



Legal Employers Advancing Diversity in Washington

Legal Employers Advancing Diversity in Washington (“LEAD-WA”) Summer 2025 1L Diversity Fellowship Program Description

Legal Employers Advancing Diversity in Washington (“LEAD-WA”) is a Washington non-profit organization established with the goal of increasing the number of traditionally underrepresented, minority and/or diverse lawyers practicing in the Washington legal community. LEAD-WA, through its participating employers (“Employers”), provides summer associate positions to diverse first year law students from Washington’s three law schools in order to provide practical, hands-on legal experience to benefit the Fellows during their search for a second-year summer position. The Fellows will be provided the opportunity to work at either a law firm or in-house legal department where they will be integrated into the Employer’s summer associate/intern program. See Attachment 2 for a current list of participating Employers.

Applicants must be students in good standing at **Gonzaga University School of Law**, **Seattle University School of Law**, or the **University of Washington School of Law**, and have legal authorization to work in the United States.

Application Materials

To apply for a Fellowship position, students must submit application materials through the online application system used by their Career Services office. Applicants must upload each document separately in the correct field and follow the steps required by the law school’s system. Schools will forward completed student application materials to each Employer for consideration. Application materials are due by Deadline #1, except law school transcripts, which must be uploaded by Deadline #2. To be considered, students must submit all required materials by the respective application deadlines.

DEADLINE #1 - Submit the following materials by Thursday, January 9, 2025 at Noon PST:

1. Personal Statement

- a. Content: The personal statement provides Employers with information about you, your personal background, law school journey, and/or aspirations.
 - i. Please begin with one or two short paragraphs describing your interest in the program and stating how your participation in the program will advance diversity in the legal profession in Washington. The remaining content for the personal statement is at your discretion. Suggested topics include your personal background, your professional aspirations, your leadership experience and skills, challenges or disadvantages you have faced (personal/family-related, socioeconomic, or other), your volunteer or professional efforts to further diversity, and why you decided to become an attorney.
- b. Size/Font/Spacing
 - i. The body of the Personal Statement will be 1,000 words or less, single spaced. (Word limit does not include address, signature block, and length certification.)
 - ii. The Personal Statement will use 11-12 point font, Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri.
 - iii. The Personal Statement will include the following statement below the signature block: *“I certify that the body of this Personal Statement is _____ words in length.”* (insert word count for body in the blank).

c. Address Personal Statements to:

LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship Program
c/o Emily Yoshiwara, President
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Columbia Center
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 6100
Seattle, WA 98104-7043

2. Resumé

3. List of 3 References

4. Writing Sample, 3-5 pages in length. This is typically a legal writing assignment which has not been significantly edited by others and reflects your writing abilities in the context of legal analysis. Note: If you submit an excerpt from a legal writing assignment, please include at least two issues and analysis.

5. Writing Sample Cover Sheet, which reflects the relevant facts and issues related to your analysis, especially if you are submitting an excerpted version so that Employers have a reference point in reviewing your writing sample.

6. Unofficial Undergraduate Transcript

7. Location preference: Indicate your interest in being considered for fellowships in Western Washington, Eastern Washington, or both. If you select both, rank them in order of preference. You will not be considered for a fellowship in Eastern Washington if you state that you are only interested in being considered for Western Washington (and vice-versa).

a. **Symlicity users:** Provide this information in the "Location Preference" text field when bidding.

b. **12Twenty users:** Indicate location preference based on how you rank the listed city locations when bidding. (Located at the top of the application submission window.) Drag and drop locations in order of preference into the Ranked Locations box. Only add locations you are willing to consider.

DEADLINE #2 - Submit the following materials by Thursday, January 16, 2025 at Noon PST:

1. An **unofficial law school transcript**. (Upload to your school's online application system.)

Interview and Selection Process

All Employers will review student application materials to determine whom they wish to interview. Students who are selected to interview will be notified by their law school Career Services office and will be required to confirm their commitment to interview within (approximately) 24 hours. While we understand students are considering multiple opportunities, if a student has accepted another offer, or is not committed to accepting a LEAD-WA Fellowship, we ask that they withdraw their application prior to accepting an interview. ***See Program Calendar (Attachment 1) for the timeline.***

Virtual interviews will be coordinated by University of Washington School of Law on Saturday February 15, 2025.
Details TBD.

On average, each student selected to participate in the interview day will be scheduled for 4-6 interviews with different Employers. These interviews will be scheduled for either the morning or the afternoon, but not both.

After interviews are completed, students who participated in the interview day will rank the Employers who interviewed them and will submit those rankings to the LEAD-WA President (who is not affiliated with any LEAD-WA Employer). Students' rankings are kept confidential and are not provided to Employers. Following reference checks, Employers will rank the applicants they interviewed. Student and Employer rankings are then used to match students with Employers for Fellowships. Students will not be eligible to be matched with any Employer they do not rank, and Employers will not be matched with any student they do not rank.

If selected for a Fellowship, students will receive one offer for a summer position. Employers will extend offers to their selected candidates on or about Friday, February 21. Students will have until **Monday, February 24 at NOON** to accept or decline the offer (unless the Employer specifies a longer time period). Students who decline their initial offer will not receive another offer through the LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship Program.

Employers consider several factors in the selection process, including: Personal Statement; employment and other life experiences; diversity; undergraduate academic credentials, experiences and activities; law school academic credentials; demonstrated writing ability; and skills and attributes demonstrated during interviews. Some Employers may conduct a background check or check additional references.

Support for Applicants with Disabilities

It is the policy of the LEAD-WA Board that no qualified person be excluded from participation in the program based on a disability. We welcome disability accommodation requests from students seeking assistance with the application and interview process. It is a student's responsibility to contact the LEAD-WA liaison in their law school career services office well in advance, and we will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodation.

Summer Fellowship Experience

The following guidelines apply for students selected to participate in the LEAD-WA Fellowship Program:

Salary. The student's salary should be equal to salaries of other 1L summer associates working for the Employer. Positions are expected to pay a weekly rate of not less than \$1800 and not more than \$3000.

Timeline. Students are required to be available to work full-time as a LEAD-WA Fellow for a **minimum of 10 weeks** during the summer. We are not able to accommodate requests to split the summer with an employer outside of the LEAD-WA program. The Employer with whom a student is matched will provide direction on a start date.

Employer Requirements During Onboarding

COVID 19 Vaccinations: Some Employers may ask Fellows to be current on vaccinations.

Drug Testing: Some employers may require Fellows to submit to a legally recognized drug test.

Questions/Concerns? Fellows should connect with their career office to discuss **before** the interview date.

Training Opportunities. The student's integration into the Employer's summer program is key to student success. The student's experience should be identical to that of any other summer associate/intern, including opportunities in the social, educational, and professional aspects of the firm or company.

Evaluation Process. Ongoing and timely evaluation of student work product contributes to student success. Periodic evaluations throughout the course of the summer and a more formal end-of-summer review and interview are recommended.

Future Employment Opportunities

The LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship Program allows Employers to extend an offer to the Fellow to return as a 2L summer associate/intern or as a full-time employee following graduation. However, one of the primary purposes of LEAD-WA is to provide students from traditionally underrepresented, minority and/or diverse backgrounds with an opportunity to gain legal experience and learn about the practice of law in a variety of settings. As such, some Employers do not invite their Fellows to return and/or do not extend offers of full-time employment following graduation. This is not a reflection on the Fellows. Fellows, therefore, should not automatically expect such an invitation and should wait for the Employer to initiate such a conversation.

If an Employer decides to invite their Fellow to return for part-time employment during the academic year, as an associate/intern the following summer, or extends an offer of post-graduate employment, that Employer will determine when the offer is made. Offers will not be extended in conjunction with the LEAD-WA program, and LEAD-WA guidelines do not apply to such future employment opportunities.

Attachment 1
LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship Program Calendar 2024-2025

Wednesday, October 23, 2024	Program Description and Timeline available to students and employers.
Wednesday, October 23, 2024 12:30 – 1:20pm	Information session at the UW. Employer representatives and previous Fellows will provide information about the program, the application and selection process, and answer student questions.
Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:30 – 5:30pm	Virtual Information Session hosted by SU. Employer representatives and previous Fellows will provide information about the program, the application and selection process, and answer student questions.
Thursday, October 24, 2024 2:00-3:00pm	Information session at GU. Employer representatives and Fellows will provide information about the program, the application and selection process, and answer student questions.
Friday, November 1, 2024	Application Process Opens
Thursday, January 9, 2025 (Noon PST)	Application Deadline for all application materials except law school transcripts. Students submit application materials using their law school’s online application system. Select session “LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship Program Summer 2025”.
Thursday, January 16, 2025 (Noon PST)	Application Deadline for law school transcripts. Students must submit their unofficial law school transcripts by uploading to the document tab in the system used by their career services office.
Approx. Thursday, January 30, 2025	Students will be notified by their Career Services office that they have been invited to interview. Alternates will also be notified.
Monday, February 3, 2025 Noon	Deadline for students to accept or decline interview offer.
Approx. Friday, February 7, 2025	Students will receive interview schedules from their law school liaisons.
Saturday, February 15, 2025	Interview Day. Virtual Interviews will be coordinated by UW School of Law.
Approx. Friday, February 21, 2025	Employers notify students of selection to be a 2025 LEAD-WA Fellow.
Monday, February 24, 2025 (Noon PST)	Deadline for students to accept/decline the offer of a 2025 LEAD-WA Diversity Fellowship unless otherwise indicated by the Employer.

Attachment 2 Law Firms and Companies Participating in 2025

Bennett, Bigelow & Leedom, P.S.
Carney Badley Spellman, P.S.
Costco Wholesale Corporation*
Expedia Group, Inc.
Gordon, Tilden Thomas Cordell LLP
Howard S. Wright Company*
Karr Tuttle Campbell, P.S.
Lasher, Holzapfel Sperry & Ebberson PLLC
Lee & Hayes, PC (Seattle or Spokane)
Ryan Swanson & Cleveland PLLC
Seattle Children's Hospital
Seyfarth Shaw LLP*
Smith Currie Oles LLP*
Stokes Lawrence, P.S.
Sound Transit
Summit Law Group PLLC
T-Mobile USA, Inc.
Terrell Marshall Law Group PLLC
Zillow Group

Note: Additional employers may join the program prior to or during the application period. Carefully review emails from your school's Career Services office for updates.

***Employers that generally offer a split summer experience:**

Seyfarth Shaw LLP and Costco Wholesale Corporation
Smith Currie Oles and Howard S. Wright Co.