

GENDER AND LAW

GUIDE TO JOBS

A GUIDE TO FINDING JOBS IN WOMEN'S AND LGBTI RIGHTS **2020-2021**

Getting Started

A career in gender and law can take you in many different directions. Is your passion fighting employment discrimination? Preventing domestic violence? Ending human trafficking and forced labor? Ensuring economic equality for women? Guaranteeing reproductive rights and freedoms? Improving public policy for gay and lesbian families? Do you want to litigate? Testify on the Hill? Negotiate contracts? Mediate disputes?

With all of these options in front of you (not to mention a tight labor market) where should you begin? How do you get an elusive internship when you don't know any lawyers? How do you use your time in law school to be best prepared to get a job in women's or LGBTI rights after law school? Or, how can you pursue your interests in these areas while working full time in another area of law? How can you stand out in a crowded field? The Women and the Law Program has designed this guide to help you get started. Please make an appointment to come and see us — we'd love to hear about your goals, and help you figure out how to reach them!

TAKING CLASSES

The best place to begin is right here, at WCL. The beauty of using your law degree to work in women's rights and LGBTI rights is that gender cuts across all substantive areas of law. What this means is that you can use your electives to explore any area of law that interests you—be it business associations, intellectual property or family law. Public interest lawyers need, above all, to be able to grasp the multiple and sometimes conflicting legal systems, policies and programs that affect their clients' lives. Taking courses such as Administrative Law, as well as skills courses will help you to hit the ground running. There will always be a gender-related angle, if you know how to look!

You chose a law school that offers a rich selection of courses in gender and law. The Women and the Law program distributes a list of gender and law courses each semester and has course advising sessions open to all students. If you want to make a career in women's or LGBTI rights, it is helpful, although by no means required, to take some of the WCL foundational courses, such as Feminist Jurisprudence or Sexuality and the Law, which are offered every other year. These courses serve as overviews, and faculty design them to enable you to apply what you have learned in your other law school classes. Additionally, WCL offers an array of specialized courses in gender and law-related subjects each semester (in addition to live-client clinics, described on

- Feminist Jurisprudence
- Domestic Violence
- · Gender, Health Law & Policy
- Advanced Family Law: Policy
- Women's Legal History
- Reproductive Rights
- Sex-based DiscriminationSexuality & the Law
- · Gender, Inequality & the State
- Advanced Family Law: LGBT Families
- Immigrant Women, Law, & Policy
- Immigration Issues: Family and Employment

- Gender, International
- & Comparative Law
- Gender, Cultural Difference & Human Rights
- · Women's Human Rights (Summer)
- · Women and Conflict
- Gender, Labor & the Global Economy
- · Comparative Family Law
- International Trafficking in Persons
- Advanced Legal Writing: Gender and Law
- · Advanced Human Rights

the right), so you should be able to find a course in your specific areas of interest.

DEMONSTRATE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE AND NETWORK, ALL AT THE SAME TIME

Now that you've enrolled in a few classes, what comes next? Working for an organization dedicated to women's or LGBTI rights requires a particular kind of commitment. Employers want to know that you are passionate about the field, not just looking for any job that comes along. You need to meet people who share your interests (otherwise known as networking) and add to your resume. Fortunately, creating a community and beefing up your credentials go together, and are easy when you are working on something you care about.

Start with the WCL faculty. The Women and the Law Program website lists faculty who research or have experience in gender-related fields. You can also check the "Gender and Law and LGBT Advocacy" curriculum navigator page on the main WCL website. These faculty members may or may not be currently teaching courses in the area, but almost everyone will be happy to meet with you by appointment to discuss your interest in gender and law.

Second, join associations of people who share your interests. Getting involved with student groups, such as **LAMBDA**, **If/When/How** (formerly Law Students for Reproductive Justice) and the **Women's Law Association** is a good first step, especially for first year students. You will join a community of people who share your interests, and who will be your colleagues for years to come. An even better step might be running for office in one of those organizations.

Third, join as a student member of local or national associations:

- National LGBT Bar Association
- · Women's Bar Association of the District of Colombia (WBA)
- · ABA Commission on Women in the Profession
- Law Students for Reproductive Justice (LSRJ)
- Lambda Law Society
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Attorneys of Washington (GAYLAW)
- National Lesbian and Gay Law Association

Now that you have made friends, add to your advocate's resume by thinking strategically about how to use your membership in these groups and other extracurricular activities to show your commitment to your cause. For example, what should you do if you know you want to litigate cases on behalf of gays and lesbians experiencing employment discrimination? You might organize a lunchtime panel on recent developments in genderbased discrimination litigation. Of course, as the panel organizer, you would research plaintiff-side firms (filing those names away for later job searches) and ask your friends or professors for introductions to those lawyers. You would invite them to speak at the school, making sure to always present a professional appearance (just in case one of them might be looking for an intern.) After the event, you would follow up with a professional thank-you note. The following semester, when you are looking for an internship in the field, you can reach out to your new contacts and ask them if they know of any openings, you can put "panel organizer" on your resume, and you can discuss how interested you are in the subject in your cover letter.

DEMONSTRATE YOUR COMMITMENT AND SHOW OFF YOUR WRITING SKILLS, ALL AT THE SAME TIME

Or what about showing your passion for a cause by volunteering? Why not take the WCL's Pro Bono Honors Pledge and use those hours to gain experience working on behalf of low-income women and LGBTI persons? By meeting your hours, you will provide much needed services, gain experience, make valuable contacts, and show that you are committed enough to the cause to use your precious free time to volunteer in the field.

Employers in all legal fields are looking for great writers. One of the best ways to improve your chances of getting a job in a competitive field like women's or LGBTI Rights is to improve your writing skills. Use your time in law school to develop diverse writing samples that show off different forms of writing, such as research memoranda, law review articles, essays, blog posts, know-your-rights handouts, or white papers. Your chances of getting an interview improve even more if your writing samples

reflect an interest in the field. For example, if your goal is to get a job handling domestic violence cases, write your upper level writing requirement paper on an emerging issue in domestic violence law, or volunteer to draft a know-your-rights handout for a local legal aid office, or prepare a summary of a significant case for the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence's website.

Don't forget that seminars are a great place to not only learn substantive law, but also develop great writing samples on subjects that might be relevant to your field. For example, if you want to work in the field of Reproductive Justice, you might want to take a Reproductive Rights or Feminist Jurisprudence seminar. Take advantage of your professor's feedback to craft an excellent sample that showcases both your interest and your skills.

GET REAL EXPERIENCE

Employers who hire entry-level lawyers do not expect you to have litigated a Supreme Court case or drafted a complex contract before graduation. So why does experience matter?

Getting experience while in law school (or what we often call "experiential learning") is important because being a good lawyer is less about memorizing the black letter law (which you will have to look up each time, anyhow) and more about possessing the skill and judgment that comes only with experience. Experiential learning allows you to take the first steps toward developing those skills, while being mentored and supervised by an experienced attorney.

Experiential learning also allows you to try out different kinds of practice. Even if you already think you know what you want to do, you might be surprised to discover that you enjoy litigation, or that you really prefer policy work, or that you are happiest working directly with clients, even though this was not what you had planned on doing. There are many opportunities to incorporate experiential learning into your coursework here at WCL, including the clinical program and off-campus externships. You can also take advantage of clerkships, internships, and volunteer work.

GENDER-RELATED CLINICS AT WCL

WCL has one of the most highly regarded programs in clinical legal education in the nation. WCL offers two clinical programs that are specifically focused on the interaction of gender and law: The Domestic Violence Clinic and the Women and the Law Clinic. For more information about how to apply to the Clinical Program, please visit http://www.wcl.american.edu/clinical/.

GENDER-RELATED EXTERNSHIPS FOR CREDIT

Externships allow you to take full advantage of our location here in Washington, DC. Externships are work placements for academic credit at one of the following kinds of organizations:

- federal, state or local government agencies;
- federal, state, or administrative courts/tribunals;
- not-for-profit organizations; or
- law firms (only if assigned exclusively to pro bono projects)

The great news is that many of these types of organizations work on issues important to women and LGBTI persons. It helps to think broadly about in particular when looking opportunities, organizations that do not specifically hold themselves out as "Women's Rights" or "LGBTI" organizations. For example, perhaps you can locate a housing rights organization working on housing discrimination against transgendered persons. Or, you can find an intellectual property organization working to protect the rights of women artisans. Or, perhaps you can work for a farmworker rights organization concerned about the reproductive harms caused by pesticide exposure.

Because Washington, D.C. is a large, diverse city, you can find externships in a wide range of practice areas. The first step in locating an externship is to visit the Externship program website http://www.wcl.american.edu/externship/. There, you can learn more about the program and search through the online database for organizations that have expressed an interest in hiring WCL externs. You can also attend the Externship Fair, held each October and October, where hundreds of local public interest/public service employers come to search for externs. Finally, you are not limited to the organizations already in the database. Any eligible employer can participate in the program. If you locate an eligible employer who is not on the database list, contact the Externship office, and they can help you to arrange the externship.

INTERNSHIPS AT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

There are also opportunities to work on gender-related issues at government agencies. You can look for opportunities at the local, state or federal level of government. Many states have created Governor's Commissions or Task Forces on Women's Issues, and many of these offices can provide additional resources and contacts to other gender organizations within the state. Additionally, Attorney General's Offices and prosecutors' offices may have divisions focused on policy issues that affect women and LGBTI communities, including housing discrimination, domestic violence, poverty law, and health care.

LAW FIRMS

Don't discount opportunities for gender and LGBTI work at law firms. Plaintiff-side law firms represent plaintiffs on discrimination claims related to gender or LGBTI status. Family law firms may also work with LGBTI clients. In addition, there are public interest law firms that work on political, social and/or economic change and work with traditionally underrepresented groups. Many traditional law firms also engage in pro-bono projects related to LGBTI and women's rights.

Finding that job: Put your best foot forward

Whether you are applying for an internship, a fellowship or a job, use your application materials to present a cohesive narrative about who you are. Be sure to do plenty of research on the organizations you are applying to and use their websites, publications and mission statements to get a full picture of the organization's work. Tailor your cover letters and personal statements to match the goals of the organization and how you would fit in with the culture of the organization. Give yourself plenty of time to craft each tailored cover letter or personal statement and edit, edit, edit! The Women and the Law Program is happy to review your application materials and make suggestions or edits

For applications that ask for recommendations, give a copy of your personal statement or cover letter to your letter writer so that he or she has a good sense of your interests and can include them in their letters. This helps to give your application a cohesive feel and provides an additional opportunity to show why you are a great fit for the organization.

At the end of this guide is a list of organizations that should help you to begin your search, although you should also ask practitioners, faculty, alumni and other contacts for additional recommendations.

LOOK IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

There is no substitute for a good old-fashioned job search for paid and unpaid internships, and jobs after graduation. This includes searching through the websites of organizations that do work you support, talking to anyone and everyone about who they know, what they do and how they got there (don't be shy!) and treating a job search like a "job." Many organizations advertise for interns or externs. There are great options in DC for internships during the school year, but you can also use your summer break to intern at organizations in other cities. In addition to the Externship program database, WCL's CareerLink may contain postings from

local employers. Check out the list at the end of this guide for some ideas. See the box on the next page for a list of online resources.

POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Post-graduate fellowships are excellent ways to gain additional skills and experience and are specifically designed for recent law school graduates. Many of these fund projects specifically focused on gender and law, in areas such as reproductive justice or domestic violence. In most fellowships, you'll have an opportunity to be trained and mentored by professionals and get specific training to build your skill set. The most comprehensive list of postgraduate legal fellowships can be found on PsJD, the online resource for public service careers, at www.psjd.org/ by clicking on the "Postgraduate Fellowships" link. The Women and Law Program has also created a guide which is posted on MyWCL. Most fellowships ask for faculty recommendations, so be sure to start your search early.

WCL Gender and Law Career Planning Resources

WOMEN AND THE LAW PROGRAM OFFICE HOURS

Women and the Law Program staff are available to meet with students to discuss career goals, review resumes or just chat about your plans every Tuesday from 2:00-3:00pm, as well as by appointment. Our offices are located at 4300 Nebraska Ave, NW. Capital Building, Suite #C205B. To make an appointment, email us at womenlaw@wcl.american.edu.

GENDER AND THE PRACTICE OF LAW SERIES

Gender issues touch every area of the practice of law, yet many students feel that if they are interested in using the law to defend and promote women's rights, it must be in an area of law traditionally associated with women, such as domestic violence or family law. However, there are many ways to plan a meaningful career or find pro-bono opportunities advocating for women's rights. Each semester the Women and the Law Program hosts at least one panel featuring WCL alumni and practitioners who share their perspective on a wide variety of practice areas such as Immigration Law, Transactional Law, International Law, Criminal Law, Domestic Violence and Finance. Watch MyWCL for upcoming panels.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES AT WCL

WCL hosts numerous events on gender and law related topics each semester. The Women and the Law Program organizes these events in part so that WCL students have an opportunity to network. Attending is an excellent way

Where do I look for job postings?

- WCL Women and the Law Program Listserv: A weekly listserv with postings for gender and law related jobs, fellowships, internships, calls for papers and networking opportunities). To join, visit the WILP program website and click on "Join our Listserv."
- WCL Externship Database: A database compiled by the WCL Externship Program. It includes listings from organizations who have requested a WCL extern or have sponsored a WCL student through the Externship Program. Login with your AU username and password and filter the search by practice area.
- WCL CareerLink: As OCPD's online database, CareerLink allows WCL student to search and apply for internships. You can narrow your job search by entering key terms such as "Reproductive Health" and "LGBT."
- Association of Women in Development (AWID) Listserv: A weekly listserv featuring postings for jobs and fellowships with a focus on women's rights and international law and development. To join, visit http://www.awid.org/Get-Involved/Jobs.
- **PS-JD**: This is an online resource connecting public interest law job-seekers with job opportunities at all experience levels. WCL subscribes to the service, and all students can create an account free of charge. You can narrow your job search by selected categories such as 'GLBT Issues' and 'Women.' This resource includes both public policy and legal positions. To sign up, visit http://www.psid.org/.
- Idealist.org: This is an online resource to search public interest and human rights related jobs. You can narrow your job search by selected categories such as 'LGBT Issues' and 'Women.' To sign up, visit www.idealist.org.
- IF/When/How Internships and Fellowships Guide: This annually updated guide identifies training and employment opportunities at 75 organizations working for reproductive health, rights, and justice across the United States. Visit http://www.ifwhenhow.org/resources/internship-fellowship-guide/
- Reprohealthlaw Blog: This blog maintained by the International Reproductive and Sexual Health Law Program at the Faculty of Law of the University of Toronto is full of information about current events, and also maintains a list of current jobs in the field of reproductive health, many of which are outside of the United States. To view, visit reprohealthlaw.wordpress.com.
- Organization Websites: Most organizations post job opportunities on their websites. It pays to review these, as they often list specific projects or qualifications that you can address directly in your cover letter. See the list at the end of this Guide for a starting point.

to meet practitioners in the field, ask them about their work, and ask if their office takes interns. Even if you are not looking for a job right now, it doesn't hurt to drop them a nice email telling them that you enjoyed meeting them and asking them to keep you in mind in the future; many students have found internships this way! Just remember to dress appropriately and bring business cards.

OFFICE OF CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAM

The OCPD and Office of Public Interest are here to help you with your career search. They offer workshops throughout the year and are available by appointment to review your resume and cover letters. They can also provide you with login information to job databases available through their office. Let them know your specific career goals so that they can help you tailor your application materials.

Selected Organizations

WOMEN AND PUBLIC POLICY (DOMESTIC US)

- ACLU Women's Rights Project, (New York)
- Alliance for Justice
- American Association of University Women
- California Women's Law Center, (Los Angeles)
- Center for American Progress (Women's Rights Initiative)
- Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, (Hartford)
- DC Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH) DV Housing advocates
- Equal Rights Advocates, (San Francisco)
- Freedom Now
- Institute for Women's Policy Research
- interACT, (Raleigh)
- International Center for Research on Women
- Legal Momentum
- <u>Legal Voice</u>, (Seattle)
- Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)
- National Advocates for Pregnant Women, (New York)
- National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
- National Center for Health Statistics
- National Center for Youth Law, (Oakland)
- National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
- National Partnership for Women & Families
- National Women's Law Center
- Reproductive Health Technologies Project
- Wider Opportunities for Women
- Women's Law Project, (Philadelphia)
- Women's Congressional Policy Institute

HUMAN TRAFFICKING & FORCED LABOR

- Amara Legal Center
- Ayuda
- Boat People SOS
- ECPAT
- Freedom Network USA
- International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
- Polaris Project
- Shared Hope International
- The Rebecca Project for Justice

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ABA Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence
- AEquitas

- Ayuda
- Battered Women's Legal Advocacy Project, (Minneapolis)
- Bread for the City
- Break the Cycle
- DC Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH) DV Housing Advocates
- DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- DC Volunteer Lawyers Project
- DV LEAP
- Futures Without Violence, (San Francisco)
- Hopeworks
- House of Ruth
- Indian Law Resource Center (Safe Women, Strong Nation)
- Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Legal Resource Center on Violence Against Women
- Maryland Legal Aid Society
- Women's Law Center of Maryland
- Mil Mujeres
- My Sister's Place
- National Center for Victims of Crime
- National Coalition against Domestic Violence
- National Network to End Domestic Violence
- Neighborhood Legal Services Program
- Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC)
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance, (Maine)
- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network)
- SAFE (Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment)
- Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI)
- Tahirih Justice Center
- Victim Rights Law Center, (Boston)
- Virginia Legal Aid Society

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE & WOMEN'S HEALTH

- ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project
- Center for Reproductive Rights (New York and DC)
- Catholics for Choice
- Feminist Women's Health Center, (Atlanta)
- Guttmacher Institute
- <u>If/When/How</u> (San Francisco)
- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- National Abortion Federation
- National Advocates for Pregnant Women
- National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
- National Health Law Program (NHeLP)
- National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH) (New York)
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- National Partnership for Women & Families
- National Women's Health Network
- National Women's Law Center
- Pan American Health Organization/WHO
- Physicians for Reproductive Health (New York)
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- Planned Parenthood of Maryland
- Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
- Reproductive Health Technologies Project
- SisterSong, (Atlanta)
- Sister Love, (Atlanta)

- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
- Virginia League for Planned Parenthood
- Women's Refugee Commission

GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS (INTERNATIONAL)

- ABA Rule of Law Initiative
- ActionAid International USA
- American Society of International Law
- Amnesty International USA
- Chemonics (Women Legal Rights Initiative)
- Equality Now, (New York)
- Global Justice Center, (New York)
- Global Rights
- Human Rights Watch, Women's Rights Division (New York)
- ICC Secretariat of the Trust Fund for Victims
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, (DC)
- International Association of Women Judges
- International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- OutRight Action, International, (New York)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights
- MADRE
- <u>Plan International (Center for Development and Population</u> Activities)
- Refugee Law Project, (Uganda)
- Shared Hope International
- The Protection Project, (DC)
- The World Bank Group Women, Business & the Law, (DC)
- U.N. Women, (New York)
- Vital Voices Global Partnership
- Women for Women International
- Women Thrive Alliance
- Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, (The Hague)
- Women's Legal Centre, (South Africa)
- Women's Refugee Commission

GENDER AND IMMIGRATION

- Asian Immigrant Women Advocates, (Oakland)
- Ayuda, Inc.
- Boat People SOS
- CASA of Maryland
- Catholic Charities- Immigration Legal Services
- Catholic Legal Immigration Network
- Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
- **Equality Now**
- HIAS
- Human Rights First
- <u>Immigration Center for Women and Children</u>
- Immigration Equality
- International Organization for Migration
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center (El Paso)
- Migrant Legal Action Program, Inc.
- Mil Mujeres
- Public Counsel Law Center

- Tahirih Justice Center
- US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- Whitman-Walker Health (Legal Program, Immigration)

LGBTI RIGHTS

- ABA Center on Children and the Law
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Center for American Progress (LGBT Project)
- Family Equality Council
- Freedom Now
- Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network
- GLBTQ Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) (Boston)
- Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS)
- Human Rights Campaign
- <u>International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex</u> <u>Association, (Belgium)</u>
- Lambda Legal
- <u>Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (Stop Hate Project)</u>
- Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
- National Center for Lesbian Rights
- National Center for Transgender Equality
- National Coalition for LGBT Health
- National LGBTQ Task Force
- OutRight Action International (New York)
- OUTSERVE (SLDN)
- <u>Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United</u> States (SIECUS)
- SPARK Reproductive Justice Now, (Atlanta)
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project, (New York)
- The Trevor Project
- Transgender Law Center, (Oakland)
- Whitman-Walker Health

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Food and Drug Administration Office of Women's Health
- Maryland Office of the Public Defender Children in Need of Assistance
- US Commission on Civil Rights
- US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights
- <u>US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Women's Health</u>
- <u>US Department of Labor -Women's Bureau</u>
- <u>US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division</u>
- <u>US Department of Justice Office on Violence Against</u> Women

FAMILY LAW

- ABA Center on Children and the Law
- Bread for the City
- Children's Defense Fund
- Children's Law Center
- Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Legal Services Corporation
- Legal Services of Northern Virginia
- Maryland Legal Aid Society
- Neighborhood Legal Services Program

 Tahirih Justice Center Youth Law Center
*There are also numerous small to mid-sized family law firms in the D.C. Metropolitan Area. Check on CareerLink for postings.