



The Pre-Law e-Newsletter from Pre-Professional Programs & Advising

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

The 2010-2011 Law School Action Report is now available on our office website, at the following link:

http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/law/your_jhu/2010.2011.law.school.action.Report.pdf

The Law School Action Report provides the most current law school applicant and matriculation data of Johns Hopkins University alumni.

For those of you looking for summer opportunities and GAP year opportunities, be sure to use the resources of the Career Center, specifically, J-Connect. Below are some sample, law related J-Connect postings:

- Summer Clerical Assistant (May - September) at Venable LLP, to temporarily assist with legal recruiting efforts in the Baltimore office
- 2 year, full-time, Paralegal position at the U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Office of International Affairs (OIA)
- 2 year, full-time, Case Assistant position in the Litigation department of Goodwin Procter
- 2 year term, full-time, Litigation Legal Assistant for complex securities law enforcement investigations and litigation at Richards Kibbe & Orbe LLP

2. SUMMER OPPORTUNITY: RESEARCH PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP, SOUTH BROOKLYN LEGAL SERVICES (SBLS)

The mission of South Brooklyn Legal Services (SBLS) is to seek equal justice for low-income people in Brooklyn by providing a broad range of legal advocacy and information, helping empower poor people to identify and defeat the causes and effects of poverty in their communities. SBLS is a program of Legal Services NYC. South Brooklyn is seeking an intern to manage an important research project that will investigate whether racial bias is playing a role in New York's eviction proceedings.

Duties

- Research, study and record various court documents pertaining to eviction cases (e.g., Orders to Show Cause, Stipulations, Motions, Verifications);
- Maintain a database for each of New York's five boroughs, and ensure that appropriate information is recorded for analysis;
- Interact with staff attorneys to discuss inferences related to macroscopic trends in data;
- Catalogue outlier instances of judicial, police, and City of New York behavior; and
- Perform simple analysis on aggregated data.

Qualifications

- Proficiency with Excel is highly prized. Familiarity with Excel combined with a willingness to learn may also be acceptable
- Associate's degree or higher or paralegal certification
- Motivated, organized, independent and goal-oriented
- Attention to detail
- Proven research skills

Salary

Interns will be unpaid, but will work on a project of critical importance with the additional benefit of granting expertise with Excel and familiarity with both the court system and the attorneys at South Brooklyn Legal Services.

Details & Benefits

- Unpaid internship.
- Start date is negotiable. End date dependent upon speed of work, and number of hours available per week.
- Minimum of 15 hours per week: Monday to Friday.
- Roughly half of the work can be done from home
- Flexible schedule available during normal business hours.
- School holidays and vacations will be respected.

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter:

- Via email to sshield@sbls.org
- Or via mail to Sonja Shield, South Brooklyn Legal Services, 105 Court Street, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

To learn more about South Brooklyn Legal Services, visit their website at: <http://www.sbls.org>

3. MEDIA WATCH: LSAT ADMINISTRATION DOWN FOR SECOND YEAR IN A ROW

A March 19, 2012 article in *The New York Times* by David Segal, entitled "For 2nd Year, a Sharp Drop in Law School Entrance Tests," indicates that the number of law school admissions tests (LSATs) administered fell to 16+%, the largest drop in over ten years. In the past two years, the total number of test takers has fallen by nearly 25%.

Traditionally, graduate programs have been a place to ride out economic downturns. The above figures indicate that undergrads no longer view law school as such. Law school seems to be losing its perception as guaranteed financial security.

One law school professional predicts that in response to this shift, some law schools may be forced to decrease class size to maintain their median statistics -- or lower their standards.

To read the article in full, visit:

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/20/business/for-lsat-sharp-drop-in-popularity-for-second-year.html?_r=1

4. INTERVIEW: JUSTIN LOFFREDO JHU '07, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW 3L



Justin Loffredo grew up and went to high school outside of Boston, Massachusetts. He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 2007 with a degree in mechanical engineering. While at Hopkins, Justin was a member of a mechanical engineering team that designed an automatic positioning device to move a backpack from a storage position to an access position on a wheelchair for a child with cerebral palsy. He was also a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. One of Justin's most enjoyable experiences at Hopkins was the spring

semester of his junior year, which he spent studying abroad at the University of Wollongong in Australia with three friends, who were also mechanical engineering majors. Not only was this a great experience academically and socially, but he met his fiancée there when she was also studying abroad.

While at Hopkins, Justin worked part-time at the bar/restaurant, The Brewer's Art, and also for a moving company, Bill's Moving. He fit in some research for academic credit over one summer, when he researched and wrote a paper on high temperature heat exchangers for Professor Cila Herman.

After college, Justin stayed in Baltimore and worked as an engineer at a steel mill in Sparrows Point, MD. He was assigned to the iron producing division of the steel mill, first in a reliability engineering group, and later as a mechanical supervisor overseeing union steelworkers. The massive mill was formerly owned by Bethlehem Steel and had nearly 30,000 employees, but it has been sold and purchased numerous times since then. Eventually, he designed his own projects to help the mill produce iron efficiently, and he was selected for and participated in a Management Development Program to learn more about the business side of working for a major company.

Justin worked at Sparrows Point for about a year, then switched jobs and cities. He took a job as a patent examiner at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) and moved to Washington, D.C. At an USPTO, Justin examined patent applications related to refrigeration, heat exchange, and automatic temperature and humidity regulation -- "a great introduction to the area of patent law."

Justin studied for the LSAT during his first year at the PTO, took it twice, and then applied to five law schools. He began classes at George Washington, in the part-time program, fall of 2009. While at the PTO, he worked during the day and attended class at night. During 1L and the fall semester of 2L year, class met Monday through Thursday, 6-9pm, and occasionally later first year, when he had legal writing class.

Justin Loffredo applied for a student associate position at the law firm of Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett and Dunner, LLP during the spring of his 2L year, and started in February 2011. In this position, he focuses on drafting and prosecuting patent applications involving mechanical technologies.

1) Describe a typical day as a 3L.

Most days, I head into work in the morning and check the schedule to make sure I'm on top of things. There's some predictability with patent prosecution, which is a plus being in law school. I spend much of my time drafting and prosecuting patent applications for various clients. When possible, I take on a non-patent related case helping veterans with their claims for benefits through Finnegan's pro bono program. Occasionally, I travel to meet with clients to discuss their inventions before drafting patent applications on their behalf. Meeting inventors face-to-face, asking questions, and seeing their designs in action is one of the most gratifying parts of my position.

This semester, I typically have class three days a week from 6-8pm, and one day from 4-9 pm. Luckily, GW is close to the firm's office, so I usually walk to the law school with a friend. After class, I usually head home, have some dinner, and either read for class, work on a legal drafting assignment, or finish up some work that I brought home from the office.

2) To date, what has been your favorite law school class, and why? How have you been choosing classes after your first year of law school?

I took Patent Law during my 3L fall with Chief Judge Rader of the Federal Circuit Court and Dean John Whealan, who is the former solicitor of the USPTO and who has argued numerous times at the Federal Circuit. I had a background in patent law going into the course, but I learned a great deal from the combined experience of my professors that semester. Their practical knowledge coupled with their excitement for the field of patent law made it a great class, especially during a time when Congress was in the process of overhauling the patent law system.

I also really enjoyed Constitutional Law II, which I also took spring of my 2L year. You read some great, often controversial, cases. The class was very interactive, driven by long discussions between the

professor and students, and covered in depth some of the interesting topics, like the First Amendment, that you just don't have time for in a first-year Constitutional law class.

3) What made you choose George Washington University Law School? What do you see as the primary pros and cons of law school?

Thankfully, the DC area has some great law schools, most, if not all of them offer part-time programs geared toward working students. I only applied to schools in the DC area, and only for the part-time program. I chose GW for many reasons: it offers a great number of intellectual property focused classes (and they keep adding more); many of their faculty members either are or were practicing attorneys, often in the field they teach; it's located in a great location in DC - Foggy Bottom; and I had a few friends who were enrolled at GW at the time I applied and they had only good things to say about the school. Finally, GW has a deep alumni network, which is important for job-seeking students, and it's establishing an impressive record as more of its students obtain competitive clerkships.

If I had to pick a negative, it's the cost of tuition, which can be downside at many law schools. While it's expensive whether you go full-time or part-time, at least if you're working a full-time job, you can try to pay off or avoid taking out at least some of student loans. GW (and other schools, I'm sure) also offer scholarships. For example, GW has a presidential merit scholarship, which is a full ride for a candidate admitted through their binding early decision process -- a pretty good deal, I think.

4) What types of undergraduate opportunities did you pursue that led to your decision to apply to law school? Were there any experiences that you felt were particularly helpful in strengthening your application to law school?

I didn't go into college planning on going to law school. Junior year at Hopkins I found out that a family friend worked as a patent attorney in Manchester, NH. Over winter break, I visited her, and she showed me around her law firm and talked with me about the field of patent law, which sparked my interest. It didn't hurt either that I had been interested in the works of the great inventors growing up, especially Thomas Edison.

While I took a law and psychology class at Hopkins, this didn't lead to my decision to apply to law school. The mechanical engineering senior design project, however, did. I worked with a team to research, design, and construct a working device. From this, I was able to get a small glimpse into the inventive process. I was pretty sure that I didn't want to work as a design engineer, but the field of patent law sounded great.

5) What did you pursue during your interim year(s)/before beginning law school, while in law school and during your law school summer(s)? How did you go about researching these opportunities?

As mentioned above, I worked for one year as an engineer and supervisor at a steel mill, realized that this field wasn't entirely for me, and went to the USPTO to get a background in patent law while applying to and starting law school. Being part-time, I didn't do anything special over summers, other than continue working at my full-time job. I took one summer class after my 2L year, and plan on taking another this summer to ease the workload during my final 4L year (yes, full-time law school is three years, but part-time is up to four).

6) How would you compare the reality of law school and the ensuing job search to the picture you had of it while an undergraduate?

I really had no idea about law school while I was an undergrad, and the only exposure I had to the ups and downs of law school was my now-fiancée's experience as a full-time student. The reality is that it is a lot of work, especially working a full-time job, and that you don't have time for extensive extra-curricular activities that full-time students often do. That being said, it's a very rewarding experience. Reading cases and attending classes, many of which employ the infamous Socratic method, is challenging, but it teaches you to think about problems very differently than you likely did before. Exam periods are never fun and I often take time off of work to study, but the classes, especially with excellent professors, make it worthwhile.

7) Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing law school and a career in law given your experience in today's legal market and now as a current law student?

To someone generally interested in law school, if you aren't sure, maybe take at least year or two after graduating to work or travel. Doing so can give you a break from academic life while you take the time to grow and determine whether you do want to go to law school after all. If you decide to go, admissions offices often look favorably upon applicants with work experience between undergrad and law school, especially in part-time programs. In this market, going to law school shouldn't be a decision made lightly or because you haven't figured out what else to do, but if you have the passion—whether it is to defend indigent defendants, broker mergers, or become a prosecutor, or litigate patent infringement actions—studying law is an excellent opportunity.

To someone with a technical background interested in going to law school and pursuing a career in patent law, the same considerations apply. For an interim job, you may consider looking into law firms that do patent work, or working as a patent examiner at the PTO. Doing so can be a great introduction to the field of patent law, and you can decide whether it's something you're interested in pursuing as a career before applying to law school.

If you have a technical background and are interested in patent law, judging from my own experiences and those of my fellow law students, there seems to be a market demand for patent folks right now. That being said, I would still advise any prospective law student to take the time to weigh the pros and cons before applying to law school. It is expensive, and depending on the field in which you would like to work, it can take time to get the job you are looking for. Look into a variety of schools, especially in the geographic region where you'd like to work, seek out scholarships, and if you can get a full-time job after undergrad, consider going to school part-time.

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about George Washington University Law School, patent law, or if you have additional questions for Justin Loffredo, you may contact him by email at: j.e.loffredo@gmail.com or by phone at: **978-314-3116**.

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW STUDENT MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming LSAT Administration

Location: Check with LSAC for testing locations (next on campus/JHU LSAT administration – Monday, June 11, 2012).

Date: Monday, June 11, 2012

Time: Registration begins at 11.30a for the June exam – consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

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