



## Law Firms: Considering Sponsoring a PILI Fellow?

PILI's Graduate Fellowship Program provides for the furlough of law firms' incoming associates to work for PILI-affiliated agencies during their "bar exam summers" -- the summer before the associates begin work at their firms. Law firms may choose to sponsor one or more of their incoming associates, who are essentially "in residence" at one of PILI's 50+ affiliated agencies for a reduced 300-hour summer schedule (typically 5 half-time weeks before the bar exam, and 5 full-time weeks after the exam). The Fellowship Program is designed for law school graduates who have already accepted permanent employment with a Chicago-area law firm. Its purpose is to give young lawyers experience and training in public interest law, to encourage young lawyers to develop long term interests in pro bono practice, and to provide public interest law agencies with much-needed assistance.

The program is entirely flexible for the firm. First, firms may choose their own level of participation. For example, some firms sponsor only one Fellow per summer, while others sponsor as many as three dozen Fellows. Second, firms may set their own pay structure for their Fellows. For example, while a couple of law firms choose to offer no additional summer stipend to incoming associates who choose to be PILI Fellows, the majority of participating law firms offer a simple stipend ranging from \$7,000 to \$12,000. And several firms even offer their Fellows a pro-rated associate salary (based upon a 300-hour or 7½ week work-schedule).

***Whatever the payment arrangement, all participating law firms pay their Fellows directly; the firms do not send a check to either PILI nor to the host agency.*** (Therefore, these funds do not constitute a charitable contribution to a 501c3). Third, if law firms choose to compensate their Fellows, they may choose their own payment structure. For example, some firms pay their Fellows a lump sum stipend at either the start or end of the summer, while others choose to pay their fellows through regular firm payroll.

PILI instructs all Fellows to run conflict checks throughout the course of the summer, and evaluates all of its host agencies to ensure that they provide appropriate public interest legal work, and adequate supervision by licensed attorneys. PILI also invites all Fellows to a summer-long series of educational programs, luncheons, and networking and social events with other fellows and with PILI-funded student interns.

PILI Fellows differ from PILI Interns some of the following ways:

- ◇ while Fellows are graduates of law school, Interns are current 1Ls or 2Ls at accredited law schools
- ◇ while law firms directly pay their Fellows, the student Interns are paid with proceeds from PILI's yearly fundraising; each year, PILI raise funds from law firms, foundations, and others to support more than forty \$5,000 internships at 20 or more of its affiliated agencies. Participating law firms support at least one PILI Intern by providing a \$5,000 charitable donation to PILI.
- ◇ while Fellows work a reduced summer schedule to allow them to study for and take the bar exam, Interns work a full-time ten-week 400-hour summer schedule.

For a snapshot of the differences between PILI Interns and Fellows, please visit <http://www.pili-law.org/INTERNSVS.FELLOWS.htm>