

# **BU Law's Public Interest Project**

## **Summer 2009 Grant Application Packet**

### **Grant Description**

PIP grants are \$4,000 stipends which are distributed to recipients through BU's payroll system. Recipients are paid \$10.00 an hour and are capped at 400 hours of summer work. The grants are the equivalent of working forty hours a week for 10 weeks. The grant is taxed as normal income, and recipients must submit weekly timesheets to the Payroll Department.

If the student does not work the maximum 400 hours, the student forfeits the right to collect the remaining balance of the grant.

### **Important Dates**

**February 2, 2009** Work-study application due to the Financial Aid office.

**March 5, 2009** Auction items are due to the PIP office by 5:00 pm.

**March 17, 2009** Grant applications and essays are due to the PIP office by 5:00 pm.

**April 2, 2009** 18th Annual Public Interest Auction Gala

**April 10, 2009** All PIP and Community Service Hours must be completed. If applicable, verification of your hours must be turned in to the PIP office by 5:00 pm.

**April 17, 2009** PIP will notify successful grant recipients, who must attend a mandatory meeting regarding grant disbursement details.

**April 23, 2009** Your employer confirmation letter is due to the PIP office by 5:00 pm.

### **Grant Requirements**

To be eligible for a grant, applicants must:

- Apply for summer work-study through the Financial Aid office;
- Secure summer employment that qualifies as "Public Interest" or "Public Service;"
- Perform the requisite number of "Service Hours;"
- Submit the requisite number of donations; and

- Submit the application cover sheet and essay.

### **A. Work-Study Application**

Applicants **MUST** apply for summer work-study through the BU Law Financial Aid Office. International students are not eligible for work-study and need not apply (though they must inform the board that they are ineligible for work-study). Work-study forms are available in the Financial Aid Office on the 13th Floor and are due by **February 2, 2009**.

Qualifying for work-study funding does not affect your chances of receiving a grant. An applicant who qualifies for work-study still receives a \$4,000 grant, but the Federal Government contributes approximately half of that amount, which allows PIP to distribute more grants.

Failure to apply for summer work-study by **February 2, 2009**, will render an applicant ineligible for a grant.

### **B. Summer Employment Qualifications**

Applicants must secure a “Public Interest” or “Public Service” job, which includes the following:

1. Representation of groups or individuals who are politically, socially, legally or economically disadvantaged, or who are facing widespread discrimination;
2. Work for an organization that seeks to safeguard rights that have been traditionally under-protected, whether through strategic litigation or legislative action;
3. Work for a government agency or office, if that office pursues cases that have historically been under-prosecuted, or if that office pursues cases to vindicate the rights of traditionally disadvantaged or traditionally underrepresented individuals;
4. Work for an international, federal, or state government agency or office if the applicant demonstrates that the proposed work with that office serves traditionally disadvantaged or traditionally underrepresented groups, individuals or interests; or
5. Work for a municipal, state, or federal legislature, or work for an individual representative at any of these levels. This job must involve working in a non-political capacity.

Judicial clerkships, research assistant positions, and political campaign jobs **DO NOT** qualify for PIP funding.

Additionally, the internship must be “non-paying.” To qualify as a non-paying internship, the student must not receive a paycheck from his summer employer. If you are awarded a grant, your employer must submit a signed Employer Confirmation Letter, stating that the internship is non-paying.

Applicants must notify the PIP Board of any outside funding they receive for the summer. PIP enforces a funding cap of \$6,000, which is the maximum a recipient can earn through all funding sources. The cap applies to all external stipends, fellowships, scholarships, grants and any other outside income, with the exception of additional employment.

Examples:

In April, Ryan is awarded a \$4,000 PIP grant. In May, he is awarded a grant from the Florida Bar Foundation Legal Services Summer Fellowship Program for an additional \$4,000. Ryan will only receive a \$2,000 grant from PIP.

Katie is awarded a Rappaport Fellowship for \$7,000. She is no longer eligible to receive any funding from PIP.

Grant recipients must disclose to the PIP Board any additional income relevant to the funding cap. If a grant recipient does not inform the PIP Board within a reasonable period of time after receiving notification of the outside funding, then the PIP Board reserves the right to limit or revoke the grant.

If you have a question about whether an employer qualifies as “Public Interest,” please contact us at [pip@bu.edu](mailto:pip@bu.edu). The President will decide if the employer qualifies.

### **C. “Service Hours”**

Applicant must perform thirty (30) “Service Hours,” broken down as follows:

#### **Community Service Hours**

Applicants must complete ten (10) hours of community service or pro bono assistance. PIP interprets community service broadly and does not require that the activity be law-related.

Completion of the First Year Orientation Service Day or PIP Community Service activities can count towards this requirement. If you perform community service outside of these opportunities, you must submit a statement from the organization verifying that you performed community service and the number of hours you worked. Letters or notes of verification can be emailed to [pip@bu.edu](mailto:pip@bu.edu) or dropped off at the PIP office.

#### **PIP Service Hours**

Applicants must complete fifteen (15) hours assisting the PIP Board with activities other than the Auction (e.g., helping with publicity, assisting with fundraising events, volunteering at the phone bank, and preparing mass mailings). PIP Service Hours must be directed, supervised, or approved by a PIP Board member.

All PIP and Community Service Hours must be completed by **April 10, 2009**. If applicable, verification of your hours must be submitted to PIP by 5:00 pm on that date.

## **Auction Hours**

Applicants must complete five (5) hours helping prepare for the Auction or during the Auction (e.g., organizing donations, selling tickets, setting up the Ballroom, and volunteering at the auction). There will also be opportunities to earn Auction Hours in the week following the auction. Time spent obtaining donations to satisfy the Donations requirement does not count towards fulfilling this obligation.

The PIP Board will regularly distribute emails advising applicants of opportunities to perform service hours. Applicants should also feel free to propose their ideas for other ways to fulfill these service hours.

## **D. Donations**

Applicants must submit four (4) donations for the Auction. The fair market value of each donation must be equal to or above \$50. Auction donations must be submitted by 5:00 pm on **March 5, 2009**.

In the past, donations have included various items, including theater tickets, bottles of wine, sports memorabilia, artwork, and vacation homes. Extremely valuable items may count toward two donations. Decisions regarding whether an item can count for two auction items are made at the discretion of the PIP Auction Co-Chairs.

## **Eligibility of items**

Auction Co-Chairs have the exclusive right to reject donations submitted to meet this requirement. In the past, applicants have submitted items that have had little to no value at auction, thereby limiting the ability of PIP to effectively fundraise. Please email the auction committee at [pipauction@gmail.com](mailto:pipauction@gmail.com) if you have any questions about the appropriateness of an item.

## **Gift Certificates**

A combination of gift certificates up to or above the \$50 minimum can be donated as one item. However, only one item Donation may consist of gift certificates.

Please note that if an applicant donates auction item(s) and then does not complete the application process, the item(s) become the property of PIP and will be used to fundraise for the remaining applicants. Items already donated to PIP cannot be transferred to another applicant.

## **E. Application Essay**

Applicants must submit an essay that does not exceed three pages. The essay must be double-spaced, in 12-point size Times New Roman font, with 1” margins. **DO NOT** put your name on your statement.

The statement should address all three of these points:

- 1) Discuss your past involvement in public interest and/or community service during and prior to law school. If you have not previously worked in public interest or have not been involved in community service, please describe why you are now motivated to pursue a public interest work. While the committee values previous public service, a clear and purposeful plan for future involvement can mitigate any previous lack of experience.
- 2) Discuss how you intend to incorporate public interest, public service, or pro bono work into your legal career.
- 3) Discuss the type of work you would like to do this summer (be as specific as possible), the employers or organizations where you applied to work this summer, and how the internship would fit into your commitment to public interest or public service and future plans.

This essay is not intended to be a personal statement, but a discussion of your qualifications for the grant. In past years, applicants who addressed the three specific issues mentioned above received the highest scores. Applicants who provided more details and a coherent theme also received high scores.

### **Selection Committee**

The Selection Committee (“Committee”) anonymously reads and grades the Application Essays. The Committee is composed of four members, made up of faculty, staff, alumni, and practitioners. No current student at BU Law (including PIP board members) will evaluate the Application Essays. Committee members individually score applications, and applicants are then ranked according to their cumulative scores.

### **Essay grading system**

Applicants’ essays will be graded by four Committee members, on a scale of 0-100. The Committee is composed of four members, made up of faculty, staff, alumni, and practitioners. No current student at BU Law (including PIP board members) will evaluate the Application Essays. Each Committee member will be able to award the essay up to twenty five (25) points. Each reader’s score will be combined for the applicant’s total score. The Committee will grade the essays using the following rubric:

<b>Grading Category</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
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<p><b>Discussion of Past Service Experience:</b></p> <p>Has the author meaningfully participated in service in the past? Has she/he discussed why she/he chose to participate in the particular activities they chose and/or in community service in general? If the author has not participated in past service, has she/he sufficiently described her/his motivations to pursue public interest work now and in the future? Please note that a clear and purposeful plan for future involvement can mitigate any previous lack of experience.</p>	<p>Up to 10</p>
<p><b>Discussion of Expectations for Future Pro Bono Work in their Legal Career and Expectations for Public Service Work this Summer:</b></p> <p>Did the author express a clear vision of her/his future service work for both the summer and in her/his legal career? Does the author have clear and realistic aspirations? Did she/he clearly and specifically explain their interest in the area of service she/he chose to pursue?</p>	<p>Up to 10</p>
<p><b>Structure:</b></p> <p>Does the essay have a recognizable controlling purpose? Did the author use transition sentences? Is there a clear introduction and conclusion? Is the essay generally well crafted?</p>	<p>Up to 5</p>
<p>Total</p>	<p>25</p>

### Essay Submission

The Application Essay is due to the PIP office at noon on Tuesday, March 17, 2009. When submitting your Application Essay, please provide five copies of the essay, each copy stapled separately, in a manila envelope. Please remember that your name should not appear anywhere on your statement. You will be provided with a cover sheet to submit along with your Application Essay.

## **Additional Points**

While the essay score is the basis an applicant's ranking for grant eligibility, applicants have the opportunity to earn up to fifteen (15) additional points that will be added to the essay score.

These points are divided into three categories: Community Service, PIP Service, and Auction Items. An applicant may earn a maximum of five points **in each category**.

Applicants may earn up to five points for each hour of Community Service or PIP Service performed above the application requirements. The verification requirements imposed for the mandatory Service Hours will also be applied to these Service Hours. The PIP Board will regularly distribute emails advising applicants of opportunities to earn additional hours.

Applicants may also earn up to five points in the Auction Item category by contributing extra donations or donations of high value. The Auction Item points will be awarded at the discretion of the Auction Co-Chairs.

## **Ranking**

An applicant's total essay score and any additional points the applicant earns will be combined to determine the applicant's ranking on the eligibility list. In the case of a tie that would require one applicant to receive a grant and another to be denied a grant, the President will ask members the Selection Committee to break the tie based on quality of the applicant's essays.

## **F. Employment Confirmation Letter**

A letter confirming the applicant has secured a job must be turned in by April 23, 2009. In the letter, your employer must state the duration of the internship and nature of the work and confirm that the internship is unpaid. The letter may be faxed, emailed, or mailed to PIP. You can also hand deliver the letter to the PIP office.

If an applicant is waitlisted for a grant, he must also turn in an employment letter by the deadline.

If an applicant does not submit an employment letter by the deadline, and there is a waitlist, the applicant will lose their grant and the person at the top of the waitlist will take their place. The applicant who lost the grant will then be placed at the bottom of the waitlist and will not be eligible to come off the waitlist until they submit an employment confirmation letter.