

Law School Career Placement Centers Feel The Pain

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Law School Career Centers Adjust in Bad Market

by Petra Pasternak

Law school career services offices are responding to the anemic job market by adding a hire or two, paying more attention to markets outside their home turf, and serving up more tailored advice. The efforts are driven by growing demand from students as well as alumni, career professionals say.

UCLA School of Law, for instance, is reviewing applications for a new alumni counselor position. "We have always counseled alumni in our office, but with the market, we are seeing an increase in demand from alumni as well as students," said Beth Moeller, assistant dean for career services, in an e-mail. At the moment, it is a one-year contract position focusing on one-on-one counseling for everyone from recent graduates to mid-career alumni, plus outreach to potential employers.

UC-Berkeley School of Law is looking to add two career counselors despite a campus hiring freeze, according to a spokeswoman. In a May letter to students and alumni, Dean Christopher Edley Jr. said the school is determined to "assure 100 percent employment of our graduating students, despite the difficult market," and help alumni through "difficult transitions."

Two months ago, University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento promoted Colleen Truden to the new position of assistant director for employer outreach, said Dave James, assistant dean for career development. Truden, who has been with the career center about two years, is now driving to cities like Modesto and Fresno for visits with law firm recruiting partners and administrators and well-placed alumni.