

Vermont Law School Bridge The Gap Fellowships

Purpose: The Vermont Law School Bridge the Gap Fellowships assist graduates who hope to pursue a career in public service after law school. In recognition of the value that volunteer experience plays in the job search process, the law school will offer a number of living allowances in the fall to members of the most recent graduating class who are seeking employment and are volunteering at qualifying organizations. It is our goal to help “bridge the gap” between law school and work by providing a two-month fellowship or loan that will be forgiven at a later date contingent upon certain criterion being met by the recipient. Preference will be given to those applicants who have secured positions that have a high likelihood of leading to a full-time job upon completion of the volunteer experience.

Requirements: All Vermont Law School Class of 2012 J.D. degree recipients who are not enrolled in a degree program are eligible to apply for assistance. The following eligibility standards are also required:

- **Qualifying Employment:** The graduate must be employed at least 24 hours per week in law-related, public interest work. Public interest work is defined as employment where the primary purpose of the work is the representation of the interests of an individual or a group of individuals which, for various economic, political, or social reasons, are not adequately represented. Such employment would include: legal services offices, public defenders, prosecutors and other appropriate government agencies, non-profit organizations or qualifying law firms. Graduates working for a private firm may be eligible for assistance where at least 75% of the graduate’s time is spent on public interest work.

- All fellowship recipients are required to do the following, as part of the grant:
 - Meet or talk with a member of the Career Services staff before the start of the fellowship to discuss how to use this opportunity to maximize job search efforts.
 - Recipients are required to be actively engaged in their job search during the term of the fellowship.
 - At the end of the Fellowship, each recipient must participate in an Exit Interview with a member of the Career Services staff.

Award Amount: There will be 25 BTG Fellowships awarded and the amount will be \$1,000 a month for a maximum of two months. Payments will be made in 2 installments.

Deadline: We will begin reviewing applications on August 15th, 2012. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until 25 fellowships have been awarded, but no later than January 16, 2013.

Post-Graduate Obligation: Recipients are asked to repay assistance in the form of a donation to the Vermont Law School financial aid programs if and when they are able to do so. In addition, recipients may be asked to assist Vermont Law School Alumni/ae Affairs, Development, Financial Aid, Career Services, and/or Admissions efforts.

Application Procedure: This application must be completed and returned with all requested documentation. In addition, each applicant must supply the following documents:

- A letter from a qualifying employer verifying that s/he has been hired as a volunteer and will be working at least 24 hours a week in a law-related capacity
- A personal statement detailing how the volunteer experience will help the applicant secure a full-time law-related position
- Applicants are encouraged to attach a statement describing pertinent information regarding financial need, which may be considered in the award process.
- Applications will be reviewed and awarded within 14 days of being received.

Vermont Law School Bridge The Gap Fellowship Application

I. Personal Information

Name:
Address:
E-Mail Address:
Telephone Number:
Graduation date:

II. Employment Information

Employer:
Address:
Position/Title:
Nature of Work:

A letter from a qualifying employer verifying that you have been hired as a volunteer and will be working at least 24 hours a week in a law-related capacity must accompany this application.

III. Affidavit Of Purpose

The above information is being submitted in application for assistance through the Vermont Law School Bridge the Gap Fellowship Program. I agree to use any funds awarded to me through this program to help support my efforts to gain full-time law-related employment. I authorize the use of this information in connection with publicity and fundraising for this program.

Attachments:

- Personal statement detailing how the volunteer experience will help the applicant secure a full-time law-related position
- Letter from a qualifying employer verifying that I have been hired as a volunteer and will be working at least 24 hours a week in a law-related capacity

Deadline Date: We will begin reviewing applications on August 15th, 2012. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until 20 fellowships have been awarded, but no later than January 16, 2013.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Return to:

Michelle Parent, Program Coordinator
Office of Career Services
Vermont Law School
PO Box 96
South Royalton, VT 05068
Attn: Bridge the Gap
802-831-1243 or 800-227-1395

Or:

Scan all materials and email to Michelle Parent at mparent@vermontlaw.edu