

## **WMAACCA Corporate Scholars Program FAQS for Potential Hosts Summer 2012**

### **Q. Who is funding the internship program?**

**A.** In June 2003, WMAACCA received a \$10,000 grant from the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) to be used for creation and implementation of a diversity-related program. WMAACCA decided to use the grant to create an internship program (the “Program”) where students would receive training and experience in the legal departments of some of our members. Based on our successful inaugural year, WMAACCA received a second \$10,000 grant from MCCA for the 2005 Program. In each of those years, and subsequently, WMAACCA has also used a portion of its sponsorship revenues to fund the Program. We also have received donations from individuals and companies. In 2005, WMAACCA established the WMAACCA Corporate Scholars Fund (the "Fund"), a non-profit foundation (501(c)(3)), through The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region to provide a vehicle for permanent internal funding of the Corporate Scholars Program. Individuals and corporations can make a tax-deductible donation to the fund at: **WMAACCA Corporate Scholars Fund/CFNCR** (Tax ID Number 23-7343119), The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, 1201 15th Street, NW, Suite 420, Washington DC 20005.

### **Q. What is meant by diversity and what kind of students is the Program designed to attract?**

**A.** Diversity for this Program is used in its broadest sense, not simply to convey ideas about gender, race and ethnicity, but also concepts of socio-economic background and the student’s individual educational and career path. It means reaching populations within law schools that may lack access to and/or knowledge of in-house legal practice, such as students whose family backgrounds lack in professional careers, college degrees or exposure to the law. Further, diversity means obtaining a pool of applicants who are reflective of the workforce in general and the communities that lawyers serve. We have “branded” the Program as the WMAACCA Corporate Scholars Program to convey the profile of the interns we invite to participate – students with excellent grades, strong writing skills, previous work experience, and professional maturity.

### **Q. Can both for-profit and non-profit entities participate in the Program as hosts?**

**A.** Yes, the Program includes profit and non-profit entities.

### **Q. What type of legal experience are hosts expected to provide to the students?**

**A.** The Program should provide all interns with meaningful exposure to in-house practice. The students really want to learn about the various areas of legal advocacy and general corporate practice that in-house counsel handle, as well as the relationship between providing business and legal advice to clients in a variety of substantive areas. Further, the students should exit the Program with substantive experience (and a work product suitable to use as a writing sample) in a particular area of the law.

### **Q. From which schools will the students be selected?**

**A.** In 2012, WMAACCA is inviting applications from students at the law schools at American University, Catholic University, George Mason University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, the University of the District of Columbia, the University of Baltimore, the University of Maryland, The University of Richmond, the University of Virginia, and the College of William & Mary.

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### **Q. What is the application process?**

**A. Applications from students must be postmarked by January 12, 2012.** An independent consultant will screen the applications and recommend finalists for interview and selection of the interns by the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators. Interviews of finalists will be conducted over the weekend of February 25 and 26. The Program coordinators then will select the members of the “Class of 2012” and make preliminary matches with the internships that have been offered by WMACCA member companies and organizations. The students and the organizations will then meet to ensure that the match is a good “fit.” When the parties agree to the matches, the students and organizations will be able to determine logistics, timing, etc., for the internships to begin.

**Interested organizations are asked to submit an agreement to participate in the Program by January 27, 2012.** Otherwise, there is no application process for corporations. Since WMACCA is likely to receive offers for more internships than it can fund, the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators, in their discretion, will select the corporations to participate in the Program and make the best possible matches. (In the case of organizations that do not receive a match through the Program, there may be a separate/independent opportunity for a corporation to still have an intern and arrange course credit for him/her.)

### **Q. My company has its own internship program. If the student has not applied to our program, why would I take the student through the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program?**

**A.** The differences between the description, marketing, funding and scope of the Program and the companies’ existing internships may lead a student to apply for one internship and not apply for the other. It is worth noting that students submit applications to our Program without knowing which corporations will be participating and do not discover the names of the participating companies until after the matches are made by the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators.

### **Q. How will the students and companies be matched?**

**A.** The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators ask the students for their geographical and corporate practice preferences. In addition, at the end of their interviews, the students are given a list of “blind” descriptions of the internships we have in our pool and rank their preferences. In addition, we gather information from the companies about what level of student they want for their internship and what kinds of assignments they will provide. The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators then try to match the students’ interests and academic or employment background to the business and interests of participating corporations. Location of the companies also is a factor, since we try to make matches to which the students could reasonably commute. We wish we could afford to fund all the internships we are offered, but at this time we do not have those resources.

### **Q. May my company meet or select the student?**

**A.** The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators strive to make the best possible matches between students and corporations. Companies will not be given a choice from our pool or a voice in the matches. However, companies and students are informed of the matches in early March and are told they are tentative, pending a meeting. The companies and the students are required to meet prior to finalizing the selections. After that meeting, the company could raise questions or concerns about their specific match to the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators. The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators will try to resolve any concerns. If the company’s concerns are not resolved, the company will not be required to accept the intern and will be withdrawn from the Program.

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### **Q. May a student withdraw from my company's legal department as its designated internship?**

**A.** No. During our interviews of the finalists, we will ask questions designed to prevent scheduling conflicts, transportation issues, or similar issues, and we will make sure the student understands that he/she may withdraw from the Program prior to the commencement of the Program (or while the Program is underway) only under extreme personal circumstances, such as serious illness in the student's immediate family. In the event that a student needs to withdraw prior to the start of the Program, WMACCA will try to select another student for the corporation.

### **Q. When should the internship begin and how long should it last?**

**A.** The internship should begin no later than June 4, 2012, but students and corporations should mutually agree on a specific start date. The internship may begin earlier if the student and the corporation desire. The internships last ten (10) weeks.

### **Q. May my company contribute to the scholarship provided by WMACCA?**

**A.** WMACCA will provide support of at least \$10,000 for each student. In order to maintain equity among the students in the Program, we ask that companies not supplement or match the funding provided by WMACCA. However, we would be very grateful if your company would contribute to the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Fund, which will enable us to grow the Corporate Scholars Program in the future and benefit all participating students.

### **Q. How will the scholarship be processed and provided to the students?**

**A.** Funding for the Program comes from the WMACCA Corporate Scholars Fund (the "Fund"), a non-profit scholarship foundation (501(c)(3)) established by WMACCA under the auspices of The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region. WMACCA contributes annually to the Fund from its sponsorship and other revenues.

In 2012, once the student and host matches are finalized, the host will take the steps necessary to employ the student for the 10-week internship period. The Fund will provide the funding for the internship to the host organization, which then will pay the student. Students should be paid the amount of support provided by WMACCA (less applicable income taxes and other deductions) over the course of the 10 weeks by their host organizations per the organizations' usual payroll practices and timetables.

### **Q. Will my company be expected to do anything after the internship ends?**

**A.** WMACCA will ask the primary point of contact in the legal department to provide an evaluation of the internship process, the student's performance, and suggestions for changes/improvements in the Program for the future. WMACCA's goal is to share the feedback with the participating schools and corporations upon completion of the Program, and to continue to refine the Program so that will grow and thrive into the future. The Company will also file all required documents for tax purposes for the period of the student's employment.

### **Q. If the intern works out well, may my company ask him/her to continue working with us?**

**A.** Companies are not required to hire students after their summer internships end, but may choose at their discretion to extend the internship. Unfortunately, WMACCA cannot provide funding for any additional internship period.

### **Q. Who should I contact with questions?**

**A.** Please – should you have any questions – make sure to inform one of the Program contacts as soon as possible:

## **FAQS for WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program**

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