

# OCS Weekly Bulletin

April 7, 2009

Upcoming Programs/Events & Career-Related Articles

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## About OCS

The Office of Career Services (OCS) serves as a bridge between students, alumni and employers. The staff helps students and alumni to shape and realize their career goals. We also provide counseling, workshops and resources on judicial clerkships, international opportunities and non-law alternatives.

OCS is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The office is located on the first floor in Room 143 in the Law School's office building on Nathan Abbott Way.

## Upcoming Programs/Events

- **“Backpack to Briefcase: Moving from Student to Professional”**- Wednesday, April 8th at 12:45pm
- **“How to Survive Your Summer”**- Tuesday, April 14th at 12:45pm

**“Backpack to Briefcase: Moving from Student to Professional”**- Wednesday, April 8th at 12:45pm in Room 280A

Dean Kramer recently spoke with Hiring Partners from firms around the country regarding SLS's programs and students. One of the messages to come out of these discussions is that students (and not just ours) could use some coaching on what it means to be a professional. Get a leg up on other incoming associates (summer or permanent). Come hear what Partners wish associates knew and learn some simple steps you can take to set yourself apart.

Our Backpack to Briefcase Workshop will focus on life as a professional. Lynne Traverse, Recruitment Administrator with Bryan Cave in Phoenix, will be here to discuss the changes that come when you transition. Lynne has more than 20 years recruiting and professional development experience and is a respected speaker on topics of professionalism. She regularly writes for the legal press on recruiting and professional development.

Please RSVP through *Symplicity*.

**How to Survive Your Summer”**- Tuesday, April 14th at 12:45pm

Join hiring attorneys and recruiting managers for an informative discussion on what you can do to have a successful summer. Don't miss this program if you're heading to firm this summer!

### **Our panelists will include the following:**

Chris Boyd, Wilson Sonsini LLP  
Kristen Major, Skadden LLP  
Melainie Mansfield, Millbank LLP  
Ian Feinberg, Mayer Brown LLP

Lunch will be served. Please sign up in *Symplicity*.

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# Career-Related Articles

## • **More Than 25% of Attorneys Surveyed Predict Firms Will Add Personnel in the Next 12 Months**.....Page 2

More than one quarter of lawyers said their organizations would add personnel in the next 12 months, with bankruptcy and litigation anticipated to be the practice areas with the most growth potential, according to a recent survey.

## • **In-House Attorneys, Law Firms Spar Over Flex-Time, Part-Time Policies**.....Page 3

Law firm leaders and corporate general counsel at a recent meeting took each other to task over what each side can do to better support flex-time and part-time policies that advance women at firms, attorneys who participated said. The top firm partners at the March 27 meeting in Chicago suggested that general counsel focus on flex- and part-time policies when hiring firms and deliver praise when they're satisfied with the programs, according to participants. The general counsel want firms to be more transparent in using the programs and less reluctant to implement them, they said.

## • **Recession Offers Law Firms a Chance to Refocus on Client Needs**.....Page 4

There has been plenty of cost cutting at law firms of late -- and in-house lawyers are asking where the savings will go. "The bottom line is that some of these savings have got to find their way into clients' pockets, not just partners' pockets," says Bupa GC Paul Newton. He believes the legal services market is for overdue for a shake-up, and hopes that law firms will use the recession as an opportunity to refocus themselves towards clients' needs.

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## **More Than 25% of Attorneys Surveyed Predict Firms Will Add Personnel in the Next 12 Months**

Amanda Bronstad / Staff reporter

The National Law Journal

March 27, 2009

More than one quarter of lawyers said their organizations would add personnel in the next 12 months, with bankruptcy and litigation anticipated to be the practice areas with the most growth potential, according to a recent survey conducted by Robert Half Legal, a legal placement firm. The survey, which took place from Feb. 11 to 27, was conducted by an independent research firm and involves 300 attorneys at law firms and corporations in the United States and Canada.

About 65% said that staffing levels would not change when asked, "Do you expect the number of lawyers employed with your law firm/corporate legal department to increase, stay the same or decrease in the next 12 months?" In contrast, 10% said their organizations would reduce their staff, which includes attorneys, paralegals and legal secretaries.

Charles Volkert, executive director of Robert Half Legal, said the numbers reflect the fact that most of the layoffs have been centered on the nation's largest law firms.

"Our survey is representative of large firms, midsized firms, small firms and corporate legal departments, so when you look across that span, a lot of midsized firms and small firms that have busy litigation and bankruptcy practices, maybe foreclosure practices, and IP firms, continue to have demand for clients to move through cases and need to hire specialized candidates within those specialized categories," he said.

In fact, more than half of the attorneys in the survey said the area with the most growth in the future would be bankruptcy, while 31% said litigation. Fewer than 10% mentioned any other potential areas of growth. Still, the survey's results mirror the slowdown in hiring compared to one year ago, when a similar poll conducted by Robert Half Legal found that 45% of lawyers believed there would be an increase in hiring, and 50% said staffing levels would remain the same, Volkert said. Only 3% anticipated a decrease at that time, he said.

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## In-House Attorneys, Law Firms Spar Over Flex-Time, Part-Time Policies

Lynne Marek / Staff reporter

The National Law Journal

April 06, 2009

CHICAGO — Law firm leaders and corporate general counsel at a recent meeting took each other to task over what each side can do to better support flex-time and part-time policies that advance women at firms, attorneys who participated said.

The eight top firm partners at the March 27 meeting in Chicago suggested that general counsel focus on flex- and part-time policies when hiring firms and deliver praise when they're satisfied with the programs, according to participants.

The seven general counsel want firms to be more transparent in using the programs and less reluctant to implement them, they said.

Although attorneys from both sides support the policies, they have misperceptions and differing positions about what's stymieing more use of the programs, said lawyers who attended the meeting.

Corporate clients need to "state openly that it's important," and that will give firm leaders more backing to do the same, said Dickstein Shapiro Chairman Michael Nannes.

The Project for Attorney Retention, an effort started by a pair of women lawyers who contend that the flex- and part-time policies help retain and advance women at firms, initiated the meeting with lawyers they consider leaders in the area. The project, which is funded by its law firm and corporate members, will bring the lawyers together again in June before issuing a best practices report.

### A slim 17%

The project grew out of dismay that women make up only about 17% of law firm partners despite graduating from law school in numbers equal to men for years, said Joan Williams, a University of California Hastings College of the Law professor who co-founded the project. Retaining women makes business sense, too, to avoid losing the talent and training costs of at least \$200,000 per lawyer, she said.

In addition to Nannes, other attendees were Arnold & Porter Chairman Thomas Milch, Farella Braun + Martel Chairman Steven Lowenthal, Fenwick & West Chairman Gordon Davidson, Fulbright & Jaworski Chairman Steven Pfeiffer, Schiff Hardin Chairman Robert Riley, Sidley Austin Chairman Thomas Cole, DLA Piper Joint Chief Executive Lee Miller, Del Monte Foods Co. General Counsel James Potter, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co. General Counsel Thomas L. Sager, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. General Counsel Jeffrey Gearhart, Allstate Corp. General Counsel Michele Coleman Mayes, Accenture Ltd. General Counsel Douglas Scrivner, Timberland Co. General Counsel Danette Wineberg and former Shell Oil Co. General Counsel Catherine Lamboley.

There were 12 firm partners and 12 general counsel invited.

Firm leaders argue that general counsel must initiate conversations about flex- and part-time attorneys because firms are too fearful that clients will see these attorneys as a threat to responsiveness or availability.

Corporate counsel should ask firms about the programs in the hiring or request-for-proposal processes and respond positively to firms using them, said Nannes, whose firm has 30 people in such programs.

When companies have good experiences with the programs, they should say so to top partners so decision-makers at the firm know the programs are working, the firm leaders said.

The participants agreed that communication and understanding each other's constraints are key to making the programs work, Davidson of Fenwick & West said.

Law firms shouldn't hide the programs from corporate clients out of fear that in-house lawyers will view them poorly, Potter of Del Monte said.

"The partners should not be saying to the associates 'don't let them know,'" Potter said. "It's difficult to reinforce

a program when you don't know who's using it."

Attorney availability isn't as big a concern for in-house lawyers as law firms seem to think, said General Mills Inc. General Counsel Rick Palmore, who was invited, but unable to attend the meeting.

"I have yet to talk to any of my colleagues who are from the 24/7 school," Palmore said. "When there's a crisis, you want your people to be available, but generally crises aren't 24/7."

To encourage the programs, law firms shouldn't penalize lawyers who use them by shifting them to nonpartner tracks or lower-priority work, Sager of DuPont said.

The increased use of technology, such as video conferencing, the economically challenging times and the changing law firm business model are all likely to increase the use of the flex- and part-time programs, the lawyers said. Part-time employees with flexible schedules may help firms reduce costs, Potter said.

The law firms "can't rely on their conventional business models anymore, particularly in light of this current economic environment," Sager said.

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## Recession Offers Law Firms a Chance to Refocus on Client Needs

Alex Aldridge  
Legal Week  
April 03, 2009

There has been plenty of cost cutting at law firms of late -- and, unsurprisingly, in-house lawyers are asking where the savings will go.

"I hope firms are scaling back in an intelligent way that will make them more competitive," says Bupa general counsel Paul Newton. "The bottom line is that some of these savings have got to find their way into clients' pockets, not just partners' pockets."

While Newton, 51, sympathizes with those lawyers who have lost their jobs, he believes the legal services market is overdue for a shake-up, and hopes that law firms will use the recession as an opportunity to refocus themselves towards clients' needs.

"At the end of the day, the customer must come first -- and firms are going to have to hang onto customers in a market that has become radically more competitive."

Despite the rates freezes announced by several major firms, Newton still doesn't believe lawyers' fees represent value for money. He cites the hourly going rate for paralegals -- 120 pounds to 140 pounds at most top firms -- to illustrate his point. "That is a lot for unqualified people," he comments.

With this recession shaping up to be the worst that Newton's generation has experienced, the Bupa GC predicts further law firm restructurings to come.

"That may mean de-skilling and automating more of the things they do, or looking to outsource," he says.

Softly spoken and casually dressed, Newton has an air of an academic, an impression that is heightened by the view of the UCL campus out of the window of his sixth floor Bloomsbury office. But despite originally studying theology, he never had any doubts about going into law: "I decided against a career in the Church pretty early. And I ruled out accountancy due to my less-than-brilliant maths skills. So law seemed the natural option."

After completing a conversion course, Newton trained with west end practice Medlicott & Benson, before joining Bupa as one of its two first ever in-house law-

yers.

"I actually thought I had made a terrible mistake at the time," he reflects. "There was no general counsel and I didn't really know what was expected of me. So I told myself that I would give it six months."

Over two decades later and Newton is still at Bupa -- climbing the ranks in 22 uninterrupted years at the company from legal adviser to GC, a position he has held since 2005. So what happened?

"Well, having to start from scratch proved something of a blessing in disguise," he recalls. "I found myself working closely with other employees across the company and also liaising directly with external law firms. From both of these groups I learnt a lot."

As the years passed and Bupa began a series of ambitious acquisitions, Newton found himself well placed to progress his career. These days, the company -- which now has customers in more than 180 countries -- bears little resemblance to the UK health insurance provider with a couple of hospitals that he joined back in 1987. Newton says the changes have been such that he feels as if he has worked for "several different organisations" during his time there.

With Bupa having acquired U.S. disease management provider Health Dialog and Australian care home business Amity Group in 2007, and more recently entering into a joint venture with Indian healthcare company Max (sealed last month), the company's legal function is now up to a global total of 60. Managing a team that is spread out across the world brings very different challenges to the ones which Newton faced in his early days at the company.

"Communication is key to ensuring that things run smoothly," he explains. "This is why we launched our legal intranet system. On top of that, there are the regular conference calls and team meetings."

In addition to managing his team, Newton also has to keep track of Bupa's sizeable panel of law firms. The U.K. M&A panel alone features eight law firms

(a mixture of London and regional outfits, including Slaughter and May, Wragge & Co and Walker Morris), while the procurement and litigation panels contain four and five firms respectively.

These arrangements are the result of a major panel shake-up, which took place in March 2008, and several subsequent additional reviews. Newton says their combined effect has led to a significant reduction in external legal spend.

"It is amazing what you can achieve when you start introducing a bit of competition," he observes, giving an example of a recent-tier three M&A review that saw one regional firm reduce its rates by 50 percent. "Although, when negotiating it is obviously important to avoid undermining existing relationships with firms," he adds.

Is that possible? "It is not impossible. One thing I have found is that firms often do not realise how expensive they are in relation to their competitors. Giving them an insight into that makes the difficult conversations easier."

To escape the stresses of life as a GC, Newton regularly decamps with his wife and children from their house in Battersea to a second home in Exmoor, where he indulges his passion of fly fishing. But come Sunday evening he is usually ready to head back to London ("we all moan about it, but we love it really") and into work the next day at an organization for which he clearly has a great deal of affection.

"I couldn't imagine doing what I do anywhere else," says Newton.

However, as a committed Christian who sits on the corporate development board of deaf and blind charity Sense, he would like to devote himself full-time to some kind of community role before he retires.

"It would seem a shame to go on until 60 and just have one career."

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## Past Articles

To access the Bulletin Archive, click on the following link:

<http://www.law.stanford.edu/experience/careers/ocs/students/bulletin>

### Tuesday, February 24

“Some Lawyers Are Still Hot in This Cold Economy”

“Law Firms’ 2011 Scenario and the End of Leverage”

“Large Firm Layoffs Lead to Small Firm Startups”

“Perspectives on Fall 2008 Law Student Recruiting”

### Tuesday, March 9

“Remain Bold and Valiant in Your Job Search”

“Law Schools Revamp Their Grading Policies”

“Simpson Thacher Send Some Associates on Year-Long Pro Bono Stints”

“Take Proactive Steps to Avoid a Layoff”

### Tuesday, March 9

“How Do Firms Lay Off Lawyers? Very Carefully”

“What Makes a Lawyer Great?”