HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

A checklist for Current Law Students & Graduates of Elon Law

- Focus your paper applications to two or three locations and keep all of your options open. Your dream job is not usually your first job.
- Include non-legal experience in your resume; it could give you the competitive edge in the marketplace.
- Let family and friends know you are searching for a position. Everyone knows an attorney.
- Utilize Elon Law alumni in your geographic area of interest. (CPD has contacts)
- Utilize Elon University graduates who are now attorneys and practice law in your geographic areas of interest. (CPD has contacts)
- Utilize alumni of your undergraduate institution who are now attorneys. Contact your undergraduate alumni office.
- Seize all opportunities to meet attorneys (and non-attorneys) who can assist with your search. Attend social events, sporting events, gallery openings, etc. and network.
- Contact your first year preceptor for assistance.
- Attend Law School functions including receptions, CLE’s, etc.
- Keep in touch with your peers; they may know or learn of a position that is right for you.
- Engage with student professional groups while in law school.
- Contact faculty members.
- Offer to write an article for a bar publication or volunteer to assist with a Bar or associated event.
- Join student division of ABA and NCBA and student affiliated sub-groups. NCBA sections offer free membership to law students.
- Watch Symplicity at least once/week.
- Consider informational interviews (conversations) with attorneys practicing in areas of interest to you, particularly if you are applying to a different geographical area. Dress for an interview, but consider it a conversation to learn about their practice, how to move toward that practice and how best to navigate the job market in their location. See the CPD Website – Informational Interviews.
- Attend Continuing Legal Education seminars in your practice area(s) of interest. Add the “Additional Education to your resume. See the NCBA’s CLE offerings at (www.ncbar.org).
- Split summer employment especially after second year (possibly first summer, as well). Experience two different types and sizes of practice and two different geographic locations.
- Search Martindale-Hubbell’s Advanced Search Feature (www.martindale.com) to identify law firms and companies in your practice areas of interest and preferred geographic locations.

Graduates – In addition to the above …

- Join your state bar association and the Young Lawyers Division. Attend meetings, dinners, etc., volunteer to assist with conferences, seminars.
- Routinely check NCBA’s Online Career Center.
• Join your city bar association and attend regularly meetings, luncheons, etc.
• Watch *Lawyers Weekly* publications (published on Mondays in 25+ states) for classified ads – attorneys – for 0 – 3 year’s experience (www.lawyersweekly.com).
• Return to Elon Law for alumni events, receptions, lectures and other functions.
• Attend Chamber of Commerce After Hours gatherings.
• Sign up with a project with Habitat for Humanity; lawyers tend to participate.
• Contact legal search firms for short term and contract assignments. Contact the CPD for a list of firms.
• Check out Elon Law’s CPD website – Student Resources – Helpful Websites.
• Stay in touch with the CPD; we are glad to assist with resume and cover letter review and continued job strategies.
• Stay focused and keep a positive attitude. Take a break and go to the gym or the manicurist – good places to meet attorneys!

Suggested Reading for All: *Guerilla Tactics for Finding the Legal Job of Your Dreams*, Kimm Walton
Available in CPD and Elon Law Library. Choose a few chapters offering “How To’s.” The information is factual and funny.