

**Widener University**  
**Commonwealth Law School**  
*Career Development Office*

***Career Planning Guide***

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The Career Development Office invites you to explore the broad range of career opportunities available to you as a Widener University Commonwealth School of Law student and graduate. This guide has been designed to provide you with the resources needed to help you achieve your career objectives over the next three years and throughout your legal career.

This guide is broken into eight sections:

- I. Self-Assessment & Career Planning – p. 3**
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**SECTION I**

***Self-Assessment  
&  
Career Planning***

## A. SELF ASSESSMENT

There are a variety of professional opportunities available to students during law school and beyond. Law firms, public interest organizations, government agencies, judges, and professors all hire law students. The process might seem daunting at first. Do not get overwhelmed. Begin to narrow down your options by conducting a self-assessment. Ask yourself:

- What potential practice areas do I want to pursue?
- What geographical locations am I interested in?
- What type of employer do I want to work for?
- What are my interests, skills and values?
- What are my academic and professional priorities?
- Why did I come to law school?
- What are my short-term and long-term professional goals?

There are several resources in the Career Development Office and on-line that contain tests and exercises you can do at your convenience. We also suggest that you answer some of the following questions to ascertain your current interests and goals.

### Work Environment

1. Would you prefer a large office to a small one?
2. Do you function better in a team environment?
3. Do you mind spending your day at your desk, with small breaks?
4. Would you prefer to spread your day equally between the office and court?
5. How do you feel about being in the court?
6. Do you prefer structured training or are you comfortable learning on the job?
7. What level of feedback do you prefer?
8. Are you seeking lots of responsibility early in your career?

### Practice Areas

1. What skills do you prefer to use on a daily basis? Writing, researching, negotiating, advocacy?
2. Which classes do you enjoy the most?
3. Do you consider yourself a self-starter?
4. Are you attracted to a cause or a mission?
5. Are you multi-lingual?
6. Do you have a background that includes public service or volunteerism?
7. Are you good with numbers, accounting or calculations?
8. Do you enjoy looking at the “big picture” or digging into the details?
9. Do you desire the “spotlight” or do you prefer to work behind the scenes?
10. Do you have political aspirations or desire to be a public servant?
11. Do you like working with facts and data?
12. Are you comfortable working one on one with people?

### Other Considerations

1. Where would you prefer to work? How far are you willing/able to travel for work?
2. What are your family responsibilities? How will you balance work, family, community and peers?

3. What are your current financial obligations? How can you adjust your budget so that you have maximum flexibility in exploring viable career pathways?
4. Have you established a family budget and gathered information concerning typical salaries? Doing so early will greatly assist in your career planning process.

When you are finished, consider meeting with a career counselor to discuss your discoveries and decide how you might best use the information in your job search process.

## **B. CAREER PLANNING**

The Career Development Office is invested in the success of our students and alumni and strives to provide employment leads and opportunities, career-related skills, training and education to ensure that every student is employed upon graduation. To facilitate that goal, the CDO will:

- Create and maintain a database of job listings and potential legal employers with information about the employers and contact persons at each employer.
- Develop and maintain robust relationships with law firms, judges and their staffs, in-house counsel, government attorneys and officials, nonprofits, and public interest organizations.
- Work with each student to develop and refine the skills necessary to find employment as a legal professional.
- Provide ongoing counseling to students and alumni on strategies to assist with both short and long-term career goals.

Employers highly value students who can demonstrate, through specific experiences, their ability to succeed as a lawyer, and commitment to excelling as a professional. Taking time early on to understand your professional goals and how they can be fulfilled is essential to your long-term professional success. The Career Development Office works with a multitude of employers to help you gain the necessary experience, including pro bono and other volunteer work, externships, part-time legal work, clinics, etc.

The Career Development Office has developed a set of timelines to help students identify and plan for critical events through their law school experience. Please contact the CDO for more information and to obtain a copy.

## **SECTION II**

# ***Networking***

Networking is a crucial part of any job search and will be an invaluable tool in every aspect of your life going forward. Networking consists not only of contacting people you know, but also reaching out through those individuals to their contacts. One of your most important assets in a job search is a network of contacts.

The way we network has evolved over the years and now includes in-person and online networking, which means that it is now critical to evaluate both your physical and online presence when you begin your job search.

## **Putting Your Best Foot Forward**

### **In-Person**

How do you present yourself? Do you have the proper interview wardrobe? One good business suit and one good business casual look are what you need before you begin meeting with people. Always dress for your audience, not yourself. If you are going to a law firm where there is a dress code, wear business attire; for an informal meeting, wear business casual. You should always be over, not under-dressed.

### **Online**

What comes up when you search your name online? What does your social media presence say about you? You should always assume that someone will “google” you before meeting you, so your online presence should reflect the image you want to present to the world. Edit what needs to be edited.

Sites such as LinkedIn are critical to your job search. LinkedIn is now used by more than 560 million people in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. The site was designed specifically for professional networking. If you are conducting a job search, it is essential to be on LinkedIn.

## **Developing Your Elevator Pitch**

An elevator pitch is your “personal statement”. It sums up who you are professionally and should be delivered in a very short period of time – the time it would take for you to share an elevator ride with someone. Remember that this is a crucial way for you to make a first impression, so it should always be positive, concise and directed.

There are a few distinct things to keep in mind when developing your pitch:

1. Clearly state your purpose – what kind of position do you want?
2. Write it down – what do you want employers to know about you? What skills and accomplishments do you want to highlight? What experience can you bring to the table? After drilling down on this information, begin editing and keep editing until you have just a few bullet points that become your core message.
3. Prepare – read your pitch out loud. Try it out on your family and friends.

A good elevator pitch should always include the following three questions: Who are you? What do you do? What are you looking for?

### Who Do You Know?

The idea of networking can be overwhelming but the reality is that we do it nearly every day. Whenever we ask for referrals or recommendations, we are networking. When starting your job search, you should sit down and make a list of everyone in your life – friends, family, colleagues, service providers, etc. Which of these people are personally invested in you? Who are you willing to ask for help? Think of this process as planting seeds. While none of them may be attorneys, they all are likely to know an attorney or know someone who knows an attorney. Plant the idea that you are looking for a new job and, with a little persistence, watch your network grow.

There are numerous other ways to expand your network. The CDO has names of alumni who are willing to serve as mentors and guides through your job search process.

### What Should You Say?

The first rule of networking for job search is: Always be prepared. Make a point of doing your homework before you reach out or meet with someone. Google them – know who they are, what they do, and what their company does. The more prepared you are, the more impressive you will be.

The first step is to ask for a meeting. You should not be asking for a job at this point – you are there to get information. Ask if you can meet to get their opinion or “pick their brains”. If someone feels like they may be able to provide information, they are more likely to be willing to meet you.

You should always make the meeting about the other person, not you. You are there to get information. Ask about their background; how they ended up at their firm or organization; what their day-to-day activities look like. **Always ask if there is anyone else with whom they would recommend you meet.** It is okay to ask if you can send them your resume, but do so in the context of asking for feedback as you begin your job search.

Finally, be mindful of their time. This person is doing you a favor, so don't overstay your welcome. Try to keep the meeting to the amount of time it would take to grab a cup of coffee.

### Follow up

Always be sure to follow up your meeting with a thank you email. Your email should be clear, concise, and well-written. Follow up on any leads or suggestions they offer and report back. Make sure they feel that their time was well-spent.



## **SECTION III**

# ***Resumes & Cover Letters***

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## The Legal Resume: Format and Examples

There are a number of things to keep in mind when preparing your legal resume. First, a legal resume varies in format and content from other types of resumes; therefore, it is probably necessary to revise your current resume. Potential employers will formulate their first impressions of you while reviewing your resume. Consequently, you want to make sure your resume is a true reflection of your skills, interests, abilities, accomplishments, and even your personality. When employers review resumes, they will usually scan them first, looking quickly for achievements, experience and other highlights. Instead of writing in sentences and paragraphs, use phrases; be concise. Through the judicious use of spacing, highlighting, and underlining you can exercise a great deal of control over the initial thirty-second scan your resume receives by emphasizing those items enhancing your candidacy.

Included in the following pages are: a general resume format; a list of law-related action verbs to draw from when writing job descriptions for the "Experience" section of your resume; "Questions and Answers on Resume Writing"; a number of sample resumes; "Questions and Answers on Cover Letter Writing"; and cover letter samples.

Variations on the standard resume form are encouraged. You may decide to highlight certain information and underplay other details depending on your targeted employer. Notice that, while each sample resume generally conforms to the legal resume format, each is unique.

Before you begin drafting your resume, consider how to best "sell" your experience and credentials, with an eye toward conveying the legal skills that you have already developed. Achievements in school, research and writing, public service, work experience, the arts, sports, or languages are all of great interest to potential employers. Keep in mind that effective resumes must be tailored to the employers receiving them. Thus, throughout your job search, you will likely create more than one version of your resume. The ways in which one may produce a resume are numerous. Legal employers are usually interested in obtaining as much information as quickly as possible. Therefore, a resume that calls attention to keywords by using underlining, uppercase letters or bold face type will appeal to employers.

Employers looking for legal talent expect clarity, neatness and evidence of strong communication skills. If your resume is poorly designed, copied, not printed, difficult to scan, hard to understand or contains a typographical error, you will give the employer reason to assume you may not live up to his/her expectations of you on the job. Remember, your resume is the first "writing sample" an employer will see!

Once you have a solid template, it should be easy to modify your resume on a regular basis. The following three examples follow the same student through law school and highlight the idea that you can build upon your resume every year.

## IL RESUME

**Jane Q. Smith**

123 Main Street

Harrisburg, PA 17110

H (717)123-4567 · C (717)234-5678

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### **EDUCATION**

**Widener Commonwealth Law School**, Harrisburg, PA

Juris Doctor, expected May 2021

GPA: 3.25

Honors: Dean's List, Fall 2018

Activities: Environmental Law Society 2018-2019

Moot Court 2018-2019

Student Bar Association, class representative, 2018-2019

**Shippensburg University**, Shippensburg, PA

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 2018

GPA: 3.21

Honors: Dean's List, 2015, 2017

Activities: Member of NCAA Division II Track & Field Team, 2015-2018

### **EXPERIENCE**

**PA Department of State, Prosecution Division**, Harrisburg, PA

Legal Intern, Spring 2019

Drafted pleadings, including orders to show cause, petitions for mental physicals exams, motions to deem facts admitted, and subpoenas; conducted extensive legal research on General Rules of Administrative Procedure for hearings; prepared presentations for state boards of licensing; attended hearings in order to assist attorneys with their cases.

**Volvo Group, Connected Services**, Shippensburg, PA

Intern, January 2018-July 2018

Supported the Volvo CE NA "Uptime Solution Center", with assisting dealers in providing uptime services, account administration, subscription management, and fleet reporting services. Supported the Reporting and Analytics team with various local and global projects. Provided call center support to the Volvo CE dealers within North America Region.

### **ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS**

Hiked the entire Appalachian Trail over the course of the three summers (2015-2017); self-published science fiction novel; produce and host true crime podcast

## 2L Resume

**Jane Q. Smith**

123 Main Street

Harrisburg, PA 17110

H (717)123-4567 · C (717)234-5678

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### **EDUCATION**

#### **Widener Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, PA**

Juris Doctor, expected May 2021

GPA: 3.32; Ranked 4/84

Honors: Dean's List, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019

Activities: *Widener Commonwealth Law Review*, 2019-present

Moot Court Honor Society, 2019-present

Environmental Law Society 2018-present

Student Bar Association, class representative, 1L, 2L

#### **Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 2018

GPA: 3.21

Honors: Dean's List, 2015, 2017

Activities: Member of NCAA Division II Track & Field Team, 2015-2018

### **LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **Central Pennsylvania Civil Law Clinic, Harrisburg, PA**

*Certified Legal Intern*, Spring 2020

Experience handling divorce actions, landlord-tenant disputes, and various estate planning matters. Personally responsible for maintaining case files and corresponding with clients. Interviewed clients. Researched, wrote, and filed complaints with the court.

#### **The Governor's Office of General Counsel, PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Harrisburg, PA**

*Legal Extern*, Summer 2019

Assist attorneys with preparing legal documents, briefs, pleadings and opinions. Assist with trial preparation. Research, interpret and apply laws, court decisions, and other legal authorities in preparation of briefs, pleadings and indictments.

#### **PA Department of State, Prosecution Division, Harrisburg, PA**

*Legal Intern*, Spring 2019

Drafted pleadings, including orders to show cause, petitions for mental physicals exams, motions to deem facts admitted, and subpoenas; conducted extensive legal research on General Rules of Administrative Procedure for hearings; prepared presentations for state boards of licensing; attended hearings in order to assist attorneys with their cases.

### **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

#### **Volvo Group, Connected Services, Shippensburg, PA**

*Intern*, January 2018-July 2018

Supported the Volvo CE NA "Uptime Solution Center", with assisting dealers in providing uptime services, account administration, subscription management, and fleet reporting services.

### **ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS**

Hiked the entire Appalachian Trail over the course of the three summers (2015-2017); self-published science fiction novel; produce and host true crime podcast

## 3L Resume

**Jane Q. Smith**

123 Main Street

Harrisburg, PA 17110

H (717)123-4567 · C (717)234-5678

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### **EDUCATION**

#### **Widener Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, PA**

Juris Doctor, expected May 2021

- GPA: 3.41; Ranked 3/82  
Honors: Dean's List, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Fall 2020  
Activities: *Widener Commonwealth Law Review*, 2019-present  
Moot Court Honor Society, 2019-present  
Environmental Law Society 2018-present  
Student Bar Association, *President* 2020-present; *class representative*, 1L, 2L

#### **Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 2018

- GPA: 3.21  
Honors: Dean's List, 2015, 2017  
Activities: Member of NCAA Division II Track & Field Team, 2015-2018

### **LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **Eckert Seamans, Harrisburg, PA**

Summer Associate, Summer 2020

- Assisted with researching and drafting briefs on energy litigation matter filed with the United States Courts of Appeals for the Eleventh and Ninth Circuits.
- Researched and wrote memoranda of law for the Sustainable Development team, including an analysis of the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) and the related Pennsylvania counterpart, and the applicability of this legislation to a major golf course development project.

#### **Central Pennsylvania Civil Law Clinic, Harrisburg, PA**

*Certified Legal Intern*, January - May 2020

- Experience handling divorce actions, landlord-tenant disputes, and various estate planning matters.
- Personally responsible for maintaining case files and corresponding with clients.
- Researched, wrote, and filed complaints with the court.

#### **The Governor's Office of General Counsel, PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Harrisburg, PA**

*Legal Extern*, Summer 2019

- Assist attorneys with preparing legal documents, briefs, pleadings and opinions.
- Research, interpret and apply laws, court decisions, and other legal authorities in preparation of briefs, pleadings and indictments; assisted with trial preparation.

#### **PA Department of State, Prosecution Division, Harrisburg, PA**

*Legal Intern*, January 2019-May 2019

- Drafted pleadings, including orders to show cause, petitions for mental physicals exams, motions to deem facts admitted, and subpoenas.
- Conducted extensive legal research on General Rules of Administrative Procedure for hearings.
- Prepared presentations for state boards of licensing and attended hearings in order to assist attorneys with their cases.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON RESUME WRITING

Below are frequently asked questions to the Career Development staff. The answers should help you in preparing a rough draft of your resume before your appointment. We may then spend our time clarifying wording and format, as well as dealing with concerns unique to your situation.

Keep in mind that the answers in this handout are only suggestions. There are a variety of approaches you may wish to take in creating your resume.

### GENERAL

Q: What is the purpose of a resume?

A: A resume serves to introduce you to potential employers in the most favorable light possible, ultimately culminating in interviews. Further, what you include in your resume will influence the interviewer's questions and the tone of the interview in general. You actually exert a significant amount of control over the interview by what you present in your resume.

Q. How do I begin to write a resume?

A. The first thing you do when drafting a resume is to take an inventory of everything you have done. To begin this process you are going to make six (6) different lists with the following headings: education, honors and activities, experience, additional information (or interests).

Under **education**, list all post-secondary education including law school, colleges and universities attended, exchange programs, off-campus study, etc. List degrees, month and year obtained or expected to obtain, names and locations of schools, major and minor, and grade point average.

**Honors and activities**, should be listed in the education, under the institutions at which you received them. Be certain to include honors that indicate a high level of academic performance, and explain their significance if not readily apparent. Also include any significant college or professional activities here, and be sure to highlight any leadership roles you may have had.

Under **work experience**, list all jobs held full time, part time, paid or unpaid including externships. List the months and years you worked, position, name and location of employer, and your duties and responsibilities. You may also choose to create a separate legal experience section in order to distinguish your legal positions from your non-legal positions.

Under **activities**, list all extra- and co-curricular activities, i.e., organized groups, teams, clubs, community involvements in which you participated in both undergraduate school and in law school.

Under **academics**, list scholarships received, class rank, special recognition and academic achievements.

Under **interests**, list hobbies, travel experiences and special talents.

Under **miscellaneous**, list everything you left out thus far. This list may contain computer languages and software, foreign languages, etc.

**DO NOT LIMIT YOURSELF AT THIS POINT; LIST EVERYTHING, EVEN IF IT SEEMS TRIVIAL.**

- Q. Now that I have all this information, what do I do with it?
- A. Once you have made your lists, the editing process begins. Ask yourself the following questions for each item listed: Do I feel a sense of pride or accomplishment? Does it relate to what a prospective employer might be looking for? What aspects of my education, experience or skills will be most attractive to an employer? For example, working at Hershey Park as a ride attendant for three years may seem trivial to you, but being a conscientious worker and having the ability to deal with the public during this job may be pertinent information. Which things on my list show different aspects of my personality?
- Q. What do I do once I have identified the most pertinent information?
- A. Organize your information. Review the sample resumes in this packet. Prepare a draft copy of your resume and make an appointment with the Career Development Office to have it reviewed. Once the CDO has offered suggestions, prepare a final product.



## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Q: Should I include my memberships in student organizations and participation in activities? How should I include them?

A: In general, well-rounded individuals impress legal employers, so it is recommended that you list your activities on your resume. The next question is, “What are the most important items to put on the resume?” Ask yourself which facts are most important to you, as well as what you are trying to accomplish. If you are trying to emphasize your writing ability or experience, you may include writing for the Widener Law Review or your participation in a writing competition. For future litigators, it may be important to stress excellence in advocacy skills and training. Consider adding participation in trial competitions or memberships in Moot Court and/or Moe Levine. If you are editor-in-chief of the Widener Law Review, you may want a separate heading for that item.

## **PRE-LEGAL EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT**

Q: How much information about pre-legal education should I include? Should I mention high school?

A: As with all sections of your resume, emphasize your highest levels of achievement. For example, mention serious academic honors and achievements, as well as positions of leadership in organizations. The inclusion of social/recreational activities will help present you as well rounded. Regarding high school: this information is rarely included unless a specific reason exists for doing so, e.g., you attended a small select prep school or a school that you believe will be of special significance to the employer.

Q: What if I have little or no legal background or experience?

A: Probably at least one of your jobs, if not all, facilitated the development of skills and abilities which are used by a lawyer. For example, if you have sales experience or have otherwise dealt directly with people, you have probably developed excellent oral communication skills. Additionally, your participation in undergraduate activities and organizations may provide employers insight into your organizational and leadership

skills. Other transferable skills include research and writing, analytical skills, problem solving, supervisory skills, ability to handle large workloads, negotiation skills, and ability to work independently.

Your career goals will influence the manner in which you present your experience. If you have experience in a field in which you wish to continue, it makes sense to include that experience. If your goal is to work for a law firm, emphasize your legal or law-related experience, such as law clerk. Remember to use law-related action words such as "drafted," "interviewed," "argued," etc., to assist you in describing your skills in a legally relevant manner. NOTE: It is recommended that you do not include personal pronouns on your resume.

Q: What if I have substantial professional experience that is not law-related?

A: You will want to find a balance whereby you emphasize the fact that you are a person with extensive professional experience, but without over-emphasizing your particular field. You want to demonstrate that your orientation is now toward a law career, and that skills developed through previous work experience are transferable. An appointment with a Career Counselor will help you determine whether this is an appropriate option.

Q: What if I have held a variety of jobs that were not on the same professional level to which I now aspire?

A: You may include a short paragraph summarizing such experiences, e.g., "Held various hospitality industry positions providing the opportunity to build communication/public relations skills." If you worked in order to help finance your education, you may include this information, e.g., "Worked summers throughout college as (include title, separated by commas) contributing substantially to college tuition." See Resume Sample p. 14.

Q: What if I have little or no work background?

A: In this case, emphasize positions of responsibility, activities, honors and grades in college and law school, as well as community interests and volunteer activities.

### **PERSONAL/INTERESTS**

Q: Should I include personal data such as birth date, marital status, and health?

A: The appropriate emphasis in a resume is on professional qualifications. Personal data is not included.

Q: What if I took several years off to raise my children? How should this be reflected on my resume?

A: If your gap in time is more than 6 months, it should be addressed in your resume. Create an "Other Experience" section towards the end of your resume. Briefly state that you were involved with significant volunteer and/or leadership positions (i.e. PTA Treasurer, School Fund Raiser- raised amount in # of years). These are significant achievements and denote skills that are transferable to the legal industry.

Q: Should I list interests on a resume?

A: This is an optional section on a resume, which is seen with increasing frequency. The advantage is that by including interests, you make it known you are a well-rounded person, and you create a safe topic of conversation which can serve as an icebreaker for the interviewer.

Q: How should I handle affiliations, which may point out a political, religious, or other orientation different from a potential employer?

A: In order to strike a balance between being practical and being true to yourself, you must decide how important to your identity that affiliation is, and whether or not you can work comfortably with an employer with a different viewpoint. For example, if the affiliation is crucial to your identity, but you could work with an employer with a divergent

viewpoint, you may want to de-emphasize the affiliation or leave it out. If you could not work with such an employer, it may be more important that your resume make your affiliation clear to potential employers.

## **REFERENCES**

Q: What about references?

A: Ideally, references should be respected individuals in the legal field who are able to speak to your legal abilities. Include references as a separate document to your resume, listing each reference's name, title, work address, and work phone. If the relationship is not apparent, you might also consider including a brief line describing that person's relationship to you, e.g.: supervising attorney at Smith, Jones, and Wilson. You should confirm this information with your references; advise them as to when you will begin your job search, and follow-up with a courtesy copy of your resume for each reference.

## **BAR EXAMINATIONS/ADMISSIONS**

Q. How should I reflect that I sat for a Bar Exam on my resume?

A: One example would be to include a separate section as your first entry on your resume entitled: BAR EXAMINATION(S) and then list "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" July 2011, results pending.

Q: As a graduate, how should I word my bar admission(s)?

A: There are several ways to present your bar admission(s). One alternative is to include separate header entitled "BAR ADMISSIONS" and then list "Supreme Court of Pennsylvania November 2018; Supreme Court of New Jersey, December, 2018; U.S. District Court E.D. Pa., November, 2018. See Resume Sample, p. 23. Another alternative is to center your bar admission across the page and state "Admitted to Supreme Court of Pennsylvania November, 2018:" or "Admitted to Practice Commonwealth of Pennsylvania November, 2018." In any event, your bar admission(s) should appear at the top of your resume.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Q: May I get further assistance with my resume?

A: Yes. After reading the information in this packet you may still want suggestions about specific concerns. Please make an appointment with the Career Development Office counselors to review your resume draft and discuss your career options.

### **The following is a checklist to aid in resume preparation.**

- ✓ Hold your resume at arm's length to see how it looks
- ✓ Evaluate the content of your resume
- ✓ Make important information easy to find
- ✓ Use action verbs to describe work responsibilities
- ✓ Use the correct tense (past/present) of action verbs
- ✓ Review resume for correct capitalization, punctuation and dates
- ✓ Review for typographical, grammatical and spelling errors
- ✓ Review resume for consistency in date format usage
- ✓ Make your name stand out by utilizing bold text, underlining or capital letters
- ✓ List your current address, email address and telephone number
- ✓ Match your resume content to the employer and the position sought
- ✓ Include only accurate information
- ✓ Eliminate excessive type/font styles, sizes, lines or boxes creating a "busy" look
- ✓ Avoid excessive blank space on your resume
- ✓ Avoid excessive repetition of words or phrases including articles like "a," "an" and "the"

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON COVER LETTER WRITING

- Q. What information should I include in a cover letter?
- A. A cover letter should highlight your skills and qualifications as they relate to your targeted employer. This differs from the resume, which highlights your achievements and accomplishments. Your cover letter should not repeat verbatim the information contained in your resume, but instead, demonstrate how your skills can meet the employer's needs. The employer perceives the cover letter as a writing sample and/or work product; therefore, it should be treated as such by you. **NOTE:** A common pitfall in writing a cover letter is the over-use of personal pronouns to begin sentences and paragraphs. Always review your cover letter to determine if editing is necessary.
- Q. What is the appropriate length of a cover letter?
- A. The cover letter should be written in a strong, concise, but brief manner. It is strongly recommended that a cover letter be no more than one page in length.
- Q. May I use the same cover letter for each employer?
- A. In today's competitive job market, every effort should be made to strengthen your candidacy. Individuality and creativity will pique the interest of the reader while the mass mailing of form cover letters is ineffective and wasteful and easily recognized by the employer. It conveys a lack of research and, therefore, knowledge about the employer, as well as a lack of commitment to wanting to work for that employer. Conducting research on employers before preparing your cover letter enables you to personalize or target cover letters to individual employers.
- Q. How should I address my cover letter?
- A. It is best to address your cover letter to the firm's designated contact person. If this information is not available, it is suggested you phone the firm to acquire the name of the contact person. If you cannot determine who the individual contact person is, use the title of the firm's contact person, e.g., "Recruitment Coordinator," "Hiring Partner," etc. **AVOID** the use of "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern" as salutations.

- Q. What does an employer look for when reading a cover letter?
- A. You should answer the reader's questions, "Why is this candidate interested in my firm/organization?" "What can this candidate do for me (my organization)?" Tell the employer specifically why you want to work for them and also convey to the employer your relevant experience and abilities as well as concrete evidence that you possess those skills necessary to perform the job. Remember that your cover letter is, in a very real sense, a schematic of yourself. It reflects your personality, your attention to detail, your communication skills, your enthusiasm, and your intellect. Your cover letter and resume are usually all an employer has to decide whether or not you will reach the next phase in the application process -- the interview. These documents are the first Writing Samples an employer reads, as such, they should be concisely written and free of any typographical or grammatical errors.
- Q. How should I address a request for salary requirements in a job ad?
- A. Often it is difficult to determine what a specific position will pay. Although you may be interested, there is a concern that your salary requirements may be too high or too low for consideration for the position. The best way to handle this request is to state a salary range that is typical for the position, e.g., I am currently interviewing for positions in the low to mid sixties. The Career Development Office has salary surveys available to help you determine what the market will bear for the position you seek in your geographic region.

**CAUTION: All documents should be spell checked/proofread for errors before sending/mailing to employers.**

## Business & Law-Related Action Verbs

accepted	conducted	financed	predicted
accomplished	constructed	focused	prepared
achieved	consulted	formulated	presented
acquired	contracted	fulfilled	prevailed
acquitted	convinced	gathered	produced
adapted	convicted	generated	processed
added	coordinated	governed	proofed
addressed	corrected	guided	prosecuted
administered	corresponded	handled	protected
admitted	counseled	highlighted	provided
advised	created	identified	publicized
advocated	critiqued	implemented	pursued
afforded	cross-examined	improved	questioned
aided	debated	increased	recommended
allocated	defended	informed	reconciled
amended	defined	initiated	recorded
analyzed	delivered	innovated	rectified
answered	demonstrated	inquired	redirected
appeared	deposed	instituted	reduced
applied	described	instructed	referred
appointed	designed	interpreted	reported
approved	determined	interrogated	represented
arbitrated	deterred	interviewed	researched
argued	developed	introduced	resolved
arranged	devised	investigated	responded
articulated	devoted	launched	revealed
assembled	directed	litigated	reviewed
assessed	disseminated	maintained	revised
assisted	distributed	managed	ruled
attained	documented	maximized	scheduled
attended	drafted	mediated	selected
authored	edited	mobilized	served
balanced	effected	modified	settled
billed	elucidated	monitored	solved
briefed	enforced	named	specialized
budgeted	engaged	negotiated	sponsored
catalogued	engineered	observed	strategized
chaired	entered	obtained	strengthened
challenged	established	operated	studied
changed	evaluated	orchestrated	submitted
classified	executed	organized	subpoenaed
collected	exercised	oriented	suggested
combined	explained	originated	summarized
communicated	explored	oversaw	supervised
compared	exposed	participated	supported
competed	facilitated	persuaded	surveyed
compiled	familiarized	pinpointed	targeted
concluded	filed	planned	taught



# **SAMPLE RESUMES**

# 1L Resume

**NAME**

Address

Phone · Email

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## EDUCATION

**Widener University Commonwealth School of Law**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Juris Doctor* expected, May 2020

GPA: 3.013 (Top 20 percent = 3.013)

*Honors*: Certificate of Achievement, Torts

*Activities*: Environmental Law and Policy Society, *Treasurer*  
Pace University Environmental Law Competition, *Semi-Finalist*

**Lehigh University**, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Science in Economics, *cum laude*, May 20--

*Honors*: Central Dauphin Education Association Scholarship

*Activities*: Chi Omega Sorority, *Intramural Sports Coordinator*

*Study Abroad*: University of Cologne (2 semesters), Cologne, West Germany

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## LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**Jones & Powell**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Law Clerk*, Summers 2015 & 2016

Conducted legal research primarily in the area of insurance defense claims arising out of medical malpractice suits; drafted briefs, memoranda and pleadings; summarized depositions; assisted attorney in trial preparation; observed appellate arguments.

**The Hon. Donald E. Wieand, Superior Court of Pennsylvania**, Allentown, Pennsylvania

*Judicial Clerk*, Summer 2014

Analyzed cases, which were submitted to and/or argued before the Superior Court; researched case and statutory law; drafted opinions and bench memoranda; assisted with court week duties.

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## OTHER EXPERIENCE

**Lambert Industries**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Account Executive*, June 2013 - May 2014

Assessed customer requirements; generated corporate accounts in excess of \$2 million; procured government business; negotiated pricing structure for purchasing contracts; and reviewed and evaluated new product implementation procedures.

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## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Lehigh University Alumni Club - Big Brother/Big Sister Program

*Board of Directors*, 2012-present

## 2L Resume – Extended Division

### MARILYN R. SPENCER

[mrspencer@anywhere.com](mailto:mrspencer@anywhere.com)

20 Spring Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17111  
(717) 541-0000

#### EDUCATION

##### **Widener University Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

*Juris Doctor*, expected May 2020

Extended Division

GPA: 3.013 (Top 20 percent = 3.013)  
Honor: Certificate of Achievement: Torts  
Leadership: Treasurer, Environmental Law and Policy Society  
Competition: Pace University Environmental Law Writing Competition - semi-finalist

##### **Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

B.S., *cum laude*, May 2016

Major: Economics  
Minor: Business Administration  
Honor : Central Dauphin Education Association Scholarship  
Activity: Chi Omega Sorority, Intramural Sports Coordinator  
Study Abroad: University of Cologne (2 semesters), Cologne, West Germany

#### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

##### **Jones & Powell**

May 2015 – Spring 2016

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

**Law Clerk.** Conduct legal research primarily in the area of insurance defense claims arising out of medical malpractice suits; draft briefs, memoranda and pleadings; summarize depositions; assist attorney in trial preparation; and observe appellate arguments.

##### **The Honorable Donald E. Wieand**

Summer 2014

Superior Court of Pennsylvania

Allentown, Pennsylvania

**Judicial Clerk.** Analyzed cases, which were submitted to and/or argued before the Superior Court; researched case and statutory law; drafted opinions and bench memoranda and assisted with court week duties.

#### EMPLOYMENT

##### **Lambert Industries**

June 2013 - May 2014

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Account Executive.** Assessed customer requirements; generated corporate accounts in excess of \$2 million; procured government business; negotiated pricing structure for purchasing contracts; and reviewed and evaluated new product implementation procedures.

#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Lehigh University Alumni Club - Board of Directors, Big Brother/Big Sister Program - 3 year volunteer

## 2L Resume – Regular Division

### JANE D. DEMURRER

2030 Anywhere Road  
Somewhere, Pennsylvania 19380  
Home (215) 123-4567 · jddemur2030@hotmail.com

#### EDUCATION

**Widener University Commonwealth Law School**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
*Juris Doctor*, expected May 2019

Rank: 10/209  
Law Review: *The Delaware Journal of Corporate Law*, Staff  
Honors: Widener Scholar; Dean's Honors List (two semesters);  
Phi Delta Phi, Harrington Inns of Court  
Memberships: American Bankruptcy Institute, *Student Membership*  
Research: Directed Research Topic, Law and Economics Analysis of Delaware Corporate Law.

**Saint Joseph's University**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Bachelor of Arts in History, May 2016

GPA: 3.46  
Honors: *Phi Alpha Theta*, National History Honor Society  
*Pi Gamma Nu*, Social Science Honor Society  
Dean's List (all semesters)

#### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**United States Bankruptcy Court**, E.D. of Pennsylvania, Reading, Pennsylvania  
*Law Clerk*, Summer 2013

Researched legal issues related to the United States Bankruptcy Code; drafted judicial opinions; and observed Chapter 11 and Chapter 7 hearings and pre-hearing judicial conferences.

#### OTHER EXPERIENCE

**Macys, Inc.**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
*Assistant Manager*, Summers 2010, 2011 & 2012

Supervised and trained staff of 14 employees. Handled all opening and closing procedures, sales meetings and incentive program, bank deposits, receipts and computer level inventory control.

\*Held various positions throughout college to help finance undergraduate education.

## 2L Resume – Regular Division

**NAME**

Address

Phone · Email

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### EDUCATION

**Widener University Commonwealth School of Law**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Juris Doctor* expected, May 2019

Honors: Certificate of Achievement - Property I

High Grades: Torts I (A); Property I (A+); Legal Methods (A-)

Member: Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division  
Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

**The Pennsylvania State University**, University Park, Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Science in Internal Family Studies, May 2016

GPA: 3.1/4.0

Honor: University Scholarship - Freshman Year

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Judicial Clerk Intern*, Summer 2017

Assisted Judge's law clerk in reviewing briefs, petitions and orders; researched criminal law and procedural issues; assisted in trial preparation and trial conferences; and drafted opinions.

**York County Legal Services**, Reeceville, Pennsylvania

*Legal Assistant*, August 2015 to May 2016

Assist attorneys representing indigent clients in matters of general practice including divorce, child custody, personal injury and landlord/tenant law.

### OTHER EXPERIENCE

**Dick's Sporting Goods**, Christiana, Delaware

*Sales Associate*, May 2012 to July 2015

Assisted customers in selection of merchandise; operated cash register; opened and closed department.

**The Pennsylvania State University**, University Park, Pennsylvania

*Dormitory Resident Assistant*, September 2014 - May 2015

Served as a counselor for 75 coed students in a university residential hall. Coordinated dormitory activities; acted as student liaison in dealing with university administration; and performed various counseling functions.

### ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

Proficient in Spanish

York County Division III, *Little League Coach*, 2012-2014

Division of Youth and Family Services Big Brother Program, *Volunteer*, 2012-2015

**3L Resume – Regular Division  
Two-Page Resume**

**CHRISTOPHER P. ALLEN**

2500 East West Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19999  
home (215) 555-5555  
work (215) 666-6666  
name@aol.com

**EDUCATION**

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**Widener University Commonwealth School of Law**, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Juris Doctor*, expected May 20—

Evening Division

Honors: Certificate of Achievement, Civil Procedure

Membership: Philadelphia Bar Association, Student Division

**School of Business Administration**, Chester, Pennsylvania

Master of Business Administration, expected May 20--

Honors: Dean's List (2 semesters)

**Temple University**, Philadelphia Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting, *summa cum laude*, May 20--

G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0

Honors: Dean's List (all semesters)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Philadelphia Platforms, Inc.**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Controller*, March 20-- - August, 20--

Supervise financial management of corporation. Plan and implement budgets and cash flow analysis. Prepare payroll and all corporate tax returns. Oversee computer and manual operations including internal auditing

*Senior Staff Accountant*, November 20-- - February 20--

Prepared tax returns for individuals, corporations and partnerships; provided compilation and review services; represented clients at tax audits and arranged deferred payment agreements with various governmental agencies.

*Junior Staff Accountant*, November 20-- – October 20--

Worked with senior staff accountants to assist with preparation of tax returns; attended client tax audits with senior staff; assisted with other general administrative tasks.

*Awards* – Won “*Work Achievement Award*” as Junior and Senior Staff Accountant positions.

**McTavish and Company**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Junior Accountant*, July 20-- - November 20--

Maintained cost accounting and inventory records and assisted in preparation of monthly financial reports to management.

**Safety Insurance Co.**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Claims Service Representative*, May 20-- - June 20--

Received and reviewed property and casualty claim reports; recorded statements from involved parties and witnesses and participated in other investigative and claim settlement procedures; revised claims procedure manual and successfully negotiated 50 claims resulting in 20% cost savings for company.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

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Habitat for Humanity, *Community Volunteer*, 20-- -- present

Red Cross Blood Drive, *Representative*, 20-- -- 20--

**PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION**

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Certified Public Accountant, 20--

**INTERESTS**

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Classical music, piano, world history, certified NASCAR Mechanic

# 3L/4L Resume

## Joseph Davis

2525 North Main Street  
North Ashcroft, New Jersey 19999  
(215) 222-2222  
joe\_d@rex.com

### EDUCATION

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#### **Widener University Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, PA**

*Juris Doctor*, expected May 20--

GPA: 3.21  
Honors: Moe Levine Trial Advocacy Honor Society, *Executive Board Member*  
Oral Advocacy: Hugh B. Pearce Trial Advocacy Competition, *Semi-finalist*  
Argued State's case-in-chief in matter involving collection of fire insurance policy  
Law Review: **The Widener Law Review**, *Case note Writer*  
Memberships: Association of Trial Lawyers of America  
New Jersey Bar Association, Student Membership  
American Criminal Justice Association, Student Membership

#### **Villanova University, Villanova, PA**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 20--

Minor: Criminal Justice  
Honors: Pi Sigma Alpha, Political Science Honor Society  
Dean's List – 3 semesters

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

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#### **Smith, Jones & Brown, Cherry Hill, Pennsylvania**

*Law Clerk*, Summer 20—

- Drafted discovery requests and responses in personal injury cases
- Performed investigative services necessary for preparation of cases including witness interviews, document searches, and filing of pleadings in state and federal courts.

#### **Court of Common Pleas, Pretrial Services, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

*Bail Interviewer*, Summer 20--

- Interviewed defendants prior to preliminary arraignment and assimilated information on prior record, current charges, and court appearance history to determine risk of flight
- Provided conclusions as to appropriate bail amounts and recommendations to the Presiding Municipal Court Judge for purposes of lodging bench warrants

### INTERESTS

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Golf, Music, U.S. History



### 3L/4L Resume w/References

## Lawrence L. Marks

121 Progress Street  
Harrisburg, PA 19999  
(717) 555-5555  
e-mail: name@widener.edu

### EDUCATION

Widener University Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, PA  
*Juris Doctor*, expected May 20--

GPA: 3.069  
Class Rank: Top 25%  
Honors: Law Review, **Widener Law Journal**  
Publication: Marks, Lawrence L., *The Fourth Amendment in the New Millennium*. 8 *Widener L. J.* 212 (2011)  
Activities: Widener New Horizons Club, Vice President  
Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division

St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA  
Bachelor of Arts in English, May 20—

GPA: 3.5  
Honors: Dean's List (7 of 8 semesters)  
Activity: Varsity Soccer Team

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**Pennsylvania Civil Clinic** August 20-- - Present  
Widener University School of Law

**Certified Legal Intern.** Conduct legal research; draft pleadings, memoranda and briefs; interview clients; negotiate agreements; and represent clients at mediation as well as court hearings pursuant to Pennsylvania Supreme Court Rules 321 and 322.

**Smith, Jones & Brown, Harrisburg, PA** Summer 20--

**Law Clerk.** Conducted legal research, prepared motions, and drafted memoranda on a variety of topics relating to corporate law and assisted in trial preparation.

### INTERESTS

Golf, Music, U.S. History

Lawrence L. Marks  
121 Progress Street  
Harrisburg, PA 19999  
(717) 555-5555  
e-mail: llmarks@law.widener.edu

## REFERENCES

Professor Thomas Torts  
Widener University Commonwealth Law School  
3800 Vartan Way  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-09450  
(717) 541-3900  
(Torts Professor)

John D. Smith, Esquire  
Smith, Jones & Brown  
277 Somewhere Street  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 19999  
(717) 999-9999  
(Supervising Attorney at Smith, Jones & Brown)

Professor Frances Finance  
Widener University Commonwealth Law School  
3800 Vartan Way  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9450  
(717) 541-3900  
(Business Organizations Professor)

## 3L/4L Resume Evening Division

### Patricia Patent

123 Main Street  
Anywhere, Delaware 12345  
(302) 555-1234  
patsypat@gravitas.net

## EDUCATION

**Widener University Commonwealth Law School, Harrisburg, PA**  
*Juris Doctor*, expected May 20—  
Extended Division

Rank: Top 30%  
Honors: Certificate of Achievement, Legal Methods II  
Certificate of Achievement, Patent Law  
High Grades: Legal Methods II (A-)  
Patent Law (A+)  
Copyright Law (A)

**University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA**  
Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, *summa cum laude*, May 20--

G.P.A.: 3.82/4.0  
Honors: Dean's List (all semesters)  
Activities: President, Engineering Society  
Dormitory Resident Advisor  
Chair, Special Olympics Committee (Fall 1998)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C.**  
Patent Examiner, June 20—20--

Determine the patentability of inventions submitted by engineers, inventors and scientists to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Analyze the subject matter of the application for a patent, as well as the prior art to the field. Grant or reject the claims of the application. Possess area of specialization in chemical engineering. Gained knowledge of the patent laws, rules of practice, using the Manual of Patent Examining Practice and Procedure.

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

United States Patent and Trademark Office  
March 20--

## INTERESTS

Renaissance Art, Antiques, Gardening, Hot Air Ballooning

## Recent Graduate

Name

Address - Home Phone · Mobile · email

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### Education

**School, City, State**

*Juris Doctor, cum laude, May 20—*

GPA: 3.38/4.0

Honors: Lincoln Scholar; Dean's List, Spring 20--, Fall 20--, Spring 20—

Activities: Journal of the Business Law Society, Managing Editor, Fall 20-- – Spring 20--, Section Editor, Fall 20-- – Summer 20--; Student Alumni Association, Treasurer, Spring 20-- – Spring 20--; Jessup Moot Court Competition, Fall 20--; Frederick Green Moot Court Competition, Fall 20--; ABA Client Counseling Competition, Spring 20--; ABA Mock Negotiation Competition, Fall 20--

**School, City, State**

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, May 20--

GPA: 3.27/4.0

Activities: Delta Phi Fraternity, Tau Chapter: President, House Manager, Recruitment Chair, Most Valuable Brother Award Winner (Twice); Society of Automotive Engineers, Treasurer

### Experience

**FIRM LLP, City, State**

Associate, Corporate, Securities & Finance Group, March 20-- – Present

Reviewed and drafted professional service contracts. Drafted loan and entity organization documents. Participated in due diligence for private company stock sale (e.g. prepared schedules to the stock purchase agreement, organized documents, and responded to supplemental requests.)

**XX Company, City, State**

Vice President, Board of Directors, 20-- - 20--

Evaluated and administered all important policy and fiscal matters through board meetings and budget approvals. Interviewed and hired top production and sales managers for all divisions of company. Oversaw initial planning, financing, design, and construction of a new facility.

**XState House of Representatives, House Republican Staff, City, State**

Legislative Staff Intern, Spring 20--

Performed research tasks, prepared memoranda and observed committee hearings.

**Firm, P.A., City, State**

Intern, Summer 20--

Researched probate and Medicaid issues, and suggested possible courses of action based upon research findings.

### Bar Admission

State, November 20--

# **SAMPLE COVER LETTERS**

Below is a **standard cover letter format** for reference when creating cover letters.

Mailing Address  
City, State and Zip Code  
Telephone Number  
E-mail Address

Contact's Name, Job Title  
Firm/Organization Name  
Mailing Address

Today's Date

Dear Mr. (or Ms.) Last Name:

The first paragraph should answer the questions: Why do you want to work for this employer and what intrigued you about the potential position? Start the letter with an attention getter: a statement that establishes a connection with your reader, research conducted, or person who referred you. State something unique about the firm or organization and why it is of specific interest to you. Briefly state what job you are applying for and briefly who you are (1L, 2L, 3L, licensed attorney, etc...).

The second paragraph should flow from your first paragraph and discuss why you are specifically interested in this employer. If you are applying to a position in a different geographical area, be sure to state why you are considering a move to that area.

The third paragraph should consist of relevant points about the firm's/organization's needs and your education and work qualifications and how you can add value. Reference your enclosed resume here (i.e. As my enclosed resume provides, ...). This is where you need to sell yourself! Relate your skills and qualifications, whether direct or transferable, to the needs of the employer by stating relevant experience, achievements and how it benefits the employer. You should support all statements of your abilities with specific examples of your achievements or job tasks that relate to your abilities. (i.e. "I have excellent organizational skills and in my current position created a new database for client files"... ) **Do not summarize your resume.** Keep in mind that the focus of this paragraph should be what you can do for them, not what they can do for you!

The closing paragraph should pave your way to an interview. Restate your interest in the position and your desire for an interview. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Restate your phone # and email address for their convenience.

Sincerely,

Your Name (typed)

Enclosure(s)

**1L Cover Letter – Law Firm**

300 Jay Way, Apartment 208  
Lancaster, PA 17601

December 1, 2017

Ms. E. Joy Bryan  
Legal Recruiting Coordinator  
Smith & Jones, P.A.  
P.O. Box 123  
Lancaster, PA 17601

Dear Ms. Bryan:

As a first-year student at Widener University Commonwealth School of Law with life-long ties to Lancaster. I am writing to ask that you consider my candidacy for a Summer Associate position at Smith & Jones for the summer of 2018.

As a Lancaster, Pennsylvania native, I was familiar with Smith & Jones's excellent reputation long before I entered law school. I also had the pleasure of hearing partner and Widener Commonwealth Law alumnus Mary Smith speak on her litigation practice at an event at the Dauphin County Bar Association. It was especially interesting to learn about the firm's recent involvement in antitrust litigation involving the financial industry. Given my longstanding interest in dispute resolution and positive experiences in both finance and trial advocacy, I am drawn to Smith & Jones' highly regarded Litigation Practice Group.

My education and work-related experiences have given me a number of skills that would help me contribute to Smith & Jones' tradition of excellence. My undergraduate degree in English has helped me identify, analyze and write about complex legal issues, skills which I further refined while drafting trial and appellate level documents alongside attorneys at the Dauphin County Attorney General's Office this past year. Additionally, my experiences in management on behalf of several non-profit and for-profit entities—including successfully promoting sales to new customers and serving as a representative to existing patrons in the U.S. and around the world—have enhanced my ability to effectively relate to, communicate with, and meet the needs of a diverse clientele.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to introduce myself more fully and discuss the possibility of working at Smith & Jones next summer. I have enclosed a resume for your review; please let me know if you would like me to provide you with any additional materials. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Kennedy

Enclosure

## 1L Cover Letter – Public Sector

John Smith, Esq.  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
1400 Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

January 1, 2018

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am a first year student at Widener University Commonwealth School of Law, and Professor Franklin suggested I reach out to you regarding your office's summer intern opportunity. I am interested in state/local government law as well as environmental law, which is why I believe I will be a good fit at the Public Utility Commission. I want to work at the intersection of government and the energy industry and I hope to serve at the PUC.

Prior to law school I received my BA in English with a minor in Print Media Studies. In my first year at Widener Commonwealth Law School I excelled in my legal methods courses. I have attached as my writing sample my judicial opinion from first semester, and I just recently finished an appellate brief and oral argument for this semester. I pride myself on being a quick, concise, and thoughtful writer.

As an assistant store manager at Target, I developed many skills which will be useful in the legal world. I am used to a high-pressure work environment and know how to balance a multitude of deadlines and tasks. I also developed excellent communication and problem-solving skills through my experiences in customer service and leadership within the store. These skills will transfer to my work in the legal field and as an intern at the Public Utility Commission.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or wish to schedule an interview, I can be reached on my cellphone (717) 777-4567 or my email [mjjordan@widener.edu](mailto:mjjordan@widener.edu). I have attached my resume, references, unofficial transcript, and a writing sample for your review.

Regards,

Michael J. Jordan



**2L Cover Letter - Firm**

**Kaneesha C. Washington**

451 South Cherry Avenue  
Holland Point, PA 17101  
(717) 555-7621  
kaneeshdub@centric.com

Lawrence H. Schwartz, Esquire  
Schwartz and Associates  
The Riddick Building, Suite 86015  
2400 John F. Kennedy Parkway  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

(Insert date here)

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

I am currently a second year law student at Widener University Commonwealth Law School and would like to be considered for your summer clerkship position as advertised through my Career Development Office. I am very interested in joining a firm that specializes in representing plaintiffs in products liability and medical malpractice matters, and have been impressed with your firm's success in these types of matters.

As my attached resume demonstrates, my background includes a variety of experience that is relevant to your litigation practice. Last summer, I worked with the Bureau of Consumer Protection at the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. That position allowed me to perform a variety of tasks including conducting legal research, writing memoranda of law, counseling consumers on products liability issues and negotiating settlements with business owners. In addition, my work as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for the past six (6) years has taught me how to balance my priorities and provided me with valuable people skills which I developed further while working for the Attorney General. My EMT experience also exposed me to legal issues related to healthcare, including medical malpractice.

I am confident that my work with the Attorney General has prepared me to contribute to your products liability practice, while my EMT experience will serve you well in the analysis of medical malpractice matters. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at (717) 555-6721 or via email at [kaneeshdub@centric.com](mailto:kaneeshdub@centric.com). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kaneesha C. Washington

Attachment

**3L Cover Letter - Firm**

**Jane R. Green**  
114 Silverside Road  
Harrisburg, PA 19802  
(717) 454-2252  
jrg@yahoo.com

Jonathan F. Gold, Esquire  
Senior Partner  
Silver, Gold & Platinum LLC  
416 Legal Way, Suite 411  
Georgetown, PA 17202

(Insert date here)

Dear Mr. Gold:

I met your colleague, Janice Emerald, at a Pennsylvania Bar Association function, and she recommended I contact you immediately regarding an open associate attorney position with your firm. After reviewing your website, I was excited to read about your successful Criminal Defense practice. I have a strong interest in criminal defense work and have discussed my relevant experience below. I am currently a third year student at Widener University Commonwealth Law School and am on schedule to graduate this May.

As my attached resume indicates, I have had two valuable internships as a Widener Law student. After my first year, I was selected to work as a summer intern with the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office. This experience allowed me to participate in each aspect of the criminal justice system and also provided me with practical experience drafting legal orders and memoranda. During my second summer, I interned with the United States Army's Judge Advocate General Corps. While there, I assisted in Courts-Martial and drafted briefs on behalf of the United States of America. My exposure to the prosecution of criminal cases for the State of Pennsylvania and The United States Army has provided me with a valuable and strategic perspective on criminal defense work, which will be of benefit to you in your practice.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. I can be reached at (717) 454-2252 or via email at [jrg@yahoo.com](mailto:jrg@yahoo.com). Thank you for your consideration of my resume.

Very truly yours,

Jane R. Green

Attachment

**JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SAMPLE (with prior clerkship experience)**

**John C. Law**

2117 North Widener Avenue  
New Castle, PA 08797  
(610) 555-1212  
[jclaw@woofboom.net](mailto:jclaw@woofboom.net)

The Honorable Richard A. Bean  
Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas  
400 Swede Street, P.O. Box 311  
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

(Insert date here)

Dear Judge Bean:

During this past school year, I had the honor of working as an extern with your colleague Judge LeRoy Mervin. Since he has retired from the bench, Judge Mervin suggested I contact you to express my interest in applying for a judicial clerkship with you during the 20--20-- term. I am currently a fourth year evening division student at Widener University Commonwealth Law School. In addition, I am a native of Norristown and intend to return to practice law upon graduation.

My experience with Judge Mervin exposed me to the challenges and rewards offered while working as judicial clerk. I carried out a wide variety of tasks for the Judge, such as performing legal research, drafting opinions, assisting during voir dire and providing support at settlement conferences. These experiences would allow me to make an immediate positive contribution to your chambers. In addition, my academic achievements support my ability to positively contribute to your work. For example, I obtained a Certificate of Achievement in Legal Methods II signifying the highest grade in the class. I also performed well above the class average in my Pennsylvania Civil Practice class and the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program.

I look forward to utilizing both my skills and academic and work experience as outlined above and in my attached resume. I would be honored to meet with you to discuss the contributions I might make to your chambers and can be reached at your convenience at (610) 555-1212 or via email at [jclaw@woofboom.net](mailto:jclaw@woofboom.net).

Thank you for considering my application.

Respectfully,

John C. Law

Attachment

**JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SAMPLE (NO PRIOR CLERKSHIP EXPERIENCE)**

**Jane C. Law**

2117 North Widener Avenue  
New Wilmington, PA 08797  
(610) 555-1212  
[jclaw@woofboom.net](mailto:jclaw@woofboom.net)

The Honorable Helen T. Thomas  
Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas  
400 Swede Street, P.O. Box 311  
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

(Insert date here)

Dear Judge Thomas:

I am writing to you to express my interest in clerking for your chambers post-graduation from law school. I am currently a fourth year evening division student at Widener University Commonwealth Law School. I am originally from Norristown and intend to return to the area after law school.

As my attached resume details, I have served as an intern with two law firms in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. At both of these firms, I conducted legal research and drafted memoranda, briefs and motions. In addition, my academic achievements support my ability to positively contribute to your work. For example, I obtained a Certificate of Achievement in Legal Methods II signifying the highest grade in the class. I also performed above average in my Pennsylvania Civil Practice class and the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program. I am confident that my research and writing experience as well as my exposure to Pennsylvania procedural rules will allow me to make an immediate positive contribution to your chambers.

I look forward to applying both my legal experience and skills outlined above and in my attached resume. I would be honored to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. I can be reached at your convenience at (610) 555-1212 or via email at [jclaw@mail.widener.net](mailto:jclaw@mail.widener.net).

Thank you for considering my application.

Respectfully,

Jane C. Law

Attachment

**3L Cover Letter – ENVIRONMENTAL LAW**

**Joan E. Barnes**  
1101 North Oak Road  
Castle Park, NJ 08062  
(876) 555-9263  
[jebscuba@sailnet.net](mailto:jebscuba@sailnet.net)

Carol E. Gowling, Esquire  
Executive Director  
Friends of Coral Reefs  
4450 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20034

(Insert date here)

Dear Ms. Gowling:

I am writing to express my interest in a summer intern position with Friends of the Reefs. I am currently a third year Evening Division student at Widener University Commonwealth Law School in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I am highly motivated to do everything I can to help stop the devastation of the world's reef systems. In examining your website, I was impressed by the variety of activities your organization undertakes to educate lawmakers and the public regarding the dangers faced by the reef ecosystem

As demonstrated in my enclosed resume, I have been successful in law school. I rank in the top third of my class and performed well in a variety of classes. I received an "A" in my Civil Procedure and Environmental Law classes and will be taking the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program (ITAP) at the end of this school year. Currently, I work as a volunteer at the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic (Clinic) where I have performed legal research and drafted the federal preclusion section of the Clinic's recent *amicus* brief to the United States Supreme Court filed in opposition to proposed state regulations permitting commercial development of Delaware wetlands. While attending law school, I work full-time as a litigation support paralegal with Krump & Stone, LLC, located in Wilmington, Delaware.

For the last eighteen years, I have enjoyed scuba diving on various reefs in the Caribbean, including the fantastic Belize Barrier Reef. I have seen with my own eyes the deterioration of coral structures during that period. Global warming, pollution, careless anchoring practices and mindless harvesting of coral have all contributed to the crisis that reefs face worldwide. I am confident that my academic and work experiences would allow me to positively contribute to the Friends of Reefs mission to protect coral structures located outside the National Park system.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in Washington, D.C. to further explore how I might assist you with your important work. Please contact me at your convenience at (876) 555-9263 or via email at [jebscuba@sailnet.net](mailto:jebscuba@sailnet.net).

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Joan E. Barnes

Attachment

## OUT OF TOWN JOB SEARCH

Your Name  
Contact Info

Contact person  
Firm name  
Address

Date

Dear :

I am presently attending Widener University Commonwealth Law School and will receive a Juris Doctor degree in May, 20\_\_\_. I am interested in applying to (Name of firm) for an associate position following the completion of my studies in May. After reviewing your website, I was pleased to learn that your firm specializes in (areas of law). In addition, I am quite familiar with and fond of (City name) as (state your connection to the area) and hope to relocate to there upon graduation.

My academic achievements and legal experience with (name of organization) have provided me with a strong substantive background in (relevant areas of law). Throughout law school, I held a variety of positions which allowed me to develop my interpersonal and advocacy skills. Additionally, I have gained hands-on experience drafting motions and legal memoranda, which has enabled me to attain practical legal skills which would be of value to your firm.

I have enclosed a resume and writing sample for your consideration. I would be pleased to speak with you about the needs of your firm during the coming year. I will be in (geographic area) (state dates) and would appreciate meeting with you during that period. I can be reached at (phone) or (email). Thank you very much for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Name

Attachment

**ALUMNI COVER LETTER**

**Matthew K. Mulligan, Esquire**

66 Walker Way  
Camden, New Jersey 08911  
856.219.2626  
mkm@yahoo.com

Joseph Marks, Esquire  
Franks, McGillicutty and Shaloub, LLP  
1500 Mellon Bank Center  
1735 Market Street  
Philadelphia PA 19103-7595

October 21, 20--

Dear Mr. Marks:

Franks, McGillicutty and Shaloub, LLP is an outstanding organization as evidenced by its excellent reputation in the legal community. After reviewing your website I was excited to learn about your corporate litigation, tax and real estate practices. I have experience in these practice areas and would like to be considered for an associate position with your firm. I am a licensed Pennsylvania and New Jersey attorney and a Certified Public Accountant. I also reside in the Philadelphia area.

As my enclosed resume provides, my professional experience in tax, corporate governance, and real estate finance has enabled me to gain the skills necessary to add immediate value to your corporate practice. During my current employment at Wesson & Barretta, I work on corporate litigation as well as commercial and residential real estate matters. While employed at Guberoff Consultants in Philadelphia, I directed international audit projects and managed a portion of the Sarbanes-Oxley implementation project. I have also worked in public accounting with a concentration in tax matters. I am confident that my legal and professional experience will be an asset to your practice.

I welcome the opportunity to personally interview with you at your convenience. Please feel free to contact me by email at [mkm@yahoo.com](mailto:mkm@yahoo.com) or telephone 856-219-2626 at any time. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Matthew K. Mulligan, Esquire

Enclosure

## **SECTION IV**

# ***Interview Preparation & Logistics***



## QUICK INTERVIEWING TIPS

### Do's:

- ✓ Prepare a focused response to answer "Tell me about yourself".
- ✓ Research the organization and the interviewer before the interview.
- ✓ Anticipate possible questions and formulate your best answer.
- ✓ Formulate questions to ask the interviewer.
- ✓ Make sure the questions you ask the interviewer could not be answered by researching the firm.
- ✓ Dress conservatively and professionally.
- ✓ Be on time.
- ✓ Be friendly to everyone, including people with whom you are not actually interviewing.
- ✓ Convey enthusiasm for the position.
- ✓ Use specific examples in relating your qualities (e.g., projects you spearheaded to address a certain problem).
- ✓ Concentrate on your best attributes.
- ✓ Send a thank-you note within 48 hours of the interview.
- ✓ Follow up with a note or a phone call to reaffirm your interest in the position if time has elapsed since the anticipated response from the firm.

### Don'ts:

- × Sell yourself short.
- × Lose your cool during a "stress interview".
- × Use vulgar language or slang.
- × Order alcohol during an interview luncheon.
- × Wear provocative or rumpled clothing.
- × Convey non-centrist political views, unless you are sure they would be welcomed by the employer or you could not work for the employer without the employer knowing your views.
- × Address interviewer by first name before being invited to do so.
- × Act unprofessionally even if the interviewer does.

## **INTERVIEWING**

If you are reading this, chances are you have been given an opportunity for an interview - congratulations! You now have an invaluable opportunity to convince the firm or organization that you are the best candidate for the job. This can be exhilarating, but for many it is also a bit nerve-wracking. By doing a few simple things, however, you can help ensure that you will be less stressed, more confident, and better able to convince employers that you would be a perfect fit for their organizations.

### **PREPARATION**

The first thing you need to know is that the key to successful interviewing is **PREPARATION**. As with everything you do in law school or in your career, preparation can be the most critical component of a good performance. By the same token, lack of preparation can ruin your chances of getting hired.

There are four different kinds of interview preparation that you should consider doing:

1) researching the firm or organization and interviewer 2) practicing answers to the questions you anticipate, 3) knowing the questions you want to ask the interviewer, and 4) participating in mock interviews.

**1) Research.** Researching is a vital component of the interview preparation process. The more you know about the employer, the more likely you will impress the interviewer.

Basic, yet important information to gather prior to the interview:

- the number of attorneys working for the employer;
- if the employer is a judge, the areas of law the judge practiced before going on the bench;
- the number of alumni from your law school working for the employer;
- the employer's chief areas of practice;
- the employer's representative clients;
- if the employer represents the public interest/public sector, the organization's mission and the issues facing the clients being served.

All these pieces of information will help you decide which questions to ask the interviewer and how you may want to tailor your answers to their questions.

## **RESOURCES**

There are many other directories and resources in the Career Development Office that can help you with your employer research. Many of the online resources can be found in the websites section of this manual. In addition, our CDO library contains state and local attorney directories, practice specific resources, and information on hiring trends, professional development and internship opportunities.

A few major on-line resources are worthy of specific mention below.

### **NALP DIRECTORY**

[www.nalpdirectory.com](http://www.nalpdirectory.com)

The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) publishes significant information about large law firms. Using the NALP Directory, you can find information about a firm's billable hours, starting salary, demographic composition and the number of positions the firm expects to fill.

### **MARTINDALE - HUBBELL**

[www.martindale.com](http://www.martindale.com)

Martindale and Hubbell is a popular national legal directory listing lawyers in most, but not all, firms in the United States. Martindale.com, the on line version of the legal directory, contains a search engine that will allow you to target searches based on location and practice area.

### **CORE – powered by 12Twenty**

<https://law-commonwealth.12twenty.com/login>

CORE is the Career Development Office's on-line job bank and recruitment software. If you are an enrolled student, your CORE **User Name** is your Widener Law Campus Cruiser e-mail address. The job bank, updated daily, includes a variety of legal and law-related jobs for law students and graduates submitted by employers contacting the Career Development Office.

### **WORD OF MOUTH**

Another great source of information about an employer is word-of-mouth. Career Development counselors are a great source of insider information. Friends who have interviewed with an employer, with whom you may be interested, may also be good resources. Associates inside the firm can be a great source of information and they can clue you in on what the employer is looking for in a candidate.

## **BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW**

Many of you have experienced an interview that includes the usual questions: Tell me about yourself? What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness? But now a different type of interview questioning is becoming popular. It is called Behavioral Interviewing. The goal of the behavioral interview is to predict future performance, often using hypothetical questions to determine how you have or will behave under certain circumstances.

Often, the questions asked encourage you to tell a story in detail about a specific incident that will give the interviewer a chance to assess your experiences, skills and professionalism. Examples of typical behavioral interview questions are: "Tell me about the time when you had a problem with a fellow co-worker and how you solved it", "What did you do upon determining you would be unable to complete a project on time?", and "State a challenge you have overcome recently?"

Through these questions, the interviewer better understands how you work, your values and skills. He will also be able to judge if you would be happy with the firm/organization. To prepare for the behavioral interview, reread your resume and review past positions, giving special attention to accomplishments and challenges. It is also wise to think about times where you have taken initiative and held leadership roles.

### **ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS, FORMULATE ANSWERS.**

In an interview, remember that each question asked has an underlying agenda.

**"Why did you apply for this position?"**: The interviewer is looking for indications that you have researched the firm and demonstrated diligence in gathering thorough background research. Applicants who come prepared and have taken the initiative to learn about the organization are more likely to do the same when hired.

**"Do you have any questions for me?"**: Applicants should prepare for this question, and it is a red flag if the applicant has not done so. The absence of questions can lead the interviewer to think that you are ambivalent or only generally interested in his firm. If you are meeting multiple people, try to ask different questions of each interviewer.

**Know the job requirements**: It is of great importance that you know what the position requires. In the interview, you should stress each requirement and address it, highlighting your accomplishments or successes. In this way, the interviewer can ascertain whether the job fits with your personality and background and your chances for success.

As with any moot court argument, an essential part of preparing for an interview includes anticipating the questions that will likely be asked and formulating your best possible answers. Be careful, though, not to appear "rehearsed." The following are some common questions that you should anticipate in advance, and suggestions of things to think about in formulating your answers:

**Tell me about yourself.** The response to this classic opening interview line should be a persuasive, focused “infomercial” about yourself which should be no longer than 30 seconds. KEEP YOUR RESPONSE RELEVANT TO THE EMPLOYER! As you decide now how you would answer this question in an interview, remember that this is one of the best opportunities you will get to sell yourself. Keep your answer brief, and focus on a few of your key attributes. Illustrate these qualities with evidence from your past and current professional experience. Remember, the answer to this question can set a positive tone for the rest of the interview so it is recommended that you spend time developing what you will say.

**What do you do outside work/school?** The answer to this question will shed light on how well-rounded you are. Often, an interest section provides the interviewer with important clues about yourself, so be prepared to discuss these items or use them as ice-breakers. Be sure that any such information is clear, accurate and current. Just as your interests can help you in the interview by providing a common bond between you and the interviewer, if you are inaccurate about the nature and depth of your interest, it can hurt you.

**Where do you want to be in five years?** It typically takes employers 3 years to recoup training expenses and start making a profit from an employee, so they are naturally interested in employees who intend to be stable with their career and employer choices. Your answer will depend on your honest intentions and other factors, but this is a particularly important area in which you should be sensitive to the interviewer's concerns and business priorities.

**What is your greatest strength?** There are many different variations on this theme that could come up in an interview. As with the "Tell me about yourself" question, the employer is allowing you the opportunity to sell yourself. Ask yourself which of your best attributes would be most valuable to this particular employer? People skills? Team work? Tenaciousness? Research and writing?

**What is your greatest weakness?** This is a tough question, no doubt, and the experts disagree somewhat with how you should field it. One expert, Kimm Walton, J.D., in her book called Guerilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams, says that you should **not** say something that is really a strength (e.g., tend to work too hard), because employers may see that as a dishonest answer. She recommends, rather, that you admit a minor weakness that you have overcome.

**Why do you want to work for us/why do you want this job?** One important thing to remember is that the employer is not really interested in what they can do for you. They are much more interested in what you can do for them. They would prefer to have a person working for them who is genuinely enthusiastic about the position, rather than a

person who just wants a job. Accordingly, any enthusiasm you can muster for the position or the employer, particularly honest enthusiasm, will strengthen your candidacy for the position.

**Why did you go to law school?** Focus on the contributions you intend to make and the skills you enjoy using that resonate with the legal profession and then follow-up with any activities or classes you participated in that helped pave the way for you (i.e. debate team, mock trial, volunteer work, externships, etc.) Do not tell the interviewer that “I have always wanted to be a lawyer” without going into the information above.

Here are common questions that you should anticipate, including:

- In which areas of law would you like to practice? Why?
- Current events questions (make sure to keep up with news around the world, in the legal community, and in the particular area of practice at issue).
- Explain xxx on your resume (could be anything, so make sure you are familiar with your entire resume).
- Substantive legal/ethical questions (especially with public defender and prosecutor positions).

No matter what, avoid negative information in your responses. Do not speak negatively about your law school, professors, curriculum, etc. It ultimately undermines the value of your own degree. By the same token, do not "trash" a former or current employer. Regardless of the experience, you can always find something positive to say which can propel you back to your ultimate interview objective: selling yourself.

**3) Formulate questions.** One of the biggest mistakes you can make in an interview is to not have questions ready to ask the interviewer. It is considered a serious mistake to say that all your questions have been answered during the interview. Ideally, you should ask questions a few times during the interview, as well as at the end when interviewers usually ask if you have any questions. The ability to ask intelligent questions will be directly related to the quality of the research you did before the interview. Accordingly, employers can tell a lot from a candidate by the questions he asks.

As a student, however, your best bet is to do as much research as you can, seek advice beforehand and gauge the interviewer as the interview progresses.

Among the kinds of questions you can ask are the following:

1) Questions regarding the interview’s personal experience: Why did he choose this firm? How does he like the firm? Does he find practice here different from \_\_\_\_\_ (previous experience)?

2) Questions about the firm or organization or a particular area of practice: certain cases you know about, how the firm is affected by new legislation, growth areas for firm, opportunities for community involvement (such involvement inevitably leads to rainmaking), etc.

3) Questions about the position for which you are interviewing: What does the firm look for in a successful candidate? How will a person in the position for which you are interviewing be evaluated? How will they be supervised? To whom would you report? What types of training would you receive? When is the decision being made (and may you call if you have not heard by then)?

Be careful not to ask questions that could have been answered through reasonably diligent research.

**4) Mock interviews.** Your Career Development Office counselors, attorney friends, and many professors, are happy to conduct mock interviews with you. Just as you would want to practice fielding moot court questions before the competition, you want to practice your interviewing technique and get constructive feedback on your strengths and growth areas. Practicing can help you feel as prepared as possible, and can thus alleviate stress. If you are stress-free, chances are you will be more relaxed during the interview and you will make a better impression.

### **APPEARANCE**

The key word is PROFESSIONAL. Be as neat and polished as possible.

Quick tips for women:

- Keep your hair away from your face.
- No short skirts, no low-cut or sheer blouses, and low to medium pumps.

Quick tips for men:

- For men, professional typically means no earrings, piercings, or flashy jewelry.
- Men should wear a conservative striped or understated patterned necktie.

For both men and women:

- Darker colors, such as grey or navy blue suits are always safe; depending on the season; women have more leeway to wear different colors than men.
- Shoes should be in good repair and nicely polished.
- Go light on perfume or aftershave.
- Dress in a way that hides tattoos.
- No visible body piercings.

## **MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION**

If you have done all your preparation prior to the interview, are on-time and conduct yourself in a professional manner, you should do fine. Make sure to bring extra copies of all your paperwork with you, including: a resume, a writing sample, a transcript, a reference list, and anything else you think the interviewer may need.

When greeting your interviewer, be sure to use a firm handshake and maintain good eye contact. If you are sitting when the interviewer enters the room, be sure to stand to greet him or her before extending your hand.

Keep in mind that during the interview, you need to project your best possible persona. This is your chance to put your best foot forward. As Kimm Walton notes, you would not buy a car if the salesperson says, "The car is okay, but it does not get great mileage." Like other consumers, the interviewer is expecting only the positive, and any deviation from that may be interpreted as a warning sign. Therefore, although you must be honest, it is expected that you will generally be emphasizing only your best qualities.

There comes a time in the interview process when you should relax a little, tone down the sales job, and be yourself. This is particularly true if you are invited back for a second interview. At this point, they just want to make sure your personality is a good fit. If you're not sure whether to keep selling or relax more, try to take your cue from the interviewer and the kinds of questions he or she is asking.

## **STRESS INTERVIEWS**

Stress interviews are meant to be just that – stressful. The "stress interview" is a tactic used by employers who expect their employees to be faced with a lot of pressure, such as in the courtroom. The interviewer wants to see how you perform under pressure. They want to *make sure that you can remain level-headed under fire*. You can expect to be asked repeated difficult or seemingly inappropriate questions, or the interviewer may behave more aggressively than you may be used to. You will often confront this kind of situation in district attorney or public defender interviews, and it is not uncommon to receive hypothetical questions. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification or request additional details. As long as you know this and do not take it personally, you can stay calm and concentrate on answering their questions.

## **INAPPROPRIATE/ILLEGAL QUESTIONS**

Unfortunately, you may confront an inappropriate or illegal question during the course of your interview. You should know that questions about your plans for marriage or starting a family, race, gender, religion, age, disability and/or national origin may be prohibited by law. Some interviewers, however, may cross the line because they have not trained in proper interviewing techniques and/or are trying to set an informal tone in the interview. If such questions come up, you can answer them if you



are comfortable doing so. You may also attempt to address what you perceive to be the interviewer's underlying concern (e.g., do you intend to fully devote yourself to your job?) or you may refuse to answer the question. In any event, if you feel you have been asked an improper question during an interview, please let the Career Development Office know.

### **CONCLUSION OF THE INTERVIEW**

At the conclusion of the interview be sure to deliver a firm handshake, a sincere thank you, and a clear and enthusiastic reiteration of your interest in the job. While you should not seek an evaluation of your performance ("How did I do?") or an estimate of your chances of success, as previously noted it is okay to ask when you might expect to hear from them again.

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### General Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself.

What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?

Why should we hire you?

Why do you want to work for us?

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

Why aren't you on Law Review/Moot Court?

Why did you choose to attend Widener?

Why do you want to work in (geographic location)?

What other firms are you interviewing with/applying to?

How do you like law school?

What is the biggest mistake you ever made?

What was your greatest achievement/disappointment?

What would you do if you won the lottery?

What is the last book you read/movie you saw?

What qualities do you have that will make you a successful lawyer?

What two or three things are most important to you in a job?

Do you know what type of law you want to practice?

What courses have you enjoyed the most/least?

What did you like/dislike most about your work past experiences?

What skills have you developed as a result of your past experiences?

How is your previous experience relevant to our practice?

Have you received offers from any other firms?

Why did you decide to interview with us?

What distinguishes you from other candidates?

What do you think it takes to be successful in a firm like ours?

What are the criteria you will use to distinguish our firm from other similar firms?

What are you hoping to gain from working at this firm?

What work related contributions have you found most satisfying?

What persuaded you to decide to become a lawyer?

What qualities do you possess which have led you to believe that you would make a good lawyer?

How would you describe your ideal job situation?

How would you describe yourself?

What is the most significant item on your resume?

How do you determine success?

What are your career objectives? Personal goals? How will you achieve them?

What is unique about you?

Why weren't you offered a job by the law firm where you worked last summer?

What would you do if a client did not want to work with you?

Tell me what in particular about our firm interests you.  
Have you read our resume? What impressed you about it?  
What part of our practice would be of special interest to you? Why?  
Do you think you have the qualities that would enable you to become a partner in our firm?  
What are those qualities?  
Do you have any ties to this community?  
What familiarity do you have with the way a small/medium/large firm operates?  
What do you know about our firm that leads you to believe it would be a satisfactory place for you to work? Why?  
What do you want to know about this firm?  
How has your undergraduate degree helped you in law school?  
Why do you want to be a litigator/transactional attorney, etc.?  
Do you like living in [state, city]?  
In what areas do you feel most competent?  
In what areas do you need the most improvement?  
Tell me about a recent work assignment? How did you begin, develop and complete it?  
Tell me about an occasion when you achieved a goal as a member of a team? What was your role?  
In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable? Most productive?  
If you had not pursued a law career, what other choices might you have made?  
Why? How do you feel about those choices now?  
Tell me about a time when you had to work under time constraints? How did you get the job done?  
What do you do in your spare time?  
What newspaper do you read?  
What person do you most admire? (Philosophical questions)  
Explain (grades, time gaps, etc.) on your resume?

### **Judicial Clerkship Questions**

Why are you interested in a clerkship?  
Have you any particular reason for seeking a job with me?  
Why do you want to clerk on this (level and type of) court?  
What are the aspects of a clerkship that you value?  
What are the criteria you will use to distinguish me from other judges?  
Do you think a one-year term is long enough to make a job worthwhile?  
What have you done to research the particular judges with whom you are applying?  
Who is your favorite Supreme Court Justice, and why?  
Have you noted particular judges whose opinions you particularly admire? Why?  
How important to you are the political views of the judge for whom you clerk?  
What have you done to develop your research and writing skills?  
What are your career plans after the clerkship?  
How does this clerkship fit into your goals in life?

Tell me about your ties to the geographical area where the court is located.  
(If on law review) Discuss your note/article. Why did you choose this topic?  
Discuss your writing sample in detail.  
What are your views on ANY topic? (This may be news, politics, or personal.)  
What is your most/least favorite Supreme Court decision? How and why would you have decided the case differently?  
If I ask you to write up a decision in a particular way and you disagree with the outcome, what will you do?

### **Government, Legal Services & Public Interest Groups**

What interest do you have in service to the public generally?  
How committed are you to service for the poor, and what past experiences do you have to evidence this commitment?  
What do you see as the basic rewards for working for legal services, government, or public interest law?  
How does your resume or background demonstrate your commitment to public service?

### **Corporations/Organizations**

What do you know about our company?  
How do you feel about having only one client?  
Unlike private law firms, partnership is not an opportunity here. How do you feel about that?  
Why do you want to work for a corporation as opposed to a law firm?  
What advantages do you see working with a corporation as opposed to a law firm?  
What disadvantages?

### **Questions for YOU to Ask**

#### **For a firm.**

Did you participate in the summer program before joining the firm?  
(If the interviewer says "yes.") How is your practice similar to/different from your summer experience?  
What do you like most about working for the firm?  
What do you see as the firm's greatest challenges?  
What are the firm's strategic plans for the next five/ten years?  
Do you involve new associates in marketing? If so, how and what training is provided?  
Tell me about the feedback that I will get on the work I do for the firm over the summer.  
Does the firm rotate summer clerks among different practice areas?  
Tell me about pro bono opportunities with the firm.

### **For a judicial clerkship.**

What are a law clerk's main responsibilities?  
What is a typical day like for a law clerk?  
How frequently will I need to work into the night or on weekends?  
What is the division of labor/cases, including different tasks?  
Does the Judge issue opinions from the bench, or does he/she prefer written opinions?  
How do opinions get written? Who writes the first draft? How many drafts are usually needed?  
Tell me about the feedback I will receive on my work. Will the Judge redline draft opinions?  
How closely does the Judge work with the clerks?  
Do clerks communicate with the Judge verbally, or mostly through memos?  
Do law clerks spend time in court, at settlement conferences, and at oral arguments?  
How much contact do clerks have with lawyers?  
What are the types of cases and the size of the docket?  
What is the Judge's timetable for making a hiring decision?  
What was the Judge's favorite case, most difficult decision, or most surprising jury verdict, and why?

### **For a public interest or government position**

Do clerks/attorneys have the opportunity to work in a variety of practice areas, or are they assigned to a single section?  
What does the interviewer regard as the most rewarding aspects of public service?  
What are the biggest challenges of public service work?  
What are the organization's plans for the next five years?  
Do you believe that the number of lawyers working at your office will increase in the next five years?  
Do you believe that your work makes a difference for people, and how?

### **THANK-YOU LETTERS**

After an interview, you should always send a brief thank you note to an interviewer(s) with whom you have met. The letter should be sent within 24 hours of your meeting. If you interviewed with several individuals, it is sufficient to send one letter to the person chiefly responsible for bringing you in for the interview. The letter gives you an opportunity to reiterate your interest in the organization and also brings your application to the top of the pile in terms of refreshing their recollection of you and your particular candidacy. The thank you letter should be brief and professional. It should follow the same business format as for the cover letter.

**Note:** Thank you notes may be sent via email in lieu of regular mail. If sending one via email, always make sure to use a professional subject line (i.e. "Thank you – Your Name or Position Title).

## Sample Thank You Letters

### **Individual Thank You – Initial Meeting**

October 21, 2013

Richard C. Angino, Esquire  
Angino & Rovner  
4503 North Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Dear Mr. Angino:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday to discuss the possibility of my joining your firm as a summer law clerk. I enjoyed talking with you and meeting your partners and associates. I was particularly impressed with your firm's vast bankruptcy practice and dedication to pro bono work. I am very interested in this opportunity and look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Jordan A. Arsenault

**Collective Thank you letter following Callback Interview**

Your Name  
Contact information

Barbara Smith, Esq.  
Smith & Reed  
101 South Street  
Wilmington, DE 19803

Date

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you so much for an informative and enjoyable visit to the offices of Smith & Reed this past Tuesday, November 13th. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with members of the firm and to tour your offices. Our discussion of women in the courtroom was enlightening and I am grateful for your candor and willingness to share your perspective. Please extend my thanks to your colleagues Bill Smith, Patty Norway and Jack Chartres for taking the time from their busy schedules to meet with me. I particularly appreciated having the chance to speak at length with Mr. Smith and Ms. Norway regarding the extensive litigation training program at the firm.

I remain very interested in pursuing an associate position with Smith & Reed. Should you require any additional information to assist you as you consider my candidacy, please do not hesitate to contact me at 302-443-2233. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Tamara Shaeffer

**Email – Initial Meeting**

**Subject Line of the Message:** Thank You – Widener University Commonwealth Summer Associate

**Email Message:**

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Thank you for taking time to meet with me this afternoon regarding the summer association opportunity at Smith & Reed. I very much enjoyed our discussion and appreciate the opportunity to learn more about your firm. I was particularly impressed with your firm’s associate development program and strong commitment to pro bono matters. As we discussed, I am a member of Widener’s Public Interest Law Society and volunteer at for the school’s VITA program.

I remain very interested in joining the summer associate program at Smith & Reed. Please contact me at (717) 987-6543 or via email if you have any additional questions about my background. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Email Address

Address

Phone Number

[LinkedIn URL]



## ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION SAMPLES

### **Letters for Acceptance of Offer**

Dear Mr. Reed:

I am very pleased to accept your offer of employment with Smith & Reed. I thoroughly enjoyed my recent meetings with several junior and senior associates in the Corporate Department, including Joan Smith and Tom Peters, and look forward to joining the team.

Thank you and I hope that we will have an opportunity to speak again before I begin next summer.

Sincerely,

### **Offer received: acceptance/rejection put off:**

Dear Ms. Connell:

I appreciate your offer to join xx firm and am still very interested in the possibility of working with you. At this time, however, I am weighing a few options and have not made a final decision. I would like to respectfully request a few additional days to consider your offer, as I intend to make my decision by (date). I appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Again, thank you for your offer.

Sincerely,

### **Detailed Letter Rejecting an Offer:**

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to advise you that, after much deliberation, I have decided not to accept your offer to join Smith & Reed. As I am sure you can imagine, my decision was based on a great deal of information obtained over the course of a lengthy recruitment process. This was a very difficult decision, as everyone I met was friendly and very professional, coupled with Smith & Reed's outstanding reputation in the corporate space. I would like to thank you again for all of your consideration and assistance in this endeavor, and hope that our paths cross again in the future.

Sincerely,

*\*It is also good practice to write a note even if you do not get offered the job. In addition to displaying good manners, it is possible that your resume could be kept on file for future openings or be passed on to the interviewer's colleagues who may also be seeking help. Never burn your bridges! Try turning the negative into a positive!*

## **SECTION V**

# ***Careers in Public Interest Law***

## CAREERS IN PUBLIC INTEREST LAW

### **Introduction**

Public interest lawyers represent people, causes and issues which are otherwise under-represented in the courts, legislative bodies and administrative agencies. The American Bar Association defines public interest law as that which "encompasses a wide range of law-related activities which aim toward bettering our society..." Through their work, public interest attorneys help balance the scales of justice, provide equal access to the justice system and promote social change.

Most public interest lawyers work in public law firms (public interest litigation organizations, public defender programs and legal services offices), private law firms, non-profit organizations and government entities. Some of these organizations represent individual clients, while others represent particular interest groups or political agendas. While some public service organizations focus on litigation, others emphasize policy research, advocacy, and lobbying or community education. The work done by public interest lawyers covers a broad spectrum of substantive legal areas. For example, public service practice areas include:

AIDS/HIV	Criminal	Environmental	Homelessness
Animal Rights	Disability	Family	Immigration
Children	Education	Gay Rights	International Human Rights
Civil Rights	Elder	Health	Welfare
Consumer	Employment	Housing	Women's Law

### **Recruitment**

Unlike many private law firms, most public interest employers lack the resources to conduct formal campus recruiting and, therefore, generally hire attorneys as positions and funding become available. However, some of the larger government employers recruit on and off-campus during the fall and spring for summer and permanent positions. While other public interest organizations generally do not participate in campus recruitment, many provide summer internship opportunities with application deadlines ranging from fall to early spring. Please also be aware that for many public interest agencies, the selection process may take some time. Candidates should be prepared to stay in communication with employers throughout the process in order to convey continued interest in the position. While many exceptional summer public interest employment opportunities exist, students must take an active and creative role in seeking them out. Opportunities are most abundant in Washington, D.C., New York and California; however, Philadelphia and Baltimore contribute their fair share. There is a wealth of information available in the Career Development Office with respect to specific internship opportunities.

As with any career search, you should begin by doing some self-assessment. This involves identifying your interests, skills, strengths, values and needs. Please refer to the Career Development section on skills assessment for more information. Particularly with public interest work, you should develop a focus or vision of the specific kind of work you wish to pursue (i.e. juvenile advocacy).

In addition to those qualities that legal employers generally seek in candidates (solid legal skills, ability to assume responsibility quickly and work independently, and a good "personality fit"), **prior public interest experience and a demonstrated commitment to public interest work in general and in a particular practice area are extremely important to public interest employers.**

## Gaining Experience

There are many ways to gain public interest experience while in law school. Consider the following:

### Internships/Pro Bono

Internships can be paid, volunteer or work-study. Creative funding opportunities exist through grants, fellowships and stipends. In addition, you may participate in the Public Interest/Public Service Job Fair (see Section on Job Fairs). The Career Development Office has public interest job opportunities advertised in the CORE job bank.

### Externships

Off-campus work with non-profit organizations or government agencies for academic credit during the summer or the school year.

### Clinicals

Students work directly with clients under the supervision and training of clinical program instructors.

Students can also gain experience by working as a research assistant for a professor, through independent research and writing projects and competitions, course selection and leadership in student organizations and community activities.

## Networking/Informational Interviewing Opportunities

Networking and informational interviewing are critical to achieving career goals. Fortunately, in the public interest arena, opportunities for networking abound. Consider the following:

EQUAL JUSTICE WORKS is a coalition of law student organizations that offers grants and other forms of assistance to students and recent graduates engaged in public interest employment. Equal Justice Works serves as a clearinghouse and public education and training center, and works with its member organizations to create public interest legal employment and training opportunities. Equal Justice Works is actively involved in public interest fund raising activities and providing information on loan repayment assistance programs.

PHILADELPHIA BAR FOUNDATION PUBLIC INTEREST FELLOWSHIP Participants are provided the opportunity to defer their entry at participating law firms in order to spend one year at a Philadelphia public interest organization. During the fellowship year, and the subsequent year at the law firm, participants receive half of their law firm salary annually plus benefits. After one year at the law firm, compensation and benefits rise to the same level as the participant's class. Deadlines are usually in early January. The following firms have participated in the Philadelphia Bar Foundation Public Interest Fellowship:

Morgan Lewis & Bockius, LLP	Pepper Hamilton, LLP
Drinker, Biddle & Reath, LLP	Ballard, Spahr, LLP
Dechert, LLP	
Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads, LLP	

For more information, see <http://philadelphiabar.org/page/PublicInterestFellowship>

AMERICORPS/NATIONAL SERVICE LEGAL CORPS & AMERICORPS\*VISTA. Americorps is a landmark national service initiative created in 1994 which involves 25,000 participants nationwide in community service programs.

*Americorps\*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America)* is a national and community service program that places its members at local sponsoring organizations to work on innovative and sustainable community development projects. Americorps \*VISTA members receive a monthly living allowance, health insurance, and an educational voucher which may be used for loan repayment.

SKADDEN FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP. The Skadden Fellowship Foundation launched in 1988 to commemorate Skadden's 40th anniversary and has since become the largest public interest law firm in the United States. The program provides two-year Fellowships to talented young lawyers to pursue the practice of public interest law on a full-time basis. The Foundation's guiding principle is to improve legal services for the poor and encourage economic independence. The application is usually due in mid-September. For more information, check out the website at [www.skaddenfellowships.org](http://www.skaddenfellowships.org)

## **Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP)**

Widener University School of Law has joined the growing number of law schools, bar associations and other organizations that are committed to training students for service in the public interest. Under the LRAP program, graduates are afforded the opportunity to pursue their public interest career goals without the undue pressures of making loan payments. Graduates may apply to the program within three years of graduation and must secure a position within a non-profit organization that provides legal services which benefit the community, underrepresented groups or indigent people. Grants cover monthly law school loan debt up to thirty-six (36) months for loans which were certified by an ABA-Accredited law school financial aid office. Graduates with an annual salary of up to \$50,000 are eligible to apply for LRAP benefits. Please contact the Financial Aid Office for information.

## **SECTION VI**

# ***Judicial Clerkships***

## FEDERAL COURTS

Most federal judges accept applications for law clerks from third/fourth year law students in the Fall of their last year of law school. The majority of federal judges require 3Ls/4EDs to apply online using OSCAR, the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review. Usually OSCAR becomes available for student registration in June. At this point, students are able to begin using the system to select which judges to whom they would like to apply and build their application(s) online by uploading resumes, cover letters and writing samples. In addition, references are able to upload letters of recommendation onto OSCAR.

Judges are able to log on and view your application materials on the Tuesday after Labor Day, therefore it is important to begin this process early so that your application is complete by this date. To access OSCAR, log on to: <https://oscar.symlicity.com/>

Register to receive your password and begin building your application online!

For more information on applicable deadlines, review the federal law clerk hiring plan (including applicable deadlines located at: <http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/lawclerk/>)

### SPECIAL TIPS:

1. **ALL OF YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATION LETTERS, MUST BE UPLOADED TO OSCAR **PRIOR** TO THE TUESDAY AFTER LABOR DAY.**
2. Applying for a federal clerkship is a competitive process in which GPA and class rank is extremely important. Typically, federal judges are looking for students who have ranked in the top 5-10%, depending on the applicant's school.
3. Contact your references early to ask for a letter of recommendation. Because it can be more difficult to connect with faculty over the summer, you are advised to contact faculty members during the spring of your second year of law school to request that they serve as references. Please remember that your references will need time to prepare a letter on your behalf, upload same to OSCAR, and are likely fielding recommendation requests from multiple students.
4. All of your written application materials, including resume, cover letter and writing sample, must be PERFECT. Have your resume and cover letter reviewed early and often before the deadline. Spend time incorporating suggested changes to your writing sample. It will be worth the extra effort!
5. For more information concerning the clerkship process, check out *Behind the Bench: The Guide to Judicial Clerkships* by Debra M. Strauss, Esq. available in the Career Development Library.



## FEDERAL COURTS

COURT	APPLICATION PROCESS	APPLICATION MATERIALS
<p>U.S. Courts of Appeals            U.S. District Courts            U.S. Claims Courts            U.S. Tax Courts            U.S. Courts of Veterans Appeals            U.S. Courts of International Trade</p>	<p>In March of 2002, an Ad Hoc Committee, co-chaired by the Hon. Edward R. Becker and the Hon. Harry Edwards, reported that federal appellate judges voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new Plan for law clerk hiring. The Plan includes:</p> <p>(1) an arrangement ensuring that the hiring of law clerks will not be done earlier than the fall of the third or fourth year of law school; and</p> <p>(2) an agreement that focuses law clerk hiring on third or fourth year law students.</p> <p>The US District Courts in PA, DE, and NJ have agreed to abide by the same hiring plan.</p> <p>Most federal judges accept applications for law clerks from third/fourth year law students in the fall of the last year of law school. The majority of federal judges require 3Ls/4EDs to apply online using OSCAR, the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review. Usually in June, OSCAR becomes available for student/recommender registration.</p> <p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>For more information on applicable deadlines, review the federal law clerk hiring plan located at:  <a href="http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/lawclerk/">http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/lawclerk/</a></p> <p>To access OSCAR, log on to:  <a href="https://oscar.symplicity.com/">https://oscar.symplicity.com/</a></p>	<p>Cover letter            Resume            Unofficial law school transcript            Writing sample            Two or three letters of recommendation (depending on individual judge)</p>

## DELAWARE STATE COURTS

COURT	APPLICATION PROCESS	APPLICATION MATERIALS
<p><b>Supreme Court of Delaware</b></p>	<p>Generally speaking, students should apply directly to the five individual Justices between the summer and early winter of the third year. However, please be advised that, depending on the Justice, hiring can occur earlier than this period. Therefore, students are advised to contact chambers directly during their second year to determine hiring timetable for each Justice.</p>	<p>Cover letter            Resume            Unofficial law school transcript            Unofficial undergraduate transcript            Writing sample            Two or three letters of recommendation (depending on the individual Justice)</p>
<p><b>Court of Chancery</b></p>	<p>Apply directly to the five (5) individual judges. Application dates are determined by the Chancellor and vice-chancellors individually. Submit between summer and early winter of 3L year. Some Chancellors/Vice Chancellors have hired clerks earlier than the third year of law school; please contact chambers directly early in your second year to determine the hiring timetable for each Chancellor/Vice Chancellor.</p>	<p>Cover letter            Resume            Unofficial law school transcript            Undergraduate transcripts            Writing sample            Two letters of recommendation (preferably written by professors)</p>

COURT	APPLICATION PROCESS	APPLICATION MATERIALS
<p><b>Superior Court of Delaware</b></p>	<p>While the advertised application deadline generally is not until early fall of the 3L, <u>students are encouraged to submit their applications early</u>. Clerkships are available for a one-year term. While students should apply centrally (see below), <b>the CDO encourages students to apply directly to individual judges as well.</b></p> <p>Apply centrally to the Resident Judge for each county: (Contact the Court for the contact person information)</p> <p><u>New Castle County</u> The Honorable Richard Cooch Superior Court of Delaware New Castle County Courthouse 500 North King Street Wilmington, DE 19801</p> <p><u>Kent County</u> The Honorable William Witham Jr. Superior Court of Delaware Kent County Courthouse 38 The Green Dover, DE 19901</p> <p><u>Sussex County</u> The Honorable T. Henly Graves Superior Court of Delaware Sussex County Courthouse 1 The Circle, Suite 2 Georgetown, DE 19947</p>	<p>Cover letter Resume Unofficial law school transcript Writing sample Judicial Application Form (after submission of above items)</p>

COURT	APPLICATION PROCESS	APPLICATION MATERIALS
<b>Family Court of Delaware</b>	<p>While students may apply centrally (see below), the CDO encourages students to apply directly to the individual judges in the late summer. Clerkships are for a one-year term.</p> <p>Apply centrally to:</p> <p>Jackie Riggs-Potts  The Family Court of the State of Delaware  New Castle County Courthouse  500 King Street, Suite 3500  Wilmington, DE 19801-3732</p>	<p>Cover letter  Resume  Unofficial law school transcript  Writing sample  Letters of recommendation (optional)</p>
<b>Court of Common Pleas</b>	<p>The application deadline is generally in January of the year of the clerkship; however, students are encouraged to apply in the early Fall of the third year in law school to the individual judges. Clerkships are for a one-year term.</p>	<p>Cover letter  Resume  Law school transcript  Writing sample</p>

**PENNSYLVANIA STATE COURTS**

Court	Application Process	Application Materials
<b>Supreme Court of Pennsylvania</b>	<p>Apply directly to the seven individual justices. The deadline for applications is in the early spring of the second year. Check with individual Justices for specific deadline information. The clerkship can run from one to three years. For more information, see: <a href="http://www.courts.state.pa.us/Index/Supreme/IndexSupreme.asp">http://www.courts.state.pa.us/Index/Supreme/IndexSupreme.asp</a></p> <p>List of justices also is available in the Career Development Office or may be obtained from several directories in our library. Biographical sketches and/or contact information may also be reviewed in the <i>Pennsylvania Bar Association Lawyer's Directory</i>, and <i>The American Bench, Want's Judicial Directory</i></p>	<p>Cover letter Resume Unofficial law school transcript Writing sample Two letters of recommendation</p>
<b>Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania</b>	<p>Apply directly to each of the individual judges. Application process is the same as that listed above for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.</p>	<p>Same as above.</p>
<b>Superior Court of Pennsylvania</b>	<p>Same as above.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>
<b>Court of Common Pleas</b>	<p>Apply directly to individual judges in the fall of your last year of law school. Clerks may serve for more than one year and many judges have permanent clerks. Applications should be submitted early in the fall of the final year of law school. For more information on Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas: check out: <a href="http://courts.phila.gov">http://courts.phila.gov</a> under the employment tab.</p> <p>Lists of judges also may be obtained from several directories in the Career Development Office. Biographical sketches may be reviewed in <i>The American Bench</i>.</p>	<p>Resume Cover letter</p>

## **SECTION VII**

### ***Job Fairs***

# JOB FAIRS

Widener Commonwealth Law School participates in and co-sponsors a number of job fairs throughout the year. These job fairs present students with the opportunity to interview with multiple employers at a given date and location. The format of the individual job fairs generally remains consistent from year to year.

Attached is an alphabetical listing along with a brief description of the various job fairs in which Widener Commonwealth Law School participates. Most of the job fairs occur on a regular basis throughout the calendar year; therefore, many of the application deadline dates fall around the same time each year.

**PLEASE LOOK FOR UPDATED DEADLINE DATES AS PUBLISHED BY THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE.**

## **WIDENER UNIVERSITY COMMONWEALTH LAW SCHOOL LISTING OF JOB FAIRS**

### **GPALS D.C. JOB FAIR**

August Resume Collection

Sponsored by these Greater Philadelphia Area Law Schools (GPALS), Widener Commonwealth Law, Delaware Law, Penn, Villanova, Temple, Penn State-Dickinson, Rutgers & Drexel, the GPALS D.C. job fair provides an opportunity for students to interview with firms, government agencies and legal organizations in the Washington D.C. area. Student applications are due in early August through a special Symplicity website.

### **GPALS PHILADELPHIA JOB FAIR**

September

Sponsored by these Greater Philadelphia Area Law Schools (GPALS), Widener Commonwealth Law, Delaware Law, Penn, Villanova, Temple, Penn State-Dickinson, Rutgers & Drexel, and held at Temple Law School's Center City campus, the GPALS Philadelphia job fair provides an opportunity for students to interview with firms and legal organizations in and out of the region. Student applications are due in early July through a special Symplicity website and the job fair is held in early August each year.

### **MID -ATLANTIC BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION JOB FAIR (BLSA)**

Early September

The annual BLSA Job Fair is sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Black Law Students Association and is generally held in late August in the Washington, D.C. area. Students submit their application packets online mid to late summer. For more information, check out [www.nblsa.org](http://www.nblsa.org) (look under the Mid-Atlantic Regional tab or Job Fair information tab).

### **PATENT LAW INTERVIEW PROGRAM**

August

If you are a second-year or third year student, or a graduate studying for an LL.M. in Intellectual Property and you have an interest in patent law, and if you have an undergraduate or graduate degree in engineering or technical science, you may want to consider attending this job fair. This program provides the opportunity for students to

interview with patent law firms, as well as law firms, corporations and government agencies with patent law departments.

Registration is online and applications are processed by Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Initial applications to participate usually are due in February. Interview schedules are set and mailed directly to selected students by mid-June. Widener will pay students' registration fees. However, if selected, students must travel to Chicago at their own expense. For more information, please see: <http://www.luc.edu/law/career/patent.html>

#### **PHILADELPHIA AREA DIVERSITY JOB FAIR (PADJF)**

Late July

The Philadelphia Area Diversity Job Fair (PADJF) was created through a partnership of the Legal Recruitment Administrators of Philadelphia (LRAP) and Philadelphia Area Law School Administrators in order to address the issue of minority recruitment in the legal profession. PADJF offers minority students the opportunity to meet with large law firms, major corporations, public interest organizations, the judiciary and federal, state and local government agencies. This job fair is not invitational; students need only sign up to attend.

To participate, students select 15 employers according to preference. Twenty-minute interviews are then scheduled by a computer program utilizing a numerical lottery system. Students do not receive interviews with all of their listed preferences. Applications are due in July. For more information, check out: [www.padjf.org](http://www.padjf.org)

#### **PHILADELPHIA DIVERSITY LAW GROUP (PDLG)**

Late July

[www.philadiversitylaw.org](http://www.philadiversitylaw.org)

"The PDLG First-Year Summer Program (the "PDLG Program") offers first-year students from participating area law schools an additional route to summer employment in outstanding law firms and corporate law departments. Application through this program will not preclude a student from otherwise seeking or accepting a job at any participating organization or preclude the organization hiring the student outside of the program.

The PDLG Program is designed to identify first year law students who have overcome obstacles in pursuing a legal career or come from disadvantaged backgrounds or from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the Philadelphia legal community and who have the ability to succeed in the summer programs run by our member organizations. The PDLG hopes this program will enable a group of those students to get summer clerkships in Philadelphia and thus allow them to experience the law school or corporate law environment in Philadelphia and, perhaps, help them "kick-start" their legal careers." Applications are due in late June.

#### **PUBLIC INTEREST/PUBLIC SERVICE CAREER FAIR (PIPS)**

Late January

The Consortium of Greater Philadelphia Area Law Schools (The Dickinson School of Law of The Pennsylvania State University, University of Pennsylvania Law School, Rutgers Law School, Temple University School of Law, Villanova University School of Law, Drexel, Delaware Law and Widener Commonwealth Law School) sponsors an annual Public Interest/Public Service Career Fair. This career fair is usually held during the month of January in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Many Widener students obtain jobs through this job fair.



Students who participate in this career fair have the opportunity to meet with representatives of public interest and public service organizations to discuss career opportunities in one of two ways. Group information sessions with organization representatives are scheduled throughout the day; individual interview sessions are scheduled in 15-30 minute increments throughout the day. You will receive further information about this job fair in your Widener e-mail in November. Applications are usually due in early January.

## **SECTION VIII**

# ***Career Development Websites***

## 1. CAREER BASICS WEBSITES

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
General	Keirsey Temperment Sorter and Keirsey Temperment Theory	Personality test of 36 questions in two parts. It sorts your responses and categorizes your personality into one of four types, helping you determine what type of profession you may do well in.	<a href="http://keirsey.com/">http://keirsey.com/</a>
General	Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAAP)	Free test that reveals your motivation for work.	<a href="http://www.assessment.com/Default.asp">http://www.assessment.com/Default.asp</a>
General	Occupational Outlook Handbook	This website is maintained by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The "index" provides an extensive list of professions. Each profession is described, working conditions are provided, and salaries are listed..	<a href="http://bls.gov/">http://bls.gov/</a>
General	Jobsmart	Sample Resumes, Career Guides, Salary Information, and Hidden Jobs.	<a href="http://jobstar.org/">http://jobstar.org/</a>
General	Monster Careers	Interview tips and job board (not legal-specific)	<a href="http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/careers.aspx">http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/careers.aspx</a>

## 2. EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES & JOB BOARDS

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
General	Indeed	Aggregator site which organizes relevant job postings from several sources and forwards to you by email	<a href="http://www.indeed.com">www.indeed.com</a>
General	Job Fox	Job aggregator site	<a href="http://www.jobfox.com">www.jobfox.com</a>
Legal	ABA Career Center	Excellent resource for law students and alumni. This site lists legal resources and contains job listings specifically geared towards law students and practicing attorneys.	<a href="http://www.abalcc.org/">http://www.abalcc.org/</a>
Legal	HG Employment Center	Practice area-specific information; law firm links; government links; employment and career links	<a href="https://www.hg.org/">https://www.hg.org/</a>
General	CEI Internships	Must obtain password from Widener University School of Law Career Development Office. Listings of environmental, federal, law & policy, congressional and	<a href="http://cei-internship.squarespace.com/">http://cei-internship.squarespace.com/</a>

		human rights internships. Links to law firm, prosecution and judiciary websites. Links to over 200 other internet resources to aid in your job search. Law Students/Bar Exams: links to articles about legal jobs and taking the bar exam.	
Legal	Lawyer Intl	Legal resources, including job boards, attorney directory, articles, & forms.	<a href="http://www.lawyerintl.com/legal-jobs.php">http://www.lawyerintl.com/legal-jobs.php</a>
Legal	Office of Public Interest Advising	Harvard University's web site for public interest opportunities with links to federal and state organizations as well as access to public interest groups.	<a href="http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/opia/">http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/opia/</a>
Legal	Intellectual Property Association	Dedicated to the all things intellectual property, including an international directory of IP resources.	<a href="http://www.intellectualpropertyassociation.com/">http://www.intellectualpropertyassociation.com/</a>
Legal	Association of Corporate Counsel	Extensive resource and job postings for in-house counsel. Geared primarily towards experienced attorneys.	<a href="http://www.acc.com/">http://www.acc.com/</a>
General	Environmental Organization Web Directory	Links to environmental job sites. Lists addresses for environmental employers.	<a href="http://www.webdirectory.com/">http://www.webdirectory.com/</a>
Legal	Lawmatch	News and information about latest industry and career trends, as well as tailored career tips pertaining to different legal specialties.	<a href="http://www.lawmatch.com">www.lawmatch.com</a>
Legal	JD Refugee	Website dedicated to helping people with a law degree who want to use it in alternative ways.	<a href="https://jdcareersouthere.com/alternative-careers-for-lawyers-jd-refugee">https://jdcareersouthere.com/alternative-careers-for-lawyers-jd-refugee</a>

### 3. JOB POSTINGS – LEGAL

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	American Health Lawyers Association	Searchable job bank for attorneys interested in health law	<a href="http://archive.healthlawyers.org/crm_queries/career/main.cfm">http://archive.healthlawyers.org/crm_queries/career/main.cfm</a>
Legal	iHirelegal	Job postings, career advice, resume writing-suggestions	<a href="https://www.ihirelegal.com/">https://www.ihirelegal.com/</a>
Legal	Lambda Legal	National organization focused on protecting the civil rights of the gay,	<a href="https://www.lambdalegal.org/about-us/jobs">https://www.lambdalegal.org/about-us/jobs</a>

		lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.	
Legal	Legal Authority	Company that provides targeted mailing job search services.	<a href="http://www.legalauthority.com/">http://www.legalauthority.com/</a>
Legal	LexisNexis	Legal job board	<a href="http://www.lexisnexis.com/careers/default.aspx">http://www.lexisnexis.com/careers/default.aspx</a>
Legal	Nationjob	Job boards, including attorney-specific postings	<a href="http://www.nationjob.com/legal/">http://www.nationjob.com/legal/</a>
Legal	US Department of Justice	Attorney positions. Honors program for students. Summer internships.	<a href="http://www.usdoj.gov">www.usdoj.gov</a>
Legal	The Balance Careers	Career profiles, job search strategies and other resources	<a href="https://www.thebalancecareers.com/legal-careers-4161716">https://www.thebalancecareers.com/legal-careers-4161716</a>

#### 4. JOB POSTINGS - OTHER

	Name of Site	Description	URL
General	Bloomberg	Large international financial organization with internal law related alternative law listings.	<a href="https://www.bloomberg.com/careers">https://www.bloomberg.com/careers</a>
General	Chronicle of Higher Education	Site featuring teaching and administrative job listings at the college and university level.	<a href="http://chronicle.com/jobs/">http://chronicle.com/jobs/</a>
General	Higher Education Jobs	Jobs in higher education	<a href="http://www.higheredjobs.com/default.cfm">http://www.higheredjobs.com/default.cfm</a>
General	Federal Jobs Digest	Database of federal vacancies, including legal; some available for students. Resume submission feature. Description of federal benefits.	<a href="http://www.jobsfed.com">www.jobsfed.com</a>
General	The Hill	Job listings on Capitol Hill	<a href="http://www.hillnews.com">www.hillnews.com</a>
General	USA Jobs Database Online	Database of federal government jobs and internships for new and experienced attorneys.	<a href="http://www.usajobs.gov">www.usajobs.gov</a>
General	US Office of Personnel Management	Database of federal government jobs and internships, including experienced attorney and student positions.	<a href="http://www.opm.gov/">http://www.opm.gov/</a>
General	Roll Call	Capitol Hill job openings	<a href="http://www.rollcall.com">www.rollcall.com</a>

## 5. RESEARCH WEBSITES

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	Chambers Associate	Search engine for law firm information, such as firm strategy, culture, hours, compensation, getting hired, diversity, exit strategy, pro bono, work-life policies and more.	<a href="http://www.chambers-associate.com/Default.aspx">http://www.chambers-associate.com/Default.aspx</a>
Legal	Chambers Partners	Chambers Partners USA ranks the leading firms and lawyers in an extensive range of practice areas throughout America. The research is in-depth and client focused and the guide is read by industry-leading companies and organizations throughout the US and worldwide. It is also widely used by firms in all states for referral purposes.	<a href="https://www.chambersandpartners.com/guide/usa/5">https://www.chambersandpartners.com/guide/usa/5</a>
Legal	National Association for Law Placement	The National Association for Law Placement provides large law firm hiring information as well as market trends and statistics for the legal industry.	<a href="http://www.nalp.org">www.nalp.org</a>
Legal	NALP Directory	Searchable directory for law firms, corporate departments, government agencies and public interest organizations.	<a href="http://www.nalpdirectory.com">www.nalpdirectory.com</a>
Legal	Vault	Law firm and company rankings; tips and resources; job boards	<a href="http://www.vault.com/">http://www.vault.com/</a>

## 6. ATTORNEY DATABASES

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	Martindale-Hubbell	Comprehensive listings of attorneys worldwide. Searchable database.	<a href="http://www.martindale.com">www.martindale.com</a>
Legal	FindLaw	Search database for information on firms, government offices, corporate law offices and lawyers in the U. S. and Canada. Articles on legal developments. Descriptions of practice areas	<a href="http://www.findlaw.com">www.findlaw.com</a>

		and state-specific searches for lawyers by practice area.	
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## 7. LEGAL SEARCH CONSULTANTS

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	Assigned Counsel	Temporary Legal Counsel	<a href="http://www.assignedcounsel.com">www.assignedcounsel.com</a>
Legal	National Association of Legal Search Consultants	National database of legal recruiters	<a href="http://www.nalsc.org/membership/directory.cfm">www.nalsc.org/membership/directory.cfm</a>

## 8. STATE GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	PA Governor's Office of General Counsel	Advises executive departments of the State of Pennsylvania – over 500 attorneys work there. Contains employment information.	<a href="http://www.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pa_gov/2966">http://www.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pa_gov/2966</a>
Legal	PA office of Attorney General	Represents the State of Pennsylvania	<a href="http://www.attorneygeneral.gov">www.attorneygeneral.gov</a>
Legal	PA Board of Bar Examiners	Administers the PA Bar Exam	<a href="http://www.pabarexam.org">www.pabarexam.org</a>
Legal	The Unified Judicial System of PA	Information on the PA Courts	<a href="https://wwwsecure.pacourts.us/judicial-administration/human-resources/job-openings/">https://wwwsecure.pacourts.us/judicial-administration/human-resources/job-openings/</a>
Legal	NJ Judiciary	Information for NJ Judiciary, including clerkship information	<a href="http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us">www.judiciary.state.nj.us</a>
Legal	NJ Dept of Law & Public Safety	Information on NJ Attorney General's Office, including employment	<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/lps/">www.state.nj.us/lps/</a>
Legal	Delaware Dpt of Justice	Information about the DE Attorney General's Office, including employment	<a href="http://www.state.de.us/attgen/">www.state.de.us/attgen/</a>
Legal	Delaware Courts	Information on DE practice, including information about the DE Bar Exam and employment opportunities	<a href="https://courts.delaware.gov/">https://courts.delaware.gov/</a>

## 9. PUBLIC INTEREST WEBSITES

Type	Name of Site	Description	URL
Legal	PSLawNet	Information on public interest legal jobs	<a href="http://www.psjd.org">www.psjd.org</a>
Legal	National Legal Aid and Defender Association	Information on civil legal service organizations, defender groups and other public interest organizations. Searchable by state.	<a href="http://www.nlada.org">www.nlada.org</a>
Legal	Idealist	Database of jobs and volunteer opportunities for non-profit organizations world-wide	<a href="https://www.idealist.org/en/?radius=auto&amp;type=JOB">https://www.idealist.org/en/?radius=auto&amp;type=JOB</a>
Legal	Equal Justice Works	Information about programs and jobs in the public service arena	<a href="http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/about/employment">http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/about/employment</a>
Legal	Foundation Center Job Corner	Jobs in foundations, corporate grant makers, grant-making public charities, educational institutions and other nonprofits	<a href="http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/jobs/">http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/jobs/</a>
Legal	Roll Call Jobs	Jobs in government affairs, lobbying and other groups doing business with the Federal Government	<a href="http://www.rcjobs.com">www.rcjobs.com</a>
General	Human Rights USA	Jobs, fellowships and internships with human rights groups	<a href="http://www.hrusa.org">www.hrusa.org</a>
General	Human Rights Watch	Jobs, including legal-related, at human rights organization	<a href="http://www.hrw.org">www.hrw.org</a>
General	Amnesty International	Job openings at Amnesty International	<a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a>