Section of Litigation Judicial Intern Opportunity Program

The American Bar Association Section of Litigation will begin accepting applications for its 2005-2006 Judicial Intern Opportunity Program November 1st for second-year law students. Applications for first-year law students will be accepted beginning December 1st, according to NALP guidelines. The program is a full-time, six-week minimum, summer internship program open to all first-or second-year minority and financially disadvantaged law students.

Students selected to the program will intern with state or federal judges in Chicago and surrounding suburbs, Central and Southern Illinois, in Houston and Southern Texas and in Miami, FL, Phoenix, AZ and Los Angeles, CA. Interns will receive a stipend of $1,500 for the entire summer.

The Section of Litigation runs the Judicial Intern Opportunity Program in partnership with the ABA Section of Intellectual Property Law. Therefore, in addition to the Litigation internships, internships for students with an Intellectual Property Law focus will also be offered in Chicago and Houston. Students can indicate their interest on their application.

Students applying to the program must submit a completed application form, legal writing sample and a statement of interest. Detailed program information, frequently asked questions and a copy of the application are available at our website www.abanet.org/litigation/jiop.

All applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2006. Screening interviews to better determine student qualifications will be done on a rolling basis. We will make every attempt to screen students where they attend school and in person. Only qualified students will be sent on for judicial interviews. Students will be notified when they are sent on for a judicial interview.

Judicial interviews will begin in February and will continue until all positions are filled. All applicants will be notified when the program has closed for the year and all positions are filled. The program is only open to students who have not previously participated as an intern in the program.

The ABA Section of Antitrust Law created the program in 2000. The ABA Section of Litigation now administers it. The program seeks to provide internship opportunities for minority and financially disadvantaged law students; those who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups in the legal profession.

Participating Judges

Participating judges will determine their process for interviews and selection. Students will be forwarded to judges based on qualifications and the results of their screening interviews. Not all students will be granted a judicial interview. Participating judges are from the United States District Court for the Northern and Central Districts of Illinois, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Illinois Circuit Courts, United
States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Texas Civil District Court and state and federal courts in Miami, FL, Phoenix, AZ and Los Angeles, CA.

**Geographic Locations**

Students may indicate geographic location preferences on their applications. Applicants are encouraged to rank all geographic locations where they are able to accept a position.

**Stipend**

Interns will receive a stipend of $1,500 for the entire summer. Stipend checks are mailed by the end of June. Students may also elect to receive law school credit. The choice of stipend or law school credit must be indicated at the time of application. The program does not provide housing.

**Time Commitment**

The time commitment will vary by student, subject to a six-week minimum. Individual judges will determine a student’s expected schedule and students will be expected to coordinate their schedules with their individual judge and to work the hours required by each judge. Students will be expected to attend one of the program orientation programs if possible. They will also be invited to participate in other programming throughout the summer. Attendance at these programs is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged.

**Application Requirements/Procedure**

Applications for this year’s program will be accepted for second-year law students beginning November 1, 2005. Applications for first-year law students will be accepted beginning December 1st, according to NALP guidelines. Students will be given a screening interview on a rolling admission basis. Screening interviews will begin in November and will continue through the application process. We will make every attempt to interview students where they attend school and in person. Students will be sent on for judicial review and possible interviews based on qualifications. Individual judges will determine their interview procedures. We will continue to send students for judicial interviews based on qualifications until all positions are filled. All applicants will be notified when the program has closed for the year and all positions are filled. Students are encouraged to apply early. No applications will be accepted after the January 31, 2006 (postmark) deadline.

Applicants are required to submit four copies of each of the following:

* A completed application form (located on the program website)
* A legal writing sample from 3 – 5 pages in length; and
* A statement of interest

The statement of interest should be no more than two pages in length and should outline the student’s qualifications for the internship. Students should use that statement as an opportunity to express why they believe they are qualified for this program and what sets them apart from the rest of the applicants.
In addition, there are also specialized internships being offered this year in the area of Intellectual Property Law in Chicago and Houston. Students interested in also being considered for one of these positions should include a one-page summary of qualifications and background in intellectual property law.

Frequently asked questions and a copy of the application will be available online after October 3rd.

For additional information, contact the program director, Gail Howard at howardg@staff.abanet.org, or at 312-988-6348.

Students will be notified via email when their completed application has been received. Applicants will be interviewed in a screening interview by a member of the ABA or local bar association. Students will be interviewed in the geographic area where they attend law school or by telephone. All first round interviews will be completed sometime in March.

Students will be forwarded on to judges for review and possible interviews beginning in March. Interviewing judges will make the final hiring decisions. Judges in their respective locations will conduct judicial interviews and judges will complete their selections by May 1. There is no funding for interviewing expenses. Please note that there are a limited number of paid internship positions available.

Each student who is accepted for a position will be asked to provide his or her social security number and a summer mailing address and email. Stipend checks will be mailed by the end of June. Students need to be a U.S. resident in order to apply.

**Application Process**

**First Round Interviews**

- First round interviews will be conducted either in person in the geographic area where you attend law school, or by telephone.
- The interviewer (or his or her assistant) will contact you to set up an interview time and place. You do not need to do anything. You will be notified by telephone or email.
- The interview will last no longer than 30 minutes and is intended to give you the opportunity to discuss your skills, experience and interest in being an intern. You can best prepare by reviewing your resume and summarizing previous work experience and law school activities.
- Our goal is to have all first round interviews completed by March.
- If you decide to withdraw from the program at any time during the interviewing process, please notify the program staff as soon as possible.
Judges’ Interviews

- Candidates will be sent to judges based on qualifications for review. The most qualified applicants will be sent out for review first. Due to the large number of applications received, we will not notify you if you have been selected for judicial review.
- Individual judges will determine which students they will interview and ultimately hire. If you have been selected for a judicial interview you will be notified either by the chamber or the program staff. Due to the large number of applications received, we ask that you not contact us about whether you have been selected. We will notify you as soon as possible.
- Most judicial interviews will be conducted in person in the judges’ chambers in the city selected for the internship. They usually last a minimum of 30 minutes. If personal interviews are not possible, they may be conducted by telephone. Please remember that there is no reimbursement for any travel expenses.
- Be prepared to talk about your law school activities, legal background and your interest in working as an intern. Most judges will also ask to see a copy of your current grades if available.
- Judicial interviews will continue until all judges have filled their positions.

Final Selection of Interns

- Judges are expected to conclude their selection process by late April.
- At that time all applicants will be notified as to whether or not they have been accepted into the program. If you are accepted into the program, it is assumed that you are committed to participate and fulfill the requirements outlined by the hiring judge.

Program Orientations

Welcome receptions and program orientations will be held in Chicago, Springfield, Houston, Miami, Phoenix and Los Angeles in June. Students are expected to attend the program orientation if possible. In addition, supplemental programming will be made available to students. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these programs.

Follow Up Procedures

Upon completion of the internship, students will be asked to complete a program evaluation form. Interested students may join a JIOP alumnae group to work on future program development.

Contact Information

Questions about the program can be directed to the Program Director, Gail Howard, at howardg@staff.abanet.org or 312-988-6348.