



## **ACC National Capital Region Corporate Scholars Program FAQs for Potential Hosts – Summer 2025**

**Apply before January 31, 2025 at:**

**<https://accnationalcapitalregion.com/survey.php?id=52>**

### **Q. What are the origins of the Corporate Scholars Program?**

**A.** In June 2003, our chapter received a grant from the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) to be used for creation and implementation of a diversity-related program. We decided to use the grant to create the Corporate Scholars Program (the “Program”) to provide opportunities for students to receive training and experience in the legal departments of some of our members. In 2025, we will enroll the 22nd class of Scholars. Nearly 200 students have participated in the program thus far.

### **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 race and ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation, and other “protected classes,” 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. Nonetheless, we welcome all who are interested in the Program to apply. We have branded the Program as the Corporate Scholars Program to convey the profile of the interns we invite to participate – students with strong grades, strong writing skills, previous work experience, and professional maturity.

### **Q. Can both for-profit and not-for-profit entities participate in the Program as hosts?**

**A.** Yes, the Program hosts include ACC NCR members that are both profit and not-for-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 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.

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

**A.** For Summer 2025, we have invited 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 Baltimore, the University of the District of Columbia, the University of Maryland, The University of Richmond, the University of Virginia, and the College of William & Mary.

**Q. What is the application process and timeline?**

**A.** Applications from students are submitted online (***the deadline for Student Applications is Friday, January 3, 2025***). A screener will review all of the applications and recommend finalists for interviews. Interviews of finalists will be conducted on Saturday, February 8 (via ZOOM). The Corporate Scholars Program coordinators then will select finalists for the “Class of 2025” and make preliminary matches with the internships that have been offered by our member organizations. The students and the organizations will then meet to ensure that the match is a good “fit.” When both parties agree to the match, the student and host organization will be able to determine logistics, timing, etc., for the internship to begin.

**Interested organizations are asked to submit an application to host a Scholar by January 31, 2025.** Since we are likely to receive offers for more internships than can be funded, the Corporate Scholars Program coordinators, in their discretion, will make the best possible matches. (In the case of organizations that do not receive a match through the Program, there may be an independent opportunity for an organization to consider a student from the finalist pool. Funding or course credit for a finalist to intern with any organization outside of the Program is up to the organization and the student.)

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

**A.** The differences between the description, marketing, funding and scope of the Program and your organization’s 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 organizations will be participating and do not discover the names of the participating entities until after the matches are made by the Corporate Scholars Program coordinators.

**Q. May my organization select the student?**

**A.** The Corporate Scholars Program coordinators strive to make the best possible matches between students and hosts. Host organizations will not be given a choice from our pool. However, Host organizations and students must both approve any match before it is final.

**Q. How are students and organizations matched?**

**A.** The Corporate Scholars Program coordinators ask the students for their geographical and corporate practice preferences. In addition, as part of the interview process, the students are given a list of “blind” descriptions of the internships we have in our pool and rank their top three choices. We also gather information from the organizations about what level of student they want for their internship and what kinds of assignments they will

provide. The Corporate Scholars Program coordinators then try to match the students' interests, academic, and employment background to the business and interests of the organizations that have applied to host a Scholar. Location of the organizations 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. After we learn of our match (if any), then what?**

**A.** When the hosts and students are informed of the matches by mid-March, they are told they are tentative. Before a match can be finalized, the host and student must meet, and the student must complete the organization's screening process (if any). We have explicitly informed the students (and they have acknowledged and agreed) that they will have to complete any application and hiring process conducted by the organization with which they matched, which may include background checks, fitness checks, or other evaluations conducted during the organization's standard hiring process.

In light of the tight timeframe on which the Program operates, we ask that you have the meeting and conduct and complete any such checks or evaluations promptly (within two weeks after you are informed of the match) and let us know as soon as possible if it prevents you from accepting the match. You should also contact the Corporate Scholars Program coordinators if, after meeting with the student, you have any questions or concerns about the match. The Corporate Scholars Program coordinators will try to resolve any concerns. If the host's concerns are not resolved, the host will not be required to accept the intern and will be withdrawn from the Program.

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

**A.** 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 they 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, we will strive to select another student for the organization but cannot guarantee another match.

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

**A.** The internship should begin no later than June 2, 2025, but students and organizations should mutually agree on a specific start date. The internship may begin earlier if the student and the organization desire. The internships last ten (10) weeks. We do not allow Scholars to split the summer and have a second position, unless the other position allows them to meet their full commitment to the Scholars Program without interruption.

## **Q. How is the Program funded?**

**A.** In 2005, we established the Corporate Scholars Fund (the "Fund"), through a not-for-profit foundation (501(c)(3)), the Greater Washington Community Foundation to provide a vehicle to financially support the Program's operations. ACC NCR contributes annually to the Fund from our sponsorship and other revenues. Individuals and organizations can make tax-deductible donations to the fund at: ACC National Capital Region Corporate Scholars Fund/GWCF (Tax ID Number 23-7343119), The Greater Washington Community Foundation, 1325 G Street NW, Suite 480, Washington DC 20005.

For Fund continuity, we now expect host organizations to contribute – on a sliding scale, according to their size and organizational status (profit/not-for-profit) – to the stipend paid each Scholar. For instance, a contribution of \$10,000 is requested from for-profit entities with 25 or more attorneys; a contribution of \$7,500 from for-profit entities with 15 – 24 attorneys, a contribution of \$5,000 from for-profit entities with 5 – 14 attorneys and a contribution of \$2,500 from for-profit entities with 1 – 4 attorneys and not-for-profit organizations with any number of attorneys. By submitting an application, your organization agrees to pay at least the amount that applies to its size and status or offer an explanation as to why they cannot pay at the requested level. If the organization's contribution is less than \$10,000, and a match is made, ACC NCR will provide the difference from the Fund.

In 2025, 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. We will arrange for the Fund to remit the required level of funding (if any) for the internship to the host organization, which then will pay the student. Students should be paid the full stipend amount (less applicable income taxes and his or her share of other payroll taxes/deductions) over the course of the 10 weeks by their host organizations per the organizations' usual payroll practices and timetables. Employers must pay their share of all applicable payroll taxes and not deduct this amount from the stipend.

Your HR department should be able to help you structure this arrangement, but here are some suggestions that we have received from previous hosts:

- If the organization receives the grant, you can book it by adding it to the Legal Department's salary expense account. For each payroll period, you would then offset the department's salary expense account credit by the amount paid to the Scholar.
- It may be easiest to set the Scholar up as a full-time, temporary, hourly employee. Inform him/her that they will work 40 hours per week. (If the amount of funding in 2025 is \$10,000 that would mean a rate of pay of \$25 per hour.) If you use this structure and the Scholar works overtime, the organization will have to pick up that expense.
- Because the Scholar's period of internship may include one or more legal/federal holidays, the Scholar should be paid for those holidays from the amount of the grant or host funds.
- Have a discussion up front with the Scholar about how you will handle any other missed days – e.g. for illness or other exigent circumstances. Because we require

that the full amount of the grant be used for the internship, there are two choices: (1) require the Scholar to make up the day; or (2) agree to pay even for missed days (assuming these do not become excessive).

- Hosts will be required to submit a statement to ACC National Capital Region at the conclusion of the internship confirming that the full amount of the support received from the Fund was used for the internship.

If you have any questions, please contact Nathaly Lescano at [Nathaly.Lescano-ncr@accglobal.com](mailto:Nathaly.Lescano-ncr@accglobal.com)

**Q. Is my organization limited to pay the Scholar no more than \$10,000?**

**A.** We will provide support of up to \$10,000 for each student, based upon the difference between what the host organization agrees to pay and what remains to make up the balance of \$10,000. In order to maintain equity among the students in the Program, we ask that host organizations not increase the amount of the stipend.

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

**A.** We 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. Our goal is to share the feedback with the participating schools upon completion of the Program, and to continue to refine the Program so that it will grow and thrive into the future. The organization will also file all required documents for tax purposes for the period of the student's employment. Finally, hosts will be required to provide a letter addressed to the Greater Washington Community Foundation at the conclusion of the internship confirming that the full amount of the funding was used for the internship.

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

**A.** Organizations are not required to hire students after their summer internships end, but may choose at their discretion to offer the student Scholar a separate internship in the fall after the ACC internship concludes. Unfortunately, we cannot provide funding or oversight for any additional internship period. Of course, we would be thrilled if the host ultimately hires the intern for long-term employment.

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

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

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