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TCDIP 1L Clerkship 2024

Information for Employers



TCDIP 1L Clerkship: Launching Careers in the Twin Cities

For over 15 years, the Twin Cities Diversity in Practice 1L Clerkship has helped launch the careers of law students of color in the Twin Cities. We strengthen the legal talent pipeline with strategic partnerships between TCDIP Members from law firms and corporate legal departments. The mission of Twin Cities Diversity in Practice is to attract, recruit, advance, and retain attorneys of color through education and collaboration with Member Organizations. Through the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program, we seek to expand the number of law students of color working at law firms in the Twin Cities.

The [NALP Annual Report on Diversity in U.S. Law Firms](#) continues to show that the number of attorneys of color at law firms lags significantly behind the number of white attorneys nationwide and in the Twin Cities. TCDIP advertises our 1L Clerkship program to law students from historically under-represented racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Moving Forward after *SFFA*

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's June 29, 2023 decision in the Students for Fair Admissions cases against Harvard and the University of North Carolina (the "*SFFA* cases"), the TCDIP Board of Directors carefully considered the legal and practical implications of the *SFFA* ruling on the TCDIP mission and our programs, specifically the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program. After careful deliberation, TCDIP has decided not to make any material changes to our mission or the scope of the 1L Clerkship program.

The TCDIP 1L Clerkship program will remain aligned with our mission to help our Members attract, recruit, advance, and retain attorneys of color. As in previous years, TCDIP 1L Clerkship employers hire candidates directly and are responsible for their own hiring practices and decisions. TCDIP is not a direct employer of TCDIP 1L Clerks.

We hope your organization will participate in the 2024 TCDIP 1L Clerkship program!

Although it is not without risk in the current climate following the *SFFA* cases, TCDIP believes strongly that now is not the time to retreat from our mission to attract, recruit, advance, and retain attorneys of color. More than ever, TCDIP Member Organizations can work together as a collective to support attorneys of color by continuing to participate in TCDIP programs such as the TCDIP 1L Clerkship. We look forward to our next class of TCDIP 1L Clerks!

Information provided by TCDIP is not legal advice and is not meant to take the place of legal advice.

Employers and corporate partners should consult their own legal counsel in making decisions about whether to participate in the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Program, how to make lawful hiring decisions, and all other legal questions.



How the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Works

TCDIP advertises the program to law schools across the country and encourages 1L students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds to apply. Anyone can apply for the positions and there is no prohibition based on race, ethnicity, or other characteristics. **Be sure to read the FAQ section of this document.**

TCDIP 1L Clerkship jobs are posted to our website. Employers also post summer positions on other platforms. TCDIP will continue to ask law firm employers to register with their corporate partner(s) and indicate how many TCDIP 1L Clerks they intend to hire at the time of registration.

TCDIP 1L Clerkship Timeline

For those who have participated in the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program in previous years, you can expect the same level of support and programming for employers and TCDIP 1L Clerks.

Date	Item	
9/19/2023	TCDIP 1L Clerkship Employer Registration Opens!	Decide if your organization will host a TCDIP 1L Clerk with a partner organization next summer. If your organization is open to hosting multiple TCDIP 1L Clerks, determine how many clerks you can host and who you will partner with.
10/27/2023	Employer registration closes	Use the online form to register your firm or corporate legal department.
10/27/2023 – 11/13/2023	Law firms submit job postings	Law firms should prepare a job description that accurately reflects the TCDIP 1L Clerkship experience at their organization, including the corporate partner. Employers determine what materials to collect from students, such as cover letter, resume, transcript, essay, etc.
11/15/2023	Student applications open	TCDIP will advertise the program to law schools throughout the country. TCDIP sends information about the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program to law school career centers and law student affinity groups. Employers are also welcome to post the position on other platforms.
11/15/2023 – 1/15/2024	1L students apply to TCDIP 1L Clerkship positions	Students apply directly to the law firm. Law firms are responsible for reviewing applications, conducting interviews, and hiring TCDIP 1L Clerks. Law firms and corporate legal departments may collaborate as much as desired during the hiring process.

3/8/2024	TCDIP 1L Clerkship hiring complete; law firms submit information for 2024 TCDIP 1L Clerks!	Employers evaluate applications, conduct interviews, and hire TCDIP 1L Clerks directly. Firms may collaborate with corporate legal departments on hiring as much as each party desires.
Spring 2024	Employer programming, including best practices panel for employers	<p>In the spring, hosts a forum for employers about best practices for successful summer programs.</p> <p>TCDIP collects information about hired TCDIP 1L Clerks and communicates with them directly about summer programming. TCDIP does not collect demographic information from TCDIP 1L Clerks until after they have started employment.</p>
Summer 2024	TCDIP 1L Clerkship programming	<p>Orientation</p> <p>In-person kickoff</p> <p>Professional development</p> <p>Small group coaching sessions</p> <p>Networking opportunities</p> <p>And more!</p>



Frequently Asked Questions

These FAQs are meant to provide general information for TCDIP 1L Clerkship employers and corporate partners about the program. FAQs are not meant to take the place of legal advice. Employers and corporate partners should consult their own legal counsel in making decisions about whether to participate in the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Program, how to make lawful hiring decisions, and all other legal questions.

1. How do the SFFA cases impact the legality of the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Program?

The SFFA cases were concerned with race-based decisions made in the education admissions context, but the implications of the cases are expected to extend to the employment context. However, students have never been, and will not in the future be, discouraged or prohibited from participating in the Program or applying for 1L Clerkship positions based on their race or ethnicity (or any other protected characteristic). As noted above, law firm employers make all hiring decisions related to the 1L Clerks and are encouraged to consult with legal counsel for advice on making such decisions following the SFFA cases.

2. What should TCDIP 1L Clerkship employers do to ensure their hiring practices abide by recent SCOTUS rulings?

TCDIP 1L Clerkship employers should continue to evaluate all applicants along the same metrics and without regard to their race or ethnicity. Employers should also continue to comply with EEOC standards, including not asking applicants about their racial or ethnic background.

3. Are there specific requirements for TCDIP 1L Clerkship candidates?

No. TCDIP markets the program to law schools across the country and advertises that our mission is to attract, recruit, advance, and retain attorneys of color. We encourage students from racial and ethnic backgrounds historically underrepresented in the legal industry to apply. We do not discourage or prohibit applications from any group or based on any protected characteristic, including race or ethnicity.

Law firms are responsible for setting requirements such as GPA, etc. We advise law firms to evaluate all candidates across the same qualitative metrics such as writing skills, work experience, and other substantive information gleaned from the interview process.

4. Should organizations pause or reverse their DEI efforts following this ruling?

The ruling has increased scrutiny of organizations' DEI efforts and energized certain groups that are challenging such efforts. However, based on NALP data, TCDIP strategic planning, and conversations with our Board of Directors and Member Organizations, TCDIP's mission remains critically important. TCDIP and our Members firmly believe that now, more than ever, we must use our collective efforts increase racial diversity within the legal profession. We know from our [Eliminating Barriers](#) study that in order to further the TCDIP mission, employers must continue

to diversify the ranks of attorneys at all levels. We encourage TCDIP Members to publicly commit to continued DEI efforts.

Diversity, equity, inclusion efforts continue to be important core values. U.S. EEOC Chair Charlotte A. Burrows endorsed the continuation of employers' DEI efforts following the SFFA cases, stating as follows:

"Diversity helps companies attract top talent, sparks innovation, improves employee satisfaction, and enables companies to better serve their customers. However, the decision in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard College* and *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina* does not address employer efforts to foster diverse and inclusive workforces or to engage the talents of all qualified workers, regardless of their background. It remains lawful for employers to implement diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility programs that seek to ensure workers of all backgrounds are afforded equal opportunity in the workplace."



Guidelines for Clerks, Law Firms, Corporate Legal Departments, and TCDIP

These guidelines are designed to facilitate a successful and enriching summer for TCDIP 1L Clerks.

Each firm and corporate legal department will adapt these guidelines as needed.

Role of Clerks:

- Participates in all programming and receptions by law firm and corporate partners.
- Actively participates in TCDIP summer programs.
- Commits to providing feedback on summer experience to TCDIP.
- Secures housing and transportation for the summer.

Role of Firm:

- Creates job posting, reviews applications, conducts interviews, and hires TCDIP 1L Clerks. Law firms and corporate legal departments may collaborate as much as desired during the hiring process.
- Coordinates summer schedule with corporate partner.
- Pays TCDIP 1L Clerk's salary for entire summer, including time spent with corporate partner.
- Regularly checks in with 1L Clerk during time at corporate partner and is available to answer questions.
- Provides feedback and evaluation to 1L Clerk.
- Promotes TCDIP summer programming to firm members and 1L Clerk.
- Stays in communication with TCDIP throughout the process from hiring to return offers.

Role of Corporation:

- Identifies internal supervisor for TCDIP 1L Clerk to provide orientation and oversee and distribute work projects.
- Coordinates summer schedule with law firm partner.
- Commits to providing substantive projects for the 1L Clerk.
- Provides feedback on 1L Clerk's performance to law firm partner immediately following the conclusion of their time at the corporation.
- Promotes TCDIP summer programming to law department and 1L Clerk.

Role of Twin Cities Diversity in Practice:

- Promote the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program to law students of color across the country and in the Midwest.
- Develops programming for 1L Clerks and law firm and corporate partners, including the kickoff event, welcome and reception, mentorship program, professional development programming, professional coaching, and Emerging Leaders Group event.
- Collect, analyze, and share aggregate information about each class of TCDIP 1L Clerks.