

VANDERBILT LAW SCHOOL



CHARTING A PUBLIC INTEREST CAREER PATH

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1L FALL

CHECKLIST

☐

Attend *Justice for All: Public Interest, Pro Bono and the Law* at Orientation.

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Settle into law school and learn to be a successful law student. Make an appointment with the Dean of Public Interest during the fall semester.

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Create your public interest or government resume and cover letter. Send documents to your career advisor for review.

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Attend the *Public Interest Boot Camp* in September.

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Recommended: Participate in the Equal Justice Works Career Fair in October.

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Attend Public Interest Community Conversations and lunch events about different areas of practice. Get to know upper-class students active in public service and pro bono projects.

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During registration, select a public interest elective related to your public service interests.

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Over winter break, continue applying to summer internships.

1L SPRING

CHECKLIST

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Attend *Government & Public Interest Career Day* in early January.

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Continuing applying for summer internships using the Arizona Government Internship Handbook, psjd.org, and other resources.

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Bring any questions about selecting an internship to your career counselors or Assistant Dean for Public Interest.

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Get involved in pro bono opportunities advertised through the public interest listservs.

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Continue developing relationships with the public interest community.

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Attend *Public Service: How to Succeed this Summer* workshop in April.

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Consider whether to participate in the journal write-on competitions and/or whether to be involved in moot court as a 2L.

1L SUMMER

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Register for fall courses. Consider courses related to your career goals and experiential learning opportunities, including clinics and externships.
- ☐ Complete high-quality legal work at your summer internship.
- ☐ Connect with attorneys in your office. Ask questions about their practice and career paths.
- ☐ Reflect on your experience: What gaps do you see in the law? Are there underserved populations and disparities in the application of law? How do resource constraints affect your agency? What did you enjoy and not enjoy about your summer experience?
- ☐ In July, begin thinking about 2L summer internships based upon what you have learned about your skills, strengths and interests.
- ☐ Begin watching for 2L summer job postings in July.

2L FALL

CHECKLIST

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Attend the *Public Interest Boot Camp* in September.

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Make an appointment to plan your job strategy with Assistant Dean for Public Interest for public interest careers or with the Government Advisor in the Office of Career Services for government roles, including federal agencies and JAG.

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Continue your summer 2L job search.

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Attend Equal Justice Works Career Fair in October where you can secure interviews or network with employers at table talks. Students have secured positions through participating in table talks. The Public Interest Office will cover your registration costs.

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Continue taking classes related to your public interest career. Consider taking Evidence as it is a pre-requisite to Trial Advocacy.

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Develop your lawyering skills: Participate in a clinic, externship, moot court or other courses related to experiential learning.

2L SPRING

CHECKLIST

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Continue to develop your lawyering skills: Participate in a clinic, externship, moot court, trial advocacy or other skill-building courses. Second semester 2Ls in externships or clinics are eligible for limited practice licenses in Tennessee and may appear in court on behalf of clients with supervision.

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Attend *Public Sector Post-Graduate 101: Fellowships and Post-Graduate Hiring* in April

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Familiarize yourself with early fall deadlines for fellowships and government honors programs.

2L SUMMER

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Build strong relationships with attorneys and supervisors at your internship. Summer recommendations can be crucial for your post-graduate job search.
- ☐ Connect with other attorneys who practice in your field of interest.
- ☐ Begin preparing fellowship application materials if applying. Review *Launching your Public Interest Career: A Vanderbilt Student's Guide to Fellowships* and meet with Assistant Dean for Public Interest to begin planning your project. Find a host organization and begin writing your proposal.
- ☐ Apply to Federal Government Honors Programs.
- ☐ Begin monitoring job postings in July.

3L FALL

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Meet with the Assistant Dean for Public Interest or your Government Advisor to plan your post-graduate job strategy.
- ☐ Create a calendar for applying to jobs.
- ☐ Submit fellowship and government honors program applications.
- ☐ Attend the *Public Interest Boot Camp* in September.
- ☐ Attend the Equal Justice Works Career Fair.
- ☐ Continue to develop your lawyering skills, focused upon your desired area of practice. Participate in a clinic, externship, trial advocacy, client interviewing or negotiation courses.

3L SPRING

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Apply for fellowships with spring deadlines.
- ☐ Apply for positions that post announcements in spring.
- ☐ Continue sharpening your substantive knowledge and lawyering skills through courses, experiential learning and pro bono activities.
- ☐ Celebrate! You've made it to graduation. Attend the *Public Interest and Clinic Reception* the week of graduation to celebrate with your classmates.

LEARN MORE ABOUT PUBLIC INTEREST AT VANDERBILT LAW



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