

To: NALP Board of Directors

From: Michelle Stevens, Chair, NALP Public Service Section

Date: October 19, 2007

Re: Second Quarterly Report

The Public Service Section held its semi-annual meeting at the NALP Public Service Mini-Conference in Washington, DC on October 4, 2007. There were 113 people present at the meeting and attending the mini-conference sessions. In addition to the mini-conference sessions and meeting, the second annual Public Interest Advising 101 program for new law school professionals, with approximately 30 registrants, and a new program, the Public Interest Law Student Forum were held on Friday, October 5.

During the section meeting a short presentation was made by John Rapping, Executive Director of the Southern Public Defender Training Center (SPDTC), during which he advised section members about his organization. SPDTC has been set up with funding through a Soros Fellowship and has as its goal to train public defenders who will then be placed in positions with PD offices throughout the South.

Following John's presentation, the various work group chairs updated the section on the work their respective groups have been involved in. Details are below in the Work Group Reports section of this memo. In addition to the work group reports, Steve Grumm and Jarrod Shirk reported on the updates being made to the PSLawNet website. Steve Grumm also updated the section members on the *2008 Public Interest & Public Sector Attorney Salary Report*.

Finally, during the meeting about an hour of time was spent discussing the latest federal legislation, the College Cost Reduction Act. The discussion was led by Heather Jarvis of Equal Justice Works who has been working to understand the details of the new law and how it will impact students and graduates interested in public service legal careers.

WORK GROUP REPORTS

Publications Work Group

The publications group, with contributions from over 20 of the section members and Steve Grumm, saw the completion of a project begun during the previous NALP year – the *NALP Law School Guide to Public Interest Careers*. This resource, invaluable for those new to public interest advising, had not been updated since 1998 and is now available for purchase by NALP members.

In addition to the *Law School Guide* being completed, there have been monthly contributions to the *NALP Bulletin* as follows from various section members:

- 1) *Working to Encourage Public Interest Careers with Legal Services Corporation Programs: The LSC Quality Initiative*, Karen Sargeant – NALP Bulletin, July 2007
- 2) *Firms Sponsoring Split Public Interest Summers*, Teresa Bryant – NALP Bulletin, August 2007
- 3) *Congressional Action on Public Interest Loan Repayment Programs*, Steve Grumm – NALP Bulletin, September 2007
- 4) *The State of Legal Services in New Orleans Two Years Following Katrina*, Heather Gattuso Lambert – NALP Bulletin – September 2007

Public Service Mini-Conference Planning Work Group

Planning of the Public Service Mini-Conference was overseen by work group chair, Steve Langerud, and by Steve Grumm. The mini conference was held on October 4 at the offices of Arnold & Porter in Washington, DC and was attended by 113 professionals. The plenary session was entitled *Opportunities in International Public Interest Law* and featured the following panelists:

- Elizabeth Andersen, American Society of International Law
- Sara Rakita, New York University School of Law
- Michelle Mohr Vodenik, Chicago-Kent College of Law
- Steve Langerud, University of Iowa School of Law
- Tori Andrea, 2L Student, Georgetown University Law Center

There were three break-out sessions following the plenary session. Those were:

- *Law School Pro Bono Toolbox: A Nuts and Bolts Approach to Program Management* featuring
 - o Elizabeth Kane, Brooklyn Law School
 - o Melanie Kushnir, ABA Center for Pro Bono
 - o K Royal, Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law
 - o Teresa Schmiedeler, University of Maryland School of Law
- *Public Interest Law Firms: Exploring the "Third" Way* featuring
 - o Michael Allen, Relman & Dane, PLLC
 - o Deborah Ellis, New York University School of Law
 - o Carolyn Smith Pravlick, Terris, Pravlick & Millian, LLP
 - o Jenny Rae Yang, Cohen, Milstein, Hausfield & Toll, PLLC
- *Everything You Need to Know About Federal Security Clearances* featuring
 - o Brooke Bonhet, Partnership for Public Service
 - o Rena J. Cervoni, U.S. Department of Justice
 - o Lauren Dubin, Georgetown University Law Center
 - o Kim Reid, U.S. Department of State

Law Student/Public Interest Employer Forum Work Group

This program was the first of its kind the section has planned, and it brought together public interest minded students and members of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) for a dialogue on the current and future state of public interest law practice.

NLADA and LSC Panelists were:

John Idleman, Sr. Program Counsel, LSC Office of Policy and Programs

Michael Genz, Director, Office of Policy and Programs

Don Saunders, Director of Civil Legal Services, National Legal Aid & Defender Association

Brenda Ford Harding, Executive Director, Neighborhood Legal Services Program

Blake Fetrow, Chief Attorney, Legal Aid Bureau Inc.

Heather Jarvis, Program Manager, Law School Advocacy, Equal Justice Works

James Leipold, Executive Director, NALP

Approximately 60 law students attended, a number within the goal of the forum's planning team. The goal was to keep the number small enough to have a very interactive, participatory format but also to have diversity (e.g. size of school, geographic region, private & public, small & large) and hoped for diversity of students as well. Approximately 15 law school professionals attended as well.

The issues addressed included:

- Quality of life/practice of law issues
- Impact of the work: can you make a difference?
- Mobility: types of work, geographic area
- Salary/Debt
- Long-term funding of legal services
- Planning for next generation of management and leadership of programs
- Hiring decisions

Overall, feedback of both students and law school professionals was very positive. The overwhelming sentiment was to repeat the program. Many thought that young attorneys should be added to the panel to discuss life as a new civil legal services attorney.

Work group chair, Hillary Exter, has invited the planning team to send around their own comments on the forum and then to schedule a conference call. To open up the discussion Hillary sent around some of her own thoughts on the forum, and next steps.

NALP Conference Programming Work Group

RFPs were submitted for eight programs and all were approved, however two proposals were combined into one program. The programs approved for the 2008 NALP Annual Conference are:

- 1) Creating, Building and Strengthening a Law School Pro Bono Program
- 2) Coaching Students Through the Post-graduate Fellowship Application Process
- 3) Maximizing Your Public Interest With a Scholars Program
- 4) A Beginner's Guide to Public Interest Counseling
- 5) Fostering Partnerships: Private Sector Funding of Public Interest Initiatives
- 6) Alternative Winter/Spring Break Trips and Public Service Projects
- 7) A Candid Dialogue Between Law Firms and Law Schools on the Impact of Pro Bono in the Hiring Process

In addition to these programs and in response to lengthy conversation about it during the Mini-Conference Public Service Section Meeting October 4th, NALP Executive Director, Jim Leipold, announced they would add a program to discuss the College Cost Reduction Act.

New Initiatives Work Group

The New Initiatives Work Group is being lead by Alexa Shabecoff (Harvard). She is continuing in her work with Tom Maligno (Touro) to spearhead an effort to better align public interest employer recruitment efforts, and to possibly get them on a similar hiring timetable as large firm employers. Since my last quarterly report, the survey was created and about 300 responses were collected from public interest employers. Alexa and Tom are beginning the process of culling through the responses and determining what trends can be identified in those answers.

Work Group Developing Law Student Recruitment/Supervision Best Practices Resources for Public Service Employers (in collaboration with NLADA and LSC)

This group has not yet "met" as the Public Interest Law Student Forum has been engaged with the NLADA and LSC up until October. The work group will likely meet in the next few months with a goal of developing something for publication by the May 2008 Equal Justice Conference.

Environmental Scanning

The big topic of conversation in the Public Interest community at this time is the new federal law passed by Congress and signed by the President, the College Cost Reduction Act. As previously mentioned, the legislation dominated the open discussion period during the October 4 meeting, and is continuing to be discussed on all of our campuses.