September 11, 2020

Hi folks –

I hope you are all settling into your new routines with the semester underway. I’m writing to provide an update on several important topics relating to Early Interview Week. At the outset, I should say that we are getting ready to publish a comprehensive EIW guide that will cover all of the nuts and bolts of the process. I’m not going to go into all of that detail in this email—I’m just trying to hit the highpoints on the following topics:

- Updated timelines regarding EIW
- What we are hearing regarding current market conditions

**Updates to EIW – Where, When, How?**

**When is EIW?** EIW is scheduled to take place January 12-15, 2021. We will have an orientation on Monday, January 11, and then interviews will be scheduled to happen during the remainder of the week. Generally firms only interview one day during the week, so you should plan to be available during that entire period.

**How will interviews work?** EIW will be entirely online this year. Rather than a room number indicating where to go at the designated interview time, you’ll receive a link for a meeting room. At the time of the interview, you’ll launch the link and enter a waiting room. The attorney(s) conducting the interviews will receive a message that you have arrived and will admit you to the interview when they are ready to begin. The technology we are planning to use is specific for online interviews so it will not permit you to accidentally “walk in” on another interview or allow the interview to be recorded. We won’t be using Zoom, but it will be very similar to that kind of user interface. More details along with screenshots on the interview platform will be coming shortly, but the goal here is that this will be incredibly simple and self-explanatory.

**What firms are coming to EIW?** Firms have only recently started registering for January EIW so we don’t yet have a complete (or even substantially complete) list to provide. My expectation based on conversations with recruiting contacts and hiring partners is that we will have roughly the same size program as we’ve had in past years and I expect all of the major firms to participate again this year. Right now the list of EIW participants from 2019 available on the student site is a pretty good proxy for who we expect to attend this year.

In early October we will publish the list of firms that have registered and will update that list periodically over the course of the semester. By late October, we will be able to provide a further breakdown of how many interviews
for students, but our schedules may be booked out further in advance than you are accustomed to seeing.

both 1Ls and 2Ls will be looking to make appointments. We will make sure there is enough counseling availability
1Ls start coming to see us. The reality of this fall is that our counseling availability will be tight at times because
If you haven't been in to see a counselor recently, my advice would be to make an appointment soon—before the
We are anticipating that grades will be released sometime during the week of January 4. You will have until noon
We will have a lot of materials to substantively address this question, but from a process standpoint you are going to have an appointment with an OCP counselor specifically to discuss your bid list. You should be planning on having this appointment in late October or November—basically at the point you think your bid list is substantially constructed. You must have a bid list review appointment in order to participate in EIW.

Again, all this information along with a copious amount of nuts and bolts details is coming in the updated EIW guide.

**Current Market Conditions**

If you are following the industry news via sites like law360.com or above the law.com, I think the tone of recent reports suggests that firms have some sense of very cautious optimism regarding the market. It feels like they are describing someone standing precariously on a frozen lake and the cracking noises have stopped. There continues to be a pretty consistent view that while things are not great, this is not a repeat of 2009. During the Great Recession, firms were dismantling and shedding whole practice areas, shuttering offices, and laying off hundreds of associates at a time. That’s not what’s happening now. With the shelter orders lifted and courts generally back in action, the extreme cash flow pressures are easing for many firms. There is an increase in the number of firms that are reportedly ending their austerity measures and, with the fiscal year end approaching for some firms at the end of this month, the financial impact of the last year is coming into better focus.

That said, there are definitely still signs of economic uncertainty. To use my previous metaphor, we are still out on the ice. Some firms—even big, profitable firms like Skadden and Cleary—are continuing to cut support staff, selectively lay off associates, and extend furloughs. Because some of these firms are also simultaneously rolling back their attorney pay cuts, I tend to think of these continued layoffs as more opportunistic cost-cutting measures to ensure that profits remain high rather than cuts necessary to keep the firm afloat. Similarly, just this week Ropes & Gray (an AmLaw 50 firm) offered its incoming 2020 first-year associates a year-long deferral option—a common move in 2009 which caught everyone’s attention. The firm has gone out of its way to emphasize that this option is not being offered because of any financial struggles—it’s being presented almost like a paid wellness initiative—although it’s easy to be skeptical in this environment.

Based on recent conversations I’ve had with alums and employers, I’m also hearing this sense of very cautious optimism. Attorneys are busy, lateral hiring is happening, new client matters are arising. Not all practice areas are thriving, but overall the financial health of the private sector market seems to be holding. If we’ve learned anything this year, however, it’s that all assessments must come along with the disclaimer that it’s 2020, so everything could change tomorrow when … gravity stops being a thing.

Separate from the general financial health of the private sector market is the question of demand for entry-level hiring—this is still unfortunately a big unknown. If a firm is financially unstable, they are not going to hire as many incoming associates. The inverse is not necessarily true. Hopefully we will get a better sense where individual firms are at over the next few months as we get closer to EIW.

**Next Steps**

If you haven’t been in to see a counselor recently, my advice would be to make an appointment soon—before the 1Ls start coming to see us. The reality of this fall is that our counseling availability will be tight at times because both 1Ls and 2Ls will be looking to make appointments. We will make sure there is enough counseling availability for students, but our schedules may be booked out further in advance than you are accustomed to seeing.
There is a lot more information coming on EIW and related issues. If you are feeling lost or uncertain about what to do next, please come talk to us.

Best,

Ramji Kaul
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Pronouns: he, him, his

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<th>EIW STUDENT SITE</th>
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## Workshops

### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:

### 2L Directory - Class of 2022

- **SESSION START:** Sep 15, 2020, 12:00 PM
- **SESSION END:** Sep 15, 2020, 12:30 PM

## Info Sessions

### UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSIONS:

### Metropolitan Public Defender Services (Portland, OR)

- **START DATE/TIME:** Sep 14, 2020, 12:00 PM
- **END DATE/TIME:** Sep 14, 2020, 12:50 PM
- **LOCATION:** Via ZOOM video conference

### King County Department of Public Defense (Seattle, WA)

- **START DATE/TIME:** Sep 15, 2020, 1:00 PM
- **END DATE/TIME:** Sep 15, 2020, 3:00 PM
- **LOCATION:** Off-Campus (see event description)

### Advocate Attorneys LLP (Washington, DC)

- **START DATE/TIME:** Sep 15, 2020, 1:00 PM
- **END DATE/TIME:** Sep 29, 2020, 3:00 PM
- **LOCATION:** Off-Campus (see event description)

### Reed Smith (Philadelphia, PA)

- **START DATE/TIME:** Oct 01, 2020, 11:00 AM
- **END DATE/TIME:** Oct 01, 2020, 3:30 PM
- **LOCATION:** Off-Campus (see event description)
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