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 the insights they gain over the summer to their academic and career goals. To accomplish this purpose, Fellowship Program participants must satisfy pre- and post-employment requirements as a condition of receiving funding.

Each student who secures qualifying public sector summer employment is guaranteed to receive one Fellowship during their academic career at the School of Law. Students pursuing post-graduate employment in the public sector may request a Fellowship for a subsequent summer (“Second Fellowship Request”) of qualifying employment that is consistent with their individual career goals. There is no guarantee that a Second Fellowship Request will be granted. Applications for Second Fellowship Requests will be reviewed by a faculty committee who will select recipients. To be eligible to submit a Second Fellowship Request, you must have fulfilled all terms and conditions for your first Fellowship in a timely manner.

Employment Terms and Conditions

To qualify for a full Fellowship of $3500, you must work full time (at least 35 hours per week) for at least eight weeks between May and August 2018. If you do not work the full eight-week period, you will receive a pro rata share of the Fellowship. 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.

- You will be awarded only one Fellowship for summer 2018.
- 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 2018, you will be required to repay the Fellowship.
- Your total funding for Summer 2018 may not exceed $5000, including the Fellowship, outside fellowships or grants and/or paid law-related employment beyond the eight-week Fellowship commitment. Should you receive grants or payment for 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 $3500. 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 Fellowship Program.

Second Fellowship Application Process

Participants in the Fellowship Program must complete the following (steps are required unless otherwise noted):

1. Review the podcast of the Summer Public Service Fellowship Program Information Session for Second Requestors, available on the CDO website on October 2, 2017.

2. Conduct a one-on-one career advising and resume review appointment with your career advisor no later than December 1, 2017, to discuss your post-graduate goals. Partner with your career advisor to develop a strategy to secure summer 2018 employment in the public sector. Update your resume consistent with the feedback provided by your career advisor.

3. After developing a search strategy with your career advisor, complete a Fellowship Application as follows:

   a. Complete and submit to the CDO in hard copy or via email to lawcareerdevelopment@richmond.edu between Monday, October 9 and 5 p.m. on Friday, December 1, 2017, an application comprised of the following documents:

      i. your resume; and
      ii. a Career Statement describing your post-graduate career and professional goals and how those align with and will be enhanced by a second public sector internship. Your statement also should describe 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. Your Career Statement should be between 700 and 1500 words.

4. Your Fellowship Application will be reviewed by the Fellowship Committee. The Committee will consider the following when selecting recipients of a second Fellowship:

   a. the applicant’s demonstrated interest in a post-graduate career in the public sector;
   b. the extent to which the applicant’s Career Statement clearly articulates his or her career goals and an understanding of the steps necessary to achieve those goals;
   c. an assessment of whether a second summer of qualifying employment will assist the applicant in attaining his/her articulated professional goals;
   d. the quality of the applicant’s Resume and Career Statement; and
   e. the applicant’s timely compliance with all obligations for the first Fellowship.

5. OPTIONAL: Students seeking qualifying employment in the Virginia-area should apply via Symplicity by January 17, 2018, to participate in the Commonwealth Law School Consortium Government and Public Interest Interview Program (GPIIP), which will be held at the University of Richmond on February 9, 2018. If selected for an interview at GPIIP, attend the Government & Public Interest Interview Program Information Session on Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at noon.

6. You will be notified by the Fellowship Committee by Monday, January 29, 2018, whether you have been granted a second Fellowship. The Fellowship Committee reserves the right to ask for additional information regarding your application, in which case a decision about whether you will be granted a second Fellowship may be delayed.
7. If you are awarded a second Fellowship, submit a Summer Fellowship Employment Form to the Law School Dean’s Office in hard copy or via email to Leigh Deignan (ldeignan@richmond.edu) no later than 5 p.m. on May 11, 2018. Your supervisor must sign your employment form or provide a letter confirming your employment. Any confirmation letter must specify the amount of compensation you are receiving directly from the employer or certify that you are not receiving any. Please note that a typed/electronic signature will not be accepted. An original signature or scanned copy is required.

8. If your banking information has changed since Summer 2017, please update it via Bannerweb. You can check your direct deposit information by logging into Bannerweb and selecting the “Manage and Set up Direct Deposit” link.

Post-Fellowship Obligations

1. Beginning on July 30, 2018, sign up via Symplicity to participate in a faculty-led Fellowship Program Discussion Group, which will be held between August 13 and September 7, 2018 (a four-week period). If you will not be on campus during the fall semester, and thus are unable to attend a Fellowship Program Discussion Group at the School of Law, please notify the CDO when you submit your completed Fellowship Application. In preparation for your Discussion Group, consider the attached discussion questions.

2. At the conclusion of your Fellowship, submit a Summer Employment Evaluation, Interest Questionnaire, and updated resume (including a description of your summer employment) via Symplicity no later than September 7, 2018.

Fellowship Disbursement

After your completed Employment Form is submitted to the Law School Dean’s Office, it will be reviewed for completeness and forwarded to University Payment Services.

Fellowship payments will be processed on a rolling basis beginning on April 9, 2018. Applicants submitting a complete Employment Form by April 13 will receive payment by May 11, and applicants submitting a complete Employment Form by May 11 will receive payment by June 8. Payment Services requires at least 12 business days to process a Fellowship payment, so please allow 14 – 16 total business days for processing.
Fellowship Discussion Group Questions

Please be prepared to discuss the following questions in your Fellowship Discussion Group, to be held between Monday, August 13 and Friday, September 7, 2018, at the School of Law.

1. Describe the employer (number of practicing lawyers, types of matters in which they are involved, types of clients served, office culture, etc.) with whom you worked over the summer and the kinds of assignments you typically were asked to complete.

2. From your perspective, what are the benefits and disadvantages faced by lawyers working in this environment?

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

4. 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?

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

6. 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.

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

8. 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?