



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

\*Best viewed in HTML\*

**Vol. 7, No. 13**

Friday, April 18, 2014

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- 1. Message from Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.**
- 2. Legal Education & the Legal Industry in the Media**
- 3. Opportunity: Student Trainee -- Summer Internship, U.S. International Trade Commission**
- 4. Interview: Samita Khan '12, 2L at The University of Chicago Law School**
- 5. Upcoming Pre-Law Student Meeting & Program Announcements**

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**1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.**

Next Friday there will be the following program -- lunch will be served!\*

**DC-Metro Area Law School Admissions Panel**

**Location:** Mason Hall Auditorium

**Date:** Friday, April 25, 2014

**Time:** 12-1pm

**Description:** Admissions Officers from Georgetown University Law Center, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, University of Baltimore School of Law, and American University, Washington College of Law will discuss their respective schools and the law school admissions process.

**\*In order to attend the event, pre-registration is required. To sign up, visit the following link:**

[https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/vkb5m10/?event=yes&auth=yes&customer\\_id=&service\\_id=8461&event\\_service\\_id=8461&\\_id=&starting\\_date=20140425&action=confirm&customer\\_location\\_id=405&appt\\_date=20140425&appt\\_start\\_time=720&appt\\_end\\_time=780](https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/vkb5m10/?event=yes&auth=yes&customer_id=&service_id=8461&event_service_id=8461&_id=&starting_date=20140425&action=confirm&customer_location_id=405&appt_date=20140425&appt_start_time=720&appt_end_time=780)

Hope to see you there!

**2. LEGAL EDUCATION & THE LEGAL INDUSTRY IN THE MEDIA**

**Comparing Law School Rankings? Read The Fine Print -- NPR story on law school generated post-graduate employment figures**

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/money/2014/03/28/294887683/comparing-law-school-rankings-read-the-fine-print>

**Law Firm Entry-Level Hiring Unlikely to Return to 2006 Levels**

<http://blogs.wsj.com/law/2014/04/11/law-firm-entry-level-hiring-unlikely-to-return-to-2006-levels/>

Legal Sector Added 700 Jobs in March

<http://www.americanlawyer.com/home/id=1202649803956?slreturn=20140314163137>

### **3. OPPORTUNITY: STUDENT TRAINEE(S) -- SUMMER INTERNSHIP, U.S. INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION**

The U.S. International Trade Commission adjudicates import injury cases and provides the President and Congress with high quality analysis and technical support on international trade, tariff, and competitiveness issues. They are seeking academically successful and motivated students who are particularly interested in their mission.

This summer employment opportunity will entail assisting staff members and managers in primary and technical occupations -- Economists, International Trade, and Legal.

#### **DUTIES:**

All summer interns will be working under the direction of senior staff members in the targeted occupation of the internship, performing support functions associated with the primary mission of the organization.

#### **Economist -- Student Trainee - GS-0199- opportunities available at grades 4, 5, and 7**

Engage in the conduct of qualitative and quantitative analysis which will be used to critique, design, and improve management planning systems, surveys, and decision models.

Analyze data and information related to international trade and import injury investigations. Involvement in data collection from secondary sources (e.g. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, OECD). May conduct literature reviews and other targeted research on international trade issues and topics, including summarizing findings through written products.

#### **Industry Trade Analyst - Student Trainee - GS-0099- opportunities available at grades 4, 5, and 7**

Perform specific industry and trade related research, analysis, and associated functions. Conduct research and data analysis of policies, trade, or other issues, within the framework of a larger project. Based on project parameters, independently handle conventional or moderately complex portions of larger projects.

#### **Law Clerk - Student Trainee - GS-0999-opportunities available at grade 7 only**

Work on legal issues of moderate complexity where established or easily determinable facts and clearly applicable precedents are involved. Typical assignments would include the review, comment, and citation of proposed and current trade legislation, policies, procedures and regulations.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:**

To be eligible for basic consideration, all summer interns must:

- Be enrolled, or accepted for enrollment, on at least a half-time basis, at a qualifying educational institution
- Be seeking a diploma, degree, or certificate
- Be in good academic standing and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50

In general, grade 4 requires one year of college; grade 5, a Bachelor's degree; grade 7, a Bachelor's degree with high academic achievement, or one year of graduate education. Applicants who have directly related education to our core occupation requirements, will generally be rated higher and considered first over applicants who do not. These Student Internships are thru the Pathways program; more information about same can be found here:

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards/final-groupcoveragequalificationstandardforpathwaysprogramschedule-20d.pdf>

**\*APPLICATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2014\***

To see the complete listing and to apply, visit the following link:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/367183900>

#### **4. INTERVIEW: SAMITA KHAN '12, 2L AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LAW SCHOOL**

Samita Khan is a 2L at The University of Chicago Law School, where her honors include acting as the Symposium Editor of the Midwest Region of the National Black Law Students Association Law Journal, an International Fellow from 2013-2014 and completing the Keystone Leadership & Professionalism Program. Samita is also the President of the South Asian Law Students Association, Community Service Co-Chair of the Black Law Students Association, Secretary of the Latino Law Students Association, and a part of Spring Break of Service and the Careers in Law Mentor Program.

Following her first year of law school, Samita was a Summer Associate with Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP in Chicago, IL and moved into a Legal Extern position at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago during her Fall semester of second year. Since January 2014, she has been a Clinical Student for The Institute for Justice Clinic on Entrepreneurship.

Samita graduated Phi Beta Kappa and with University Honors from Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in 2012, where she majored in Sociology and Africana Studies. During her time at JHU, Samita was a Legal Intern for the Office of the Public Defender, a Paralegal for the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board, a Public Relations Intern for the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center in DC, and a Paralegal for the Kings County District Attorney's Office in the Crimes Against Children Bureau. She also volunteered in Costa Rica and Guatemala thru *Encountour, LLC* and interned at Red Elephant, Inc. an event planning company.

#### **Questions**

##### **1) Describe your typical day as a law student at The University of Chicago Law School.**

I live a 20-minute drive, and 45-minute bus ride from the Law School, and I generally only come to school three days a week for classes and clinic work. Of course, I wouldn't suggest scheduling your classes out of convenience alone. I've so far taken a wide range of classes, from seminars on racism to workshops on negotiations to lectures on mergers and acquisitions. I typically spend four hours in class and in clinic each day I'm at the Law School, and spend perhaps fifteen to twenty hours outside of this to read for class and complete assignments. Some weeks are definitely more demanding than others, but the workload is manageable. Working smart lets me do many other non-law related things during a typical day -- including catching up on a number of addictive TV shows.

**2) To date, what has been your favorite law school class, and why? How have you been choosing classes beyond the set curriculum?**

Contracts has probably been my favorite class. For one, it was something I recognized coming in. But more importantly, Contracts taught me the importance of things like clarity, interpretation, and jurisdiction. I found it interesting that different states, for example New York and California, can have absolutely divergent views on how to approach and decide a contracts case. I found it valuable to know which interpretation techniques a court will use when contract provisions are not clear, and how they might tend to decide when most people, like the plaintiff in the case, don't read the fine print. The class was very applicable to my everyday life, and I enjoyed feeling a little bit smarter about what I've signed contracts for already and future negotiations in which I might partake.

Beyond the set 1L curriculum, I've chosen classes based on professors and content. Some professors are really well known, and others are visiting and may not teach a course again before I graduate. I've taken practical classes to help me understand how to file my taxes, and will be taking general courses on corporate governance to learn the language that will help me in any transactional work at a law firm. I'm also looking forward to advanced legal writing and research, to further improve those skills. Some people choose courses that the bar exam will cover, and others take courses discussing HBO's *The Wire*. I've balanced classes I think I "should" be taking, to the extent they don't overlap, with classes I find really interesting.

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

The University of Chicago is highly ranked, and well-known for a rigorous program. The quarter system always keeps you on your toes for finals (trust me, it always feels like you're taking finals!) but it lets you take so many more classes than schools on the semester schedule. However, because we end later than other schools typically do each academic year, we start work late and cannot always finish later to make up for the time. While employers who come to UChicago know our odd schedules, and thus do not reprimand us for it, there are personal disadvantages: you might feel less competent than your colleagues when you start work later, you'll probably be doing your writing competition for the Law School journal while you're working, and you'll end classes/graduate long after bar prep classes begin.

On a brighter note, Chicago has a bustling legal community responsible for much of the work in the midwest, as well as many other parts of the world. This has been important because law students here can easily find an externship or employment opportunity to apply for in Chicago.

The Law School is also on the UChicago campus, so taking classes in other schools and disciplines is a great benefit. I'm currently taking a class at the Harris School of Public Policy to work with City Council in Gary, IN to advance a draft ordinance and on other legal matters.

The size of each class, at about 200, allows you to know everyone, but keeps the number of racial minority students low. This has for me, however, had the added benefit of working closely with students in different affinity groups to advance what are often very similar goals. Law school is, in the end, what you make it, and I've certainly had ups as well as downs in the academic, social and employment aspects of the Law School.

**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 may be in the minority, but I started thinking seriously about law school for the first time in high school. There, I competed in a CSI competition for three years, and thought I'd like to pursue criminal law. As a result, my first legal internship was with the Public Defender's Office in Baltimore. The experience taught me that I didn't want to become a public defender, but I fell in love with the way attorneys thought through issues so critically and from such different angles. I decided then I wanted that sort of education, and applied for and completed a number of internships in different legal arenas (government, non-profit, academic, etc.). Particularly because I went straight from undergrad to law school, these experiences were instrumental in not only my application for law school, but my job and legal scholarship interviews since then. You need to show you are not making the whole law school decision blind.

**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?**

I was one of those stubborn kids who wouldn't take Ms. Droscoski's (and a host of other people's) advice that I should take time off before law school. Instead, because of the legal internships I've had that all made me realize I wanted to think like a lawyer despite not knowing what law I wanted to practice, I didn't want to wait to start the rest of my life. I thought taking an interim year would just be prolonging the inevitable. Thankfully, while I was sitting in class during the first couple weeks of starting my 1L year, I realized I made the right decision.

In law school, I've been involved in a number of student organizations (mostly diversity oriented and community service organizations) because they were a natural progression of what I did throughout high school and undergrad. With the intense workload, it was sometimes a bit overwhelming, but you have to do what keeps you sane. This year as a 2L, I decided to take on more practical legal experiences as well. I did an externship at a children's hospital in Chicago, and am currently involved in a clinic on entrepreneurship -- both of which have been great in honing my research, writing, negotiation, and client interaction skills.

During my first law school summer, I worked for a notable law firm in Chicago. Their summer program was small (involving only two 1Ls and two 2Ls), but was amazing because it gave me the opportunity to create relationships with attorneys and learn directly from their experiences and expertise. I am returning to this firm at the end of my upcoming summer. I will spend the beginning of my summer at a well-known law firm in New York (and perhaps half of this time in their international office). Ideally, at the end of the summer, I will know which city and which firm I want to be in post-graduation, and they'll want me too!

To be clear, nothing in my resume suggested I would like the law firm track. But it was a decision I didn't want to knock until I tried. I'm so happy I did. With pro bono opportunities which firms seem to encourage these days, I can still be involved in public interest work. Moreover, as a woman and an immigrant, I think there is tremendous value in working with and building genuine connections with powerful and resourceful people during your career.

I've found these work opportunities through Hopkins' and UChicago's career offices, UChicago's on-campus interviewing system, random google searches, and even networking through a high school friend.

### **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?**

Like you all probably have done, I read just about a million articles and studies about why law school is not a smart investment, and that the legal market is still terrible. What you hear in law school, at least in my experience, is that the market is on the rise. I was lucky enough to get into a great school like the University of Chicago, so if I am to be honest, I would say my employment prospects were in my favor. Our class is small, and our rigor has a reputation that precedes us, so employers from all legal fields are, in a way, competing for us. That is absolutely not to say we don't try hard. I'm going to assume that if you are applying to law school, and especially if you're coming from Hopkins, you know what it means to put in hard work and always try to do well. Law school is tougher, and threatens to make you think you don't belong or that you can't compete intellectually with your classmates. I've struggled with this a number of times in the past two years, but have pulled through so far. And I can almost see the finish line! Even if it is a year away.

Law school, for me, was the right choice. The financial aspect is certainly daunting, but if you promise to put in the work by strengthening your undergrad GPA, studying for the LSAT, gaining employment experience, and actively trying throughout law school, the investment should be one of the best decisions you'll make.

### **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?**

Do your best to get into the best law school you can -- this includes studying hard now, figuring out why and when you want to go to law school, and talking to current law students and attorneys, among other things. Consider financial aid packages in combination with the opportunities you'll have at the respective law schools. You may need to be in the top 10% at one school to get the same employment prospects if you are in the top 50% at another. Once you're in law school, try hard and don't let cold calls and grades ruin your spirit. The opportunities around you will be, pretty much, limitless, and whether that comes in the form of talking to the billionaire founder of a start-up in the seat next to you or the leading professor in property law, be grateful, not jealous, and learn from them. These are the same people who will be your future bosses, colleagues, and best friends.

### **Contact Information**

If you would like to learn more about being a law student at the University of Chicago School of Law or would otherwise like to contact Samita Khan, you may reach her at the following email address: [samitakhan@uchicago.edu](mailto:samitakhan@uchicago.edu).

Samita notes that an alum from her law school, Joshua Craven, writes for [www.lawschooli.com](http://www.lawschooli.com), which is mostly geared toward law school applicants. Although she's only read it a few times, she found the articles varied and interesting.

## **5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW STUDENT MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**DC-Metro Area Law School Admissions Panel\***

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**Date:** Friday, April 25, 2014

**Time:** 12-1pm

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**Upcoming LSAT Administration**

**Location:** Check with LSAC for testing locations.

**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2014 / September 27, 2014 / December 6, 2014

**Time:** Registration begins at 12:30 pm for the June exam -- consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

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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.

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