Post Graduation Jobs in Government and Public Interest

From the Career and Professional Development Center and Office of Public Interest & Pro Bono

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Resources at Duke Law:

- Please see the Post-graduate Jobs in Public Interest and Public Service Manual (Career Center website in the Summer Toolkit – user: blue and password: devils)
- Make an appointment to meet with Stella Boswell, Dean Bart or another career counselor
- Talk with faculty about their contacts and ability to assist you
- **Loan Repayment:** Duke has a Loan Repayment Assistance Program. In addition, the new CCRAA (College Cost Reduction and Access Act) provides income based loan repayment (whether you are doing government and public interest work or not). The Equal Justice Works website has a lot of overview information on the program. John Ahlers in Duke’s Financial Aid Office is an important resource for both of the above—go see him. In addition, some jobs have loan repayment (including some JAG programs, some federal agencies and some non-profits). Learn about your options in advance.
- Both the Career Center and the Public Interest Offices have print resources available for your use as well, including: (1) **Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide Volume I – USA:** This handbook and directory, published by Harvard Law School, is for law students and lawyers seeking public service work, including government and non-profit organizations. (2) **Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide Volume II – International:** Volume II of Serving the Public provides information on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations including the United Nations, opportunities within the United States Government, and international fellowships. (3) **Good Works – A Guide to Careers in Social Change:** This publication provides profiles of professionals with careers in public service and a national directory of public service organizations. (4) **Nonprofit Sector Yellow Book:** A who’s who in the management of the leading foundations, universities, museums, and other non-profit organizations.
- For Fellowship postings, subscribe to Duke Law’s Post Graduate Fellowship Listserv https://mailman.law.duke.edu/mailman/listinfo/postgraduatefellowships

Additional Resources:

- **Equal Justice Works Conference and Career Fair:** Oct. 22nd – 23rd, Bethesda, MD. www.equaljusticeworks.org Beginning in late summer, you can (and must) register for their Symplicity site and upload a resume in order to be preselected for interviews.
- There will be a networking reception with Duke Law alumni who do government and public interest work, as well as many others, the Friday night of the conference in D.C. Location and additional details TBA.
- **Government Honors Programs:** The best resource for these is the Government Honors and Internship Handbook (the Arizona Guide) http://www.law.arizona.edu/career/honorshandbook.cfm (through August 2010: user: cookie password: dough). See the APPENDIX for deadlines and 3L positions. ALWAYS also go to the agency website. Also, search state law websites for state programs.
• **Entry Level Government Jobs:** Federal jobs: [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) is good to get a basic sense of who is hiring BUT attorney jobs are exempted from the posting requirement so many are not posted here. You should always go directly to the various agency websites. State jobs are typically posted on state websites. For both state and federal jobs, finding personal contacts within agencies is important. Do NOT wait for job postings (as the positions may already be filled). Make sure you complete all the requisite forms for government hiring when you apply.

• **Current Projections for Federal Legal Hiring:** The Partnership for Public Service, a government agency, released a study showing critical needs for government hiring within the next two years. To see the study results for legal jobs, including jobs for lawyers as well as paralegals and others, go to: [http://data.wherethejobsare.org/wtja/field/1489](http://data.wherethejobsare.org/wtja/field/1489)

• **PSLawNet.org:** This site is one of the most comprehensive resources for government and public interest jobs. Based on Duke’s membership, it is free to all Duke students and alumni. It includes job postings and well as contact information for all kinds of organizations for your outreach efforts. The Career Central section has phenomenal resources for many types of positions (including must read sections for Federal Government Employment, prosecutors’ offices, public defender offices and more.). There is also a comprehensive listing of fellowships.

• **Idealist.org:** This is one of the best sites for non-profit job postings. You can set it to email all new legal job postings to you on a daily basis.

• **REMEMBER:** As with other types of jobs, MANY positions are UNPOSTED. So it is critical that your search include networking, outreach and applying even to organizations that do not post current hiring needs or positions.

**Additional Resources:**

- National Legal Aid and Defender Associations ([www.nlada.org/jobop.htm](http://www.nlada.org/jobop.htm)): This is the best site for post-graduate jobs in civil legal services organizations and defender organizations. Searchable by state.
- Foundation Center ([www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)): Provides information about every foundation in the country and includes a jobs database.
- Roll Call Jobs ([www.rcjobs.com](http://www.rcjobs.com)): Features jobs in government affairs, lobbying and other positions with organizations that do lobbying or other work with the federal government.
- U.S. Senate ([www.senate.gov/visiting/common/generic/placement_office.htm](http://www.senate.gov/visiting/common/generic/placement_office.htm)): Assists Senators and Senate Committees with filling entry-level through professional staff vacancies by providing, upon request, resumes of qualified candidates. Note that networking is likely a better way to get into these positions.
- Elaw ([www.elaw.org](http://www.elaw.org)): Run by the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide, it lists worldwide organizations that do environmental work.
- National Fair Housing Advocate ([www.fairhousing.com](http://www.fairhousing.com)): Lists positions with organizations and agencies dealing with fair housing issues.
- Many additional internet-based resources are available on the Career and Professional Development Center website: [www.law.duke.edu/career/pdf/libraryinternetresources.pdf](http://www.law.duke.edu/career/pdf/libraryinternetresources.pdf)

**Final Notes:**

• **THE BAR EXAM:** One of the things to watch out for while you are conducting what could be a lengthy search is the deadlines to sign up for each state’s bar exam. If you are uncertain what to do while still searching, please consult with us. Note that the applications are lengthy and cannot be done at the last minute.