

WCL NEWS FORUM

Newsletter of the Washington Council of Lawyers

A Public Interest Voice in the Legal Community



SPRING 2011

The Council Stays Busy

By Taryn Wilgus Null, Washington Council of Lawyers President

I hope that all of you have had the chance to participate in Washington Council of Lawyers activities this year. I continue to be amazed by how much is happening and how many opportunities there are for members of the DC legal community to get involved with the Council. I am sure that all who attended the Council's Annual Awards Reception in December were as touched and inspired as I was by the words of Dean William Treanor of Georgetown University Law Center, and by our incredible awards recipients—Maureen Thornton Syracuse, John Warshawsky, and DLA Piper. With the constant hustle and bustle of our professional lives, it is rare to have a moment to take a step back and honor those who embody the best of what the legal profession can be. I am proud that the Council can provide the opportunity to honor those who do so much for our community.

Two events that I have attended recently highlight the different ways in which the Council can help to support and enrich lawyers who care about public interest and pro bono work. On February 23rd, I attended our workshop on "How to Land the Ideal Public Interest Job." Although I have been out of law school for nearly four years, I picked up

a few tips myself. But more importantly, I was encouraged to see current law students and young lawyers there, engaged and asking thoughtful questions of our panelists. DC is a unique place in that it has far more lawyers per capita than anywhere else, and also has a number of local law schools full of students who plan to practice in DC after they graduate. The Council can do valuable work connecting these students with public interest opportunities, and the career workshop was only the beginning of outreach that the Council can and should do with local law students.



Taryn Wilgus Null, WCL President

On March 2nd, I attended the panel that the Council co-hosted with the American Immigration Lawyers Association on "Immigration Enforcement: What is the Proper Role for State and Local Government Action?". As someone who is not an immigration lawyer, I was not aware of all of the complex issues at stake when state and local governments act to enforce immigration laws, so it was a wonderful learning experience for me. The attendees had various levels of experience with immigration law, and the panelists were able to explain the issues at a level that was understandable and interesting for all of us.

Council activities run the gamut from substantive panels for practitioners of all levels, to career workshops for law students and new lawyers. I hope that the Council can bring something to every lawyer in DC who cares about the practice of public interest and pro bono law, regardless of experience level or practice area. Please keep an eye on the Council's website and emails for our upcoming events. We have a lot of exciting plans in the works, and I hope to see you all at a Council event soon. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any ideas about what the Council can and should be doing. I look forward to hearing your input. ■

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Washington Council of Lawyers Co-Sponsors Immigration Panel with the American Immigration Lawyers Association

On March 2, the Washington Council of Lawyers and the American Immigration Lawyers Association co-sponsored a panel discussion entitled: **Immigration Enforcement: What is the Proper Role for State and Local Government Action?** The panel featured moderator **Karen Grisez**, Public Service Counsel at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, LLP, and panelists:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Juan Osuna | Acting Director Executive Office for Immigration Review Department of Justice |
| Brittney Nystrom | Director of Policy and Legal Affairs National Immigration Forum |
| Michele Waslin | Senior Policy Analyst American Immigration Council |

The thoughtful discussion was informative and entertaining. The spirited conversation was of DHS-initiated programs to identify persons subject to removal through cooperation with local authorities as well as other legislative schemes similar to AZ SB1070 that have been developed by states and municipalities seeking



Immigration panel speakers Michele Waslin, Juan Osuna, Karen Grisez and Brittney Nystrom



WCL and AILA members had a chance to get to know one another prior to the start of the Immigration Enforcement program

to regulate immigration on their own. Thank you to our speakers and to all who attended the program! ■

Panel Discussion of the Constitutional Right to Counsel

Monday, April 25, the Washington Council of Lawyers and the Constitution Project co-sponsored a panel discussion entitled, **Turner v. Rogers: New Territory for the Constitutional Right to Counsel**. The speakers included **Catherine Carroll**, Partner, Wilmer Hale and Pro Bono Counsel for Michael Turner, **Jo-Ann Wallace**, President, National Legal Aid & Defender Association, **Debra Gardner**, Legal Director, Public Justice Center and Coordinator, National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel, and moderator **Mary Schmid Mergler**,

Senior Counsel to the Constitution Project's Criminal Justice Program.

The Council is pleased to offer informative programming at little or no cost to its members! ■

Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse Subscription Drive a Big Success!

Thank you to the students at Catholic University, Columbus School of Law!

On Friday, February 18, 2011 a group of students from **Catholic University, Columbus School of Law** participated in a Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse subscription drive. Together, they extended the invitation to receive one complimentary copy of the Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse to the offices of career services at 65 law schools. We expect a significant bump up in our subscriptions due to the outreach efforts of these students. Thank you! ■

Got an Issue? Join Us!

The Washington Council of Lawyers Issues Committee welcomes additional advocacy opportunities such as signing on to amicus briefs and testimony, submitting comments regarding proposed regulations, and sending letters to legislatures on topics relevant to the Council's mission. If you know of issues or organizations working to promote the public interest and pro bono practice of law, please help us work together with them! ■

Peter Edelman Thanks WCL for Advocacy to Preserve Funding for Legal Services



Peter B. Edelman, Chair, DC
Access to Justice Commission

Dear Taryn,

On behalf of the Access to Justice Commission, I want to express my profound gratitude to you for your support of the Access to Justice Program. The Committee of the Whole voted last week to preserve funding for the program at \$3.1 million for fiscal year 2011. Although this represents a 10% cut from the level initially allocated by the Council this spring, it is a substantial improvement over the more than 50% cut proposed by the Mayor. Had that 50% been effectuated, it would have severely undermined the ability of the District's already fragile legal services network to meet urgent client needs. I am mindful that TANF and other safety net programs bore excruciating cuts that will likely increase the need for legal services for our city's most vulnerable residents. I have no doubt that the Washington Council of Lawyers' letter—and the emails and calls made by your members—had a tremendous impact on the DC Council's decision to preserve the funding. Your communications demonstrated that the legal community is broadly supportive of access to justice and that as lawyers we understand the peril faced by litigants who have to face legal crises alone. Thank you so much for working with us to protect this vital program.

Sincerely,

Peter B. Edelman
Chair, D.C. Access to Justice Commission. ■

Washington Council of Lawyers Issues Committee: Advocacy in Action

The Washington Council of Lawyers Issues Committee has been hard at work advocating for legislative and policy changes that will support the practice of public interest and pro bono law.

Recent actions include:

- **OPPOSING ADDITIONAL BURDENS ON LAWYERS REPRESENTING GUANTANAMO DETAINEES:** The Council sent a letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee asking that the Senate not adopt the provisions of Section 1037 of H.R. 5136, an amendment of the National Defense Authorization Act, in the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act, or any conference bill. The relevant provisions imposed additional burdens on attorneys representing Guantanamo detainees. The bill never became law because the Session of Congress expired without a Senate vote taking place.
- **ADVOCATING FOR IMPROVED RULES GOVERNING IOLTA ACCOUNTS:** On October 15, 2010, the Council sent a letter to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) regarding the implementation of new rules governing Income on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA). The Senate, in one of its last actions of the 111th Congress, passed a bill to fix the potential problem with certain IOLTA accounts resulting from a change in FDIC insurance coverage.
- **OPPOSING DISPROPORTIONATE FUNDING CUTS TO THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LRAP PROGRAMS BEFORE THE DC COUNCIL:** On November 30, 2010, the Washington Council of Lawyers hand-delivered letters to the chambers of each DC Council Member opposing a proposed 50% reduction in Access to Justice funding and the proposed reduction in Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) funding for public interest attorneys. A significant portion of the funding was spared from the cuts.

The WCL Issues Committee welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with other organizations supporting the practice of public interest and pro bono law. For further information, please contact Issues Committee Co-chairs Richard Jerome at rjerome@pewtrusts.org, or Elizabeth Symonds at esymonds@msn.com. ■

The Washington Council of Lawyers 2010 Awards Reception: An Outstanding Evening

By Mary-Christy Fisher, WCL Board Member

The Washington Council of Lawyers' Annual Awards Reception, held on Tuesday, December 7, 2010, was a terrific celebration of the public interest work being performed in the District of Columbia. Not only did the organization recognize three dynamic members of the local legal community—**John Warshawsky**, a member of the Civil Division's Civil Fraud Section at the Department of Justice, **Maureen Thornton Syracuse**, Executive Director of the DC Bar's Pro Bono Program, and the law firm of **DLA Piper, LLP**—Mary-Christy Fisher but the packed house also heard from **William Treanor**, the newly appointed Dean of Georgetown University Law School, which is renowned for its public interest programs.



AAG Tony West introduces Government Pro Bono Award recipient John Warshawsky

Nancy Lopez, the Council's Executive Director, welcomed the crowd to the gathering, which took place in **Arnold & Porter's** Garden Room. Ms. Lopez, who began serving in this capacity in September 2010, was officiating at her first annual reception. She opened the evening by reviewing the efforts of the Council over the past year, highlighting the important ways in which the Council supports those engaged in the practice of pro bono and public interest work.



WCL President Taryn Wilgus Null presents the Government Pro Bono Award to DOJ attorney John Warshawsky

Mr. Warshawsky, recipient of the **Government Pro Bono Award**, was honored for the outstanding pro bono work he has performed since 2006. He was introduced by **Anthony West**, Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Civil Division, who enumerated his many achievements. As AAG West described,



Mary-Christy Fisher, WCL Board Member

Mr. Warshawsky has represented numerous clients while he has been at Justice and he continued his commitment when he was on loan to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Warshawsky has volunteered in a number of capacities—Mary-Christy Fisher providing individual legal representation in child support and custody matters as well as in housing cases and attending the Bar's Saturday morning Advice and Referral Clinic. While at the FDIC, he acted as that agency's Pro Bono Coordinator. AAG West concluded his introduction with a proclamation from Attorney General Eric Holder, recognizing Mr. Warshawsky for his exemplary work.

Maureen Thornton Syracuse received the Washington Council of Lawyers **Presidents' Award**. Ms. Syracuse was introduced by her close friend, **James J. Sandman**, former DC Bar President, and at the time of the Awards Reception, the General Counsel for the DC Public Schools. (Shortly after the Awards Reception, Mr. Sandman was named President of the Legal Services Corporation.) In the almost two decades that Ms. Syracuse has been the Executive Director of the DC Bar Pro Bono Program, she has supervised its change from a telephone hotline into a multi-faceted program



Maureen Thornton Syracuse, Presidents' Award recipient

2010 Awards Reception continued on page 5

now in the forefront of pro bono programs. Area attorneys have the opportunity to provide individual client representation on a variety of legal issues, to counsel organizations in a non-litigation capacity through its Community Economic Development (CED) project, and to provide brief service through the Bar's monthly Advice and Referral Clinics. Ms. Syracuse also has been an active member of the DC legal services community, serving in the past year as co-chair of the DC Consortium of Legal Services Providers. Ms. Syracuse has been a key player in building a solid commitment to pro bono service—gaining the trust of individual attorneys and the support of the law firm community—and the Council was pleased to recognize her contributions.

Finally, the law firm of DLA Piper LLP, recipient of the Council's **Law Firm Pro Bono Contribution Award**, was toasted for its efforts. The firm has been a consistent Washington Council of Law supporter, and its Senior Pro Bono Counsel, **Roberta Ritvo**, is a Council Board

member. In addition, the firm hosted the Council's 2010 Pro Bono Fair, where attorneys are introduced to the many pro bono opportunities available throughout the DC community.

The keynote address was delivered by Dean Treanor, who took over the helm of the



William Treanor,
Dean, Georgetown University Law Center

Georgetown University Law Center in July 2010. He was introduced by Washington Council of Lawyers Board member and Assistant Dean **Barbara Moulton**, who directs Georgetown's Office of Public Interest and Community Service. Dean Treanor articulated his vision for the school and the profession, and shared his belief that although lawyers and law students are facing challenging times, they are also being afforded a chance to re-evaluate the nature of their fundamental commitment to the practice of law.

The formal part of the evening concluded with remarks from Washington Council of Lawyers President **Taryn Wilgus Null**. Attendees were able to extend their congratulations to the Award Recipients over desserts and drinks. It was a wonderful evening! ■

Many Thanks to Our 2010 Awards Reception Sponsors

The Council could not provide high quality programs and advocacy in support of pro bono and public interest law without the financial support of our donors. Thank you!

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Hold a Casual Day for the Council, and everyone in your office can dress casually to support the Washington Council of Lawyers: \$5 for staff and \$10 for attorneys.

Easy to make a donation online!

A fun way to build camaraderie and support a great cause!

For more information, or to sponsor a casual day at your office, please contact Nancy Lopez at NALopez@wclawyers.org or (202) 942-5063.



DC Bar Advice & Referral Clinic

Join the Washington Council of Lawyers in providing brief legal advice and relevant referrals on a pro bono basis. This is a wonderful way to provide discrete, time-limited legal assistance to those in need! Volunteers must be barred in DC, be barred in another state and work for the federal government, or be barred in another state and have an application to waive into DC pending. No specific background or experience in the substantive legal areas is necessary to participate in the Clinic—expert attorneys are available to assist you.

Upcoming Advice & Referral Clinic Dates!

Saturday, **May 14**

Saturday, **August 13**

Saturday, **November 12**

Washington Council of Lawyers Raffle and Happy Hour



Thank you to all who purchased raffle tickets and attended the Washington Council of Lawyers Happy Hour on March 30! It was a great success, thanks to the support of our sponsors and donors:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Julie Abbate | M&S Grill |
| Arnold & Porter LLP | Tom Mikula |
| Au Bon Pain | Museum of Crime & Punishment |
| Austin Grill | Music Center at Strathmore |
| Celedon Spa | Spy Museum |
| Green Room Speakers | Joan Weiss & Paul Ephross |
| Hunton & Williams LLP | |
| Mary Kennedy | |

Congratulations to our 2011 Raffle Prize Winners!

Prize Package #1 – Carolina on my Mind: Amanda Frizzelle

Prize Package #2 – Escape to the Cape: Barbara Moulton

Prize Package #3 – Eating...and Eating Well: Rebecca Cary

Prize Package #4 – Out & About in DC: Maria Cirincione

Prize Package #5 – New Year, New You: Karen Grisez

2011 Raffle Door Prize: Micole Allekotte

Litigation Skills Training— A Washington Council of Lawyers Tradition

One service the Washington Council of Lawyers provides to the legal services community of DC is our annual **Litigation Skills Training**, held this year on **May 19-20**. Each spring, public interest, government, and firm attorneys come together to sharpen their litigation skills in a two-day, on-your-feet litigation skills training. Experienced faculty teach participants how to conduct effective opening statements and closing arguments. Students hear tips on how to successfully guide witnesses through direct examinations, and cut to the chase on cross-examination. We are pleased this year to feature lunchtime presentations by the **Honorable Ellen Huvelle** of the DC District Court, and outstanding trial attorney **Michele Roberts**, partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, and Flom LLP.



Thank you!

Thank you to **Mary Kennedy** of **Arnold & Porter**, and **Andrew Wise** of **Miller & Chevalier** for co-chairing the 2011 Litigation Skills Training!

Thank you to the **DC Bar Foundation** for sponsoring scholarships to allow Bar Foundation public grantees to attend the Litigation Skills Training. ■

Washington Council of Lawyers Summer Pro Bono Forum

The Washington Council of Lawyers is pleased to present our annual **Summer Pro Bono Forum** on **Tuesday, June 14**, featuring keynote speaker **Seth Waxman**, former Solicitor General and current partner at WilmerHale. At the Summer Pro Bono Forum, summer associates and legal interns from around the city come together to explore many of the public interest and pro bono opportunities available to attorneys working in DC. It's a wonderful celebration of our vibrant public interest and pro bono community! ■

Meet the Co-chairs Susie Hoffman and Carolyn Lerner

The *News Forum* recently sat down with DC Bar Affairs Committee Co-chairs Susie Hoffman and Carolyn Lerner to learn more about the work of this interesting committee. Ms. Hoffman is the Pro Bono Counsel at Crowell & Mooring LLP, and Carolyn Lerner is a partner at Heller, Huron, Chertkof, Lerner, Simon & Salzman PLLC.



Susie Hoffman
WCL Board Member



Carolyn Lerner
WCL Board Member

News Forum (NF): *How long have you been associated with the Washington Council of Lawyers and the DC Bar Affairs Committee?*

Ms. Hoffman: I have been involved with the Council for more than 20 years, and a co-chair of the DC Bar Affairs Committee for about 10 years.

Ms. Lerner: I have been a Council member for more than 15 years, and a co-chair of the DC Bar Affairs Committee for about 5 years.

NF: *Can you describe the process the committee uses for endorsing DC Bar Candidates?*

Ms. Lerner: First, the committee crafts the questionnaire that will be sent to the candidates to learn about their positions on pro bono and public interest issues. Once the DC Bar has identified the candidates for each office, the questionnaire is sent to the

candidates, and we ask for their responses and a resume. The committee reviews the responses, and invites the President-Elect candidates to meet with the committee. The DC Bar Affairs Committee makes endorsement recommendations to the Washington Council of Lawyers Board of Directors. The final endorsements are circulated widely throughout the DC legal community.

NF: *What impact do the Washington Council of Lawyers' endorsements have?*

Ms. Lerner: The Council's DC Bar endorsements constitute a valuable service to our members. The DC Bar is so large, that you often do not know the candidates. It is useful to have the Council research the candidates and provide an endorsement of candidates who believe that pro bono and public interest issues are worthy of attention. It also is a central part of the Council's mission to ensure that attorneys are focused on the importance of issues impacting pro bono and public interest work. The endorsement process is another way in which the Council maintains a strong public interest voice in the legal community.

NF: *How does the Council get the word out about their endorsement of the candidates?*

Ms. Hoffman: The Council publicizes their endorsements to Council members, and asks that our members share the endorsements with others who may find them valuable. Our members will circulate the endorsements around their law firm or office. E-mail has made our lives much easier! The candidates we have endorsed also list our endorsement on their campaign materials.

Washington Council of Lawyers: A Noble Mission

The Washington Council of Lawyers is a nonprofit organization of lawyers committed to pro bono service and the public interest practice of law. Through regular and annual events, training programs, discussions, and special projects, the Council seeks to stimulate the interest and involvement of all segments of the bar in matters that affect the public interest.

Join WCL today!



Meet the Co-Chairs continued on page 8

NF: *Is it true that the Council also is active in focusing U.S. presidential candidates on issues regarding public interest and pro bono work?*

Ms. Hoffman: Yes, in presidential election years, the Council often will have a number of informative programs, such as panel discussions and debates involving representatives from each candidate's campaign at which we seek information regarding the candidate's positions on public interest issues.

NF: *As you think about future DC Bar elections, what strikes you?*

Ms. Lerner: It is important to have really good people gaining the skills and experience necessary to be viable candidates for DC Bar positions. Those attorneys who are committed to public interest and pro bono work should get involved with the DC Bar early in their careers, and stay involved, so that the issues of access to justice, and the provision of legal services to the poor remain a focus. The Washington Council of Lawyers could work to recruit and support attorneys who are dedicated to the public interest practice of law, so that they can be elected, and will have a voice and a vote in matters before the DC Bar. ■

WCL Board Members in the News



Golda Philip, WCL Membership Committee Chair

Congratulations to WCL Board Member Golda Philip, featured on Northeastern School of Law's website for her unique pathway to a public interest career focused on improving our health care and immigration systems. Check it out at <http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pathways/philip.html>. ■

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Nancy A. Lopez Washington Council of Lawyers

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Debra Kushner, Glenda Adams, Harvey Duze, Fang-Mei Liu, Jose Garriga, Barbara Higgins.

WCL Co-Sponsors Career Workshop

By Golda Philip, WCL Membership Committee Chair

On February 23, 2011, The Washington Council of Lawyers, Equal Justice Works, and NALP presented a best practices career workshop entitled “**Destination Public Interest: How to Land Your Ideal Public Interest Job.**” The panel featured Steve Grumm, Director of Public Service Initiatives at NALP, Jennifer Thomas, Director of Legal Recruiting for the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and Jarrod Shirk, Assistant Director of the Office of Public Interest at American University’s Washington College of Law.



The Destination Public Interest Career Workshop held on February 23 was well attended



Destination Public Interest Speakers Steve Grumm of NALP, Jarrod Shirk of American University, The Washington College of Law, and Jennifer Thomas from the Public Defender Service

The panelists, drawing from their extensive experience with hiring and career advising, provided practical tips on how to craft effective cover letters and resumes, and how to interview and network persuasively. Throughout the workshop, panelists fielded a range of questions from the diverse and attentive audience. The workshop, hosted by Hogan Lovells, LLP, is part of Washington Council of Lawyers’ continuing efforts to support area law students and young attorneys as they navigate the legal job market. Stay tuned for similar upcoming events! ■

Best Practices for the Postgraduate Public-Interest Job Search: A New Resource for Students and Grads

By Steve Grumm, WCL Vice President

This article has been adapted from a piece that appeared in the April, 2011 edition of the NALP Bulletin.

As described above, the Washington Council of Lawyers, in partnership with NALP and Equal Justice Works, recently hosted a program for public interest job seekers entitled “Destination Public Interest: Landing the Ideal Public Interest Job.” A webinar is available for those who were unable to attend the program: http://www.nalp.org/destination_public_interest. Here I review some of the career workshop’s highlights.

Challenges and Uncertainties for Public Interest Job Seekers

Job seekers are all subject to the prevailing economic winds. They can’t control the macro-level economic realities that influence our lives. However, in the context of the public interest job search, job seekers can control the strength of their candidacy for jobs with respect to

both written materials and in-person presentation. Let’s review some best practices in the job application process.

Ten Tips for the Postgraduate Public Interest Job Search

1. **A cover letter should almost never be longer than a page.** Jennifer Thomas, Director of Recruiting at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, explains it this way: “The cover letter is almost always one page, unless you have very specific, extensive experience in the substantive area of the job you are applying for. A one-page cover letter suffices to pique the employer’s interest and serve as an introduction to encourage her to look closely at your resume.”
2. **The cover letter and résumé are “living documents.”** Job seekers must tailor résumés and cover letters to

Best Practices for Job Search continued on page 10

each position they apply for. They should think about each job opening as requiring a brand new set of application materials. By doing this they will force themselves to craft application documents that are targeted directly to the position they are applying for. Of course this makes proofreading that much more necessary. Revising application materials increases the risk of creating grammatical or formatting inconsistencies. Ideally, a third party should review each application before it goes out.

3. **Job seekers should use qualifications specified in a job listing as prompts for points to address in their cover letters.**

If an employer is seeking someone with experience in juvenile justice issues, for example, a job seeker may write that he or she “has experience in juvenile justice issues ranging from an in-court law school clinic representing minors to academic work researching juvenile sentencing trends for violent offenses in Jurisdiction X.”

4. **A cover letter is a complement to the résumé, not simply a reformatted version of the résumé.**

Cover letters give job seekers a chance to express their passion directly to an employer in a slightly less formal manner than a résumé; it enables job seekers to say not only what their credentials are but also (a) why those credentials will enable them to do a job and (b) why they want that job.

5. **Education or experience— which goes first on the résumé?**

Jennifer Thomas explains: “When applying for that first post-graduate job, education should come first because most students/recent grads lack extensive experience in the field, and the standard formatting allows employers to quickly identify the applicant’s status. Once you have your first legal job, education becomes secondary and employers are looking more to identify the substantive expertise/experience the candidate is gaining as a working attorney.”

6. **A résumé should, as specifically as possible, list a job seeker’s skills and experiences.**

It should be driven by action verbs and cite numbers where possible. E.g.: “Represented four minor defendants as a student-attorney while completing an intensive, one-semester juvenile justice clinic. Negotiated three plea bargains and achieved an acquittal in one trial.”

7. **Electronic submission of an application involves additional considerations:**

- Applicants should follow instructions to the letter. If an employer requests submissions directly via e-mail and asks for specific language in the subject line of that e-mail, applicants

must comply exactly with those instructions. If an employer wants a direct e-mail rather than an e-mail application via Symplicity, a job seeker should not use Symplicity.

- To coin a verb, job seekers should “PDF” their cover letters and résumés as attachments in an e-mail application. There are actually two bits of advice here. First, unless directed to do otherwise, job seekers should send their cover letter as an attachment rather than in the body of an e-mail. (A short greeting/message can go in the body.) Second, unless directed to do otherwise, job seekers should convert word-processing documents into PDF files and attach those.
 - Job seekers should avoid the “Symplicity cold shoulder.” Because I have received job applications via Symplicity, I have learned that the system gives job seekers a chance to submit a short comment in the application e-mail. Job seekers should write at least a short greeting. If they leave the field blank, the employer reads the following in the e-mail: “The student entered the following notes:” ... and then nothing. It seems a bit impersonal.
8. **Do mock interviews.** They are the surest way for job seekers to (a) identify questions that could trip them up and (b) help calm their nerves by approximating the interview experience in a consequence-free environment.
9. **An interview is a conversation, not an inquisition.** Job seekers should be polite and formal but loose enough to promote the free flow of conversation. Employers are not just hiring a unit of labor; they are hiring a human being with whom they will want to be able to enjoy time and build a strong in-office relationship. A tip: smiling actually warms the tone of one’s voice, so flashing the pearly whites at points during an interview is helpful.
10. **Saying “thank you” is important.** Some tips on the post-interview thank-you note:
- Either a handwritten note or an e-mail is fine. If a handwritten note, it should go in the mail within 24 hours of the interview. If an e-mail, it should be sent within 48 hours of the interview.
 - If a job seeker meets more than three people at an interview, it is fine to send one note or e-mail to the main contact and ask them to thank their colleagues.

Finally, I encourage job seekers to visit www.pslawnet.org/jobsearchfundamentals for an array of tips and best practices pertinent to all phases of the networking and job search processes. ■

The Washington Council of Lawyers Mentoring Program

By Amelia Kegan and Micole Allekotte, Mentoring Program Co-chairs 2010-2011

There are times when working as a public interest attorney can get draining. The Washington Council of Lawyers mentoring program provides support for new public interest lawyers. Through participation in the program, mentors and mentees alike get a sense and real appreciation for the depth of talent and dedication to legal services present in the Washington legal community.

The Washington Council of Lawyers mentoring program pairs new public interest attorneys with other experienced lawyers in the Washington area. We hold luncheons every two months with presentations and panels on various aspects of public interest law. Our mentor luncheon topics this year are: (1) advice and stories for new attorneys; (2) working in the federal government; (3) introduction to DC's public interest players, providers and coalitions; (4) techniques for change: policy, litigation, lobbying, and public education; and (5) staying in public interest for the long haul: tips from longtime Washington Council of Lawyers members.

The mentoring program has grown over the five years since it was begun in 2005. It began with just a handful of participants. This year we have 26 mentors and 26 mentees. Some of the mentors have participated in the program from the beginning; others just joined the Council. Mentors and mentees have a variety of backgrounds and experiences, from working in Cambodia to working for the U.S. Congress. They work on civil rights, child advocacy, health care, immigration, environmental law, disability rights, legal education, homelessness issues, domestic violence, international law, public policy, and pro bono services to name a few examples.

One of the mentoring program's great traditions is the opening luncheon. Jess Rosenbaum and Mary Bissell open the year sharing their stories from their first years as attorneys. Their humorous and engaging stories as newly minted attorneys remind us that we all make mistakes early on, but that these missteps generally do not doom our legal careers—although we may think so at the time. In one of her first cases, Jess begged her boss to take on a case. She later discovered the case to be much more difficult and the client much less sympathetic than she originally thought (including the fact that the client had a habit of throwing her purse at the judge). Jess, now Executive Director of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission and former Coordinator for the DC Consortium of Legal Services Providers, models the adage that whatever it is, you will get through it, and be a better lawyer because of it.

For mentees who are just beginning their legal careers, the personal connections made are the most meaningful aspect of the WCL mentoring program. As mentees embark on their careers and step into this surprisingly small but powerful legal community, the mentoring program provides a true appreciation for the remarkable people that comprise this community and with whom we will work to advance the values underpinning our judicial system. ■

A Great Big Mentoring Program Thank You to Our Law Firm Friends!

Thank you to all of the law firms that have hosted a mentoring program lunch this year! We couldn't do it without your help!

Arnold & Porter LLP Hunton & Williams LLP
Crowell & Mooring LLP Steptoe & Johnson LLP
DLA Piper LLP

Does the Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse Work? You Bet It Does!

Jack Keeney recently joined **The Legal Aid Society of DC** as the new **Director of the Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project**. Prior to joining Legal Aid, Jack was a litigator at Hogan & Hartson (now Hogan Lovells), where he had been a partner since 1985. While at the firm, he served for over four and a half years as the partner in charge of its full time pro bono Community Services Department, and served as President of the District of Columbia Bar (2004-2005).

How did Jack Keeney learn about the job opening to become the director of the Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project? From the Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse!

Jack says: "I learned of my new Legal Aid job from your WCL email with its attached Public Interest Jobs Clearinghouse. Otherwise, I would not have learned of the opening. I am deeply grateful to WCL for this important service." ■



The Washington Council of Lawyers will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2011. We welcome your old photos, *News Forum* articles, memories and war stories. We hope you will join us for an extra-special Awards Reception this fall.

Stay tuned for the date and location.

FROM THE EDITOR:

WCL wants to hear from you. Please send your letter to the President, letter to the Editor, news release, announcement, or article to:

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Please send submissions on a disk or by email.

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Joining or Renewing Your Council Membership

For the last 40 years, the Washington Council of Lawyers has been exclusively dedicated to promoting and supporting pro bono service and the practice of public interest law. As a member of the Council, you have access to high-quality and affordable training, peer and advisor support, social networking opportunities, and guidance toward best-fit pro bono opportunities.

To join or renew, visit our website at www.washingtoncounciloflawyers.org.

Membership categories & rates:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Law student/Still Looking | \$15 |
| Public interest/Government | \$25 |
| General | \$50 |
| Contributing | \$75 |
| Supporting | \$100 |
| Sustaining | \$150 |

Plans call for increasing general membership involvement in our committees, which include:

- Issues
- Special Events
- Membership
- Pro Bono/Public Interest Promotion

Please indicate your interest!

Contact WCL Executive Director Nancy Lopez with any questions at NALopez@wclawyers.org or (202) 942-5063.

The Washington Council of Lawyers is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.