

# PUBLIC INTEREST

As the first law school founded by women, the goals of advancing the causes of underprivileged and underrepresented people have been at the core of American University Washington College of Law from its start in 1896. Today, the law school's public interest programs are among the strongest in the nation. Students arrive with a variety of backgrounds and interests including environmental activism, women's rights, civil rights, international human rights, labor and employment, criminal justice, juvenile justice, land use, and war crimes tribunals. Upon graduating, they continue to work on social justice issues as nonprofit staff attorneys, policy advocates, government attorneys, and litigators in public interest law firms.

Approximately 8–11% of American University Washington College of Law graduates accept public interest employment, far higher than the national average of 3%.

## OFFICE OF PUBLIC INTEREST

The Office of Public Interest seeks to educate law students about their professional responsibility to perform public service work as practicing attorneys, fostering a lifelong commitment to public service. The office provides a variety of services for students pursuing public interest and pro bono activities during law school and after graduation, including:

- Full-Tuition Public Interest/Public Service (PIPS) Scholarship
- Equal Justice Foundation Fellowships for summer internships
- Public Interest Loan Repayment Assistance Program (PILRAP)

- Public Interest Roundtable Series
- IMBY (In My Back Yard) Public Service Day
- Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

The Office also organizes an annual trip to New Orleans during winter break that provides students the opportunity to assist with post-Katrina legal and community service projects.

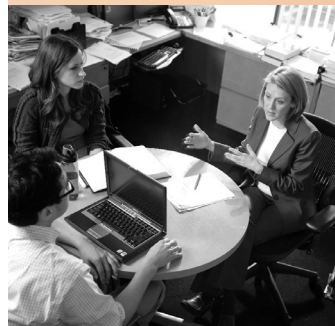
## RESEARCH AND NETWORKING

Students may network with practitioners while participating in many public interest activities and programs. Students conduct research as Dean's Fellows, and volunteer with the War Crimes Research Office, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Innocence Project, and the Health Law Project, among other programs. In addition, there are many domestic and international for-credit opportunities through the Clinical Program, the Externship Program, and the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project. Every year, the law school is one of the host schools for the Washington, D.C./Baltimore Public Service Career Fair. The fair offers law students an opportunity to learn about public interest organizations and government agencies and to



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WHAT MATTERS.**

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## Post-Graduate Placement

Examples of public interest/public service organizations and agencies where students have begun their careers include:

- American Civil Liberties Union
- Ayuda, Inc.
- Bronx District Attorney's Office
- Casa de Maryland
- Center for Justice and International Law
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts District Attorney's Office
- D.C. Prisoner's Legal Services Project
- Florida Public Service Commission
- International Intellectual Property Institute
- Los Angeles City Attorney's Office
- Los Angeles County Public Defender
- Mental Disability Rights International
- National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Law Center
- New York City Law Department
- New York Legal Aid Society
- Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services
- Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Public International Law & Policy Group's Field Office, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- Southern Poverty Law Center
- Tahirih Justice Center
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Department of Justice
- Women Empowered Against Violence (WEAVE)
- Whitman-Walker Clinic

## Contact information:

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interview for summer and post-graduate positions. Each spring the Externship Program coordinates an Externship Fair with typically more than 130 employers and 400 students participating. The Externship Program places hundreds of upper-level students each year in externships with government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, courts, and law firms engaged in pro bono work.

## POST-GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

Since 1998, graduates have received more than 50 postgraduate public interest legal fellowships with programs such as: Skadden, Equal Justice Works, Echoing Green, Soros, Women's Law and Public Policy, and New Voices.

Many law school alumni have created their own nonprofit organizations. Examples include Women Empowered Against Violence (WEAVE), Washington, D.C.; Tahirih Justice Center, Falls Church, VA; Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Zacatecas, Mexico; and Mentoring ToDAY (To Develop the Aspirations of Youth), Washington, D.C.

Additionally, 10-15% of graduates pursue government opportunities. Government Honors Programs account for many of the opportunities, with graduates going to agencies such as the U.S. Department of Justice, Internal Revenue Service, Federal Trade Commission, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Graduates also pursue entry-level positions with state and local agencies such as the Florida Public Service Commission, Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, and the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office.

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**American University Washington College of Law is a dynamic law school at the center of policy, business, and all things international. We are a law school of over 1,700 JD, LL.M., and SJD students who Champion What Matters.**

**Founded on the principles of humanity, diversity, and equal rights, our students, faculty, and alumni incorporate these values into everything they do within our walls and around the globe. We offer more than 20 specialized programs including international law, human rights, law and government, intellectual property, business, and gender studies; as well as nationally recognized clinical and trial advocacy programs. Our location in Washington, D.C. opens up extraordinary internship and employment opportunities within branches of government, international organizations, private and public interest law firms, and non-governmental organizations. What's more, you'll be surrounded by a community of students and faculty that encourages and inspires one another.**

EO/AA University and Employer