Program Description

Through the Summer Public Service Fellowship Program, the School of Law provides summer funding to students working in qualifying public sector positions. Qualifying public sector employment is unpaid, law-related work for a government agency, public interest organization or the judiciary.

The purpose of the Fellowship Program is (1) to make it financially possible for students to gain valuable, but unpaid, law-related summer employment experience in the public sector, (2) to ensure students are prepared to maximize their summer experience for long-term professional gain, and (3) to provide opportunities for students to reflect on their summer experience and apply that knowledge to their academic and career and professional development goals.

Participants in the Fellowship Program will do the following (steps are required unless otherwise noted):

1. Attend the Fellowship Program Information Session on Wednesday, January 20, 2016, at 3 p.m. (optional; recommended for first-time applicants).

2. Submit an Intent to Participate Form via Symplicity by February 26, 2016. Students interested in pursuing a Fellowship should submit an Intent form whether or not they have secured summer employment. Students will complete the Fellowship application later during spring semester, as described below.

3. Partner with their career advisor to develop a strategy to secure summer 2016 employment in the public sector (recommended). Students seeking Virginia area employment eligible for funding should apply via Symplicity by January 19, 2016, to participate in the Commonwealth Law School Consortium Government and Public Interest Interview Program, which will be held at the University of Richmond on February 12, 2016.

4. Attend at least one session during the Law Library’s Bridge the Gap Program series in April. Dates and topics to be determined.

5. Attend the CDO’s Think Like a Professional: Summer Success program on Friday, April 8, 2016 at noon.

6. Complete the Professional Development Plan within a week of commencing summer employment.

7. Revisit their Professional Development Plan during the mid-point of the summer, and make plans with their supervisor to achieve their employment goals.

8. Beginning on August 1, 2016, sign up via Symplicity to participate in a Fellowship Program Discussion Group, which will be held between August 15 and September 9, 2016 (a four-week period). In preparation for your Discussion Group, consider the attached discussion questions.

Terms and Conditions

To qualify for a full Fellowship of $3000, you must work full time (at least 35 hours per week) for at least eight weeks between May and August 2016. If you do not work the full eight-week period, you will receive a pro rata share of the Fellowship. Note that specific employers may require an additional time commitment above the Fellowship requirement; however, any additional work commitment imposed by your employer will not increase the amount of the Fellowship available from the School of Law. You may combine up to two qualifying positions to meet the full-time, eight-week time commitment.

Each student who secures qualifying public sector summer employment is guaranteed to receive one Fellowship (formerly known as a summer stipend) during their academic career at the School of Law. Requests for a second Fellowship (for a subsequent summer) will be subject first to available funding, and then to prioritization of applications by a Fellowship Committee composed of faculty, academic administrators, and students or recent graduates. The Committee will prioritize subsequent funding requests by evaluating how the student’s articulated career and professional goals align with a public sector internship and the overall quality of the student’s summer Fellowship application. Applicants who have received a summer Fellowship in a previous year and who request a subsequent summer Fellowship must submit an expanded career statement with their Application, as outlined below. If funding is available to consider second Fellowship requests, submit your completed Application by the priority deadline to maximize the likelihood that your application will be successful.

• You will be awarded only one Fellowship for summer 2016.
• A Fellowship may not be combined with any other funding available from the University of Richmond.
• You may not receive academic credit and a Fellowship for the same work.
• Once you have submitted an Application signed by your prospective supervisor, your Fellowship is not transferrable to another employer.
• If you do not return to the School of Law in Fall 2016, you will be required to repay the Fellowship.
• If you secure outside Fellowships or grants and/or paid law-related employment beyond the eight-week Fellowship commitment, you still may receive a Fellowship provided the other compensation plus the Fellowship do not exceed $5000. You will receive through the Fellowship program the difference between $5000 and the amount of other compensation up to a maximum of $3000. You must notify the CDO regarding any compensation you will earn from your qualifying employer, any outside fellowships or grants you have received for qualifying employment, and any other paid law-related summer employment you have obtained.
• Earnings from non-legal positions will not be deducted from your Fellowship.
• By accepting a Fellowship, you agree that your name, along with the name of your qualifying summer employer, may be released to Richmond Law students and graduates and used to promote the Summer Public Service Fellowship Program.

First Fellowship Application Process

Step 1: Intent to Participate
To guarantee that you will receive funding for a first Fellowship, you must complete an Intent to Participate Form in Symplicity by Friday, February 26, 2016. You do not need to secure a position prior to submitting your Form, and completion of the Form does not require you to accept summer employment in the public sector.

Step 2: Fellowship Application
Next, once you have secured qualifying employment, complete and submit a Fellowship Application to the CDO by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 13, 2016, including the following: (1) a direct deposit form with a voided check (unless you already are enrolled in the University direct deposit system for Accounts Payable/Student Accounts/Refunds; (2) your resume; (3) a career statement of approximately 300 words or less explaining how your summer position will inform or assist you in achieving your long-term goals; and (4) the signature of your supervisor on your application form or by confirmation letter. Any confirmation letter must specify the amount of compensation you are receiving directly from the employer or certify that you are not receiving any.
Step 3: Post-Summer Documentation
At the conclusion of your summer work for a qualifying employer, you must: (1) complete an evaluation for your Fellowship employment; (2) submit an interest questionnaire; and (3) upload your updated resume, all via Symplicity, no later than Friday, September 9, 2016.

Second Fellowship Application Process

If you previously have received a summer stipend and are pursuing a Fellowship for a subsequent summer, you still must submit an Intent Form to the CDO by Friday, February 26, 2016; however, funding is not guaranteed.

In addition to the steps under First Fellowship Application Process above, you must submit an expanded career statement, in lieu of the statement described above, of approximately 450 words. Your career statement should describe your career and professional goals and how those align with and will be enhanced by a second public sector internship. Your statement also should describe, if applicable, your commitment to beginning your career in the public sector and any experiences, including coursework, extracurricular activities, pro bono work, volunteer work, etc., demonstrating that commitment.

You will be notified by the CDO on March 18, 2016, whether sufficient funding exists for the Committee to review applications for a second Fellowship. If funding is available, completed applications for a second Fellowship (for a subsequent summer) will be reviewed by the Committee beginning on April 22, 2016, and approved or denied, within two weeks of receipt. Your performance during a prior Fellowship may be considered by the committee in determining whether to award a subsequent one.

Fellowship Disbursement

After your completed Fellowship Application is submitted to the CDO, it will be reviewed for completeness (and subject to available funding, prioritization and approval, in the case of a subsequent request) and forwarded to University Payment Services. Fellowship payments will be processed on a rolling basis beginning on April 22, 2016. First-time applicants submitting completed applications for a Fellowship by April 22 will receive payment by May 13, and first-time applicants submitting completed applications by May 13 will receive payment by June 10. Payment Services requires at least 12 business days to process a Fellowship, so please allow 14 – 16 total business days for processing.
**Professional Development Plan**

Within a week of beginning your summer internship, answer the following questions related to your professional development throughout the summer.

1. What is the value you bring to your summer employer? Why did the employer hire you?
2. What is your plan to develop a clear understanding of the work product your employer is expecting?
3. How will you foster effective communication with your supervising attorney? What elements of effective communication can be addressed in advance by developing a communication plan with your employer?
4. How will you obtain feedback from your employer over the course of the summer about your work?
5. Identify three work-related experiences you would like to have or skills you would like to further develop over the summer through your work?
6. Identify three attorneys within your organization, or other attorneys with whom you will have the opportunity to interact with over the summer, with whom you would like to conduct an informational interview and begin developing a continuing relationship beginning over the summer.
7. What types of professional development or networking activities (internal training sessions, shadowing opportunities, Connect Over Coffee meetings, ride-alongs, court observations, etc.) do you plan to participate in this summer?
8. What do you expect to be the most challenging aspect of your summer internship? The most rewarding?
9. How do you expect to feel about the practice area and setting in which you are working (and your interest in continuing on that path for the longer term) by the end of the summer?
Fellowship Discussion Group Questions

Please be prepared to discuss the following questions in your Fellowship Discussion Group, to be held between August 15 and September 9, 2016, at the School of Law.

1. What was your most meaningful learning experience this summer and why? What did you learn from the experience?

2. What did you learn about the profession that you did not realize before? How will you use this knowledge to enhance your law school experience? How will you use this knowledge when you become a lawyer?

3. What did you learn about access to justice? Do you think there are reforms that need to be made? If so, what and why?

4. What did you learn about professionalism? In responding to this question, please include particular experiences that informed your understanding of professionalism and how they will impact the type of lawyer you hope to be.

5. What did you learn about yourself this summer and how will those insights inform the type of practice you hope to pursue?

6. If you discovered through your internship that the area or type of practice you thought you wanted to pursue is not for you, what led you to this conclusion? What insights did you gain about yourself and the type of work environment you want that will help you reformulate your career goals? What next steps will you take? How are you feeling about this change in course? What are the positives and negatives?