

Allegheny County Bar Association

Summer
Clerkship
Program

2006

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Summer Clerkship Program - 2006

PURPOSE

The Allegheny County Bar Association recognizes that summer work experience has been identified as a key strategy of the Diversity Initiative for attracting and identifying high potential first-year minority law students who may become candidates for future employment in Pittsburgh. The ACBA is sponsoring a Summer Clerkship Program in 2006 as one of its strategies for achieving greater diversity in the Pittsburgh legal community.

The purpose of the Allegheny County Bar Association's Summer Clerkship Program is to provide an enriching employment experience for ten first-year minority law students from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Duquesne University School of Law at participating law firms, corporate law departments, or government agencies, during the summer of 2006.

PARTICIPATING LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS

Legal organizations may indicate their willingness to participate in this pilot program by notifying the ACBA during the month of December 2005 that their organization is willing to employ one or two first-year minority law students as summer clerks during the summer of 2006. The success of the program at each participating legal organization will depend in large part upon the appointment of a supervising attorney who will oversee the experience of the summer clerk. The supervising attorney will be expected to orient the summer clerk to the legal organization, its policies, procedures, and other work-related details necessary for the summer clerk to have a rewarding work experience and to coordinate the work to be performed by the summer clerk, in order to ensure a positive and educational experience.

ACBA ASSISTANCE

The ACBA Law Firm/Law Department Task Force will provide guidance and suggestions to each participating legal organization to assist in making each summer clerk's experience meaningful. In addition, the ACBA will sponsor programs throughout the summer to which all summer clerks and representatives of the legal organizations will be invited.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
- Foster the development of practical skills
- Expose law students to the legal organization's culture
- Provide a challenging and enriching work experience
- Promote student-mentoring relationships

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

First-year law students may apply for one of ten available slots for the summer of 2006. A panel of attorneys from participating organizations will interview a sufficient number of applicants to select ten successful applicants. The selection criteria will include: (1) the application, (2) submission of a recently completed research paper, and (3) an interview. A professor from one of the participating law schools will grade the research papers.

The University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Duquesne University School of Law will be asked to publicize the summer clerkship program during the month of December 2005.

Applications must be submitted to the ACBA by no later than February 1, 2006.

The ACBA will attempt to contact qualified minority candidates, as well as minority law student organizations, in order to encourage applications for the summer clerk positions.

The panel will evaluate the applicants based upon the quality of the research paper and the interview. A total of 100 points will be possible as the maximum achievable score (writing skill 50 points, interview results 25 points, and applicant background 25 points). Interviews will be conducted during the month of February 2006.

Law students will be notified of their selection for the program by March 31, 2006.

Successful applicants will be placed within a legal organization on a random basis.

The employing legal organization will determine the length of the summer clerkship assignment to begin on or after June 1, 2006.

LENGTH OF WORK ASSIGNMENT

Work assignments can be configured in either of two ways: (1) two consecutive six-week assignments within different legal organizations; or (2) one consecutive twelve-week assignment within a single legal organization. Law students will be placed in a law firm, corporate law department, or government agency. A student's career interest will be considered in the placement decision, subject to the availability of a slot in the appropriate legal organization.

Law students who participate in this program are not guaranteed employment for the summer after their second year of law school is completed.

SALARY

Salary for summer clerkship employees will be established by the individual legal organization employing the summer clerks, subject to a minimum salary level that will be established by the ACBA (the suggested salary level for summer clerks employed in the summer 2006 program is \$1,200 per week, subject to tax and withholdings). However, the salary level should be comparable with that for other first-year law students working in the legal organization in similar positions.

MEASUREMENT AND OUTCOMES

At the end of the summer clerk work period, students will be asked to complete an exit interview form, in order to obtain feedback regarding the quality of the law student's overall work experience. For purposes of evaluating the program, the legal organization's program coordinator and the ACBA's Diversity Coordinator will jointly review comments on all summer clerk exit interview forms and take note of the employers' observations.

It is recommended that the ACBA, legal organizations, law schools, and task forces consider possible revisions and/or enhancements to the pilot program with the intent that it will be offered for a third year (2007), in order to fully assess its long-term viability.



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