

WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program FAQS for Potential Applicants Summer 2012

Q. What is the background of the Scholars Program?

A. In June 2003, WMACCA received a \$10,000 grant from the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) to be used for creation and implementation of a diversity-related program. WMACCA decided to use the grant to create an internship program (the “Program”) where students would receive exposure to and experience in in-house practice in the legal departments of some of our members. Based on our successful inaugural year, WMACCA received a second \$10,000 grant from MCCA for the 2005 Program. In each of those years, and subsequently, WMACCA has also used a portion of its sponsorship revenues to fund the Program. We also have received donations from individuals and companies. In 2012, the Program will select its ninth class of Scholars.

Q. What kind of students is the Program designed to attract?

A. The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program is designed to provide students in WMACCA’s service area with exposure to and experience in in-house practice. The Program is also designed to be a “diversity pipeline,” opening up opportunities to 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. 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. 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 WMACCA 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? Where will the internships be located?

A. Yes, the Program includes profit and non-profit entities. We solicit internships from members throughout our service area (which includes D.C., the entire Commonwealth of Virginia, and suburban Maryland).

Q. What type of legal experience do the Scholars receive?

A. The Program should provide all interns with meaningful exposure to in-house practice. We understand that students 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, we expect that students will exit the Program with substantive experience (and a work product suitable to use for a writing sample) in a particular area of the law.

Q. From which schools will the students be selected?

A. In 2012, WMACCA 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.

FAQS for WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program

Q. What is the application, screening and interview 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.

Q. How will students and host organizations 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.

Q. Do the host organizations and students meet at some point in the process?

A. The WMACCA Corporate Scholars Program coordinators strive to make the best possible matches between students and corporations. Companies are not given a choice from our pool or a voice in the matches. However, the companies and the students we match do meet prior to finalizing the placements. After that meeting, either party 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 concerns are not resolved, the coordinators may find a different match for the student.

Q. May a student withdraw from the Program after starting the internship?

A. Students may withdraw from the Program prior to the commencement of the Program (or which the Program is underway) only under extreme personal circumstances, such as serious illness in the student's immediate family. Once the internship begins, WMACCA and the host company expect the student to complete it.

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 internships last ten (10) weeks.

Q. Will the students be paid for their internships?

A. Yes. 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 will 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.

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Q. If the internship works out well, may the organization extend it?

A. Companies may choose at their discretion to extend the internship into the fall of 2012. Unfortunately, WMACCA does not provide funding for any additional internship period.

Q. Who should I contact with questions?

A. Please – should you have any questions – contact:

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