Agenda

I) Overview of Judicial Externships
II) Resource Review
III) Application Materials
IV) Timing
V) Overview of Judicial Clerkships
VI) Q&A
What do judicial externs do?

- Researching and writing memoranda for the judge and his/her law clerks; supervised directly by judge or by clerks/staff attorneys
- Attend hearings, draft opinions, help with administrative duties, and support the work of the term and permanent law clerks
- Beyond that – work, type of cases, hours, pace – depend upon judge and court where you are working.
Benefits of Summer Externships

- Hone research, writing & legal skills
- Gain insight into inner workings of legal system; direct work for judge
- Great credential on resume
- Connection to clerkship applications?
Downsides of Summer Externships?

- No funding available
  - Limited summer funding; can do during year
  - Judicial Internship Opportunity Program (12/1; $1,500 stipend; limited # of participating judges; students can indicate geographical preferences)

- Can be too academic for students who are ready after year of being in the classroom to work with clients and be out in the community
  - Effect on PI/PS job search
The World of Federal Judicial Externships

- Circuit Courts of Appeal
  - Federal Circuit (IP students)

- District Courts
  - Magistrate Judges & Bankruptcy Court Judges

- Specialty Courts: Immigration Courts, Tax Court, Court of Federal Claims, Armed Forces, ALJs (DOL)
The World of State Judicial Externships

- State Courts
  - State Supreme Court
  - State Courts of Appeal
  - State Trial Courts

- CA State Courts
  - CA Supreme Court (SF)
    - 5/7 Justices accepting applications
  - CA Courts of Appeal
  - CA Superior Courts
    - Family Court; see guide for more intel on hiring
Appellate vs. Trial Court

- **Appellate** -- good fit for students who:
  - enjoy intellectual/academic issues more than actual advocacy & debate
  - have a limited desire to litigate or try cases
  - are not seeking contact with lawyers or parties.

- **District Court** – good fit for students who are seeking:
  - Solid training for litigation career; plenty of R&W, but more time in court and exposure to practical aspects of trial court litigation
  - Unique opportunities to observe wide range of lawyering styles from judge’s perspective
Bay Area
Federal Judicial Externships

- **9th Circuit**
  - 5 (SF); 1 (Sacramento); 19 (SoCAL)

- **U.S. District Court for the Northern District of CA**
  - SF, Oakland & San Jose
  - Pro Se Dept.(civil), Bankruptcy, Magistrates

- **U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of CA**
  - Sacramento (7) & Eastern CA cities & counties (Fresno, Redding, Tahoe, Yosemite, Bakersfield)
Resources

● Judicial Externship Guide
  – List of summer & academic-year placements
  – Sample cover letters & application guidance
  – Instructions on how to use clerkship database
  – Additional research resources – *CA Courts & Judges; Almanac of the Federal Judiciary*

● B-Line Evaluations
● Field Placement Office Evaluations
Application Materials & Qualifications

- Resume, cover letter, transcript (if applicable), list of references (2-3) & writing sample (LRW memo; cover sheet)

- B-Line Judicial Clerkship Database
  - Use for cover letters & judge mailing address labels

- Qualifications:
  - First week of December judges?
    - work experience, college grades; transferable skills.
  - ND of CA & other judges?
    - same as above – but including 1st semester grades
Timing of Applications & Interviews

- **First Week of December:**
  - All fed appeals & district courts; Judge Alsup (NDCA); all state supreme courts (including CA)
  - *Interviews:* Try to schedule after finals (if possible); if applying in or near home state – indicate this in cover letter
  - *Note about “exploding offers”*

- **Over Winter Break:**
  - State courts of appeal; state trial courts

- **Northern District of CA:**
  - After receiving 1st semester grades; judges won’t contact students until Feb. 1, 2010
Overview of Judicial Clerkships: The Basics

- One or two year “term” position with a judge
  - Right after graduation (begin in fall) or later in career
  - “Career Clerks”

- Different Types of Clerkships:
  - U.S. Supreme Court
  - Circuit Courts of Appeal
    - Federal Circuit & Staff Attorney Positions
  - District Courts
    - Magistrate Judges & Bankruptcy Court
  - Specialty Courts: Immigration Courts, Tax Court, Court of Federal Claims, Armed Forces, ALJs (DOL)
  - State Courts (note about CA)
Overview of Judicial Clerkships: Benefits & Downsides

- **Benefits** – similar to externships
  - Great post-graduate credential
    - Note about Law Teaching, PI fellowships & GOV Honors Programs

- **Downsides?**
  - Some students don’t want to delay opportunity to start practicing, working with clients (PI/PS)
  - Highly competitive process – requires geographical flexibility (not possible for everyone)
  - Can always apply later in your career!
Overview of Judicial Clerkships: Application Timeline

**Fall & Spring of 2L Year:** Attend CDO programs; secure 3 recommendation letters; work on application materials & research judges (talk to future, current & former clerks)
  - *Note about timing of state court clerkship applications*

**Summer before 3L Year:** Finalize application materials & judge research; continue networking efforts; work w/CDO

**Fall of 3L Year:** Submit applications; prepare for Interviews (programs); land clerkship!
Overview of Judicial Clerkships: Things to Consider Moving Forward

- Letters of Recommendation
  - Research Assistant Positions
  - Writing Requirement Supervisors
  - Clinical & Internship Supervisors

- Writing Sample Options

- Networking, Contacts & Relationships
  - 1st summer; student groups; alums; events
Questions?

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