

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

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Friday, September 11, 2009 – Thursday, September 24, 2009

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Welcome to the freshmen, and welcome back to returning students!

For those of you that are applying to law school this cycle, please be sure to schedule an appointment with me to ensure that you have all required items on file with this office, and that you are doing everything you can to put your best application forward.

Appointments are now made online, via the following link:

<https://www.securedata-trans10.com/ap/johnshopkinsuniversityofficeofpreprofessionalprogramsadvising/index.php?page=10>

Within the next two weeks, there are free, public events in the area to celebrate the signing of the Constitution: one at MICA, this Saturday the 12th, addressing the current state of women's rights in the U.S. and another, next Thursday the 17th, at JHU discussing the U.S. Supreme Court in the Obama Era. See below for more detailed information in the "Upcoming Pre-Law Meetings and Program Announcements" section. Consider attending these events!

2. A GLIMPSE AT THE CURRENT LEGAL MARKET & PROJECTED TRENDS

For anyone interested in pursuing a legal education and practice as an attorney, it is important to research and be a student of the legal market, too.

An enlightening, though sobering, article appeared recently in *The New York Times* and can be accessed via the following link:

Downturn Dims Prospects Even at Top Law Schools

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/26/business/26lawyers.html?_r=1&pagewanted=1&em

This June, at the 2009 Northeast Association of Pre-Law Advisors Conference, James G. Leipold, Executive Director of National Association for Law Placement, Inc. (NALP), and Carlos Dávila-Caballero, Assistant Dean and Career Counselor at Tulane University Law School, gave a fantastic Power Point presentation on legal employment trends, which can be accessed via the following link:

["Legal Employment Trends for Law School Graduates."](#)

Your decision to attend law school should be an informed one and account for employment prospects post graduation.

3. INTERVIEW: DAVID POULOUSE (JHU '08), (former) LEGAL ASSISTANT, WHITE & CASE, LLP / (current) 1L, DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

David Poulouse graduated from Johns Hopkins University in May 2008 with a BA in Public Health, where he also minored in Anthropology and the History of Science & Technology. While at Hopkins, David was involved with the South Asian Society at Hopkins, Students Taking a New Direction! (a mentoring program for at risk Baltimore City youth, referred to the group by the Juvenile Justice Center), and Circle-K (a volunteer organization that is part of the Kiwanis group). Additionally, he completed an independent study on the intersection of organic farming, health, and economics in South India under Professor Jane Guyer in the Anthropology Department.

Following graduation, David worked for about a year at White & Case, LLP in Washington D.C., as a Legal Assistant.

David Poulouse is currently a first-year law student/1L at Duke University School of Law.

Questions

Describe a typical day as a Legal Assistant, White & Case LLP: As a legal assistant at White & Case LLP, a typical day involved coming into the office at nine in the morning, making a cup of tea (with milk and sugar of course), and briefly reading up on the news and catching up with coworkers. After checking my work email, if I didn't have any impending projects I would contact the attorneys I usually helped out and see if they needed any assistance. At law firms, the workload seems to come in waves. When a major deadline approaches a large firm, a typical day could include being in the office from early in the morning to leaving at two or three in the morning the next day. One week, a case involving international arbitration issues required me and several other legal assistants to stay in the office overnight and continue working into the next day. That week we regularly were leaving the office only at two or three in the morning. However, there were other days when not much was going on and legal assistants would take care of light administrative duties, such as making binders or managing documents on electronic databases. For the most part, the atmosphere was relaxed, easygoing, and collegial, even when there was a lot of work to be done.

What types of post-graduation opportunities did you research? How did you go about your search? In addition to looking for legal assistant/paralegal jobs, I was looking for jobs in the health industry, especially because I was a Public Health major at Hopkins. I briefly considered doing something public health related in Kerala, India (that's where my parents are from), but I realized that I wanted to experience what being in a large law firm was like. When I was looking at legal assistant positions, a lot of people advised me not to do it because of the long hours, the stress, and the tedious paper work. But, I found working at White & Case helped me to understand different aspects of what life in a firm is all about. That practical knowledge definitely had an effect on me and will guide some of the decisions I make in my three years in law school. Of course there were moments of being ridiculously stressed out, tired, and overly-caffeinated, but overall the benefits far exceeded the negatives.

In searching for jobs, I sent out tons of personalized emails to people, including many Hopkins alumni, in law firms and health care companies. I attended a bunch of career fairs and used the Hopkins Career Service Center.

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

I chose to work at White & Case LLP primarily because the people at the firm the day I interviewed with the legal assistant manager were incredibly sincere and collegial. My manager in the DC office, was the coolest and most down-to-earth boss ever. Also, I loved the location of the DC office of White & Case, right above Metro Center and Macy's. I lived in the DuPont Circle area and was able to walk to work every day. Another thing that influenced my decision was that a lot of my closest friends from Hopkins were in DC and Baltimore that year.

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

I'm glad I worked as a legal assistant for a year, and would definitely do it again. It helped me narrow down what types of law I want to practice. Though there are many areas I'm interested in, I know that there are certain types of law that I don't want to practice. Additionally, one of the best parts of working at White & Case was the opportunity to network with the associates and partners there. I often went to associates for general advice about law-firm life or to just catch-up. I actually met with three Duke Law grads who worked in my office before I was accepted to Duke. They gave me really practical advice and I think this may have given me an edge in the application process. Network! One thing I should add, though, is that I would not want to work as a legal assistant or a paralegal for more than one year. I felt that I learned what I came to learn, and I only needed a year to do that. This is of course different for everyone. For some people, just a summer at a law firm may suffice. Regardless of what you do, make sure you learn as much as you can, even if it's in bits and pieces.

Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about being a Legal Assistant at White & Case, LLP in D.C., Duke University School of Law, or have additional questions for David Poulouse, you may contact him directly via email at dpoulouse@jhu.edu.

4. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: WHITE & CASE LEGAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Legal Assistant and Paralegal Programs are a great way to learn about the legal profession in practice. They are available at several big law firms (mostly with branch offices in NYC and DC), and usually require a full-time, one to two year term commitment. In addition to the White & Case Legal Assistant Program listed below, several more are listed on our website, at the following link:

http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/law/legal_intern_fellow/private.html

White & Case Legal Assistant Program Basic Information:

At White & Case, legal assistants are members of a collaborative team in one of three practice groups: Corporate and Financial Services, Litigation/Intellectual Property, and Tax.

Legal assistants must have the ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment, work effectively with others, and exercise good judgment and high ethical standards. Candidates must have a four-year college degree with a minimum GPA of 3.3 and relevant work experience. Foreign language skills are often needed for certain client matters.

Washington Office

Cynthia W. Coleman
Legal Assistant Manager
White & Case LLP
701 Thirteenth Street, NW

Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202.626.3631
Fax: 202.639.9355
ccoleman@whitecase.com

New York Office
1155 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036-2787
Tel: 212.819.8200
Fax: 212.354.8113

For more information, visit the following link:

<http://www.whitecase.com/careers/northamerica/legalassistants/>

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

MICA Constitution Day Symposium: "How Soon Is "Equal Rights Now"? Women's Rights After Women's Lib"

Location: Falvey Hall, Brown Center (1301 Mount Royal Ave.)

Date: Saturday, September 12, 2009

Time: 5:00-7:00p

Description: Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and the ACLU of MD present a Constitution Day event focusing on Women's Rights. The panelists are civil rights activist [Angela Davis](#), political journalist Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now!* and Helen Molesworth, a curator at the [Harvard Art Museums](#) and an expert on feminism in the art world. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit: http://www.mica.edu/News/MICA_ACLU_of_MD_Present_Constitution_Day_Event_Focusing_on_Womens_Rights.html

JHU Constitution Day Lecture: "The Roberts Court in the Obama Era"

Location: Hodson 110

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2009

Time: 8:00p

Description: To commemorate the signing of the Constitution in 1787, Adam Liptak, the Supreme Court correspondent for *The New York Times* will deliver a lecture entitled, "The Roberts Court in the Obama Era." This event is free and open to the public.

Personal Statement Workshop

Location: TBD

Date: TBD

Time: 5:30 to 6:30p

Description: Robert Condlin, Professor of Law, University of Maryland School of Law, will offer a general overview of the “sleeper” in the law school application process. Obtain suggestions and tips on how to draft your best personal statement.

Upcoming LSAT Administration for 2009

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

Date: Saturday, September 26, 2009

Time: Registration begins at 8:30a - consult with LSDAS for all controlling details

JHU’s Milton S. Eisenhower Symposium: Elizabeth Edwards, J.D.

Location: Shriver Hall Auditorium

Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2009

Time: Doors at 7:30p, Lecture at 8p

Description: A lecture by attorney and health care advocate Elizabeth Edwards, wife of former senator and presidential candidate John Edwards. Free. For more information, email mse@jhu.edu or visit <http://www.jhu.edu/mse>.

JHU’s Milton S. Eisenhower Symposium: RNC Chairman Michael Steele & Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL)

Location: Shriver Hall Auditorium

Date: Thursday, November 5, 2009

Time: Doors at 7:30p, Lecture at 8p

Description: A discussion on the role and future of young people in public service, featuring Republican National Committee chairman Michael Steele (JHU '81, JD/Georgetown University Law Center '91), and Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL), the youngest member of Congress. Free. For more information, email mse@jhu.edu or visit <http://www.jhu.edu/mse>.

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

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

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

Kirsten Kirby, M.S.Ed., Assistant Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Ellen Snyderman, M.S., 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. everyday or visit our website <http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/> for additional information.