JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP GUIDE

University of Maryland Carey School of Law
Career Development Office
500 West Baltimore Street
Suite 208
Baltimore, MD 21201-1786
410-706-2080 (phone)
410-706-0870 (fax)
careerdv@law.umd.edu
This guide was created to assist you with the process of applying for judicial clerkships. These pages present you with an overview of the U.S. Court System, a description of the judicial clerkship experience, a discussion of the application and interviewing process, and a listing of resources you will find helpful. The Career Development Office (CDO) is available to assist you in the process. Contact Director Jennifer Pollard (jpollard@law.umaryland.edu) or LaShea Blake (lblake@law.umaryland.edu) in the Career Development Office with questions about your applications.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE U.S. COURT SYSTEM AND TYPES OF CLERKSHIPS

Judicial clerkships are available on both the federal and state levels.

FEDERAL COURTS

The U.S. Supreme Court – the highest court in the U.S.

U.S. Courts of Appeals – Consists of 13 different courts, including the Federal Circuit, D.C. Circuit, and First through Eleventh Circuits. The Federal Circuit is responsible for hearing appeals from the U.S. Claims Court, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and U.S. Court of International Trade. U.S. District Courts are appealed to the U.S. Courts of Appeals. Most judges on the federal circuit courts do not hire third-year students; they prefer applicants with a prior clerkship or other experience. However, some of these courts may accept applications from a student in their final year or a recent graduate, once that student has secured another clerkship to be completed first. Most federal circuit judges hire three or four clerks for a term of one year.

U.S. District Courts – The trial level of the federal court system. There are two types of judges at this court—federal district judges and federal magistrate judges (see box on page 3 for information on magistrate judges). Most federal district judges hire two clerks for a term of one or two years; most magistrate judges hire one clerk for a term of one or two years.

U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judges – As the name indicates, the Bankruptcy Courts handle individual and business reorganization and insolvency matters. Each District of the United States has a Bankruptcy Court.

BENEFITS OF A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

While the hours may be long and the salary modest, the benefits of clerking are numerous. The rewards include:

- Learning about the judicial process;
- Gaining insight into what constitutes a good lawyer, a good brief, and a persuasive legal argument in the eyes of a judge;
- Enhancing professional development through the honing of analysis, writing, communications, and “persuasion” skills;
- Gaining exposure to a wide variety of cases and areas of law, giving the clerk a breadth of experience;
- Mentoring relationship with a judge;
- Networking with attorneys who are practicing in the location where the clerk wants to practice, which translates into good contacts for future employment possibilities;
- Applying the academic substantive knowledge obtained in law school to the practical nature of the actual practice of law while working on significant legal issues.
U.S. Court of Federal Claims – where individuals and businesses may bring suits against the federal government in matters other than tax.

U.S. Court of International Trade – has jurisdiction over tariff conflicts and hears appeals from U.S. International Trade Commission (which investigates and issues rulings concerning unfair practices in import trade).

U.S. Tax Court – hears taxpayer appeals involving income, estate, and gift taxes.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces – five civilian judges review court martial convictions.

U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals – handles appeals of U.S. veteran claims.

STATE COURTS

Generally, state court systems mirror the federal system, with both trial and appellate courts. Some states have special courts as well. Many of the state courts have judicial clerks at both the trial and appellate levels; some only have judicial clerks at the appellate level.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Other miscellaneous clerkship positions may be available as well:

Administrative Law Judges – There are over 1000 judges in federal administrative agencies who are employed by the U.S. government. They hear cases pertaining to their particular agencies. There are approximately 30 offices that employ ALJs. NOTE: Not every ALJ hires a law clerk; you should contact the office in which you are interested to determine if there are law clerk positions available.

Tribal Courts – Clerkships may be available in the tribal courts of certain states; i.e., Alaska. See the National American Indian Court Judges Association’s web site for further information: www.naicja.org.

Staff Attorney Positions: Staff attorneys serve many judges or an entire court on the federal or state level. Their duties vary, but typically include reviewing appeals, conducting research and writing memoranda, and managing specific dockets. For open positions at the federal level, check the OSCAR website. For state staff attorney positions, check each state court website.
The United States Court System

Supreme Court of the United States

- United States Courts of Appeals
  - 12 circuits*

- United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit**

- United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces

- 94 U.S. District Courts and United States Tax Court

- U.S. Court of International Trade
  - U.S. Court of Federal Claims
  - U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

- Army, Navy-Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard Courts of Criminal Appeals

* The 12 regional Courts of Appeals also receive cases from a number of federal agencies.

** The Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit also receives cases from the International Trade Commission, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Patent and Trademark Office, and the Board of Contract Appeals.
II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A JUDICIAL CLERK?

Judicial clerks perform a variety of activities in their daily work, with differences from court to court and judge to judge. The primary role of a clerk is to assist his or her judge in working efficiently under a tremendous workload and strict deadlines. Clerks carry out a variety of tasks that require legal training.

Trial court and appellate court clerkships on both the federal and state level differ significantly from each other. The trial-level clerk performs a wider variety of tasks due to the nature of the litigation process. A typical job description for a trial-level law clerk would read: review and make recommendations on a variety of motions; attend oral arguments, hearings and trials; conduct or attend settlement conferences; prepare trial memoranda for the judge, including a synopsis of the issues in a particular case; conduct legal research and draft research memoranda; write draft opinions and orders; advise and assist judge during trial; call court to session; write and edit jury instructions; perform record keeping and administrative tasks; interact extensively with attorneys.

The appellate-level law clerk’s work can be described as more “academic” in nature than the trial-level clerk’s. The clerk can participate in every step of the appellate process from screening cases to help decide in which cases the court will hear oral arguments to writing bench memoranda summarizing the parties’ briefs before oral argument to assisting in the administrative task of preparing for a “sitting” (when the panel of judges meets to hear a series of cases) to sitting in on the arguments and assisting the judge as necessary to researching and drafting the opinion, dissents, concurrences, and rulings on petitions for rehearing to reviewing the opinions of the judge.

The relationship between the judge and the law clerk has several facets: employer-employee, teacher-student, and lawyer-lawyer. In all of those relationships, the clerk must be aware of the respect due to the judge. Judges frequently seek the reactions of their clerks to the issues raised in pending cases, both for the value of being exposed to varying viewpoints and to train their clerks in the process of legal decision-making. A judge may also ask the clerk to express an independent view after reaching a tentative decision in order to test the clerk’s conclusion or reasoning abilities. Therefore, a clerk should present his/her views, supported by legal research and analysis, when asked. If the judge should then reach a conclusion that differs from the clerk’s, the clerk must, of course, carry out the judge’s instructions with the utmost fidelity. The clerk owes the judge complete

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPELLATE COURTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary focus on research and writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft opinions or memoranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit/check citations for reported cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucus with judge on legal research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May attend/prepare for oral arguments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIAL COURTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varies widely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft opinions and orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct research and writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare bench, research, and trial memoranda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assist judge while court is in session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucus with judge regarding rulings on motions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write and edit jury instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative tasks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
confidentiality, accuracy, and loyalty. The judge relies upon the clerk’s research in reaching conclusions on pending cases. Also, the judge relies on confidentiality in discussing performance of judicial duties, and the judge must be able to count on complete loyalty. The clerk must not criticize the judge’s decisions, work habits or personal matters to anyone, including other members of the same court or their law clerks.

III. DECIDING WHERE TO APPLY

Some factors that students are urged to think about are:

Location—Some judges prefer clerks with ties to their local geographic region.

Personality—According to judges, personality is often the key factor that determines their next judicial clerk. Like with any other job, judges’ personalities vary widely and you may prefer a certain personality type in your supervisors. The best resources for finding out information about judges are people who have dealt with them regularly: previous clerks, previous interns, or practitioners.

Similar Interests/Ideology—Research where judges worked before joining the bench, the community activities of the judges, and who appointed the judge (if not elected). This may lead you to certain commonalities that you share with particular judges, and may give you an edge in the application process. Your political preferences may play a role as you target judges, but remember that many judges do not make decisions along “party lines” as members of the independent judiciary.

Special Types of Judges—Some courts allow judges of a certain age to select “senior status.” These judges often do much of the same work as a regular judge, but their caseloads are reduced or limited to certain types of issues. This is a wonderful clerkship experience that is often overlooked by graduating law students, thus oftentimes making them a less competitive option. State trial level courts may appoint certain attorneys as “Masters,” who act as judges in certain matters, such as family law or child custody cases. Seldom will there be funding for a clerkship with an individual Master, but sometimes clerkships are available with a group of Masters who sit for a certain court.

Competitiveness of Court—If you want a federal or appellate court clerkship in a particular state, consider applying to less competitive jurisdictions in addition to the more competitive metropolitan areas that may be your first choice. Most competitive jurisdictions: Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, and California areas (Fourth, Second, Seventh, Ninth, D.C. and Federal Circuits). Think about applying for federal clerkships in other areas, such as the Mid-West, Northeast, and Southern states.

WHERE TO APPLY
**IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Clerkship application procedures differ between federal and state judges and among courts. Most federal clerkships are posted through OSCAR, which is a centralized resource for law clerk information and applications. OSCAR enables judges to accept applications on-line, or it indicates that paper applications are preferred. The CDO mails out completed applications for students (see the Judicial Clerkship Mailing Program packet).

For state courts, applicants should check the Vermont Law School Judicial Clerkship Guide. This resource is available on-line; please contact the CDO for the username and password. It is also in the CDO resource library. It provides clerkship application guidelines and procedures for each state’s courts. For Maryland state appellate and trial courts, applicants apply directly to each judge, usually by paper application. The CDO will post available clerkships on Symplicity, through its e-mails, or you can call individual chambers. The CDO mails out completed applications for students (see the Judicial Clerkship Mailing Program packet).

**PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION**

Generally, the application package requested by a judge will include the following:

1. Brief Cover Letter,
2. Résumé,
3. Writing Sample(s),
4. Law School Transcript, and
5. Letters of Recommendation or List of References.

Consider your clerkship application a “first interview” with a judge. Because so few applicants make it past an initial screening stage, plan on making your application perfect. Work with the CDO on any cover letters and resumes before sending them.

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**CONSIDERATIONS FOR CLERKSHIP APPLICATIONS**

1. **Apply only for clerkships you believe you would accept!**
   
   After an interview, if you no longer wish to be considered, you should immediately notify the judge that you wish to withdraw from consideration. Otherwise, the judge will assume that you will accept the offer if given. The clerkship application process differs dramatically from the law firm process; you are usually not able to collect multiple clerkship offers and select the most attractive one. **You are expected to accept the first offer you receive, often within 24 hours of receipt.**

2. **Most judges require letters of recommendation from faculty/employers.**
   
   Approach your references **as early as possible** so that they will be given adequate time to prepare a thoughtful letter on your behalf. **For federal applications, the CDO recommends that students approach recommenders in the spring well before they leave for the summer.** It is preferable to have at least two law school professors and then work supervisors. The best references are the professors/supervisors who know you the best, not necessarily those who gave you the best grade or have the most prestigious titles. Do not panic if you have not become personally acquainted with any professors; if you have performed well in a certain course, that professor may be willing to sit down with you to get to know you better and agree to provide a recommendation for you. You should provide a copy of your résumé and your transcript to all your references when requesting letters of recommendation. Also, consider consulting your references for suggestions of judges to whom you should apply.
The following items should be included in your application:

**Cover Letter**
Your cover letter must be well-written and thoughtful. Judges are very concerned with your writing skills, so excellent content and perfect grammar are extremely important. Focus your cover letter on why the judge should choose you; what skills you have in which the judge would be interested. Ideally, your cover letter will answer these questions in a few concise paragraphs and reference your résumé for elaboration. Proofread your cover letter very carefully – typographical and grammatical errors will likely be disastrous, almost certainly eliminating you from consideration. **Remember** – your cover letter is a writing sample!

**Résumé**
Your résumé should be professional and flawless. Emphasize research experience and good analytical skills, writing experience, interest in the courtroom or judicial procedure, and ties to the jurisdiction.

**Transcript**
Be clear on whether a judge requires an official or unofficial transcript (on OSCAR, you will upload a grade sheet). If you know your grades for the most recent semester, but they have not been sent to the registrar for inclusion on your transcript, type an addendum of your grades and attach it to your transcript.

**Writing Samples**
Your writing sample should be a written assignment that involved case synthesis, such as a legal memorandum or appellate brief. Avoid using a scholarly article you have written for a law journal or a law school course. It should also be your original work. If you include a piece of writing from an internship or other employment, you must request permission to use it from your employer. If you interned for a judge and plan to use a draft opinion, you should revise the opinion to appear as if it is a memo written by you to the judge. If possible, your sample should include analysis of the law of the jurisdiction where the court to which you are applying sits, or federal law if a federal court. Your sample should be short – no more than 10-15 pages – so redact sections if necessary to stay within the page limit and include a brief cover page (i.e. less than one page) indicating that the writing sample is an excerpt of a larger assignment and providing any necessary facts.

**Letters of Recommendation**
Generally, you should have three letters: choose from among law professors and legal employers. You should also provide each reference with a list of judges to whom you are applying because each reference letter should be personally addressed to each judge (“To Whom It May Concern” is **not acceptable**). Try to make the process as easy as possible for your references by providing an Excel list of judges in merge-data file format. You must follow up with your references to make sure that your letters are sent in a timely fashion (or uploaded to the OSCAR system). Some references will want to return their letters to you in individualized sealed envelopes; this is fine because they can simply be tucked into your application package.
Follow-up Letter
If you have any accomplishments to report after your clerkship applications are mailed, such as your selection to a journal editorial position or a moot court win, you should update your application immediately with a very short letter to each judge announcing the recent accomplishment.

APPLICATION TIME FRAMES

Federal Judges: Pursuant to the Federal Judges Law Clerk Hiring Plan, law students are not to send (and federal judges are not to accept) application packages for clerkships until the Tuesday after Labor Day of the students’ third year of law school. The CDO will mail out applications for receipt on that date. Please see the Judicial Clerkship Mailing Program packet for important dates for your class year. Unless you have specific and concrete information that a particular judge accepts applications early, do not jeopardize your clerkship chances by violating this embargo. This application “start date” should be adhered to by all students nationwide and has been supported by law school deans and career services offices. You will want to submit your applications to federal judges immediately after Labor Day to be considered by the maximum number of federal judges. The summer between your second and third year of law school is a good time to begin preparing your application packages.

State Judges: Applications vary from state to state. In order to get a general idea about a particular state’s application deadlines, you should refer to the Vermont Law School Judicial Clerkship Guide.

INTERVIEWING
If you are offered an interview with a judge, and federal judges in particular, be prepared to schedule the earliest available interview appointment with the judge. Many judges hire clerks on a “rolling basis,” meaning that if a judge likes the first three applicants he or she interviews, the judge would often much rather extend an offer to one of those applicants than interview every other candidate on the list. The applicants who scheduled later interview appointments may be passed over without ever even interviewing with the judge. Keep in mind that a clerkship with a judge involves a close working relationship. Personal chemistry between employer and employee is usually far more important in this setting than in other employment settings. The pages that follow discuss how to research information about judges with whom you interview, practice interview questions to expect at an interview with a judge, and questions an applicant might ask a judge and current judicial clerk.
Preparing for the Interview

Know your judge! There is nothing worse than being asked about a judge’s recent decisions or particular cases in which she or he has been involved and not being prepared to discuss these items. A judge wants to know that you did not randomly select him or her. You should do your research, hopefully, in the application stage, and certainly before an interview. Here are a few suggestions for researching judges:

- **Biographical**
  - The Almanac of the Federal Judiciary
  - The American Bench
  - Courts’ websites
  - Leadership Library (find by using the “Databases” pull-down menu on the Thurgood Marshall Law Library homepage)
- **Cases/Decisions**
  - LEXIS/Westlaw
  - Newspaper websites—about the judges or about cases/opinions
  - Courts’ websites
- **Law Review Articles written by the judge**
  - LEXIS/Westlaw
  - Professors’ websites
- **General**
  - TALK TO PEOPLE who may know the judge and/or court: professors, attorneys at your place of work, CDO Counselors, classmates, Maryland alumni, family members, friends
  - Prior law clerks of the judge

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THE INTERVIEW

The judge who is interviewing you is mainly concerned with answering these questions: Is this person a right “fit” for the chambers? Does this person show a deep interest in the law? Does this person exhibit the requisite amount of seriousness for the task? Is this a person that I can see myself interacting with on a daily basis for 1-2 years? Judges are seeking motivated, intelligent, and skilled individuals as clerks. They will carefully evaluate your demeanor, appearance, and communication skills because you, as a law clerk, will be the judge’s representative to the outside world. In addition, judges want to know their clerks are interested in the law; thus, it is not unusual to be asked questions about your favorite jurist, least favorite Supreme Court holding, etc. Therefore, be prepared for such questions. The interview itself can last anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours. Often the current clerk or secretary is included in the interview process. Remember that they are interviewing you, too. The judge will expect questions from you, so have some prepared. See the attached handout for examples of thoughtful questions.

In addition, go through every document of your application materials that you sent to the judge – you cover letter, your résumé, your writing sample(s), and your list of references. Expect questions regarding all of these items. Always remember to treat everyone you meet at the courthouse as if they have the power to deny you an offer – because they may.

You may wish to schedule a mock interview with a CDO Counselor to practice an interview with a judge/judicial clerk. In addition, professors can be a valuable source of information about interview format and preparation; many Maryland law professors clerked for judges themselves, and are willing to counsel students about clerkships. See the below list of professors who were law clerks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions A Judge May Ask A Judicial Clerkship Applicant:</th>
<th>Questions a Judicial Clerkship Applicant May Want to Ask the Judge:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Why do you want to clerk?</td>
<td>1. Describe a typical day as a clerk in this court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why this particular court?</td>
<td>2. What responsibilities do you have?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What do you hope to learn from a clerkship?</td>
<td>3. Describe you relationship with the judge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Why do you want to clerk for me?</td>
<td>4. What are the judge’s greatest strengths? Weaknesses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Why do you want to clerk in this city?</td>
<td>5. What is the judge’s legal philosophy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths, weaknesses?</td>
<td>6. What contact do you have with the other clerks (with practicing attorneys in the area)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What qualities do you have that might make you a valuable law clerk?</td>
<td>7. Tell me about this city (state, region) as a place to live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What are your short-(or long-) range legal career goals?</td>
<td>8. How has this clerkship affected your job search?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Where do you hope to practice after your clerkship?</td>
<td>9. How has this clerkship affected you career goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What type of law interests you most?</td>
<td>10. What percentage of time do you spend in court, conducting research, drafting opinions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Describe your work experience?</td>
<td>11. What have you learned from this clerkship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Describe the work you have completed for your law journal?</td>
<td>12. What criteria seem to affect the judge’s selection of a clerk?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What interests do you have outside of law school?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP RESOURCES

CDO Resource Library Resources

**Almanac of the Federal Judiciary.**  
Biographical information on federal judges. Includes commentary and critique by legal practitioners familiar with judges. (Judiciary shelf in CDO)

**The American Bench.**  
Biographical and ruling background of U.S. judges. (Judiciary shelf in CDO)

**BNA Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks.**  
Listings by state of every judge. Includes telephone numbers and mailing addresses; also lists websites for courts nationwide. Handy resource for quick access to contact information. (Judiciary shelf in CDO)

**Directory of Minority Judges of the United States**  
Minority judges at all levels of the judiciary with listings by African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Native American judges. (Judiciary shelf in CDO)

**Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures.**  
Lists basic application requirements and contact information for all 50 states. Updated every July. (also available online – contact the CDO for updated password information)

On-Line Resources

**LEXIS/WESTLAW:**  
Check the news databases through Lexis/Nexis for background information about judges and their cases. Remember to search for opinions by judges with whom you are interviewing. You should do a search for the judge’s most recent cases and decisions. You should also determine whether the judge has written any law review articles and read these, if time permits.

**Leadership Directories:**  
Go to the Thurgood Marshall Law Library homepage; use the pull-down menu under “Databases” to choose the Leadership Library. Includes addresses and telephone numbers, biographical information, and names of current law clerks.

University of Maryland School of Law Career Development Office’s **Alumni Law Clerk Spreadsheet** (contact the office to receive a copy).

**Federal OSCAR**  
[https://oscar.uscourts.gov](https://oscar.uscourts.gov)  
Provides information about which federal judges are hiring (and which are not), clerkship position details, preferred application methods, and general information about clerking and staff attorney positions.

**Federal Judicial Center**  
[www.fjc.gov](http://www.fjc.gov)  
Offers short biographies of federal judges and histories of federal courts.

**Federal Judiciary**  
[www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov)  
General information about federal courts and links to other court sites. Look for news about judicial vacancies, nominations, resignations, and confirmations in the online version of The Third Branch, the federal judiciary's newsletter (Milestones section).

**United States Department of Justice Office of Legal Policy**  
[www.usdoj.gov/olp](http://www.usdoj.gov/olp)  
Maintains a list of federal court nominations, confirmed nominees, and vacancies for each Congress. Background information on each nominee also is included.

**Alliance for Justice, Judicial Selection Project**  
[http://www.judicialselectionproject.org](http://www.judicialselectionproject.org)  
Provides information about names and number of judges in each Circuit and their demographic breakdowns, as well as ethnicity of judges and which president appointed the judge.

**Courtlink (Lexis/Nexis)**  
[www.lexis.com](http://www.lexis.com)  
This is helpful to research types of cases various judges and courts hear. Login to Lexis/Nexis and enter the Research System;
use the “Search-by-Source” option, select “Find a Source” under Option 2, type “courtlink” and select “Litigant, Attorney, & Judge Strategic Profiles,” which is Courtlink. You can search Nature of Suit, Court Profile, Judicial Profile.

**Senate Judiciary Committee**
http://judiciary.senate.gov
Includes calendar of confirmation hearings and committee actions, as well as listings of judicial nominations and confirmations.

**Senate Nominations**
www.senate.gov/legislative/legis_act_nominations.html
Most up-to-date listings of recent nominations and confirmations.

**Judicial Clerkship searches**
www.judicialclerkships.com
Centralizes many sources for searching.

**Yale University**
http://judges.law.yale.edu
Database of recent federal judicial nominations and confirmations.

**U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland;** http://www.mdd.uscourts.gov
Contains contact information.

**U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland;** http://www.mdb.uscourts.gov
Contains information about judges and employment opportunities.

**U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia;** http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov
Provides contact information, contains court opinions and list employment opportunities.

**U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia;** http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov
Provides contact information.

**US Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia;**
http://www.vaeb.uscourts.gov
Contains information.

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**Federal Courts of limited jurisdiction**

U.S. Court of Federal Claims:
http://www.uscfc.uscourts.gov

U.S. Tax Court: http://www.ustaxcourt.gov

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit:
http://www.fedcir.gov

U.S. Courts of International Trade:
http://www.cit.uscourts.gov

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**State**

**National Center for State Courts**
Links to numerous state and international court sites.

**Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures**
http://www.vermontlaw.edu
This resource is updated annually each July, so please contact CDO for access; provides updated information on state clerkship application processes.

**State and Local Government on the Net**
http://www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm
Links to most state judicial systems.

**District of Columbia Courts**
Contains information about the DC Court of Appeals and the Superior Court of the District of Columbia such as court calendars and judicial assignments.

**Maryland Courts**
http://www.courts.state.md.us
Maryland Judiciary website. Contains general information about the Maryland courts, appellate opinions and job announcements.

**Virginia Courts**
http://www.courts.state.va.us
Virginia’s Judicial System Homepage. Provides general information about Virginia courts and judges, and contains appellate opinions.
# ADDRESSING JUSTICES AND JUDGES IN YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

The following list demonstrates the proper way to address Justices and Judges in your letter to them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addressee</th>
<th>U.S. Supreme Court</th>
<th>Address on letter &amp; envelope</th>
<th>Salutation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Chief Justice</td>
<td>The Chief Justice</td>
<td>Dear Chief Justice:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supreme Court of the United States</td>
<td>Supreme Court of the United States Washington, D.C. 20543</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Justice (surname)</td>
<td>Justice (surname)</td>
<td>Dear Justice (surname):</td>
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<td>Supreme Court of the United States</td>
<td>Supreme Court of the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Honorable (full name)</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name)</td>
<td>Dear Judge (surname):</td>
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<td>Chief Judge</td>
<td>Chief Judge</td>
<td>Chief Judge</td>
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<td>The Honorable (full name)</td>
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<td>Dear Judge (surname):</td>
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<td>The Honorable (full name)</td>
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<td>Dear Judge (surname):</td>
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<td>United States District Court for the District of</td>
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<td><strong>Other Federal Courts</strong></td>
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<td>Chief Justice</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Chief Justice (full name of court here) Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge (surname):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judge (surname):</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) (full name of court here) Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge</td>
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<td><strong>STATE COURTS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>State Supreme Courts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chief Justice (surname):</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Supreme Court of the State of Address</td>
<td>Dear Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice (surname):</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Supreme Court for the State of Address</td>
<td>Dear Justice</td>
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<td><strong>Other State Courts</strong></td>
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<td>Chief Judge</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Chief Judge Court Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge (surname):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judge (surname):</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Court Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge</td>
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2 Be mindful that the name of the court will change by state, i.e. Supreme Court for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Court of Appeals of Maryland.
SAMPLE JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP COVER LETTER

1365 Homestead Lane
Annandale, VA 20986

September 9, 2012

The Honorable William Seaberry, Jr.
Chester County Courthouse
Two N. High Street
West Chester, PA 19380

Dear Judge Seaberry:

I am a third-year student at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and plan to return to Pennsylvania after I graduate in May. As a law student who aspires to be a successful Chester County trial lawyer, I am interested in becoming your judicial law clerk for the 2013-2014 Court Term.

I am confident that I am qualified to become a judicial law clerk. I understand that a clerk is required to have excellent research and writing skills and worked very hard to develop these skills in law school. For the past year-and-a-half, I have been a member of the Maryland Law Review. As a member of the Maryland Law Review, I researched and wrote an article suitable for publication, which I attached as a writing sample. My article analyzed the constitutionality of anonymous juries. This experience, along with researching and editing other staff members’ and lead authors’ law review articles, honed my research and writing skills tremendously.

I utilized my research and writing skills as tools to build knowledge of substantive areas of the law. Last spring, I interned at the United States Department of Labor in the Plan Benefits Security Division. Without having prior ERISA experience, I researched and wrote a portion of a federal district court brief in which the Department sought to enjoin a retaliatory state action prohibited by ERISA Section 287. In addition to this experience, I developed my advocacy skills and learned many aspects of criminal trial work during my summer internship with the Office of the State’s Attorney in Montgomery County, Maryland and through my clinical experience with the law school clinic this year. Through these experiences, I swiftly developed a passion for criminal work. I understand that you spent the bulk of your career prosecuting cases for the Chester County District Attorney’s Office and hope to gain further insight to the criminal justice system in Chester County through your tutelage.

Please contact me if I can provide further information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Shields

Enclosure
LAW SCHOOL FACULTY WHO WERE JUDICIAL LAW CLERKS

Andrew Blair-Stanek, Honorable Paul V. Niemeyer, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

Christopher Brown, Motions Clerk, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

Danielle Citron, Honorable Mary Johnson Lowe, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

Karen Czapanskiy, Honorable Rita C. Davidson, Court of Special Appeals of Maryland

Kathleen Dachille, Honorable Lawrence Rodowsky, Maryland Court of Appeals

Martha Ertman, Honorable Peter H. Beer, U.S. District Court in Louisiana

David Gray, Honorable Charles S. Haight, Jr., U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York; Honorable Chester J. Straub, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

Dean Phoebe Haddon, Honorable Joseph F. Lewis, Jr., U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Susan Hankin, Honorable Collins J. Seitz, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Michelle Harner, Honorable William T. Bodoh, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Ohio

Leslie Meltzer Henry, Honorable Judith Rogers, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

Alan Hornstein, Honorable Frederick P. Bryan, U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York

Renée Hutchins, Honorable Nathaniel R. Jones, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

Sherri Lee Keene, Honorable James T. Giles, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Lee Kovarsky, Honorable Jerry E. Smith, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Barbara Olshansky, Honorable Rose E. Bird, California Supreme Court

Michael Pappas, Honorable James L. Dennis, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Robert Percival, Honorable Shirley M. Hufstedler, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Byron R. White

Amanda C. Pustilnik, Honorable Jose A. Cabranes, U.S. court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

Shruti Rana, Honorable James R. Browning, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

William Reynolds, Honorable Frank A. Kaufman, U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland

Sharon Reece, Honorable George Bundy Smith, New York State Court of Appeals

Robert Rhee, Honorable Richard L. Nygaard, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Jana Singer, Honorable Richard D. Cudahy, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Max Stearns, Honorable Harrison L. Winter, Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

Leslie Turner Percival, Honorable Ive A. Swan, Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands

Urska Velikonja, Honorable Stephen F. Williams, U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit

Gordon Young, Honorable John J. Gibbons, U. S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit