



Planning Your Summer Public Interest Job Search

**What 1Ls Need to Know
About Finding
Public Interest Internships**

Agenda

- **HOW** can I afford a public interest career?
- **WHAT** do public interest lawyers do?
- **WHERE** do public interest lawyers practice?
- **WHY** should I want a public interest internship?
- **WHERE** do I find a public interest internship?
- **HOW** do I apply for a public interest internship?
- **WHEN** should I start applying for public interest internships?

First Things First – “HOW can I even afford a public interest career?”

- Research + Math + Patience = Well-informed and confident law student
 - Entry-level salaries, consider increases
 - GW and federal loan repayment assistance programs (“LRAP”)
 - Estimated monthly loan payments
 - Loan calculators: IBRInfo.org

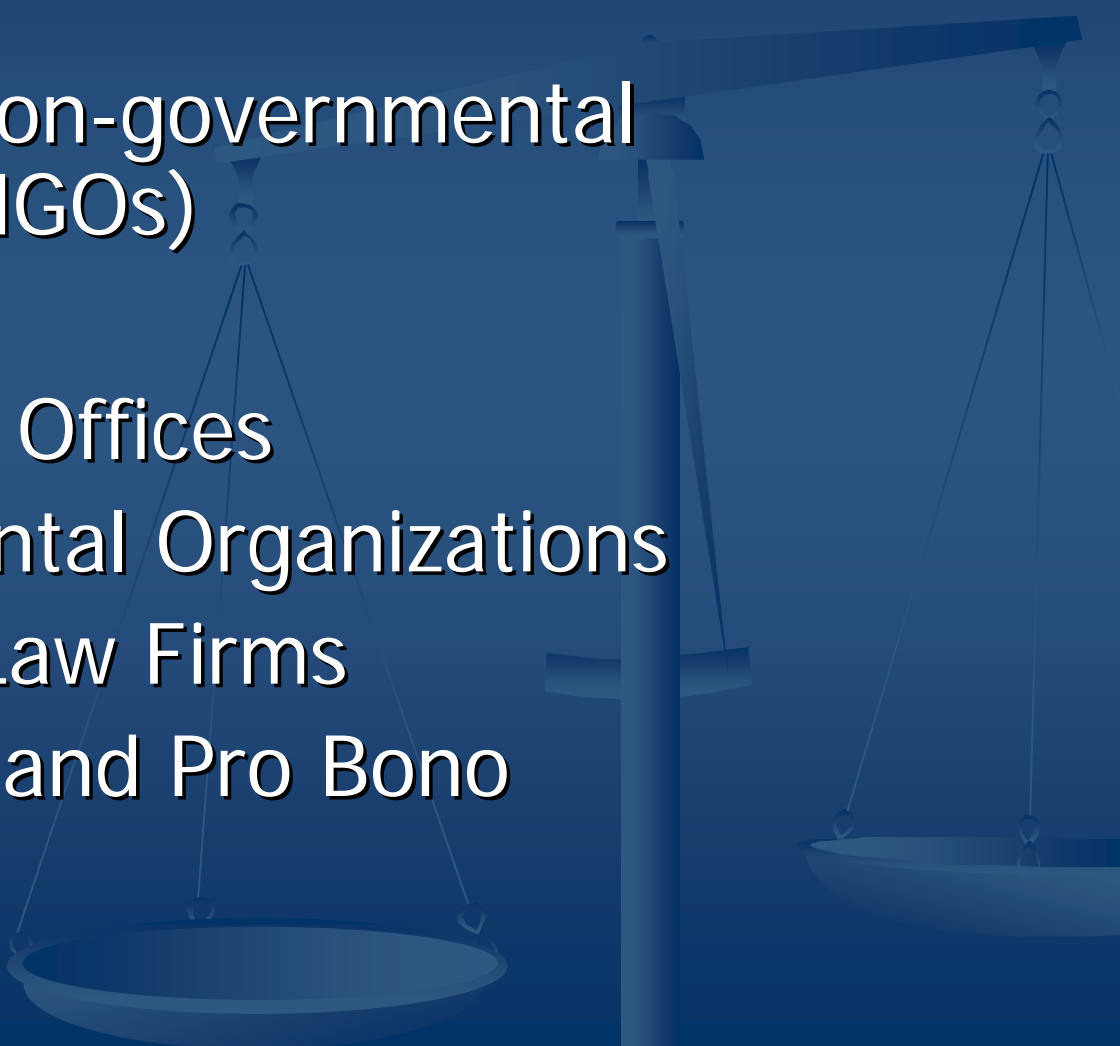
Loan Forgiveness

- College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA)
 - Consolidate your federal loans (Stafford & GradPLUS) with the Federal Direct Loan Program
 - Full-time public service job (non-profit, government)
 - Make qualifying loan payments for 10 years
 - Loan balance forgiven after 10 years
- Income-Based Repayment Plan ("IBR")
 - Can substantially reduce monthly payments
 - More info available at:
 - <http://www.finaid.org/loans/publicservice.phtml>
 - <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/resource?op0=OR&filter0=Debt+and+Loan+Repayment>
- "How to Finance Your Public Service Career": Oct.28th
 - Recording available on Portal

WHAT do public interest lawyers do?

- What is “public interest law” anyway?
- (1) Direct services/ individual client representation
 - Civil (i.e. public benefits, landlord-tenant, DV)
 - Criminal defense
- (2) Advocacy, Policy, Impact Litigation
 - Lobbying, community organizing, class action/impact litigation, public education

WHERE do public interest lawyers practice?

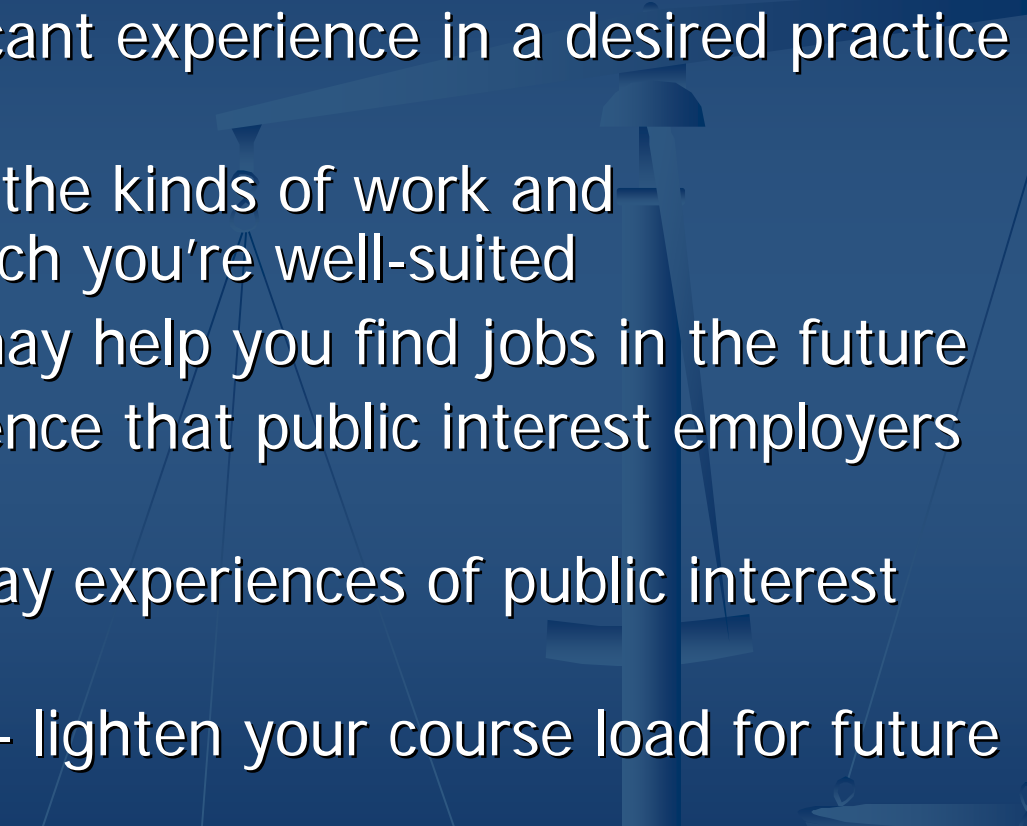
- Non-profits or non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - Government
 - Public Defender Offices
 - Inter-governmental Organizations
 - Public Interest Law Firms
 - Private Practice and Pro Bono
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WHY should I want a public interest internship?



"Really, I'm fine. It was just a fleeting sense of purpose – I'm sure it will pass."

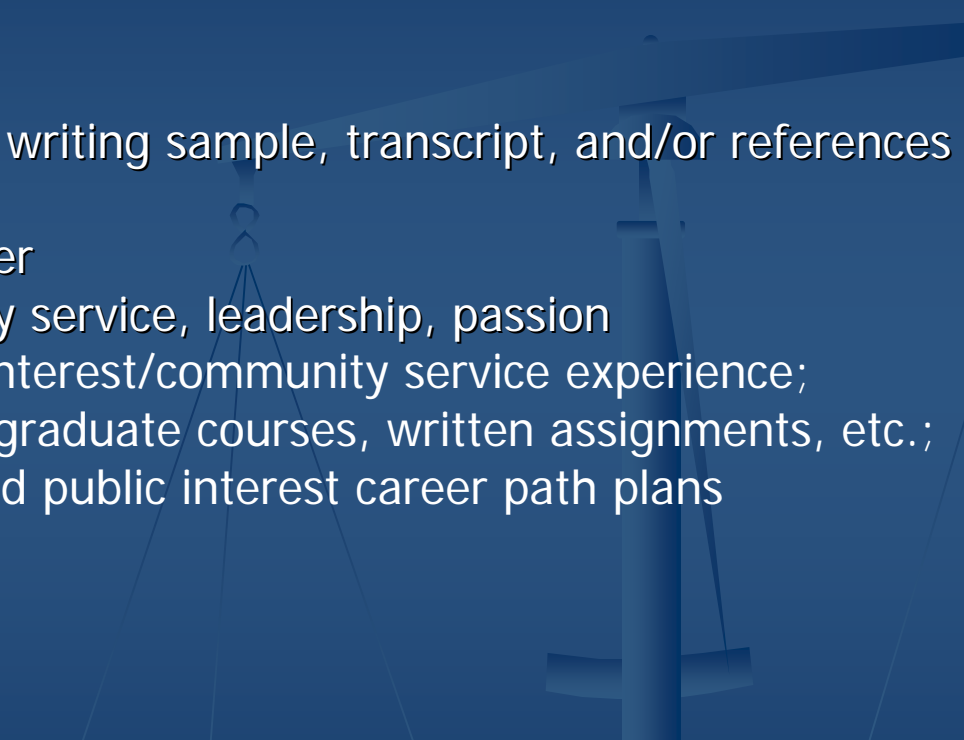
WHY should I want a public interest internship?

- Gain relevant, significant experience in a desired practice area
 - Helps you determine the kinds of work and environments for which you're well-suited
 - Make contacts that may help you find jobs in the future
 - Get hands-on experience that public interest employers value and require
 - Witness the day-to-day experiences of public interest lawyers
 - Get academic credit – lighten your course load for future semesters
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WHERE do I find a public interest internship?

- Symplicity
- Noteworthy (emailed to you every other Wednesday)
- PSLawnet.org
- Idealist.org
- Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide (Harvard)
- GW Outside Placement Program (Prof. Juliana Russo)
- Equal Justice Works Career Fair & Conference
 - www.equaljusticeworks.org (October 2009)
- GW/Georgetown Public Sector Recruiting Program
 - Saturday, January 30th, 2009
- Show up...

HOW do I apply for a public interest internship?

- Typically:
 - Cover letter and resume
 - Some employers ask for writing sample, transcript, and/or references
 - Not your mother's cover letter
 - Commitment, community service, leadership, passion
 - Accentuate your public interest/community service experience;
 - Highlight relevant undergraduate courses, written assignments, etc.;
 - Discuss your summer and public interest career path plans
 - Writing Sample
 - Don't ever....
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WHEN should I apply for public interest internships?

- The majority of these employers advertise and hire in the spring semester
 - Exceptions....
- Winter break: Rest + Resume & Cover Letter Review
- Public Sector Recruiting Program: Saturday, Jan. 30th
 - December 18, 2009 at 5:00 pm: PSRP Symplicity Opens to Students
 - January 4, 2010: First Day of Classes for GW
 - January 6, 2010 at 5:00 pm: PSRP Bidding Deadline – interviews
 - January 13, 2010 at 5:00 pm: PSRP Bidding Deadline – resume collection

Public Interest Timeline for 1Ls

October 2009

- Get involved with student organizations that interest you
 - E-mail me (tdadams@law.gwu.edu) to sign up for Public Interest Listserv
 - Public Interest Career Week Panels (available on Portal)
 - Human Rights & Immigration Law (SCC)
 - Civil Legal Services (SCC)
 - Civil Rights (FCC)
 - Pro Bono Fair
 - Financing Your Public Service Career (available on Portal)
 - Equal Justice Works Career Fair/Conference
 - Attend 1L Career Exploration Conference Launching Your Legal Career events
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Public Interest Timeline for 1Ls

After November 1st

- Work with a CDO counselor to update your resume
- Attend “Launching Your Legal Career” event for 1Ls on Friday, Nov. 6th, 3p.m. LL01
- Meet with me – start your plan

Winter Holiday Break

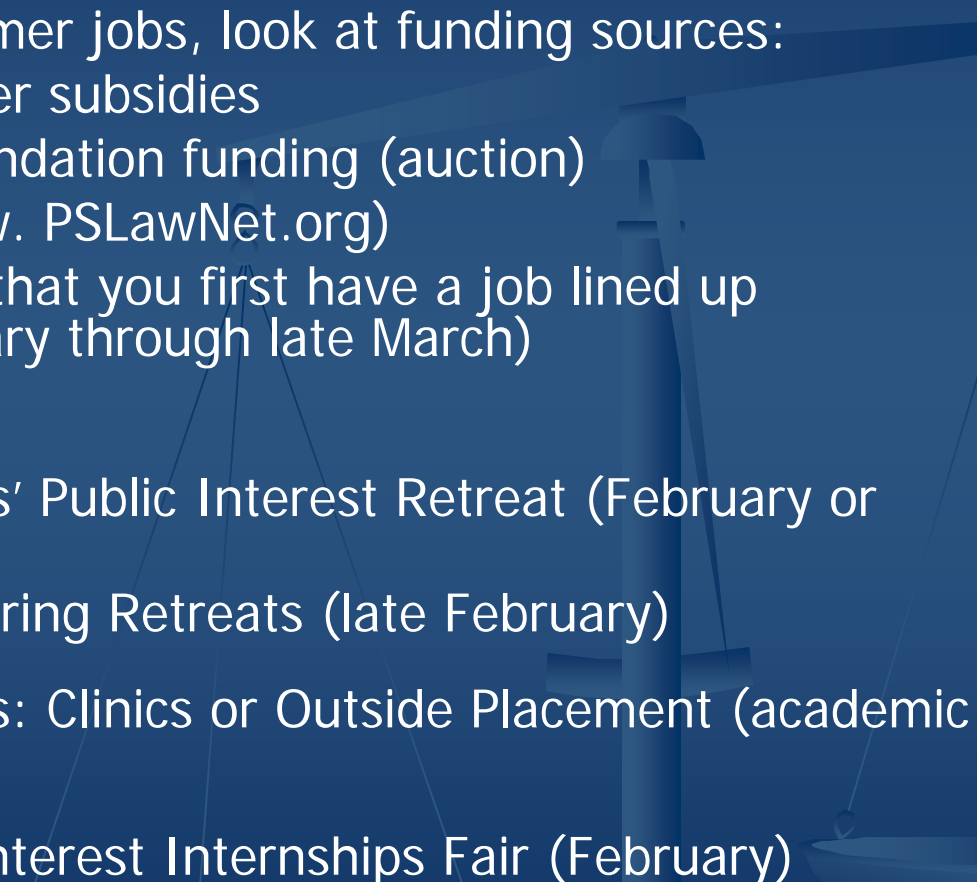
- Winter Break:
 - Relax
 - Refine (resume, research employers, draft cover letters)
- Meet with CDO by phone
- Consider volunteering legal services (pro bono); contact me for assistance and to learn more about GW’s Pro Bono Program

Spring 2010

- Meet with me
- GW/Georgetown Public Sector Recruiting Program (Sat., Jan. 30th)
 - Interviews and “table talk” – participate no matter what

Public Interest Timeline for 1Ls

Spring (cont'd)

- As you interview for summer jobs, look at funding sources:
 - GW-sponsored summer subsidies
 - GW Equal Justice Foundation funding (auction)
 - Outside sources (www.PSLawNet.org)
 - Most sources require that you first have a job lined up (deadlines late February through late March)
 - Consider attending:
 - D.C. Area Law Schools' Public Interest Retreat (February or March)
 - Yale Rebellious Lawyering Retreats (late February)
 - Register for 2L fall classes: Clinics or Outside Placement (academic credit for internships)
 - Government and Public Interest Internships Fair (February)
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Public Interest Timeline for 1Ls

Summer 2010

- Have fun and work hard
 - Establish and maintain contacts in the public interest field
 - Meet with me
 - Consider Fall Recruiting Program (FRP)
 - Research and apply for Fall 2L year internships
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