as a solid foundation for my legal writing work. While in college, I also took the opportunity to hone my communication skills through leadership roles. I organized events and delegated responsibilities to members of the Future Business Leaders of America as the organization's Vice President, and I managed a group of volunteers as Team Leader for the Bailey Park Beautification Project. I enjoyed serving my community during the Bailey Park clean up, and I am eager to serve the public in a legal setting this summer as a judicial intern with your chambers.

I have enclosed my resume and unofficial transcript for your review. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my interest and qualifications. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Thomas L. Johnson

Sample 2L/3L Cover Letter

THOMAS L. JOHNSON
245 Smith Boulevard, Apt. 9E
Queens Village, NY 11429
(917) 555-9898
TJohn5@xyz.com

November 12, 20__

Gloria Smith
Regional Director
New York City Department of Environmental Conservation
47-40 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am a second-year student at St. John's University School of Law and am writing to you regarding a summer position with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

This past summer, I obtained experience in New York environmental issues, working as a legislative intern in a New York State Assembly office. My decision to concentrate in environmental law stems in part from my active participation in the law school's Environmental Law Clinical Externship Program and Environmental Law Society. These two forums have given me the opportunity to meet with many environmental law practitioners and have exposed me to a variety of important issues that your office deals with, such as air and water quality maintenance, wetland protection, fish and wildlife management, and toxic waste disposal.

As a Student Attorney in the Clinic, I have also had the opportunity to represent clients in federal and state litigation. In addition to conducting interviews and defending a deposition, I drafted a memorandum in opposition to a summary judgment motion in a citizens' enforcement suit under the Clean Water Act. This project, along with the work I have done as an Articles Editor on one of St. John's prestigious journals, has allowed me to sharpen my legal research and writing skills.

I am confident that my research and writing skills and my firm commitment to the environment are strong qualifications for a position with your agency. I have enclosed my resume for your review. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my interest and qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

Thomas L. Johnson

C. Student Interviewing Guidelines

This section includes advice on how to present yourself for any interview, the types of questions employers may ask you, and what you can expect on a callback interview. Most smaller firms and organizations interview directly at their offices; therefore, the initial interview may be the only interview. Please review the callback tips, also discussed below, for those instances. If you are interviewing with a judge or his/her law clerk, for an internship or permanent clerkship position, make sure you read the section regarding interviews in the Judicial Clerkship Handbook, also available in the Career Development Office.

The Interviewer's Perspective

During the course of your interviews, employers will assess you in many ways. Below is a representative list of some of the criteria interviewers will use when making their initial hiring decisions.

First Impressions

The first few minutes of your interview are the most important. First impressions are critical. Was your handshake friendly, firm, and confident? How were your general demeanor, posture, and facial expression (i.e., did you have a friendly smile)? How were you dressed and groomed? If the impression is positive, the interview should continue on such a note. If negative, you will have to overcome this hurdle.

Presentation and Poise

Style of delivery; presence of nervous mannerisms; whether you appeared thoughtful and attentive; whether you seemed nervous or flustered while responding to questions.

Your Answers to Questions

Whether you answered fully, without needing to be coaxed; whether you could easily keep the conversation flowing, and in a relaxed manner; whether you succinctly and intelligently responded to questions and explained things, such as a work project, your writing sample or articles you have written, or an aberrational poor grade.

Positive Attitude

Limit your use of qualifiers, such as “although,” “but,” or “however,” because they entail negative phraseology and can alter a previously favorable presentation. Try not to say anything negative about the law school or past employers. (Remember that this is no time for “true confessions” though, of course, you should not make any misrepresentations.)

Unflappability

How you handle difficult questions is extremely important; for example, *if* asked whether you have any weaknesses, you should give a reassuring answer. Your response should include how you have overcome any such weakness, so that it is no longer an issue; for instance, shyness or inability to delegate (although those examples in particular are considered overused). If you have received a particularly weak grade, take the initiative to discuss your grade or final examination with the relevant professor. If you are asked about it during an interview, or the interviewer appears to be concerned, you can tell the interviewer what you did when you received the grade and, thereby, show that you are someone who tries to correct and learn from your mistakes.

Skills

Whether you have skills and experience that enable you to be an effective lawyer, including transferable skills from non-legal experience. Have you shown good writing, analytical, communication, and other relevant skills? Have you shown good judgment, common sense, and an ability to discuss substantive matters in an organized way?

Fit

Whether you seem to fit the parameters of the type of person the employer wants to hire; whether you are someone with whom the interviewer would want to work for long hours; whether you would fit in with the other associates in the department or summer class.

Genuine Interest in the Employer/Knowledge About the Opportunity

Be prepared to ask intelligent questions during the interview. Did you seem genuinely interested in the job? Did you know about the interviewer's professional/educational background?

Preparedness

Be able to answer typical interview questions in a manner that indicates you are prepared. Be able to demonstrate you conducted in-depth research, beyond material readily available from the employer website and employer brochure, such as conducting a LexisNexis or Westlaw search on the interviewer and employer (e.g., recent cases, recent articles written by or about them), and speaking to alumni and/or classmates who have previously worked for the employer or currently work there.

Ability to Sell Yourself

Another great way to prepare is to make an outline of your best three or four "selling points," such as extensive research and writing experience, or experience dealing with demanding situations and people. Keeping this outline in mind, go down your resume, line by line, and think of every question you could be asked. Now formulate answers that give the

information requested PLUS weave in your “selling points.” Remember that your resume is essentially the outline for your interview. Make sure you know it inside and out and, of course, that it is accurate. Remember to read the honors paper you wrote in college again so you can discuss the issues intelligently. Do not say you are fluent in a foreign language if you are something less (because the interviewer might be fluent in that same language).

Confidence

Keep in mind that your appearance, demeanor, attire, grooming, use of language, and overall ability to “sell” yourself as an effective young attorney will have an impact on the employer’s decision. Trust in yourself and believe in your own abilities! The most effective salesperson believes in their product.

Suggested Dos and Nevers For Interviewing

DO prepare extensively.

DO a minimum of two hours of research for each initial screening interview and each callback.

DO remember that interviews are formal occasions and accord them due consideration by arriving on time.

DO maintain a professional demeanor (without coming across as uptight or stiff). While it will be mostly alumni who will be interviewing on-campus, they are here as representatives of their employers first. Do keep your use of language, tone, diction, and construction, clear and professional, yet simple. Stay away from colloquialisms (e.g., don’t call someone “buddy”). Use only vocabulary that you know well. No one is impressed by an ambitious, yet unsuccessful, effort to use big words.

DO take the time to select and wear business attire, including outerwear when the weather turns cold. Though we agree that it is somewhat unfortunate that so much emphasis rests on personal attire and presentation, it is a reality with which you must be prepared to contend.

DO dress formally, even if the interviewer is dressed informally.

In general, traditional business attire should be worn during interviews. Suit jackets with pants or a skirt are appropriate and should be matching colors. Clothes should be solid, dark, or neutral colors. Light colors can be worn underneath. A collared shirt and tie or a blouse/shell are appropriate. You should avoid busy prints. Clothes should be tailored, in good condition and should be wrinkle and lint free. Shoes should be closed-toe heel or dress shoes, and socks and shoes should be dark-colored to match your suit. Belts should match the color of your shoes and clothes. Additional recommendations include neutral make-up, moderate jewelry, and mild fragrance. You should bring the essentials into the interview only, such as a portfolio, professional bag, or simple purse. You should be sure your cell phone is turned off and it should be stored out of sight with your other personal items.

DO engage your interviewer in a dialogue by asking them about their work and by asking thoughtful questions about the employer in general.

DO bring extra copies of your resume and a list of references on quality resume paper, as well as copies of your transcript and writing sample. Carry these in a simple leather portfolio.

ALWAYS leave your backpacks, knapsacks, books, etc., in your locker.

DO know everything on your resume and be ready to answer any questions about your credentials, past experience, and interests. This includes answering difficult questions about your qualifications in a calm, controlled, and clear manner.

DO maintain eye contact without staring at the interviewer; this will exhibit your interest in the position and show confidence and respect for the interviewer. It is perfectly fine to look away for a few seconds to gather your thoughts when responding to a question. However, remember to always maintain eye contact with the interviewer when answering a question.

DO practice and master a firm, dry handshake. (“Bonecrushers” and “limp noodles” are turn-offs.)

DO maintain decorum in the waiting area: both in the Career Development Office and at the employers’ offices. Examples: You should have no food with you and conversations should rise no higher than the level of a whisper. You should be polite and considerate to all employees at their offices; everything you do may influence an employer’s hiring decision.

NEVER try to “wing it” or get by on your charm; always be prepared.

NEVER treat any meeting with the interviewer as a casual chat, where you explore your interest in the employer, and they simply see if you are a decent person.

NEVER bring anyone with you to the interview.

NEVER arrive late.

NEVER assume that you can figure out the interviewer’s personality within a few minutes, and then try to tailor your responses accordingly. That is a potentially disastrous strategy. Simply remain calm, friendly, and professional. You want an offer, not a friend for life.

NEVER take notes during the interview, although you may want to have a pad and pen available with which to take some notes after the interview.

NEVER utilize colloquialisms or speak in a rough or unpolished manner. NEVER swear or curse, even if the interviewer does so!

NEVER ramble on. Listen carefully to the questions presented and try to answer in a concise, yet complete fashion. You are being judged on how you verbally present information.

NEVER dress casually. Once you get an offer in hand, then you can find out whether less formal attire is ever acceptable at the employer's office.

NEVER ask your interviewer questions which reflect a lack of knowledge about the employer and its practice.

NEVER appear surprised if the interviewer is not intimately familiar with your background or resume. Have a cogent verbal "one minute resume" ready.

NEVER appear shocked or defensive if the interviewer gives you hypotheticals, or asks you tough questions about your credentials, like "Why didn't you make law review?" or "Why did you get a "C" in Contracts?"

NEVER get a haircut the day of the interview (try a week before).

NEVER eat a meal right before your interview, while wearing your interview attire, especially food with strong odors.

NEVER flirt.

NEVER slouch or chew gum.

NEVER bring up controversial topics.

NEVER put on more than a HINT of perfume or cologne.

NEVER leave your cell phone on during an interview. If the phone rings during the interview, you will, most definitely, not get the job.

NEVER GIVE UP!

Sample Interview Questions

We have listed below 20 questions that you may be asked at an interview. Keep in mind that every interviewer has a different style, and you may not be asked any of these. But if you are prepared with answers for the questions we have listed, you will go into your interviews feeling more confident and comfortable, and these two factors are key components to your success.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. When and why did you decide you wanted to be a lawyer?
3. How and why did you select St. John's?
4. Did anything surprise you about law school?
5. What course have you enjoyed the most in law school?
6. What courses/internships/externships are you taking this year?
7. Do you know what type of law you would like to practice?
8. What criteria did you use to decide with which employers you wanted to interview?
9. What qualities or factors are important to you in choosing an employer?
10. If you receive offers from several firms/employers, what will be the most compelling factor or important reason in making your decision?
11. What do you think your strengths and weaknesses will be as a lawyer?
12. Do you enjoy law school?
13. Do you work better independently or as part of a team?
14. What do you see yourself doing in 5 or 10 years?
15. What was the most interesting project you worked on at your summer/part-time job?
16. How do you manage to juggle the demands of law school, interviewing, employment, journal/moot court/activities?
17. What do you like to do when you have free time?
18. Will you be writing a note for your journal? What is the topic? How did you select it?
19. What can I tell you about our firm /summer program/practice?
20. Is there anything else we haven't discussed that you would like to tell me about yourself?

Behavioral Interviewing

Many employers are using behavioral interviewing techniques to learn how students have performed in certain types of situations.

Behavioral questions often begin with the words “Tell me about a time” or, “Describe a situation when.”

Employers that utilize behavioral interviewing techniques have identified four characteristics/behaviors that they find desirable in candidates, and are using behavioral questions to determine if the interviewees possess those characteristics/behaviors, according to a 2005 article in an Association of Legal Career Professionals’ monthly bulletin (Patricia White, *Building Interview Skills: What to Tell Students about the Behavioral Interview*, NALP BULLETIN, January 2005):

- 1) **Decision-making and problem-solving skills.** *Examples:* Tell me about a difficult decision you had to make; Give me an example of a time you had to employ problem solving skills.
- 2) **Motivation.** *Examples:* Tell me about a time when you failed to meet expectations; What have you done that demonstrates initiative.
- 3) **Communication and interpersonal skills.** *Examples:* Describe an unpopular decision you made and how you dealt with the aftermath; Tell me about a time that you had to resolve a conflict.
- 4) **Planning and organization.** *Examples:* Tell me about a time when you had to prioritize your tasks; Give me an example of how you handle interruptions to your schedule.

Sample Questions to Ask the Interviewer

It is important that you go to your interview prepared to ask questions of your interviewer. Employers want to see that candidates are genuinely interested in their organizations. You should ask thoughtful questions that show you put the time and effort into researching the organization, your interviewer and the interviewer’s department. You never want to ask anything that should be readily available from the employer’s website or other easily accessible resources. Asking meaningful questions also allows you to obtain valuable information from the answers to those questions that can help you to make an informed employment decision.

When researching the firm or organization with which you are interviewing, be sure to analyze their website and marketing materials to see what they highlight as being important about the firm or organization, and what they seem to indicate differentiates them from other employers. This will help to guide you in your line of questioning (as well as answering).

During a callback interview, you typically meet with multiple people, so you want to make sure you have different questions prepared for each person. For instance, you don’t want to ask every interviewer how assignments are distributed, as receiving the same answers to such a question will not provide you with varied insight into the firm or organization, and it will not impress the interviewers if they later exchange notes. It could, however, be appropriate to ask each interview what they believe it takes to be successful at their firm/organization, as you will likely receive varying, personalized answers to this type of question. This question could be preceded by informing the interviewer that

you originally had several questions about the firm/organization, but they have been answered by the other interviewers. This allows the interviewer to know that you had insightful questions, but they have already been answered.

Questions About the Interviewer:

What is a typical day like for you?

Did you start off in X department? If not, how did you decide to make the switch?

What is the most challenging case/transaction that you've worked on?

What do you think is most challenging about being a [type of] lawyer?

What are you currently working on? How might a summer/junior associate help you with that work?

What do you enjoy most about working at [organization/firm]?

What do you find to be the qualities of a successful summer/junior associate at X firm/organization?

Questions About the Firm's Practice:

(Based on interviewer's practice area) I read an article in [periodical] about the firm's representation of x company in a [case/deal] this past fall. What type of role, if any, would a summer/junior associate play in such a matter?

(Based on interviewer's practice area) I read on your firm's web site about the firm's new office in [international location]. In what direction do you see the firm's international practice expanding?

How has the firm's [type of] practice evolved over the last ten years/in the time you've been with the firm?

What are future growth areas of the firm?

Questions About Organizational Structure:

How is the organization departmentalized? [Only information you could not have learned from the firm's web site or brochure]

Are attorneys asked to specialize? How soon?

How are assignments distributed (summer and permanent)? Does this vary by department?

How do associates and summer associates receive feedback for their work?

What kind of training/mentoring is provided to new summer/junior associates?

What type of reporting structure is in place? Do new summer/junior associates work with associates, partners, or both?

Tips on Callback Interviews

The callback interview is part of a matchmaking process -- the employer wants to find out whether you are right for them; whether you fit their culture; whether you are someone they would want to work alongside; whether you will fit with the rest of the summer or first-year class they are hiring. You want to decide whether they are the right firm or organization for you. Since the interviews that take place during On-Campus Recruitment are only twenty minutes, these employers will invite back one or more students for callback interviews at the employer's location. As mentioned earlier, for most smaller firms and organizations that interview directly at their offices, the initial interview may be the only interview. Therefore, you should review the callback tips for those interviews.

Most callbacks last approximately 2-4 hours, during which time you will meet with three or four attorneys, both partners and associates.

Be confident. Confidence is key.

Be upbeat and energetic the entire time. You are there to SELL yourself.

Be prepared about the employer. Make sure you can clearly articulate why you want to work for them.

Confirm your appointment time and ask for the names of your interviewers; but be prepared for schedule changes.

Know something about the people you will be seeing (e.g., are they a partner, associate? what is their practice area?)

Be on time or early. Make sure you know where the employer is located and how to get there.

Dress appropriately and formally, but in the style in which you feel comfortable. Don't let what you are wearing inhibit your personality from coming through.

Do not bring big book bags with you.

Bring extra copies of your resume, transcript, references, and a writing sample.

Be nice to the recruitment coordinator and any support staff.

Make a note of the names of all the people you will be meeting.

Greet each interviewer with a firm and dry handshake, and introduce yourself, if someone has not done so for you already.

Look the interviewer in the eye while you are meeting.

Listen carefully to the questions you are asked and be responsive.

Do not give one-word answers; don't make the interviewer do all the work. However, do not be too verbose; answer the question, but don't give a monologue.

Relax and be yourself.

Allow your personality to shine through, without being overwhelming.

Be prepared to discuss everything on your resume.

Be prepared to discuss your personal interests.

Be prepared for potentially difficult questions, such as why you have one aberrational grade, why you took time off in the middle of college, or why there are time gaps in your resume.

Do not sound too rehearsed. Since you will be meeting with at least four people, you will probably be asked similar or identical questions in some instances. Your answers should be consistent, but not canned. Treat each question as if you were being asked it for the first time.

Be prepared to ask questions, but not ones to which the answers should be obvious. (See Samples of Questions to Ask the Interviewer).

If you really don't have any questions, it is perfectly acceptable to state that you feel your questions have been answered by the literature, that person, and prior interviewers. But rather than asking no question of that person whatsoever, you can ask a question about the interviewer – those questions always elicit a personalized answer that you would not have heard before.

Always remain positive and interested. Even if the firm isn't really your first choice, all of the interviewers should be left believing that it is.

Shake hands firmly at the end of each interview and tell the interviewer it was a pleasure to meet or speak with them.

If you are scheduled for lunch, it will most likely be with some junior associates. The atmosphere should be less formal but remember they will report back on their impressions of you. Being nice and selling yourself to junior associates, without being obvious about it, are very important. These people will eventually end up working closely with you, and their impressions, about whether or not you would fit in and be able to do the work, are very important. At lunch, follow their lead in ordering, not ordering something more expensive than what they are ordering. Pick something that won't be too messy. DO NOT ORDER ALCOHOL (even if they do).

After the Interview

There are varying opinions about the importance of thank you emails. For instance, during initial on-campus interviews, when the process is very fast, and the attorneys and recruiters are dealing with large numbers of candidates at numerous schools, thank you emails may be deemed less effective. However, thank you emails are expected after callback interviews conducted at the employer's office. Additionally, many government agencies, public interest organizations and small to mid-sized firm employers often appreciate a thank you email.

In any event, if you choose to write a thank you email, be sure that it is not poorly written and that it has no misspellings. It should be sent within a day or two of the callback and should follow the same basic format as your cover letter. Remember to make sure to note the full name, correct spelling, and title of each attorney with whom you have interviewed. In the thank you, you should try to address something specific that you discussed during your interview, reiterate your interest in the firm or organization, and point out why you are a qualified candidate for the position. You should send a thank you email to each person with whom you interviewed.

It is appropriate at the end of the interview to inquire as to when you will be notified of the employer's decision. If they tell you 1-2 weeks and it has been more than that, it is appropriate to call and inquire. If, after the interview, the employer does not tell you when the decision will be made, you may call the employer if you have not heard back in about two weeks. In both cases, be prepared for the possibility of being offered the job over the phone. You need not accept over the phone. Ask the employer when they need your answer. If the employer does not give you a deadline, you should give

them an answer in no more than two weeks. It is important to note that different rules apply with respect to the On-Campus Interview Program and certain types of employers (see NALP Principles and St. John's Law Career Development Office Recruitment Policies and Guidelines).

While accepting the first offer you receive may seem like an attractive option at first, oftentimes, a better offer may be just around the corner. This may be the case if you apply for state and federal judicial internships simultaneously. Counselors in the Career Development Office can help you make a decision about outstanding offers you receive including how you might be able to split your work summer between two positions or convince an employer to allow you to work in the fall instead of during the summer.

Once you accept an offer, you should cease the job search process, and you should withdraw yourself from consideration with other employers with whom you had interviewed or have an offer. It is unethical and unprofessional to renege on an offer once accepted, and it could damage your reputation in the legal community. If, because of extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances, you feel that it is necessary to modify or be released from your acceptance, you should contact the Career Development Office immediately. Counselors can discuss options with you, and, if necessary, advise you on how to promptly notify the employer.

APPENDIX A
Action Verbs

accomplish
achieve
adjust
administer
advise
allocate
analyze
appoint
approve
arrange
assist
award
budget
calculate
collect
communicate
compare
compile
complete
conduct
consult
contract
control
coordinate
create
demonstrate
delegate
deliver
design
determine
develop
direct
distribute
document
draft
edit
elect
establish

evaluate
examine
expand
extend
found
guide
hire
implement
improve
increase
influence
initiate
inspect
install
instruct
interview
introduce
investigate
launch
lead
maintain
manage
market
monitor
motivate
negotiate
observe
offer
operate
order
organize
originate
overhaul
perform
plan
prepare
present
process

produce
promote
propose
publish
purchase
record
recruit
reduce
refer
represent
research
review
revise
revamp
save
schedule
screen
serve
study
suggest
summarize
supervise
teach
train
transfer
transform
update
utilize
write

APPENDIX B

IMPORTANT WEBSITE LINKS

Employers and legal organizations post job listings and other information useful to law students and graduates on their websites. Below is a list of useful websites.

<https://signin.lexisnexis.com/laccess/app/signin?aci=ls&bank=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.lexisnexis.com%3A443%2Flawschool>

<https://lawschool.westlaw.com>

<https://www.PSJD.org>

<https://law-stjohns-csm.symplicity.com/students/>

Additional career-related website links, including area-specific websites and blogs, may be found in the *Guide to On-Line Resources* available in the Career Development Office.

ADDITIONAL CAREER RELATED WEBSITE LINKS

General

<https://www.nybarexam.org> -- Information on New York bar exams

<https://www.findlaw.com> -- Index of law resources including career advice

<https://www.monster.com/> -- Job database and career advice

<https://www.law.com> -- Directory of articles and local laws and news for each state

<https://lawyers.findlaw.com/> -- Database to find an attorney or firm by state

<https://www.martindale.com> -- Database of information on attorneys and law firms (also available in LexisNexis)

<https://www.nalp.org> -- Association of Legal Career Professionals

<http://www.ncbex.org> -- The National Conference of Bar Examiners website

[Vault Law - Vault](#) -- Employment resource features databases of jobs, industries, careers and news

<https://www.hg.org> -- HG Legal Resource Center

<https://www.law.cornell.edu> -- Legal Information Institute

<https://www.TheCareerProject.org> -- Career Research Tool

Public Interest & Public Service

[Public Interest Center | St. John's University \(stjohns.edu\)](#) -- School of Law Public Interest Center

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/ -- Links to legal aid, pro-bono, and public interest organizations

<https://cof.org> -- Council on Foundations

<https://eji.org/> -- Equal Justice Initiative - Information and resources for lawyers involved in providing civil legal services to low-income people

[Nonprofit Jobs, Volunteering, and More - Idealist](#) -- Information and jobs in the non-profit area

<https://www.equaljusticeworks.org> -- facilitates opportunities for law students and lawyers to engage in public service and bring change to underserved communities

<https://www.nlada.org> -- National Legal Aid & Defender Association

<https://pirg.org/> -- Job site for public interest advocates, attorneys, and policy analysts

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/> -- Open Society Foundations Network
<https://www.probono.net> -- Pro Bono Net

Government

<http://arizonahandbooks.com/u/stjohnslaw> -- Govt. Honors & Internship Handbook

<https://www.usajobs.gov/> -- Federal Employment

<https://www.psjd.org/> -- Public Service Jobs Directory

<https://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/entry-level-attorneys> --- Attorney General's Honors Program

<https://www.usda.gov> -- Department of Agriculture

<https://www.afjag.af.mil/> -- Department of the Air Force (JAG)

[Judge Advocate General's Corps \(JAG\) | goarmy.com](#) -- Department of the Army (JAG)

<https://www.commerce.gov/>-- Department of Commerce

<https://www.cia.gov> -- Central Intelligence Agency

[NYC Government Jobs | Explore Careers | City of New York](#) -- City of New York

<https://www.cftc.gov> -- Commodity Futures Trading Commission

<https://www.energy.gov/> -- Department of Energy

<https://www.epa.gov/> -- Environmental Protection Agency

<https://www.fbi.gov/> -- Federal Bureau of Investigations

[Jobs & Internships | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](#) -- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

<https://www.fcc.gov/general-counsel/general/attorney-honors-program> --- FCC Attorney Honors Program

<https://www.fdic.gov/> -- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

<https://www.fec.gov/> -- Federal Election Commission

<https://www.ftc.gov/> -- Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

<https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/bureaus-offices/bureau-consumer-protection/summer-law-clerk-program> --- FTC Summer Law Clerk Program

<https://www.fda.gov/> -- Food and Drug Administration

<https://www.gao.gov/> -- US Government Accountability Office

<https://www.hhs.gov/> -- Department of Health and Human Services

<https://www.doi.gov> -- Department of the Interior

<https://www.usitc.gov/> -- International Trade Commission

<https://www.justice.gov/oarm/> -- Department of Justice Office of Attorney Recruitment & Management

<https://www.justice.gov/usao/> -- US Attorneys

<https://www.dol.gov> -- Department of Labor

[SJA Home \(marines.mil\)](#) -- Marine Corps. (JAG)

<https://www.nlr.gov/> -- National Labor Relations Board

<https://www.navy.com/careers/jag> -- Department of Navy (JAG)

<https://www.uspto.gov/> -- Patent and Trademark Office

<https://www.sec.gov> -- Securities and Exchange Commission

<https://www.ssa.gov/> -- Social Security Administration

[State & Local Business, Auto Insurance, & Government Contacts \(statelocalgov.net\)](#) -- State and Local Government on the Net

[The Official Website of New York State \(ny.gov\)](#) -- State of New York

<https://www.transportation.gov> -- Department of Transportation

<https://www.faa.gov/> -- Federal Aviation Administration

<https://home.treasury.gov> -- Department of Treasury

<https://www.irs.gov/> -- Internal Revenue Service

<https://home.treasury.gov/about/offices/general-counsel> -- U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of General Counsel

<https://www.state.gov/> -- US Department of State

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/get-involved/fellows> -- White House Fellows Program

<https://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/summer-law-intern-program> --- Department of Justice Summer Intern Program (SLIP)

Judiciary/Court System

<https://oscar.uscourts.gov/> -- OSCAR (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review)

<https://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides/> -- The Vermont Law School Online Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures

<http://www.courts.state.ny.us/ctapps> -- New York State Court of Appeals

<https://nycourts.gov> -- New York State Unified Court System

<https://www.fjc.gov> -- The Federal Judicial Center

<https://fmja.org/> -- Federal Magistrate Judges Association

<https://www.njcourts.gov/courts/> -- New Jersey Courts

<https://www.jud.ct.gov/courts.htm> -- Connecticut Courts

<https://www.ncsc.org/> -- The National Center for State Courts

<https://www.uscourts.gov> -- The official website of the Federal Judiciary (includes Federal Law Clerk Information System which lists clerkship openings)

International

<https://www.amnesty.org> -- Amnesty International

<https://www.asil.org/> -- American Society of International Law

www.oas.org -- Organization of American States

<https://www.worldbank.org/> -- The World Bank

Specific Practice Areas

<https://jobline.acc.com/jobs> -- Association of Corporate Counsel job website

<https://aipf.com/> -- The Association of Intellectual Property Firms website

<https://www.abi.org> -- Bankruptcy Law

<https://www.inta.org> -- International Trademark Association

Bar Associations

<https://www.americanbar.org> -- American Bar Association

<https://www.dcbbar.org> -- District of Columbia Bar Association

<https://www.ctbar.org> -- Connecticut Bar Association

<https://tcms.njsba.com> -- New Jersey State Bar Association

<http://nysba.org> -- The New York State Bar Association

<https://www.nystla.org> -- New York State Trial Lawyers Association

<https://www.nycbar.org/> -- New York City Bar Association

<https://www.nycla.org> -- New York County Lawyers' Bar Association

<https://brooklynbar.org/> -- The Brooklyn Bar Association

<https://www.nassaubar.org> -- Nassau County Bar Association

<https://scba.org> -- Suffolk County Bar Association

<https://www.wcbany.org> -- Westchester County Bar Association

APPENDIX C

Unofficial & Self-Prepared Transcript
St. John's University School of Law

NAME: Jane Doe
ADDRESS: 123 Your Street
CITY: Yourtown STATE: Your State ZIP: 12345
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (123) 456-7890

EXPECTED DATE OF GRADUATION: SPRING 2026

Semester: Fall
Year: 2023
Course:

Contracts (4.00)	A-
Civil Procedure (4.00)	A
Introduction to Law (2.00)	P
Torts (4.00)	A
Legal Writing I (2.00)	A-
Professional Development (0.0)	P
Semester GPA:	3.87

Semester: Spring
Year: 2024
Course:

Lawyering (2.00)	A
Criminal Law (3.00)	A-
Legal Writing II (2.00)	A
Property (4.00)	A-
Constitutional Law (4.00)	A
Professional Development (0.0)	P
Semester GPA:	3.86

TOTAL CREDITS: **31**
OVERALL G.P.A.: **3.87**