

Making the Most of Summer 2021

Careers in Law

Lawyers are logical interpreters of rules. Successful practitioners, though, approach legal problems with creativity and flexibility. You can exercise and further develop these two key strengths during the summer of 2020. Many of you will need to explore options beyond the typical ten-week legally-related internship.

But just because you don't have a traditional internship this summer doesn't mean that your career is on pause. Employers and law schools will expect to see how you used this challenging summer to move your career forward using flexibility and creativity. Careers in Law advisers can help you strategize and can review your application materials.

Tips for a Productive Pre-Law Summer

Keep Applying

- Apply broadly both in, and outside of, the legal field. Send out 10 applications for internships and jobs each day. Decisions may take longer than before the pandemic. In addition to Handshake and using the public sector legal employer lists that Rob and I can provide, check out www.internfromhome.com.
- Apply for research assistantships with law professors—at UChicago or at a law school closer to home or with a favorite undergrad professor. Check out the faculty webpages and identify professors who are doing work that interests you.
- If you have a micro-Metcalf grant, ask to continue that work during the summer.
- Be flexible: offer to work unpaid (Metcalf Grant funding is available); offer to work remotely; to start later and end later; and to work part-time. Think of the summer as project-based and yourself as a project manager—a valuable skill for your resume and interviews.
- Set up job alerts on www.idealists.org, www.indeed.com: and use the UChicago LinkedIn Group.

Volunteer

- Volunteer for any COVID-related nonprofit such as [Meals on Wheels](#); check [here](#) for local volunteer opportunities, or simply check in on homebound neighbors and relatives; help them with getting food and necessities; offer to walk their dog; help high school students who are applying to college. The best lawyers are empathetic and understand their clients' needs outside of the narrow legal issue they present.
- Volunteer with ANY nonprofit for any length of time—you can still make the world a better place remotely and gain more insight into the issues you are passionate about, whether those are related to the environment, civil rights or criminal justice.

Study for and Take the LSAT

- Study for and take the LSAT (maybe in conjunction with a part-time or a volunteer opportunity). Both [PowerScore](#) and [Princeton Review](#) offer discounts on prep courses for UChicago students. Since your score is good for five years, taking the test makes sense even if you are planning to apply after working for a year or two. Get the test out of the way while you're still in student mode. OR just take a [free diagnostic LSAT online](#) to give yourself a baseline.

Gain Useful Professional Skills

- Stay on top of the legal news: subscribe to [law.com](#) and ATL ([Above the Law](#)).
- Read a legal book or two: [Richard Susskind's Tomorrow's Lawyers](#) (the future of legal practice); [American Law and the American Legal System](#) (the basics); [The Nine](#) or [The Brethren](#) (on the US Supreme Court); biographies of Supreme Court Justices from John Marshall to RBG; and, okay, for summer fun, the latest John Grisham ([Camino Winds](#)) or Scott Turow ([The Last Trial](#)). Also, about law school and just for grins, [The Curve](#).
- Polish (or learn) a language. Try [babbel.com](#).
- Hone or update your professional materials (resume, sample cover letter, LinkedIn page). (Hint: Careers in Law can help!)
- Listen to teleconference oral arguments at the Supreme Court on [C-Span](#). State Courts are also beginning to broadcast.
- Meet virtually with an alumni attorney mentor through [WISR](#)
- Take advantage of job-shadowing opportunities with alumni you can identify through LinkedIn.
- Improve your Excel and Powerpoint skills with free online classes. Try [InsideSherpa](#) or [LinkedIn Learning](#).