



# Intro to Fellowships

February 17, 2020

# Agenda for Today



- What is a Public Interest Fellowship?
- Types of Fellowships
- Preparation for the process
- Resources and support
- Timeline for applying
- Upcoming events
- Q&A

# What's a Fellowship?

- Common (*though not exclusive*) gateway into the public interest legal profession
- Opportunity to design your dream job (*that is also realistic and feasible*)
- Focus on an issue and a client population for 1-2 years

## Types of fellowships:

- Project-based
- Organization-based
- “Matchmakers”
- Firm-sponsored
- Penn Law sponsored

- Client-centered
- Solutions-oriented
- Measurable impact or outcome
- A collaborative process between you and a host org
- Often has **both** a direct client component and a broader and more systemic impact/policy component
- Application: a detailed project proposal; personal statement; letters of recommendation; transcript (sometimes)
- Examples: Skadden Foundation, Equal Justice Works, Independence Foundation, Justice Catalyst, Penn Law Project-based Fellowship

- Organization secures funding and solicits applications
- Organization defines the salary, duration, and scope of the fellow's work
- Candidates apply directly to the organization
- Application typically involves a cover letter, resume, and letters of recommendation or references
- Examples: *Juvenile Law Center; ACLU; Civil Rights Corps; Southern Poverty Law Center; Center for Constitutional Rights Fellowship; North Carolina Justice Center*

# “Matchmaker” Fellowships

- Certain organizations act as “brokers” or “matchmakers” between you the applicant and placements within an area of practice
- Matches are often based on applicant’s expressed preferences or rankings
- Application involves personal statement, letters of recommendation, transcript
- Examples: *Immigrant Justice Corps; Gideon’s Promise*

- Fellow is paid by a law firm for a period of time while engaging in public interest work
- Examples: Fried Frank Civil Rights Fellowship (civil rights law); Outten & Golden Public Interest Fellowship (employment law); Shute Mihaly & Weinberger (environmental law)



- Project-based: 12-month project with a particular focus
- Catalyst: Volunteer attorney for up to 12 months
- Current Penn Fellows are working at:
  - *Nationality Services Center, Juvenile Law Center, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc., Reprieve, and Temple University Center for Public Health Law Research*
  - *Former fellows have worked at: Brennan Center, ACLU of Hawaii, Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, Advocates for the West, Philadelphia Defender Association, PA Institutional Law Project, Colorado DA, Capital Habeas Unit of the Federal Defender*
- Many Penn Fellows have successfully transitioned to become staff attorneys in their host org or continued on through other fellowships
  - *(E.g.: George Donnelly at PILC, Margaret Zhang at the Women's Law Project, Rodney Holcombe at the Drug Policy Alliance, Ben Weiner at the Center for Appellate Litigation, Marie Logan at EarthJustice...)*

- Skadden/Independence: must be coming from a clerkship, a JD, or an LLM
- Equal Justice Works: greater flexibility
- Gideon's Promise
- Penn Fellowship: Project-based vs. Catalyst
- Others: check posting and ask us when in doubt

- **Remember: \*\*\*Why You? + Why Your Project? + Why Your Host Org\*\*\***
- Client orientation should be front and center (CLINICS, summers, externships, pro bono – seek out as much client experience as possible)
- Find supporters within the building
- Find supporters outside the building:
  - Talk to alums who went through the process
  - Form connections with organizations that you might want to approach for sponsorship
  - Seek out mentors during your summers, clinics, externships, and pro bono work – many attorneys at PI orgs started out as fellows somewhere
- Become knowledgeable about the legal issues: don't forget about relevant coursework!

- Visits with fellowship representatives
- Individualized counseling: Jamie and Neta
- Others in the building: *Kara Finck, Sarah Paoletti, Arlene Rivera Finkelstein, Lou Rulli, Jennifer Fernandez, Seth Kreimer, Sophia Lee, David Rudovsky, Dorothy Roberts, Serena Mayeri*
- Alums (see Fellowship Directory)
- Fellowship Bootcamp
- Fellowship Resources on Website (e.g. “Anatomy of a Successful Fellowship Proposal” webinar)

# Timeline for Applying

- May/July: Start reviewing Symplicity, psjd.org, and org websites for fellowship postings/outreach
- By Early August: Apply for sponsorship and begin drafting
- Late August/Early September: Intensive draft review through fellowship boot camp
- September: National fellowship application deadlines
- Spring: Penn Fellowship application process
- A note about the new clerkship hiring plan

- **Fellowship Info Sessions – save the dates!!**
  - **2/21 at 1 pm: Equal Justice Works (T-145)**
  - **2/25 at noon: Skadden Foundation (T-112)**
  - **3/31 at noon: Immigrant Justice Corps (GK-238)**
  - **4/9 at noon: Gideon’s Promise (TBD)**
  - **4/21 at noon: Independence Foundation (TBD)**

- Start earlier than you think in planning for a fellowship!
- Focus on gaining client experience so that you can prepare yourself to be a strong client-centered advocate
- Do work that excites you – your **passion, dedication, subject matter knowledge, and authenticity** are what will shine through in your application
- Remember that there is no single formula for success
- We are here to help!



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Questions???

Career Planning & Professionalism