Washington University Law

First-year Summer Public Interest Program 2015
The Washington University School of Law is pleased to announce its 2015 Summer Public Interest Program for first-year students who undertake otherwise unpaid legal or law-related work in government and non-profit organizations.

Program Highlights

- The amount of support for first-year students is up to $3,000.
- Students must complete a total of 300 hours of uncompensated legal work for a single placement agency at the agency's regular place of business, in any manner mutually agreed with the placement supervisor, between May 15th and August 21st, 2015. No student may report more than 40 hours worked in any one week.
- Students participating in the program will be required to submit an online evaluation of their summer placements upon completion of the program.
- Students in international placements will receive their awards before leaving the country in the form of single, lump-sum checks (income taxes will NOT be withheld) to assist with costs such as air fare and immunizations.

Program Requirements

The program will provide support for each first-year student who obtains qualified public interest employment. The goals of the program include assisting all students to develop legal skills, instilling, even in those students likely to make careers in the private sector, a respect for public service and a commitment to pro bono, and last, but certainly not least, an opportunity to do the public good. The program is funded primarily through private donations, supplemented by the federal work/study program.

Who is Eligible?

First-year students enrolled in the JD program at Washington University School of Law.
Program Details

- The funds will be available for a single, uncompensated, law-related position with a non-profit organization or government agency.
- The student must complete at least 300 hours at the placement between May 15th and August 21st, 2015.
- The work performed by the student must take place primarily at the placement agency's place of business.
- Participating students must submit a 2015-2016 FAFSA form by April 1, 2015.
  - Students with international placements are exempt from this requirement.
  - Students who are not US Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents are exempt from this requirement.
- Students must promptly submit payroll documentation, including documents necessary to verify employment eligibility, in order to participate in the summer public interest program.
- No academic credit may be received for the work performed.
- Upon completion of the public interest internship, students must complete an online evaluation of the experience.

An Application Deadline of April 1, 2015, has been established. By April 1st, 2015 at 5:00pm, all first-year students potentially seeking summer public interest funding must have:


   AND

2. Completed and submitted any required application for participation in the summer public interest program.

N.B., Students may submit an application form before they have secured a summer position. If you have not secured an eligible position before April 1st, you may file an application providing all requested information which will hold your place in the program. When you accept an offer with an eligible placement agency, you may complete the application. Applications will be accepted and processed on a rolling basis. There is no need to wait. If you have secured program-eligible employment, please apply when the application becomes available.

ALL STUDENTS INTENDING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FIRST-YEAR SUMMER PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAM MUST ATTEND A MANDATORY MEETING IN THE BRYAN CAVE MOOT COURTROOM ON TUESDAY, APRIL 14th, 2015 FROM 12:00 P.M. UNTIL 1:00 P.M.
Eligible Placements

- A non-profit or non-governmental organization including, but not limited to, direct service organizations (legal aid, legal services, UNICEF, etc.)
- A government agency (state/city/federal/tribal), including a prosecutor's office, administrative agency, public defender, legislative office or committee.

The following types of placements are ineligible:

- Positions with private law firms (even if exclusively on pro bono cases)
- Positions as judicial interns/externs
- Positions working on political campaigns
- Faculty research assistantships

Note: if you are unsure whether a placement agency would qualify under this program, please contact your CSO advisor as soon as possible to discuss whether the position meets the program's requirements. Similarly, students having difficulty identifying a qualifying placement agency should contact their CSO advisors to develop job search strategies focused on the individual student's preferences as to geographic and legal practice areas. The search for a suitable placement takes time!

A note about legal employment

While it is permissible for students to engage in some compensated legal work for an employer other than the placement agency during the term of the program, it is imperative that students who choose to engage in paid legal employment exercise extreme caution, particularly with respect to potential conflicts. The proposed work must be fully disclosed to both employer and placement supervisor, permitting conflicts checks to be run and waivers to be obtained, if necessary. The knowledge that a student intends to pursue private sector legal work may be a deal breaker for certain public sector placements.

A final note

The funds that make this program possible come from private donations leveraged by the federal work/study program. To the extent that student participants benefit from the program while at the law school, we hope that when you are able to do so, you will contribute to the program, keeping it viable for the students who follow you, whether by providing placements or training for law students at your public interest organization, or by means of financial contributions, or both.