



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

Best viewed in HTML

Vol. 5, No. 3

Friday, October 7, 2011 – Thursday, October 20, 2011

~~~~~

- 1. Message from Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.**
- 2. Media Watch: "Law School Lure Fewer Students as Jobs Dry Up"**
- 3. Opportunity: SEO Career/Corporate Law Program**
- 4. Interview: Oleg Shik (JHU '09), Paralegal, Commercial Litigation Branch, U.S. Department of Justice**
- 5. Upcoming Pre-Law Student Meeting & Program Announcements**

~~~~~

1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Congratulations to those of you that completed the October LSAT last weekend! For those future test takers, please remember that instructions for the LSAT, including registration requirements that must be completed well in advance of the testing date, must be carefully reviewed. LSAT registration and administration rules can change from one test to the next and a thorough review of all instructions -- including clicking on any links provided -- is a must.

Please note that several information sessions and law school programs (including with Georgetown and Columbia) have been added this Fall; see section 5 for all details.

2. MEDIA WATCH: "LAW SCHOOLS LURE FEWER STUDENTS AS JOB DRY UP"

It is no secret that law school applications have decreased in the past few years in response to the decline in the economy and the availability of jobs in the legal market.

The article "Law School Lure Fewer Students as Jobs Dry Up," by Alan Scher Zagier released by the Associated Press on September 1, 2011 states that "post-graduate employment rates are at their lowest levels in 15 years. The typical student leaves school nearly \$100,000 in debt. And after several years of recession-driven enrollment gains, applications to law school nationwide are down nearly 10 percent this year." Decreases in applications vary depending on the school, with some realizing drops even greater than 10%.

As pointed out in the article, ultimately, law school application decline is not necessarily a bad thing. People are thinking more carefully about whether law school is for them, and it is becoming less of a default option following senior year of college. As Assistant Law Dean and Admissions Director at University of Michigan Law School states, "Now that people are aware it's not a cakewalk to get a big salary, they're thinking more carefully and a little more rationally about making this choice." Moreover, as Law Dean Larry Dessem at the University in St. Louis concludes, "That's going to lead to a lot more satisfied lawyers down the road."

Which ultimately is a great end!

To read the article in full, visit:

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/Law-schools-lure-fewer-apf-3516669113.html?x=0>

3. OPPORTUNITY: SEO CAREER/CORPORATE LAW PROGRAM

The SEO Career Program recruits and trains outstanding underrepresented college students and recent graduates of color for internships that lead to careers in some of the most competitive industries, including Corporate Law. The SEO Corporate Law Program is the only one of its kind, offering paid legal opportunities before law school.

The **SEO Corporate Law Program** offers--

- **Significant Work Experience:** A ten-week paid, mentored summer internship at one of SEO's partner law firms. For a complete list of partner firms, visit [SEO Corporate Law Partners](#).
- **Networking Opportunities:** Meet successful legal professionals through seminars and receptions.
- **1L Preparation:** The Corporate Law Institute (CLI) is a two-week intensive law school prep program designed to maximize our students' performance during the critical first year of law school.

To learn more about the SEO Corporate Law Program, meet alumni, and schedule a pre-interview with the SEO Corporate Law Program Manager, attend one of the upcoming **SEO Corporate Law Information Sessions**.

Washington, D.C.	NYC	Boston	Los Angeles	San Francisco	Chicago
Oct 24-25	Oct 26-27	Oct 28-29	Nov 1-2	Nov 3-4	Nov 17-18

Questions? Contact SEOLaw@seo-usa.org, or [RSVP](#) today!

4. INTERVIEW: OLEG SHIK (JHU '09), PARALEGAL, COMMERCIAL LITIGATION BRANCH, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Oleg Shik received his B.A. from Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in 2009, having majored in Political Science and minored in Entrepreneurship & Management. While at JHU, he was very involved in student theater, including the Buttered Niblets improvisational comedy troupe; the Throat Culture Sketch Comedy Troupe; the JHU Barnstormers, and as a board member of Witness Theater. Additionally, he started the first stand-up comedy club at JHU, Student StandUps.

Upon graduation from JHU, Oleg was an Intern for U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen the Summer of 2009 and then a Conflicts Analyst for McKenna, Long & Aldridge, LLP until June 2010, when he began his present position. Oleg Shik is currently a Paralegal for the Commercial Litigation Branch of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

1) Describe a day in the life of a Paralegal for the US Department of Justice at the Commercial Litigation Branch.

I typically get to the office at 9AM and leave at around 6PM. The hours are technically 9-5:30, but it's

rare that I finish all of my work for the day by 5:30. The culture and atmosphere throughout the office is, on the whole, very positive. Most attorneys enjoy what they do, are challenged by their work, and that makes assisting them a lot easier than if that were not the case.

I am working on three cases right now, whose potential judgments to the U.S. Government range from 200 million to 2.6 billion dollars. These are tremendous stakes, and even the most minute errors, such as an incorrectly inserting or copying a page, could be devastating. It's important to keep this in mind because the majority of what I do every day is just that: making binders, organizing/sorting documents, document review via Concordance, and legal research using Westlaw/LexisNexis. None of these tasks are complicated per se, but it's crucial that a paralegal keep in mind the enormous stakes of the case when preparing for a deposition or a motion, even when your attorneys ask you to complete the most menial of tasks. Because of a government-wide hiring freeze, more and more cases are piling on to a fewer amount of attorneys and paralegals. This means more work! It means that I get way more calls and emails from my supervisor asking me if I can take on another case, or if I could do assignment X or Y. So if you are applying to a job within DOJ or another federal agency, prepare to be busy.

2) What made you choose this particular position and has it met your expectations?

As graduation approached, I knew I wanted to work for a few years, specifically as a paralegal. I actually met a representative for the Antitrust Division at a Hopkins career fair my senior year, and was pleasantly surprised to learn that the federal government had paralegals of its own. I specifically wanted to work for the government, and not a private law firm, because I already had a lot of internship experience with the government, and was generally more interested in litigating on behalf of the public. This position has definitely met my expectations. It is a rewarding experience, and I highly recommend it to potential applicants.

3) Did you pursue anything else during your interim years before beginning law school? How did you go about researching each of these opportunities?

My class of 2009 was notorious for graduating to the worst job market in a generation. Looking through my emails from the summer of 2009, I must have applied to well over a hundred jobs. When I could not find paralegal jobs, I applied to jobs I never would have thought of. I saw an ad that summer to edit a screenplay for two strangers. I had no experience in editing screenplays, but I still gladly offered to edit it (to no avail). I found my current job on Craigslist (you don't have to look for government jobs just on USAJobs), and applied immediately for it. I got a call in a few days asking me to schedule an interview. The one piece of advice I have for applicants is to stay on top of jobs openings announcements, whether through Craigslist or the JHU Career Center. Even waiting for a day to apply could mean your resume ends up at the bottom of the pile. If you are a senior, write your resume/cover letter during Intersession. Go to the Career Center and ask them to edit your stuff. Ask your parents or friends to look at it. It doesn't take a lot of time and will make it a lot easier to apply quickly.

4) What do you think you have gained from the experiences and from taking time off before law school? Given the choice, would you do it again?

I would not go to law school straight out of college. I think I made the right choice. But that's just me. My brother went straight through, and he did fine (he tells me he regrets it, but that might be because he doesn't want to insult me). I think I have gained the most just from being a working adult. I understand the daily grind, and how I react to it. I better understand office behavior and how to handle any problems or dilemmas with attorneys or staff. I understand how to pay the bills, save money/look for bargains, and structure my day so that I am not burnt out by the end of it. I also realized that I love living in a major city, and would like to live in a city when I go to law school. It's important for someone

to decide the best environment for him or her before "taking the plunge". I also got a lot of substantive experience by being a paralegal, through legal research and document review, which will certainly help me when I start to practice.

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

I knew relatively early that I would apply to law school, so I was not influenced to do so by a particular course or undergraduate experience. There were a lot of things that helped me strengthen my application, like going to the Career Center, but I would say the biggest, along with studying a lot for the LSAT, is work experience. And not just out-of-college experience, but internships as well. Extensive work experience, especially within a common field, helps communicate to a person who doesn't know anything about you, like an employer or an Assistant Dean of Admissions, that people keep hiring you! And this must be for a reason! Most likely because you are ambitious or smart or a hard worker or all of the above. My final piece of advice, for any underclassmen reading this, is to fill your law school resume with activities from doing one or two things you really love (for me it was theater/comedy), instead of a thousand activities at once (like Max Fischer from *Rushmore*). Don't beef up your resume for the sake of beefing it up. Do extracurricular activities because you like doing them and are meeting cool people.

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about the Commercial Litigation Branch of DOJ, visit:

http://www.justice.gov/civil/commercial/commercial_home.html, or, if you have additional questions for Oleg Shik, you may contact him at ochik87@gmail.com.

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Columbia Law School Information Session

Location: Mattin 162

Date: October 19, 2011

Time: 12-1.30p

Description: Nicholas Everdell, Associate Director of Admissions, will present an info session on Columbia Law School.

Howard University School of Law Information Session

Location: Mattin 161

Date: November 2, 2011

Time: 1-2p

Description: Marchlena Rodgers, Assistant Director of Admissions, will present an info session on Howard University School of Law.

Georgetown University Law Center Group Interview

Location: Sherwood Room, Levering Hall

Date: November 2, 2011

Time: 3-4p

Description: Andy Cornblatt, Associate Vice President (Graduate Admissions Programs and Enrollment) & Dean of Admissions, Georgetown University Law Center, will conduct a group interview. Prior registration will be required; additional details to follow.

Upcoming LSAT Administration for 2011/2012

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

Date: Saturday, December 3, 2011/Saturday, February 11, 2012/Monday, June 11, 2012

Time: Registration begins at 8.30a for the December exam -- consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

~~~~~  
**STAFF IN THE OFFICE OF PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADVISING**

Ana L. Droscoski, J.D., Associate Director, Pre-Law Advisor, Pre-Dental & Pre-Health Advisor

David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Ellen Snyderman, M.S., Assistant Director, Pre-Health Advisor

The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions regarding your file:

Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, [ckrause@jhu.edu](mailto:ckrause@jhu.edu) 410-516-6744

For students whose last name begins with A-L, contact Mrs. Krause.

LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, [ladytee@jhu.edu](mailto:ladytee@jhu.edu) 410-516-4140

For students whose last name begins with M-Z, contact Mrs. Sanders.

Angie Decker, Office Manager, [decker@jhu.edu](mailto:decker@jhu.edu)

Please feel free to use the resource library between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. every day or visit our website <http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/> for additional information.

Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.  
Associate Director  
Office of Pre-Professional Programs & Advising

Johns Hopkins University  
Garland Hall Suite 300  
3400 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
Tel: 410.516.4140  
Fax: 410.516.4040  
email: [adrosco1@jhu.edu](mailto:adrosco1@jhu.edu)  
[web.jhu.edu/prepro](http://web.jhu.edu/prepro)