GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

Golden Gate Law Bridge Fellowship Program 2020-2021 APPLICATION OVERVIEWS

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Golden Gate University School of Law is pleased to sponsor the Golden Gate Law Bridge Fellowship Program. This program provides recent graduates invaluable experience, skills and connections as they pursue meaningful full-time and long-term employment. The Fellowship is designed to benefit graduates in the public sector by providing modest stipends for up to 4-months' time for individuals working on a volunteer basis for the courts, government agencies, or other public service organizations. The goal of this program is to support graduates in their job search and encourage work in public service organizations that are often minimally funded.

To submit your application, email Marie Bryant mbryant@ggu.edu a resume and cover letter. Please ensure that your letter includes the following: (1) name of the agency for which you will be volunteering, (2) the name, email and phone number of your supervising attorney, (3) tentative start and end date (4) the tasks related to your role, and (5) how the position will benefit you in your search for long-term employment.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. **Law Degree:** Applicants must earn their Doctor of Jurisprudence from Golden Gate University School of Law in May 2020, August 2020 or December 2020.
2. **Secure Volunteer Position:** Prior to applying for funds, applicants must secure a volunteer, post-graduate position (minimum 20 hours per week) performing legal work for a: (1) federal or state court, (2) federal, state or local government agency, or (3) other public interest nonprofit organization. Consideration is given to whether a volunteer employer will provide mentoring, networking and/or training opportunity to the applicant, which support the applicant's career goals.
3. **Work Parameters:** Volunteer work must be performed between September 1, 2020 and June 1, 2021. Fellows who are awarded a fellowship beginning less than 4 months from the June 30, 2020 program completion date will be awarded a fellowship for a prorated, reduced fellowship term.
4. **Legal Experience:** Consideration is given to whether a graduate had experiential legal opportunities while enrolled in law school, and whether a graduate secured any other legal employment since graduation.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

1. **Monthly Deadline:** To maximize flexibility for graduates, applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Once your cover letter and resume are reviewed, your employer will be emailed a link to a fillable PDF Verification of Volunteer Status form. Please confirm your start and end date with your employer. Once your employer has completed the form, it will be sent directly to OCS. Award decisions are typically communicated within a weeks' time. Applicants may apply for and receive determination far in advance of their use of the fellowship, thus providing certainty for both employers and graduates. For example, a December 2020 graduate can apply in September 2020 to secure funding for a post bar volunteer position beginning after the graduate takes the bar exam in February 2021.
2. **Complete Application:** The application process consists of two steps; (1) Emailing Marie Bryant a resume and cover letter and (2) Ensuring your employer received the link with the verification of volunteer status and completed the form.
3. **Apply Early:** Funding is not guaranteed. Fellowships are awarded first come, first served basis until the Bridge Program's funds for the academic year are exhausted. To foster fairness and employment certainty, eligible graduates may apply in advance of the estimated fellowship start date, or before graduation. Applicants are encouraged to secure a volunteer position and apply early in the academic year.
4. **Non-Renewable:** To maximize the numbers of graduates receiving meaningful fellowship support, fellowships are non-renewable and capped at 4-months.

CONDITIONS OF RECEIPT:

1. **Pre-requisite Employment Paperwork:** Fellowship payment is contingent on participants agreeing to all employment policies of the University and completing relevant University human resources and payroll paperwork.
2. **Documentation of Job Search Plans:** All Fellows must meet with an OCS counselor at the beginning of their fellowship. Distribution of funding is conditioned on completion of the initial meeting.
3. **Not Retroactive:** Fellows are only eligible to earn a stipend for work performed after admission to the program, and after the employment paperwork and initial interview are complete. Payment will not be made retroactively.
4. **Law Degree:** Earning a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Golden Gate University School of Law is a material condition of start and receipt of the fellowship.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the deadline to apply?
Applications are accepted and fellowships awarded on a rolling basis. Award decisions typically are communicated within one week of receiving all the completed application materials (resume, cover letter and verification form completed by the employer). Applicants may apply for and receive determination far in advance of their use of the fellowship, thus providing certainty for both employers and graduates.

Who is eligible to participate?
Graduates who earned their Doctors of Jurisprudence from Golden Gate University School of Law in May 2020, August 2020 or December 2020 are eligible to apply. Funding is limited and not guaranteed. All eligible Doctor of Jurisprudence graduates are encouraged to apply to the program, **regardless of their bar status**. Eligible graduates registered to take the February 2021 bar exam are eligible to apply to this program.
Graduates may apply for funding before earning their degree for a fellowship term beginning after they graduate. However, earning a law degree from Golden Gate University School of Law is a material condition of start and receipt of the fellowship.

How much can I earn through this program?
Eligible graduates may be awarded a payment of up to $1,500 per month, paid in accordance with the University's payroll calendar, for up to 4 months. Funds are subject to availability. Program participants may earn up to $6,000, contingent on available funds. Under no circumstances will graduates receive payments for work performed after June 30, 2020. Bridge Fellowships are NOT renewable.

What is the application procedure?
Applicants must submit the following documents;

- ☐ Resume
- ☐ Cover Letter
- ☐ Verification of Status

OCS staff will review the applications, typically with a one-week turn around. Consideration is given to whether a graduate had experiential legal opportunities while enrolled in law school, and whether graduates have secured any other legal employment since graduation. Please be sure to provide an update.

What needs to be in the Cover Letter?
The cover letter should be 1-2 pages in length. It should address: 1) a description of how your specific volunteer experience will benefit your career goals, 2) an outline of your job search plan aimed at securing full-time, permanent employment, and 3) the name, phone number and email address of your supervising attorney. Preference will be given to applicants who can show a clear nexus between their stated career goal(s) and expected gains from completing the legal volunteer placement in terms of skills, experience, training, networking, access to a hiring employer, etc. gained at the workplace.

What types of volunteer activities qualify?
Applicants must perform at least 20 hours of legal volunteer work per week for an eligible organization. Graduates who are not admitted to practice law must be supervised by an attorney or judge.

What are eligible organizations?
Applicants must perform volunteer legal work for a (1) federal or state court; (2) federal, state or local government agency; or (3) other public interest nonprofit organization. While any agency or organization that meets the above criteria will qualify, the following agencies and organizations have expressed an interest in hosting Bridge Fellows:

- ☐ AIDS Legal Referral Panel
- ☐ Asian Law Caucus
- ☐ Bay Area Legal Aid
- ☐ Bet Tzedek Legal Services
- ☐ California Rural Legal Assistance
- ☐ Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto
- ☐ Friends of the River
- ☐ Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
- ☐ Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
- ☐ Legal Aid of Marin
- ☐ Legal Services for Children
- ☐ Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
- ☐ Legal Services of Northern California
- ☐ National Housing Law Project
- ☐ Pro Bono Project Silicon Valley
- ☐ Public Advocates
- ☐ San Francisco Superior Court
- ☐ SF Bay Conservation & Development Commission
- ☐ Several regional public defender and district attorney offices
- ☐ United States Postal Service
- ☐ Wild Equity Institute

Are there geographic limitations on the eligible organizations?
No.

How do I make arrangements to volunteer somewhere if I do not know whether I will have funding?
To apply for the Bridge Fellowship Program, you must have a volunteer legal position secured. Some graduates and employers are unable to commit to a volunteer work arrangement until funding is secured. Applicants are advised to communicate clearly with potential volunteer employers regarding the following:

- ☐ Explain whether or not you can commit to the volunteer position absent securing a Bridge Fellowship.
- ☐ Ask whether the employer will allow you to volunteer there absent your securing a Bridge Fellowship.
- ☐ If necessary, clarify that you understand that any offer or acceptance of volunteer employment is conditioned upon securing Bridge Fellowship Funding.
- ☐ Provide the employer the decision timeline.

If my application is rejected, may I reapply?
Yes, pending funding availability. Should your application be rejected or deferred for any reason, you may request feedback on the reasons for that action in order to revise your application and reapply during the next application cycle, pending funding availability.

For purposes of the fellowship, who is my employer?
Program participants are part-time, short-term employees of Golden Gate University. Payment received through this program is considered to be income and is subject to taxation.

Once accepted into the Golden Gate Law Bridge Fellowship Program, what paper work do I need to submit?
Fellowship payment is contingent on program participants agreeing to all employment policies of the University and completing relevant University human resources and payroll paperwork. Program participants will receive the necessary new hire/rehire paper work and make an appointment with Paul Gibson, Director of Administration. During this appointment, applicants will submit their completed new hire/rehire paperwork and related instructions. The new hire/rehire paperwork must be approved and on file with the Dean's Office before a stipend will be issued. Payment will not be made retroactively.

Are there any other requirements?
Program participation and funding is conditioned on fellows performing the following:

- ☐ Meet with an OCS counselor at the beginning and completion of their volunteer positions to discuss how to utilize this opportunity to advance their career goals. Funding will not begin until the initial meeting is completed.

- ☐ Notify OCS immediately if their volunteer service ends prior to the completion of the fellowship period.

When must I perform the volunteer service?
Graduates will be eligible to receive payment for volunteer service that begins on or after September 1, 2020, as long as all other Bridge Program requirements have been met. Payments will not be awarded for volunteer service performed after June 30, 2021.

I am already volunteering at a qualifying organization. Am I eligible to apply for the program?
Yes. Eligible graduates who are already volunteering at qualifying organizations may be awarded payments for work performed subsequent to selection into this program. Graduates may not receive Bridge Fellowship Program payments for work performed prior to acceptance into the program or completion of the initial interview with OCS and employment paperwork.

I am already working on-campus. Am I eligible to apply for this program?
Yes. Graduates who are currently employed by GGU on an hourly-basis are eligible to apply to the Bridge Fellowship Program, but may be required to resign their on-campus employment if selected to participate in the Bridge Fellowship Program. Please contact OCS for more details.

If I receive a Bridge Fellowship, may I continue my job search for a more permanent, paid position?
Yes! In fact, the Bridge Application requires you to provide a job search plan for your fellowship period, and Fellows are required to provide updates on progress toward such plans as condition of receipt of funding. Applicants are advised to clearly communicate to prospective volunteer employers that you will need to continue searching for paid employment and that, even if you do secure the Bridge Fellowship, you may have to terminate the volunteer arrangement early should you find more permanent, paid employment.

What if I do not pass the Bar and I have to take a break from volunteering to restudy?
Should you need to take a break from your volunteer position due to not passing the bar, you can request permission to defer the remaining term of your fellowship, as long as your fellowship period concludes by June 30, 2020. Grant of a deferral requires written confirmation from your supervising attorney of the volunteer employer's willingness to permit the deferral. Fellows are strongly encouraged to clearly and professionally give notice to their volunteer employers of their need to take time to restudy so as to not damage their professional relationships.

Who do I contact for further information?
For more information, contact Marie Bryant, Mbryant@ggu.edu