

V. COVER LETTERS

A cover letter must accompany each resume you send to an employer. This letter will be the potential employer's first exposure to you and your work. It introduces you, expands on important points on your resume or parts of your background not mentioned in your resume, and requests an interview or a personal meeting. A cover letter should generally be no more than three paragraphs on one page. And although a cover letter is not a formal legal writing sample, it is the first indication of how clearly and concisely you can express your thoughts and ideas on paper. Therefore, your cover letters should always be well written, professional, and interesting.

A. Purpose of cover letters. The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce you to the potential employer and to highlight and emphasize some of your most outstanding qualities, skills, and experiences that you can bring to that employer. As mentioned above, to write an effective cover letter, you should research an employer. You should gather all of the information that you possibly can before you write a cover letter to any prospective employer and then use that information in the cover letter to relate your background more directly to the employer's specific needs and specific law practice and to convince the employer that you are truly interested in working for that employer.

B. Tone of cover letters. Your cover letters should always exude enthusiasm, sincerity, and genuine interest in the particular employer to whom it is addressed.

C. Format of cover letters. In general, a cover letter should be three paragraphs long. Each of these paragraphs has a distinct purpose which you should always keep in mind when drafting your correspondence. The basic format is as follows:

Paragraph 1:

The goal of the first paragraph is to get the reader's attention. Tell them why you are writing the letter and why the reader should bother reading the rest of your letter. The first sentence of your first paragraph must grab the reader's attention. "I am currently a second year student at Duquesne Law School" does not compel your reader to continue. Compare that very bland opening sentence to the following: "Dr. John E. Murray recommended that I contact you because of your expertise in contract law." Or if you don't have a personal contact within the firm try something like this: "I was fascinated to read your profile in the August issue of the Allegheny County Bar Journal". Or use something that you learned in your research of the particular employer to lead off your first paragraph.

In the first paragraph, you should also let the reader know very directly the purpose of your letter. The second and third sentences of your opening paragraph should introduce you as a law student and indicate the type of position for which you are applying - a summer law clerk position or permanent employment, as well as why you are applying specifically to that employer. In this first paragraph, you should also mention the employer's substantive area of practice and why that interests you and/or any geographic ties that you have to the region in which the employer is located.

Paragraph 2:

The second paragraph should tell the reader why they should meet you. Elaborate on your background and how it relates to the needs of the employer's organization. Show the reader why they should give you a chance – tell them how can you contribute to their firm or organization. Here is the place where you should write about any elements of your background that would benefit the employer, such as academic achievements and job experiences and the transferable skills that you have acquired. Your research of the employer comes into play here in allowing you to link your background with their law practice. Be careful not to just repeat everything that is on your resume - go beyond your resume and expand on areas that would be of particular interest to this specific employer. You should also discuss things that may not be appropriate for the resume such as high grades in particular courses.

Back up an assertion of skills and abilities with examples. For example, if you state that you have excellent research and writing skills, provide your grade in LR&W, list published articles, or discuss work experience that has enabled you to hone those essential skills. The second paragraph is also the place in your cover letter to show and support your interest in the city where the employer is located. **Convince the employer that a meeting with you is essential!**

Paragraph 3:

In the third and final paragraph, you should directly request a personal interview or meeting. Tell the employer what you are going to do next and what you want them to do next. Make it easy for the employer to schedule a meeting. Specify times that are convenient for you and provide telephone numbers where you can be reached and an email address. And always include a line of gratitude. For example: "I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the possibilities of a summer law clerk position. I will be in the Philadelphia area the week of October _____. If I have not heard from you before then, I will contact you when I arrive and, if appropriate, arrange a mutually convenient meeting. Thank you for your consideration."

OR

"I look forward to hearing from you soon to arrange a personal meeting. You can reach me at the phone number and address listed above."

OR

"I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss how my background and experiences may fit your needs for an associate. I look forward to hearing from you soon."

There are an endless number of configurations for closing your cover letters. There is no one correct way. Use whatever format you feel most comfortable with. But remember, if you tell an employer that you will call them in a few weeks or on a specific date, you must do so! If you have not heard from the employer after waiting two weeks for a response, write to them again and repeat your interest, asking if you can provide additional information. Better yet, call the person to whom you wrote and ask him/her if you can come in and talk to them. If you are asked

for a writing sample, offer to drop it off so that you have the chance to meet the prospective employer face to face.

The cover letter examples at the end of this section are designed to assist you in your initial drafting of a cover letter. Of course, the cover letters that you send will be more detailed and the information that you present will be geared toward the specific employers that you are targeting.

D. Some final, but crucial words on cover letters:

- No typos or grammatical mistakes - *proofread very carefully*. You must do more than a standard spell check.
- Don't address the letter to "hiring partner" or "To Whom It May Concern" - always send it to a specific person.
- If you know someone at the firm, use that contact. In addition to sending a copy to the Recruiting Director or via OCI, send a copy to the person that you or your family members know. Especially for large firms that receive thousands of resumes, if someone can put a good word in for you, you will get more serious consideration.
- Limit it to 1 page - good legal writing is always concise -- your cover letter should be too.
- Make it clear from your cover letter that you have researched the employer.
- Don't be conclusory - back up your assertions about your qualifications with examples.
- Don't focus on why you want the job - employers want to know what you can do for them, not vice versa.
- Never point out negative things about yourself - don't apologize - accentuate the positive.
- Have the CSO staff review your letters before you send them out.

The following samples should not be used verbatim. A good cover letter should be personalized and reflect your work. The samples are to be used as frameworks from which you can build your personalized letter(s).

SAMPLE COVER LETTER - GENERAL

Need A. Job
155 Carson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15227
(412) 111-2222
needajob@yahoo.com

March 1, 201*

Ms. Hire Me
General Counsel, Legal Department
Wayne General Hospital
725 Main Street
Wayne, PA 16224

Dear Ms. Me:

As a first year law student with a background in hospital administration, I am writing to express an interest in a summer position with the legal department of Big Hospital.

As the enclosed resume indicates, I was an admissions group coordinator at Bay Hospital until shortly before I entered law school. This was the last of three progressively responsible positions that I held. My experience at a hospital with such exacting professional standards has contributed directly to my success at law school, and I am eager to have the opportunity to learn about the corporate legal aspect of hospital administration. In addition, my familiarity with the hospital should limit the amount of training that I require and permit me to quickly contribute to your department.

I will be visiting Wayne from March 12-15, and I would like the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications. My phone number is 412-111-2222 and my email address is needajob@yahoo.com. Thank you in advance for your consideration, I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Need A. Job

SAMPLE COVER LETTER -- Specific Practice Area

**Roberta J. Student
521 Bay View Street
Cleveland, OH 44102
(223) 398-2987
Rstudent@msn.com**

January 27, 201*

Mr. David Stone
Stone, Weaver, and Clay, PC
2251 Main Street
Madison, WS 55291

Dear Mr. Stone:

As a graduating law student, I am writing to express my interest in a position with Stone, Weaver, and Clay, PC. I am seeking a position with a medium sized firm with a strong litigation section. I am particularly interested in construction litigation, and I understand that your firm has an excellent reputation in this field.

I have a strong academic background and experience in the types of cases handled by your firm. I am working towards a Civil Litigation Concentration in my coursework, and I am taking the following courses this semester towards that goal: Deposition Skills, E-Discovery and Trial Advocacy. During an externship for Judge Law, I researched various issues regarding construction law and civil litigation. I also drafted several bench memoranda and orders for the judge. This past summer I worked as a summer associate in the professional liability section of a large Detroit area firm. As a summer associate I performed research, wrote memoranda, and prepared pleadings on behalf of engineers and architects in cases involving various construction issues.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you regarding a position at your firm. If you have any questions or require additional information about my qualifications, please contact me at (223) 398-2987 or robertstudent@msn.com. Duquesne Law Professor Will Lecture, (412) 555-6111 and Judge Law, (412) 555-4444, may both be contacted as references. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Roberta J. Student

SAMPLE COVER LETTER -- Specific Type of Firm

Sam L. Worthy
1982 Fifth Avenue, Apt. 2B
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 333-9999
Worthys1@duq.edu

August 1, 201*

Janet C. Coates, Esq.
Beckwith, Stanger & Lawson, PC
9945 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Ms. Coates:

Please accept the enclosed resume as application for a position as a summer associate with your firm. I understand from research that Beckwith, Stanger & Lawson, PC, is a small firm with a specialized practice in corporate, commercial, real estate and related areas. I intend to remain in the Pittsburgh area upon graduation and am seeking a practice such as yours for a permanent association.

You may find my background and credentials to be of particular interest. Although I have attended school continuously, I have developed business acumen through the operation of my own seasonal service company, which has employed up to five people each summer for the past three years. I was able to put into practice the theoretical education I received as an undergraduate business and finance major. The sale of this business this year has enabled me to finance a significant portion of my law school expenses. During law school, I worked at a large law firm and a small partnership, which helped me to decide that my interests and talents could best be utilized in a small, business oriented firm such as Beckwith, Stanger & Lawson.

With my proven ability to manage my own time and that of others, to assimilate facts quickly, and to understand the concerns of your business clients, I am confident that you will find that I will soon become a productive member of your firm. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss further how I may meet your upcoming needs. If you have any question or require any additional materials, please contact me at (412) 333-9999 or worthys1@duq.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sam L. Worthy

SAMPLE COVER LETTER -- Indicating Research into Employer

Will W. Forte
903 Highland Avenue, Apt. 219
Pittsburgh, PA 15643
(412) 444-2222
ForteWill@gmail.com

March 16, 201*

John Carter, Esq.
Carter & Lewis, LLC
460 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Carter:

As a first year law student at Duquesne Law School, I would like very much to have the opportunity to work with your firm as a summer associate. I understand from speaking with Jill Mark and Sam Lester, students who have worked at Carter & Lewis, LLC, and from research, that your firm is engaged in a wide ranging, general practice and that summer and permanent associate assignments are arranged to provide a solid introduction to several areas. Because I am undecided regarding a specialty, I am very interested in the experience that your firm has to offer.

I understand that Carter & Lewis is noted for community leadership. As the enclosed resume demonstrates, I have considerable experience in peer leadership through volunteer and organizational activities. This has helped me substantially in law school and should prove to be beneficial to growth in my career. Through receiving professional instruction and intense experience in crisis management while I was a Resident Assistant Director during my undergraduate education, for example, I was able to compete successfully in the law school's Client Counseling Competition, where a partner and I placed second among six teams. The academic success of my first semester in law school can be attributed partly to the skills that I have developed in managing the often competing demands of school and other duties. As a result, I believe that my summer with your firm would prove to be beneficial to both of us.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you personally if you have an appropriate opening. I can be reached at the telephone number or address above and can arrange at appointment at most any time that is convenient for you. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Will W. Forte

SAMPLE COVER LETTER -- For Part-time Position

Patricia L. Yeoman
531 Beach Street, Apt. 4A
Bethel Park, PA 15214
(412) 902-5328
yeoman@work.com

September 25, 201*

John A. Sullivan, Esq.
Gilbert & Sullivan, LLP
222 Penzance Street, Suite 832
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

I am writing to express my interest in the part-time law clerk position that you posted with the Duquesne Law School Career Services Office. Currently, I am a second year student at the law school and am seeking part-time employment during the school year

Your job description attracted me because I have a strong background in civil litigation and an interest in civil rights issues. I recently participated in a Trial Moot Court Competition and completed a Trial Tactics course. The class provided extensive motion, hearing, and discovery practice, while the competition offered practice in opening and closing statements and direct and cross-examination techniques. In addition to my coursework, I am currently participating in Duquesne's Civil Justice Clinic. This program enables me to counsel clients and to appear in court, with the supervision of an attorney

Enclosed is a resume for your review. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please call me at (412) 902-5328 or email me at yeoman@work.com. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patricia L. Yeoman

SAMPLE COVER LETTER -- Public Interest

Will D. Good
2298 Peace Street
Serenity, PA 16229
(724) 623-8888
WillDoGood@earthlink.net

October 20, 201*

Mr. Law Advocat
Westmoreland County Legal Services
404 South Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15720

Dear Mr. Advocat:

As a second-year law student and native of Westmoreland County, I want to return to my community to practice law upon completion of my legal studies at Duquesne University School of Law. Because I have lived in this area my entire life, I understand the great need to provide legal assistance to the surrounding areas to address issues such as poverty, homelessness, medical care, as well as educational needs. I am aware of the growing concerns for the changing population due to the closing of various mines and the opening of new industry such as the Sony Plant. Consequently, being able to participate in the Legal Services Office would be a tremendous opportunity that would enable me to have a positive impact on the lives of individuals in the community that has given me the same opportunity.

Since starting law school, I have had the opportunity to receive practical legal skills from my work at Neighborhood Legal Services. I sharpened my research and analytical skills through the drafting of motions and complaints related to family and landlord tenant law, and I learned about the realities of public interest work through working with clients. Learning such skills has been beneficial to my development as a law student and has helped me to understand the great need to provide legal assistance to those members of the community who do not know of its availability.

I have enclosed my resume. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (724) 623-8888. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Will D. Good

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – REFERRED TO FIRM

Joan A. Student
121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-1374
J.Student@duq.edu

February 15, 201*

Maya H. Williston, Esq.
Senior Attorney, Tax Department
XYZ Corporation
123 Corporate Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Ms. Williston:

Timothy Jones of Smythe, Smith, and Schmidt recommended that I contact you regarding future employment in the tax department of XYZ Corporation. As a temporary legal clerk, I recently completed tax work for Mr. Jones. Because he was pleased with my work and familiar with your needs, he indicated that you might be interested in meeting with me to review my background and how I might fit in with your plans for either this summer or next year.

Currently, I am a second year law student. Last spring, I received an MBA (finance concentration). During the past four years, I have successfully managed my education in two professional schools and have also solicited and been involved in numerous short term accounting and legal projects, and served actively on the boards of several student groups. I have achieved this by learning to balance priorities continually in order to meet and exceed the demands of often conflicting deadlines. As the enclosed resume will show, I have been successful in these efforts.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience, either at your office or before the workday. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joan A. Student

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – REFERRED TO FIRM

Robin Student
158 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-1374
EarlyBird@yahoo.com

March 18, 201*

J.H. Courtes, Esq.
J.H. Courtes, Co., L.P.A.
4701 Terminal Tower
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Mr. Courtes:

Professor Edward Davis at the Duquesne University School of Law recommended I contact you, because I have a technical and regulatory background in which you may be particularly interested. I would like very much to have the opportunity to work for you as a summer clerk, and thereafter on a part-time basis.

As the enclosed resume will show, I am a 2006 graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where I received a BS in electrical engineering, with additional courses in chemistry and biology. For the three years between schools, I worked for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, where I used my technical knowledge and abilities in what was analogous to a legal position. In response to telecommunications legislation, for instance, I worked with the State Consumer Board in drafting complaints and briefs, composed sanctions on reports to the state legislature, cross-examined expert witnesses, and authored the PUCO's decision regarding a proposed offering by MCI.

As a result of this experience, I am confident that my summer and subsequent experience with you will be more productive for your practice than if you were to employ most other law students. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my background further and how it may fit your needs. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Robin Student

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – REFERRED TO FIRM

Clarence S. Darrow
1857 Steward Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15232
csdarrow@gmail.com

September 10, 201*

Jonathan L. Seagull, Esq.
Seagull, Tern & Pelican, P.C.
1938 Oceanview Blvd.
Columbus, OH 12345

Dear Mr. Seagull:

Professor John Jay recommended that I contact you about the possibility of summer employment. I am interested in your firm due to your expertise in tax and estate planning. I have a bachelor's degree in accounting and have passed the CPA exam. I am now a second year student at Duquesne Law School, where I am in the top third of my class. I enclosed a copy of my resume, transcript, and a list of references for your review.

My goal is to become a tax attorney. The two years that I spent after college as an internal auditor at Ernst & Young and my summer clerking experience with PriceWaterhouseCoopers have provided me with a foundation of experience on which to build.

My mother grew up in Columbus, and I have many relatives and friends in the area whom I have visited often. It would be a pleasure to practice law in such an exciting, growing urban area.

I will be in Columbus over the Thanksgiving weekend and would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you then if you are available. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Clarence S. Darrow

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – REFERRED TO FIRM

HARRY D. WESTERNER, Esq.
699 Old Hometown Road
Branch Hills, VA 22308
222-555-7676 (H)
Westerner@southnet.net

July 2, 201*

Bryan M. Dinsmore, Esq.
Managing Partner
Easy, Going & McFall, LLC
123 Open Plains Parkway
Boise, ID 83701

Dear Mr. Dinsmore:

While discussing career opportunities in the northwest with Professor Barry Cade, he drew my attention to your firm and suggested that I contact you directly. Professor Cade mentioned that you and two other partners at Easy, Going & McFall graduated from Duquesne Law School, from which I also received my J.D. (with honors) last year. I understand too that your firm represents Boise's largest local employers – Idaho Meals, Boise Cascorn, and Hewlett Packall – and has a growing labor relations practice, in which I am very interested.

As a graduate of Duquesne, I am sure that you are aware of the fine reputation that our alma mater enjoys in the field of labor law. I am currently just a few credit hours away from fulfilling course requirements for an L.L.M. in Labor Negotiations at Big Mid-West Law School and will complete my advanced education in labor law this fall. In light of my interest and training in this specialty, I think I would make a positive addition to your Labor Relations Group. My resume is enclosed for your consideration.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you personally concerning employment opportunities with your firm. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Harry D. Westerner

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – TO SOMEONE YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY MET

CHARLES YAMATA, Esq.
221 Findwork Plaza
Washington, DC 26550
202-400-8888 (Work)
C.Yamata@lawschool.edu

March 3, 201*

Ronald G. Barter, Esq.
Director, Foreign Trade Relations
U.S. International Trade Conference
12th and Madison Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Barter:

You may recall that we met last year at the annual Foreign Trade Relations Fair in San Diego, at which you were the keynote speaker. I was there representing the City of Portland and we had the opportunity to speak at the reception following the general membership meeting.

Since last fall, I have passed the Oregon and District of Columbia Bars and worked for a small Portland law firm with a growing Japanese and Pacific Rim clientele. Although I enjoyed the firm's international practice, I have decided that I am more interested in practicing law in the public sector.

Having moved to the Washington area, I am looking for a position with the federal government dealing with trade issues in general and international trade in particular. I have a special interest in Japan and would like to work in a setting where I could incorporate my extensive knowledge of Japan, as well as my economics and engineering background, with my avid interest in international trade law and business.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the possible options with the federal government that might be open to me. I have enclosed a copy of my resume for your reference and will call you in a few days to see when you might have some time for us to talk.

Sincerely yours,

Charles Yamata, Esq.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – FOLLOW-UP CORRESPONDENCE

Deborah M. Brown
427 South Bass Street
Harrisburg, PA 17103
(717) 555-4578
DebBrown@msn.com

June 4, 201*

George Massenmeir, Esquire
6700 Grant Building
6090 Fifth Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17219

Dear Mr. Massenmeir:

As you may recall, I submitted a resume to you last fall expressing my interest in a position with your firm as an associate. You indicated to me at that time that, although you planned eventually to hire an associate, you were not yet in a position to do so. You suggested that you might be interested in discussing employment with me the following summer, if I were still seeking a position.

I subsequently clerked during my last year of law school at Belle and Baerga, a small Pittsburgh law firm that specializes in personal injury and medical malpractice matters. In that capacity, I have participated in numerous aspects of the litigation process, including interviewing clients, drafting pleadings and motions, preparing correspondence, developing strategies regarding negotiations with opposing counsel, and attending court.

While I gained invaluable experience at Belle and Baerga, I have returned to Harrisburg to practice. I have registered for the Pennsylvania Bar examination, which I will take next month. If you are currently in a position to consider bringing in a new Associate, or expect to be in the near future, I would be most interested in discussing possible employment with you. I have enclosed my updated resume for your consideration and am available to interview at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Deborah M. Brown

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – REQUESTING MEETING FOR FUTURE OPENINGS

J. William Student, Jr.
121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(724) 379-0032
JStudent@law.edu

March 1, 201*

Georgina Gund-Hall, Esq.
Huey, Lewis & News, LPA
1200 Ontario Street, Suite 1200
La Jolla, CA 92038-2802

Dear Ms. Gund-Hall:

As a graduating law student, I am writing to express my interest in an associate position with your firm. I will be relocating to La Jolla in September to rejoin close family who have moved to the area. I am fully aware that you cannot, under normal circumstances, predict your hiring needs this far in advance. Thus, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you when I am next in the area to discuss the nature of your practice in some detail and share with you more specific components of my background that would be relevant to your needs, should an opening arise in the future.

I understand that Huey, Lewis and News has a general civil practice, primarily geared towards small businesses and individual clients. I have purposely geared my education and experience towards the needs of a small general practice firm. The law school's clinical program has enabled me to represent several clients directly, and I received valuable feedback concerning my oral arguments and briefs. In addition, my undergraduate degree and experience with accounting will enable me to work more effectively with your business clients than most law students. My experiences with a sole practitioner and small firm have helped me to decide that my interests and talents could be best utilized in a practice such as Huey, Lewis and News.

I will be visiting family during the third week of March and hope to be able to meet with you during that time. If you could please let me know if you are available to meet between March 17 and 21, I would appreciate it. Thank you for your consideration.

Very Truly,

J. William Student, Jr.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER - BLIND POSTING

Jane Y. Student
121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-1374
Janey@MSN.COM

August 15, 201*

P.O. Box 1319
Pittsburgh, PA 15111

To Whom It May Concern:

In response to a posting at Duquesne University School of Law for a part-time legal clerk, I am writing to apply for a position with your organization. Enclosed are a resume and transcript for your review.

Your advertisement indicates that you are seeking a student with previous legal experience who is a strong researcher and writer. Since my second semester in law school, I have been supplementing my education by serving as a part-time clerk at the offices of Walters & Roberts, where I have learned to manage successfully the competing demands of employment and school, as evidenced by both my increasing responsibility at work and rising grades in school. I have excellent references and writing samples from a variety of assignments I successfully completed. I am also one of the three senior editors on the Law School's magazine, *Juris*.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience to arrange a personal meeting. You may contact me at the e-mail address or telephone number above. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jane Y. Student

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

Robert J. Student
121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-1374
RobLaw@duq.edu

March 28, 200*

Honorable George Lowrey
Magistrate, U.S. District Court, Central District of Ohio
U.S. Courthouse
85 Macaroni Boulevard
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Judge Lowrey:

In reference to the opening posted at Duquesne University School of Law for a judicial law clerk, I would like to submit an application for your consideration. As requested, I have enclosed a resume, writing samples, official transcript, and a list of references.

I understand from speaking with two law professors who have clerked that important criteria in the choice of legal clerks are abilities in legal research, analysis, and writing. Through the three years of my legal schooling, I have assisted various Duquesne Law School professors in their legal research, most notably Professor Legal, whose written recommendation will be forwarded under separate cover. Please feel free to contact him or the other professors whose names I have listed for further information.

The enclosed writing samples highlight the range of my ability. “The Historical Advance of Female Practitioners in the Law” is an excerpt from a scholarly paper written to satisfy the Law School’s upper level writing requirement. The memorandum regarding a client’s responsibility to make proper provisions for a handicapped employee was sent to the client with no substantive revisions. Additional or full samples are also available.

I am very interested in clerking with your chambers, and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Student

SAMPLE LETTER TO ALUM REQUESTING ASSISTANCE

Jill M. Student
12345 East Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-9856
JillM@duq.edu

March 31, 201*

Mr. Paul Grant
Jacobs & Field, P.A.
11075 East Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Mr. Grant:

As you will note in the enclosed letter to Elizabeth Kinornee, Hiring Partner at Jacobs & Field, I have applied for a summer position with your firm. I am most interested in your firm, because your practice includes cases that pertain to real estate and land use planning.

I understand that you are an alumnus of Duquesne Law School. As my resume indicates, I am in my second year at the law school. I am finding that employers in Bethesda are commonly unfamiliar with the school and its academic strengths. I would appreciate any help you could give me in stating my case for employment to Ms. Kinornee and others involved in the hiring process.

I will let you know if I am granted an interview. If you wish to contact me before then, please do not hesitate to do so. Thank you in advance for your consideration and help.

Sincerely,

Jill M. Student

SAMPLE LETTER TO ALUM REQUESTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

D. J. Student
121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15111
(412) 555-1374
DJStudent@duqlaw.edu

December 1, 201*

Robert Craddock, Esq.
Lunden & Margulies, PC
1250 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1011
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Mr. Craddock:

As a second year law student at Duquesne Law School who intends to practice in Milwaukee, I would be grateful for any help that you could give me regarding legal practices in your area. I understand that you graduated from Duquesne Law School and that you now practice in labor law.

I will be spending winter break in Milwaukee and would appreciate any time you could spare for advice. During my stay, I plan to arrange several interviews for summer positions with firms that are devoted to, or have significant, labor practices. My resume is enclosed so that you may review my background. You will note that I emphasized my related legal course work, activities as president of the Labor Law Association and relevant undergraduate studies. You can see that my commitment to this area is long standing and continuing.

I look forward to speaking with you. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

D. J. Student

SAMPLE COVER LETTER REQUESTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Melany O'Brien
843 Fruithurst Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
MelO@duq.edu
(412) 341-6521

January 14, 201*

Ms. Bernadette Stinson
Wilmette, Stinson, and Grand
451 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20245

Dear Ms. Stinson:

I am a second year student at Duquesne Law School. As you did, I attended Canevin High School and Catholic University before coming to Duquesne Law School. Currently, I am seeking employment as a summer associate in the Washington, DC, area and am writing to you for advice.

I am very familiar with the DC legal system, having interned on Capitol Hill while I was at Catholic. In addition, last summer I clerked with the Northern Virginia law firm of Scopes, Darrow & Bryant.

I am writing to see if you might be able to take a few minutes to speak with me about your career path, and steps that I might take to secure employment in the DC area. I definitely plan to return to DC upon graduation, and I know that working as a summer associate in Washington would give me an advantage in attaining this goal.

I can be reached at the address, email, and phone number above. I appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melany O'Brien