

**University of New Mexico School of Law
Clerkship Committee Annual Report, 2012-2013**

MEMBERS

Beck, Matthew, *ex officio*
Browde, Michael
Harrigan, Heather, Chair
Huffstutler, Nancy
Lambert, Pam
Minzner, Max
Occhialino, Ted (spring)
Schultz, Andy, *ex officio*
Sedillo Lopez, Antoinette
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Valencia Weber, Gloria
Gallegos, Rebekah (2L)
Muehlmeier, Justin (3L)
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CHARGE: Develop a strategy to educate students about judicial clerkships and assist them in obtaining those clerkships; developing any infrastructure that might improve our efforts in this area; guide the Dean in outreach to judges to improve our clerkship yield.

HIRING TRENDS

National: The Clerkship Committee discussed national trends in clerkship hiring, including the breakdown in federal hiring plan, greater lateral hires, and more candidates from top-tier schools. The Committee determined that the law school should support students' decisions to apply early to judges who hire off plan in order to give them every competitive advantage given the uncertainty of the federal hiring plan. The Office of Career Service conducted outreach to each federal judge in New Mexico to determine their hiring preferences and timeline for the 2014 term and shared that information with all 2L students.

New Mexico: The committee discussed feedback from one local judge regarding concern for the caliber of UNM Law graduates and their ability to analyze complex legal issues. Employer practices regarding post-clerkship offers to summer associates were also discussed. In particular, unlike in other larger markets, New Mexico firms often will not guarantee a summer associate a position at the firm at the conclusion of a clerkship. Because students often hope to secure such high-paying positions after a clerkship, some students decide to forego a judicial clerkship for a guaranteed firm position at graduation.

STUDENT OUTREACH

Student Programs: The Clerkship Committee planned and executed the following student programs:

- September 5, 2012 – “Court of Appeals Judicial Clerkship Info Session” – Judge Bustamante

- November 7, 2013 – “The Best Job I’ve Ever Had” – Distinguished panel of judges, including Judge Browning and Judge Fry, regarding the benefits of a judicial clerkship, moderated by Ed Ricco
- February 13, 2013 – “Attn. 2Ls: Judicial Clerkship Application Workshop” – Assistant Dean Harrigan
- February 20, 2013 – “Attn. 1Ls: Position Yourself to be a Strong Judicial Clerkship Candidate” – Matthew Beck, Andy Schultz, Professor Dave Sidhu, and students Amanda Thatcher and Justin Muehlmeier

Faculty Outreach: Ted Occhialino sent an email prepared by Dean Harrigan and edited by committee members to faculty requesting that they identify strong judicial clerkship candidates. The email was timed to coincide with the submission of fall semester grades and encouraged faculty to consider not only students with strong academic performances, but also candidates that would do well under a more “whole-person” review, which many of our state judges use to evaluate candidates.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Committee discussed and the above email addressed best practices with regards to serving as recommenders. For example, while some recommenders provide students with a copy of their letters as a matter of course, others found that practice to be inconsistent with their view that letters should be kept confidential in order to maintain the integrity of the recommendation. The Committee also discussed the possibility of placing phone calls to judges to advocate for strong candidates. The faculty members were resistant to this kind of outreach because the culture in New Mexico is different and historically New Mexico judges will contact faculty to discuss possible candidates.

OUTREACH TO JUDGES

As recent graduates of the law school have traditionally done well in securing clerkships with the New Mexico Supreme Court and the New Mexico Court of Appeals, the committee decided to focus outreach efforts on federal judges. A plan was designed to utilize the professional relationships and goodwill created by senior faculty members with members of the federal bench to help develop relationships between junior faculty members and federal judges. An email was circulated to senior faculty members requesting that they identify federal judges with whom they have a relationship and asking them to consider arranging a brief meeting or lunch with the judge and junior faculty members.

The implementation of this outreach initiative was delayed in part because of the family medical leave of the Committee Chair and the relatively last minute acceleration of the federal hiring plan’s critical dates from September to June.

YIELD

Seventeen members of the Class of 2013 secured 18 clerkships (one December graduate, Julia Crooks, secured two). Note, another December graduate, [REDACTED], had a clerkship from February 2013-August 2013. Thus, for reporting purposes to the ABA and *US News*, we will report 16 clerkships. This is the greatest number of clerkships on record for the University of New Mexico School of Law. Names have been redacted for students who have not given permission for their employment data to be released.

CLERKSHIPS FOR THE CLASS OF 2013					
CLERK FIRST NAME	CLERK LAST NAME	GRAD YEAR	JUSTICE/JUDGE NAME	COURT	TERM
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2013	Zamora, M. Monica	New Mexico Court of Appeals	2013

████	████	2013	Daniels, Charles	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
Mark	Cox	2013	Maes, Petra Jimenez	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
Caitlin	Craft	2013	Vigil, Barbara	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
Julia	Crooks	2013	Vigil, Barbara	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013
Julia	Crooks	2013	Vigil, Michael	New Mexico Court of Appeals	2013-2014
Kelly	Davis	2013	Kruse, Michael	High Court of American Samoa	2013-2014
Alex	Flores	2013	Chavez, Ed	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
Kevin	Grzebielski	2013	Gonzales, Kenneth	U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico	2013-2014
Erin	Joyce	2013	Browning, James	U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico	2013-2014
Justin	Muehlmeier	2013	Daniels, Charles	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
████	████	2013	Chavez, Ed	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
R. Brian	Parish	2013	Bosson, Richard	New Mexico Supreme Court	2013-2014
Taylor	Sauer	2013	Johnson, William P.	U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico	2013-2014
████	████	2013	Wechsler, James	New Mexico Court of Appeals	2013-2015
Amanda	Thatcher	2013	Norris, Patricia K.	Arizona Court of Appeals, Division I, Phoenix	2013-2014
████	████	2013	Zamora, M. Monica	New Mexico Court of Appeals	2013-2014
████	████	2013	Hanisee, J. Miles	New Mexico Court of Appeals	2013-2014

COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2013-2014

1. Research, anticipate, and plan for changes to the judicial clerkship application process given the acceleration of the 2013 hiring plan.
2. Refine student program calendar and continue to encourage faculty identification and support of strong candidates.
3. Implement next steps in judge outreach initiative.