

*Philadelphia Diversity Law Group, Inc.*  
**Committed to Diversity in the Legal Profession**

*Mission Statement*

The Philadelphia Diversity Law Group, Inc. (the "PDLG") is committed to increasing the number of attorneys of diverse backgrounds working at law firms and corporate law departments in the Greater Philadelphia Region. Among other initiatives, we will create programs to enhance recruitment and retention of lawyers of diverse backgrounds by law firms and corporations in the region. We will, in collaboration with area educational institutions, governments, professional associations and businesses, develop initiatives and programs that will support the success of these lawyers and encourage them to come to and practice law in Philadelphia.

PDLG is committed to fostering participation of a more diverse group of lawyers in the Greater Philadelphia Region in order to make our legal profession stronger, more productive and better equipped to address the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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**ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION**

The PDLG Program is open to any first-year law student who has overcome substantial obstacles in pursuing your goal of a legal career or come from a disadvantaged background or one that is underrepresented in the profession. Additional criteria include academic record; leadership; oral and written communication, research, analytical and organizational skills; sensitivity to professional ethical concerns; maturity, judgment, and integrity; commitment to the practice of law, commitment to hard work; demonstrated interest in the type of work practiced by the employers in the program; the ability to instill confidence in others; the ability to diagnose and plan solutions to problems; initiative; professionalism; relevant work experience; extracurricular activities and interests and other indicia of the potential for success. In addition, candidates will demonstrate a genuine interest in establishing a legal career in the Philadelphia area.

Part time, evening and joint degree students are eligible to participate in the PDLG Program, if they: (i) will have completed the equivalent of at least one year of law school but less than two years by May of the year they apply and will graduate two years later; and (ii) have no time obligations that might interfere with a full-time commitment to the summer employer.

The application includes: (i) a completed application form; (ii) a current resume; (iii) student versions of transcripts of undergraduate and first semester law school grades; (iv) two personal recommendations (at least one an academic reference from law school); (v) a brief statement explaining how the student meets the PDLG criteria; (vi) a writing sample from law school; and (vii) such other information as the PDLG requests or is relevant.

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**INITIAL SCREENING**

Certain of the law schools participating in the program review applications and do the initial screening of applicants for the PDLG Program. The law school committee will select a predesignated number of candidates all of whom will be interviewed by the PDLG. The law school will evaluate applicants based on the criteria listed above and based on its familiarity with the applicant and the applicant's work. At these schools, the applications will be submitted to the person designated by the Career Services Office. No applications from those schools should be sent to the PDLG directly by the applicant – they will only be returned to the school.

Some law schools prefer that the initial screening be performed by the PDLG Committee. The PDLG Committee will review the applications from those schools and select those to interview based on the criteria listed above. Those applications will be submitted to the PDLG Summer Program Committee, c/o Lois Kimbol, Esquire, Dechert LLP, CIRA Centre, 2929 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2808.

If your law school is not in this area or does not participate in the PDLG Program and you are interested in applying, please contact Lois Kimbol at [Lois.kimbol@verizon.net](mailto:Lois.kimbol@verizon.net) for more information before preparing your application.

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**PHILADELPHIA DIVERSITY LAW GROUP SUMMER 1L PROGRAM**

The PDLG First-Year Summer Program (the "PDLG Program") offers first-year students an additional route to summer employment in outstanding law firms and corporate law departments. Application through this program will not preclude a student from otherwise seeking or accepting a job at any participating firm or organization or preclude the firm or organization hiring the student outside of the PDLG Program.

The goal of the PDLG Program is to increase the number of lawyers of diverse backgrounds working at Philadelphia area law firms and corporate law departments. Thus, the PDLG Program is designed to identify first year law students who have overcome significant obstacles in pursuing a legal career, come from disadvantaged backgrounds or from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the Philadelphia legal community and who have demonstrated the ability - based on academic achievement, writing ability and other accomplishments - to succeed in the summer programs run by our member organizations. The PDLG hopes this program will enable a group of those students to get summer clerkships in Philadelphia, whether as part of formal summer programs or not, and thus allow them to experience the law firm or corporate law environment in Philadelphia and, perhaps, help them "kick-start" their legal careers.

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The PDLG is committed to increasing the number of attorneys of diverse backgrounds working at law firms and corporate law departments in the Philadelphia area to make our members stronger, more productive, and better equipped to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. We have implemented this program to foster that diversity. We look forward to your participation.

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**PDLG COMMITTEE REVIEWS and DECISIONS**

Representatives of the participating PDLG law firms and legal departments (the "PDLG Committee") will conduct interviews similar to on-campus interviews, although the interviews will be somewhat longer. Those interviews are scheduled to on a Saturday in mid-February. Students will be notified of their selection and of the time and place of the interview by email earlier that week – if application materials are missing, you will be told when they must be received. If you are told by your school committee that you were chosen by it, or if you applied directly to the PDLG, and you have not heard from the PDLG by mid-week, please contact us by email to [Lois.Kimbol@verizon.net](mailto:Lois.Kimbol@verizon.net).

At the conclusion of the day of interviews, the PDLG Committee will select those candidates who, in its judgment, based on the application, interview and any other relevant information, are the most qualified, are most likely to succeed as summer associates, and have a genuine interest in establishing a legal career in Philadelphia. Each selected candidate will then be randomly assigned to an employer for an interview. Of course, no candidate will be assigned to an employer where there would be a conflict of interest.

By the following Monday, you will be notified by PDLG whether you have been selected for an employer interview and given your preliminary employer assignment. However, until you are contacted by the employer, the assignment is only tentative - sometimes PDLG has to change assignments because of unforeseen circumstances. Where changes must be made, they are made as randomly as possible and as soon as possible.

In general, each employer will interview two to three candidates (depending on the number of candidates available) by early March and to hiring at least one. There is no assurance that someone from each law school will be hired and, based simply on the numbers, not all those who are interviewed by employers will be offered jobs.

Employers will schedule interviews within a week after being notified of the candidates assigned to them and will make decisions within a few days of the conclusion of their interviews. Employers understand that students have classes and other academic obligations and need to schedule around them and we ask candidates to understand that interviews can involve as many as five practicing attorneys who also have complicated schedules, making flexibility in scheduling vital on both sides. It is also very important that interviews and decisions be made promptly so as not to disadvantage other applicants who are also waiting for decisions.

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A student who will not be available for an interview during the interview period specified in the application must say so in the application so we can try to make special arrangements - by telephone or video interviews, for example. Otherwise, if a student is not reasonably available for interviewing during that period for reasons other than emergencies, the student may lose the opportunity to be considered during this first round.

The NALP Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities provide that all offers to law students should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made. However, because the continued success of the PDLG Summer 1L Program depends on filling all available slots, and because often there are several students relying on initial offerees to make prompt decisions to accept or decline their offers, we strongly encourage all those students to whom offers are made to respond as soon as possible, preferably within a week of receiving the offer.

Participating PDLG law firms have also agreed that if they make an offer outside the PDLG Program to a student who is matched with another participating PDLG employer for interviewing, the firm will keep the student's offer open until the PDLG process is complete for that student.

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**PDLG SUMMER 1L PROGRAM EVENTS**

All those hired through the PDLG participate in two required programs before work begins. The first is a writing program which will include a seminar (available by audio or video-conference for those too far from Philadelphia to participate in person) in late March combined with one-on-one writing mentoring to be completed before starting work. The second is an orientation session held by the PDLG in early May, after exams end at all participating schools but before summer jobs begin. This orientation program is designed to acquaint the participants with the general expectations of the employers, the nature of the work and the legal environment in which it gets done. It is essential that all students arrange to participate in both programs. Long distance participation is possible in some situations.

The PDLG hosts several other seminars during the summer. All summer clerks who obtained their jobs through the PDLG program are requested to participate unless a job related activity conflicts with the seminar.

In the past, the PDLG orientation session and summer seminars included topics such as key things to know about working at a firm, law firm finance, writing and assignment skills, working for or within a corporate law department, dealing with difficult situations, interviewing techniques (for law firms and other legal jobs) and how to make use of the summer experience in career planning. In addition, there is a session on mentoring and networking - how to find and work with a mentor and how to begin to build a network. This program is held in advance of a networking event that gives PDLG summer program participants and alums the chance to meet lawyers and recruiters in our member firms and law departments.

On the 2L Summer Screening Interviews page, please replace the text with:

Those hired through the PDLG Program may be entitled to choose screening interviews for summer 2L jobs with a set number of law firms that hire through the PDLG Program each year. These interviews would be similar to on campus interviews, and may be held as part of a firm's on campus interviewing, or may be held at the law firm. There are no 2L jobs available just for PDLG students and no PDLG participating firm is required to hire for the 2L summer - the screening interview is merely a way to assure that our students get a chance to meet with the firms and demonstrate what they have accomplished and why they would be valuable 2L summer associates. The firm decisions would be based on an overall review of the candidate's qualifications and the firms hiring plans.

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## **EMPLOYER ACTIONS**

Students selected for summer employment will receive a letter from the employer confirming the selection and the details of employment. The final decisions will not be made by the PDLG - in fact, the PDLG will not have advance information about employment decisions.

Application materials (and other information developed during the review process) for students not offered a job. Each year we have had several positions filled through this process, but it is not required that a student participate.

Application materials for some students not offered jobs with PDLG employers may also be provided to the Montgomery Bar Association Diversity Committee for consideration under its Summer 1L Program for diverse law students. Again this year, participants in that Program will be chosen from PDLG applicants. On the PDLG application form there is an opportunity to choose whether to take advantage of this Montgomery Bar Association opportunity.

If hired by a PDLG organization, PDLG candidates will receive the same salary other first-year summer clerks (if any) are paid by the organization. Salaries and length of summer employment will differ significantly among the firms and organizations. Each participating employer has committed to fully involve any student hired through the PDLG Program in its summer associate/internship program (if it has such a program), provide the student with a mentor (if customary) and provide appropriate and continuing feedback and training. The PDLG representative of the employer or his or her designee will serve as an additional mentor. Historically, PDLG has paired each summer clerk who is not working at a law firm with one of our member law firms so that all clerks will have the opportunity to be involved in at least some law firm summer training and social events.