

## **Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association Minority Clerkship Program**

### **The Procedure of the Minority Clerkship Program**

The first step in the MCP process is for eligible first year historically underrepresented diverse law students to submit an application. The application packets are generally available after November 1 each year. Subsequently, the applications are due on or around January 20 the following year. The application packets include questions about a historically underrepresented diverse student's background, history, capabilities, skills, and other qualities. It also includes two essay opportunities for students to discuss their own unique circumstances (a personal statement) and where they plan to take their legal career (a career goals statement). The application requires the submission of two letters of reference and the student's resume. Because of the timing of the program, grades are generally not considered. Once the application packets are submitted, the students are vetted for eligibility, and the quality of the application and required materials is scored by the Committee as a component of the evaluation process.

Once the group of eligible and qualified students is created, those students are scheduled for interviews with interview teams comprised of volunteers from the various legal employers participating in the program. The interviews generally occur in February at the CMBA offices in Cleveland. However, for out of town students, who have an interest in coming to Cleveland, and participating in the MCP, arrangements can be made to allow for videoconferencing attendance. The students participating in the interview process are evaluated in several categories including appearance, poise, presentation, content and hireability.

On the same day as the interview, there is a closed universe writing exam administered by the MCP. The exam is similar to a standard law school exam and indeed, is created and evaluated by law school professors.

Once all three components have been completed, the Minority Clerkship Committee compiles the applicants' scores for the interview, application and writing assignment components and ranks the applicants accordingly. Information about the top scoring applicants (application and materials) is then shared with the pool of employers who will be hiring summer clerks. Employers are asked to identify and rank candidates in whom they are interested. The Minority Clerkship Committee then seeks to match the law students with interested legal employers. Applicants are informed of their match by mid-March and have one week to accept or decline their offers. Typically, clerkships begin in May at the end of the second semester and continue through July and into August. Students selected must be academically eligible to begin the summer employment.

Prior to starting their positions, students selected for clerkships will participate in an Orientation program at the Bar Association in May, where they meet their direct supervisors or firm/law department contact.

## **The Lunch & Learn Program**

As part of the clerk's summer experience, the Minority Clerkship Committee has implemented a "Lunch & Learn" program. Any and all applicants for the program are invited and are welcome to attend. Thus, even if a student is not selected to participate with one of our legal employers, they can still utilize the lunch and learn sessions. These periodic lunches allow the students to meet and learn from the experienced successful minority members of the legal community, including law firm partners, judges and general counsel.

## **Tracking Future Success**

In order to evaluate and ascertain the true value of the Minority Clerkship Program, the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association will conduct post-clerkship surveys of both the participating employers and students. The Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association will also track and report the students' future employment, including where each student ends up practicing upon graduation and successful passage of the bar exam.