

# Pre-Law E-Newsletter

Vol 1, No. 14

Monday, February 18, 2008 - Sunday, February 24, 2008

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## 1. MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISOR

Current Applicants: Remember that I can review any supplemental letters you intend to forward to law schools which have waitlisted you or put you on hold. You may email them to me for feedback.

To Everyone: We are once again soliciting applications for the Pre-Professional Advising Student Advisory Committee (SAC). The Pre-Professional Advising SAC will provide feedback regarding office function and initiatives. To apply, kindly forward the following items to me: 1) cover letter indicating your interest in the position, 2) resume, and 3) transcript. I look forward to hearing from interested candidates!

Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.

## 2. PRACTICE AREA FOCUS: IMMIGRATION LAW ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org))

Immigration law, regarding foreign citizens, is related to nationality law, which governs the legal status of people, in matters such as citizenship. Immigration laws vary from country to country, as well as according to the political climate of the times, as sentiments may sway from the widely inclusive to the deeply exclusive.

Immigration law regarding the citizens of a country is regulated by international law. The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights mandates that all country/countries allow entry to its own citizens.

Certain countries may maintain rather strict laws which regulate the right of entry and internal rights once established: such as the duration of stay, the right to participate in government. Most countries have laws which designate a process for naturalization, by which immigrants may become citizens.

## 3. PRACTITIONER INTERVIEW: SARIKA I. GARG, ESQ., IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY

### Background & Bio

Sarika Ila Garg, Esq. is an associate attorney in Berry, Appleman & Leiden's Washington, DC/Tysons, VA office. Ms. Garg handles an array of business immigration matters, including labor certification applications, immigrant visa petitions, applications to adjust status and consular processing, as well as nonimmigrant visa petitions for intracompany transferees and specialty occupations.

Before joining her current firm, Ms. Garg was the lead attorney at a small immigration firm in Tyson's, VA, where she also handled business immigration matters, specializing primarily in the labor certification process. Prior to that, she worked at a medium-sized immigration firm office focusing on immigration matters for physicians and nurses, including J-1 visa waiver applications based on hardship and interested government agency recommendations, H-1B visas, immigrant petitions based on national interest waivers and labor certifications, and adjustment of status applications. In addition to her business immigration experience, Ms. Garg jump-started her career as the sole attorney for a non-profit

organization representing individuals in deportation proceedings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Ms. Garg is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

#### Questions

Describe a day in the life of an Immigration Attorney: I typically arrive at the office between 9 and 9:30 a.m. I generally check my email and respond to urgent questions (from the firm's partners, company clients, etc.). Then I look at my meetings for the day to plan my schedule. I would then review files given to me by my legal assistants regarding the preparation of nonimmigrant visas and permanent residency applications. Intermittently, I would review incoming emails and respond. I also meet with my legal assistants once a week as well as attending at least 2 firm meetings a week regarding different subjects. I usually leave the office between 6:30 and 7 p.m.

What initially attracted you to this field? What are some of the rewards of this area of law?

To be honest, I just stumbled upon this field. I took one immigration law class in law school and did really well. However, I did not have the mindset of becoming an immigration lawyer. I actually wanted to go into corporate law as I have an MBA as well as a JD. After interviewing with some bigger firms immediately following graduation, I decided that the culture was not right for me. I happened to submit my resume to a small non-profit immigration clinic and received an offer. At that point, I just wanted to get some legal experience, so I took it. The position involved being the sole immigration attorney, mainly representing illegal aliens in immigration proceedings. It was pretty exciting to be able to litigate out of law school even though I had no preparation. After about a year, I decided that I was not a litigator and did not really want to be involved in the deportation aspects of immigration. I was picked up by a medium-sized business immigration firm and have been working in immigration ever since - partly because I have developed an expertise, and also because I enjoy it. It is extremely satisfying to be instrumental in procuring a work visa or green card for a foreign national. It is a life dream for many of these people.

What are some of the downsides of this area of law?

It is high-pressure in that you hold the outcome of individual lives in your hands. If you "mess up" it can have disastrous consequences for an individual (i.e., having to depart the U.S. to return to a home country, being put into deportation proceedings, an individual being forced to stop working because you forgot to file his application, etc.). You have to be constantly vigilant of deadlines. In addition, individuals require a lot more "customer service" as opposed to corporate clients. As such, a large part of the job becomes allaying people's fears and dealing with numerous inquiries (i.e. phone calls and emails).

Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing this body of law?

The impression people have of immigration lawyers is one of tatty suits, old cars, and low salaries. This is false. I work for the 2nd largest immigration firm in the country, Berry, Appleman & Leiden, LLP, and the attorneys earn just as much as those working at the large corporate firms. In addition, we do not work with "billable" hours so that is one less pressure. Most firms expect you to account for every hour you work and meet a certain goal. I believe that if you are interested in really helping individuals and feeling accomplishment at the end of the day, this is a great field to be in. It is certainly challenging in that the laws are very complex, and you are constantly having to be creative to come up with new solutions, it is an area that is very "hot" and will continue to be lucrative. However, if you do not do well with deadlines and high-volume work, this is probably not the right field.

#### Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about immigration law, or have additional questions, you may contact Ms. Garg directly via email at [sarikailagarg@yahoo.com](mailto:sarikailagarg@yahoo.com). You may also visit her firm's website at [www.usabal.com](http://www.usabal.com), where you can find an overview of her firm.

#### 4. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY HIGHLIGHT: PARALEGAL SPECIALIST, FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

For those of you looking to gain work experience in a legal setting and to take some time off before law school, this is a great opportunity to explore. It should be noted that this is a 14 month term appointment:

Job Title: Paralegal Specialist  
Employer: Federal Trade Commission  
Salary: GS-7 Government Position  
Job Location: Washington, DC  
Application Deadline: March 6, 2008  
Estimated Start Date: Summer 2008

**Employer Description:**

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) deals with issues that touch the economic life of every American. It is the only federal agency with both consumer protection and competition jurisdiction in broad sectors of the economy. The FTC pursues vigorous and effective law enforcement; advances consumers' interests by sharing its expertise with federal and state legislatures and U.S. and international government agencies; develops policy and research tools through hearings, workshops, and conferences; and creates practical and plain-language educational programs for consumers and businesses in a global marketplace with constantly changing technologies.

**Job Description:**

Honors Paralegals at the Federal Trade Commission work with attorneys, investigators, economists, and other support staff on various kinds of investigation, litigation, and policy work. Honors Paralegals participate in every step of cases at the FTC, from conducting interviews and market research to reviewing company documents, preparing exhibits for trial, and assisting attorneys in the courtroom. An Honors Paralegal performs a wide variety of tasks to support the work of the agency, including analyzing records for substantive or confidential information, drafting memorandums for senior staff, communicating with outside parties, or preparing court documents.

Additionally, Honors Paralegals may help in preparing for conferences covering a broad range of issues including emerging technologies and the development of certain industries. The FTC also holds lectures that discuss a variety of antitrust and consumer protection issues. Honors Paralegals often help in the organization of and are encouraged to attend such events. FTC Honors Paralegals have real opportunities for significant responsibility, hands-on experience, and rewarding public service, as well as the chance to learn a great deal about a career in law, economics, or public policy.

**How to Apply:**

Applicants have until 11:59 PM on March 6, 2008 to respond to the vacancy announcement. Please see the FTC's Honors Paralegal website <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/oed/hrmo/hpp/index.shtml> for more information and complete application instructions.

## 5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Engineer Turned Lawyer: A Seminar by John C. O'Quinn, Esq.  
Location: Maryland Hall, Room 110  
Date: Tuesday, February 26, 2008  
Time: 4:30pm to 5:30pm

John O'Quinn, Esq., an engineering graduate who is now an attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice, will discuss his career path and the decisions that took him from engineering into law. He will discuss how his engineering education prepared him for being a lawyer, and how he continues to use what he learned from engineering in his career today.

Additional Spring Programming - Coming Soon!

LSAT Administration for 2008

Location: On campus, Hodson 110 - check with LSDAS for additional testing locations

Date: Monday, June 16, 2008

Time: Registration begins at 12:30pm - consult with LSDAS for all controlling details

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STAFF IN THE OFFICE OF PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADVISING

Ana L. Droskoski, Esq., Assistant Director, who advises Pre-Law students:

Walkins: Mondays 10:00am to 11:30am

Appts: Mondays/Thursdays 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Wednesdays 10:00am to 11:30am & 2pm to 3pm

David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, who advises Pre-Health students:

Walkins: Friday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Appts: Mondays/Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions and schedule appointments:

Lena Harding, Administrative Secretary, lhardin7@jhu.edu 410-516-6743

For students whose last name begins with A-G, contact Ms. Harding.

Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, ckrause@jhu.edu 410-516-6744

For students whose your last name begins with H-O, contact Mrs. Krause.

LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, ladytee@jhu.edu 410-516-4140

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

Angie Decker, Office Manager and Staff Supervisor, decker@jhu.edu

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