

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

Best viewed in HTML

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Friday, October 9, 2009 – Thursday, October 22, 2009

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Meeting with law school representatives can help you learn more about law schools of interest and may make an impression on an admissions representative considering your application. If you cannot make it to one of the LSAC sponsored Law Forums (<http://www.lsac.org/Choosing/law-school-recruitment-forums.asp#>), keep in mind the upcoming Law Fair at the University of Maryland, College Park the afternoon of Tuesday, October 13, 2009.

On-campus there will be two info sessions presented by admission representatives from: Columbia Law School from noon to 1pm on Monday, October 12 and a joint session by the University of Maryland School of Law and the University of Baltimore School of Law this Wednesday, October 14 from 5:30 to 6:30pm.

For more information on these events, see the Upcoming Pre-Law Meetings and Program Announcements section below. Hope to see you there!

2. LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE: COLLEGE COST REDUCTION & ACCESS ACT OF 2007 AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION AND COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2008

Many of you are conscious of and concerned with the impending debt that attending law school may bring -- with good reason! For those of you interested in pursuing a career in public interest law, this is especially disconcerting, as you know you will be facing a lower salary.

Equal Justice Works reported that in 2005 the median entry-level salary was \$36,000 for a civil services lawyer, \$43,000 for a public defender, \$44,000 for a prosecutor, and \$40,000 for a lawyer at a public interest organization focused on issues such as civil rights, immigration, or economic justice. Meanwhile, the average law school debt load for a 2005 graduate was \$78,763 at a private school and \$51,056 at a public school!

Recently, two very important federal acts were passed that directly impact those pursuing public interest careers. The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program is one of the most significant breakthroughs for public interest lawyers in a generation. Public Service Loan Forgiveness is a new program established by the College Cost Reduction & Access Act offering loan forgiveness after 10-years of public service employment. To qualify for loan forgiveness, a borrower must make monthly loan payments for ten years (120 payments) while working full-time in qualifying public service employment.

Comprehensive information about Public Service Loan Forgiveness including which jobs qualify, which loans are covered, and how to earn forgiveness can be found at the following link:

<http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/resources/student-debt-relief/public-service-loan-forgiveness>

Tools include calculators, downloadable worksheets, podcasts and an interactive forum.

In addition to the debt-relief that these acts may bring should you qualify, most all law schools have internal public interest loan repayment programs and there are also similar state funded and run programs to potentially access. Considering a career in public interest law in light of a large debt load can be daunting. Be sure to research all of your options to ensure you are maximizing any and all available resources!

3. GLIDE YEAR(S) OPPORTUNITY: TEACH FOR AMERICA

Joining Teach For America may make your law career more meaningful and focused. By committing two years to teach in an urban or rural low-income community, you will have a significant impact on the lives of children facing the challenges of poverty. At the same time, you will gain real-world insight into many of the social issues that our country's laws and public policies should address. Teach For America alumni often recognize how abstract legal concepts and policies impact children and families in low-income communities. Additionally, the rigor of the corps experience may inspire deep personal strength that fuels the drive for excellence in a legal career. Finally, alumni say that managing a classroom of students and leading them toward ambitious goals provided them with confidence and a level of credibility that enabled them to make a huge impact in their legal career.

For more information on Teach For America alumni in law, visit:

http://www.teachforamerica.org/alumni/alumni_law.htm

Many law schools offer special benefits to corps members and alumni, including two-year deferrals, application fee waivers and scholarships.

For more information on Law School Partnerships, visit:

http://www.teachforamerica.org/alumni/grad_school_partnerships.htm

How to apply

In order to apply, applicants submit an online application by one of the deadlines. Next, selected applicants participate in a 30-minute phone interview with a Teach For America representative. Then, the most promising applicants are invited to a final, day-long interview. Applications are non-binding.

Application timeline 2010

All incoming corps members will attend the summer training institute in Summer 2010 and begin teaching in Fall 2010, regardless of the deadline at which they apply.

Next Online Application Deadline is October 28, 2009!

For more information on how to apply, visit the following link:

http://www.teachforamerica.org/admissions/how_to_apply/how_to_apply.htm

4. INTERVIEW: ELIZABETH J. REZA, CORPORATE PARTNER, ROPES & GRAY LLP

Elizabeth J. Reza is a Partner in the Investment Management Group of the Corporate Department of Ropes & Gray LLP, in Boston, Massachusetts. Ms. Reza joined Ropes & Gray full time upon graduation, following completion of a Summer Associate position her second year of law school. As a Partner in the Investment Management Group, Ms. Reza works with investment advisers, investment companies, board of trustees/directors, endowments and private foundations in connection with regulatory and transactional matters and a range of products including mutual funds, pooled investment vehicles, and separate accounts.

After 10 years with the firm, Ms. Reza made Partner in November 2007.

Ms. Reza earned her J.D., from Columbia Law School in 1997. While there, she was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and served as a Member of the *Columbia Law Review*.

Ms. Reza received her A.B. in American History from Columbia College in 1992. Before attending law school, Ms. Reza worked at Resources, Inc., a marketing research firm, from 1992-1993, and at Davis, Polk & Wardwell, LLP, as a corporate paralegal, from 1993-1994.

Ms. Reza is admitted to practice in Massachusetts.

Questions

2) Describe a typical day as a lawyer in the investment management group.

In order to juggle my work and family commitments, my typical day starts early. I usually work from 5-7am, from home, in order to get a head start on projects for the day or finish projects that I know my clients or colleagues will be waiting for in the morning. During these early hours, I review work drafted by more junior lawyers and provide them comments so that they can finish a project or I finalize work that is almost ready to go to the client and get it out the door. I arrive at the office around 9:30am and from then until close of business (5-6pm), I am on the phone or meeting with colleagues and clients. As a result, "business hours" tend to be the hours in which we deal with urgent matters or issues with pending deadlines. After 6pm, clients in my practice area tend to go home, so I have time to review and respond to on-going matters. At this point in my career, I try to leave the office by 7pm most evenings. However, I typically log back on around 9:30pm or so, and work for another hour or so.

As a lawyer in the investment management group, I provide counsel to mutual funds, boards of directors that oversee mutual funds, investment advisers, and large institutional investors. We work on client teams and, as a result, are able to work with the same clients for long periods of time. For example, my first client when I began practicing in this area 10 years ago is still one of my biggest clients. This means that I really get to know the client's business, its concerns, risk tolerances, and people.

The investment management area is regulatory in nature (there are several bodies of law applicable to the offer and sale of mutual fund shares and the provision of advisory services) so my practice has a large regulatory component. When we provide advice to clients, we need to take into account applicable regulatory constraints and ensure that the client is operating within the applicable regulations. On any day, for example, we may receive questions about how to: structure a product, respond to a request by a client of the adviser, deal with a compliance issue, disclose changes in investment strategy, or interpret a contractual provision. Many of these questions require research, analysis and writing. The research involves looking for relevant statutes or regulations, written guidance from the applicable regulatory body, and applicable case law. It is then necessary to analyze this in light of the client's facts.

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

I was initially attracted to this area of law because it provided me with a more predictable work flow that enabled me to balance work and family commitments. While there is a lot of work to be done every day, I have a lot of flexibility about where and when I get the work done -- as long as it gets done! However, it is the nature of the work that has kept me in the area. Every day, I am getting new and different questions from my clients. While I am certainly able to identify issues and provide initial feedback on many of these questions at the time they are asked, I am still seeing and considering many issues for the first time. This makes the work challenging and fun for me.

4) What are some of the downsides of this area of law? How would you compare the reality of your profession to the picture you had of it while in school?

Because mutual funds are offering their shares for purchase every business day, it is necessary that the offering documents they use to sell their shares (prospectuses) are accurate and complete. My clients currently offer about 300 separate mutual funds and, as a result, a portion of my time is spent reviewing the offering documents for these mutual funds. While the task is incredibly important (and one that typically involves lawyers of all levels of seniority, although the role changes depending on level of seniority), I can't say that it is "fun."

I never imagined practicing law in this area. Going into law school and when I started my career, I wanted to be a transactional lawyer (i.e., doing mergers and acquisitions, takeovers, buyouts, etc.). I knew that this would involve long and unpredictable hours, but I really enjoyed being part of a big team working on an important transaction. After a few years, however, I found it more difficult than I had anticipated to balance this type of schedule with my family commitments (I had a son in law school and then a second son at the end of my first year at Ropes & Gray), so I began to search for a practice area that was still interesting to me, but that provided me more flexibility in terms of my schedule.

5) Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in attending law school and, specifically, pursuing this body of law?

I think it's very important to understand the demands of working at a large corporate law firm before committing yourself. At the end of the day, lawyers are service providers. Clients are paying their lawyers a lot of money and expect that their work will be done well and done promptly. This means that lawyers are frequently the last ones working -- long after the business people have gone home. You need to be tolerant of this reality -- as well as flexible when it comes to your personal plans. I would strongly recommend working as a paralegal at one of the big firms in a geographic region where you imagine you might settle. It will give you a sense of the daily pace, length of working hours, and predictability/unpredictability of schedule. My first introduction to the world of the big law firm was my senior year of college -- when I was hired to be a clerk at a NY law firm, working 6pm-2am!

In terms of work in investment management, there are very few law schools that offer courses specifically targeted to investment management. However, investment management encompasses many of the securities laws and you should, therefore, take a securities regulation course in law school if you are interested in practicing in this area. More broadly, however, you should be a strong writer and should really enjoy research and writing.

Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about being a corporate attorney, the investment management industry, Rope & Gray LLP, or have additional questions for Ms. Reza, you may contact her directly via email at elizabeth.reza@ropesgray.com.

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Law School Info Session: Columbia Law School

Location: Glass Pavilion

Date: Monday, October 12, 2009

Time: 12:00p to 1:00p

Description: An admissions representative will be available to answer questions and provide information about Columbia Law School.

University of Maryland's Law School Fair

Sponsored by The University's Pre-Law Advising Office within Letters and Sciences in conjunction with the University Career Center and The President's Promise

Location: University of Maryland, College Park - Colony Ballroom, Stamp Student Union

Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Description: Over 70 law schools from around the country will be available to answer questions and provide information about their programs.

For a list of participating schools, directions to campus, fair tips, and other information, please visit:

<http://www.careercenter.umd.edu/LawFairPrep>

Business casual attire is suggested, and no advance registration is necessary.

Law School Info Session: University of Maryland School of Law & University of Baltimore School of Law

Location: Mattin 162

Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Time: 5:30p to 6:30p

Description: Admissions representatives from the University of Maryland School of Law & the University of Baltimore School of Law will be available to answer questions and provide information about their respective law school programs.

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, GULC '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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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.