

## PILA Summer 2012 Fellowship Application Instructions

Applications are due in the Public Service Center (SL 249) by **5:00 PM sharp** on Friday, February 10, 2012.

--Applications without 15 collated, stapled copies of Parts III & IV will not be accepted.

--**Your identification number is the last 5 digits of your UVA ID number.**

--Applicants will be notified of their status by Monday, February 27, 2012.

### Application Checklist

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1. READ the Application Instructions and Information.
2. Turn in your complete application, which consists of:
  - A manila envelope labeled with the last 5 digits of your UVA ID number and filled with:
  - **1** paper-clipped packet containing:
    - ONE Identification Form (Part I)
    - ONE Honor Pledge Form (Part II)
    - TWO copies of the Financial Form - OPTIONAL (Part V)
  - **15** collated and stapled packets of your public service and *pro bono* hours (Part III), resume & essays (Part IV).
    - Please make your copies double-sided.
    - Please do not include the application instructions in your packet.
  - **Make sure the last 5 digits of your UVA ID Number are on EVERY page of your entire application in the top, right-hand corner.** Your name should only appear on the Identification Form and the Honor Pledge Form.
    - Double-check that you have removed your name and any information about merit or need-based scholarships for law school from your resume. (You may include scholarships for undergraduate school on your resume.)
3. Sign up for a 15-minute interview when you drop off your application.
  - Your interview will take the entire 15 minutes, so schedule it so you don't have to leave early to get to class.
  - Interviews *cannot* be rescheduled unless there is a true emergency. If you miss your interview you will be disqualified.

**GOOD LUCK!!!**

**Contact PILA Disbursements Director Sarah Johns (*sdj2d*) with questions and concerns.**

## PILA Fellowship Information

The Public Interest Law Association (PILA) is a UVA School of Law student organization that supports and promotes public interest law. Through its Student-Funded Fellowships (SFF) program, PILA awards fellowships to students who will work in volunteer or low-paying public interest positions during the summer. Fellowships are funded through student fundraising efforts; student, faculty, and community donors; the Law School Foundation; the Dean's Office; and the Law & Public Service Program.

### Eligibility

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#### *Eligible Students:*

- 1Ls who have completed at least 15 *pro bono* or public service hours and 2Ls who have completed at least 35 hours from 1L and 2L years combined (see pages 4-5 for definitions and a description of how PILA evaluates hours); AND
- Who agree to the conditions in the Honor Pledge (Application Part II); AND
- Who will work in eligible positions for 400 hours during the summer.
- *Note:* Applicants need not have received a job offer before submitting an application, however, an **offer must be extended and accepted before Friday, April 27 so PILA can disburse funds.**

#### *Eligible Positions:*

- PILA awards fellowships for legal work in government or non-profit public interest organizations. Fellowships are also awarded for public policymaking positions in local, state, or federal government.
- PILA does not award fellowships for employment in for-profit organizations, for positions on political campaigns, for judicial clerkships, or for research positions with professors.

### Selection & Waitlist Information

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The PILA Board will award fellowships based upon assessment of the following elements:

1. Commitment to public service
2. How the position furthers the applicant's career goals
3. Quality and quantity of public service and *pro bono* hours completed beyond the minimum hours (15 for 1Ls, 35 for 2Ls) required for eligibility
  - In the quantitative scoring of hours, *pro bono* hours are weighted as 1.5 public service hours.
4. Financial need

Factors 1 and 2 are evaluated as demonstrated by the applicant's resume, essay, interview, and participation in public service activities.
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Applicants' grade point averages and political affiliations will not be considered. PILA does not discriminate on the basis of age, citizenship, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or status as a veteran. PILA does not endorse any discriminatory practices of organizations for which PILA Student fellowship recipients choose to work during their fellowship summer, but any such practices do not affect the decision to award a grant to a student seeking work with that organization.

The percentage of applicants receiving grants changes each year due to fluctuations in funds and the number of applicants. In the past few years, PILA has been able to fund about half of those who applied. Because deliberations are strictly confidential, PILA is unable to offer any explanation as to why a specific applicant was not offered a fellowship.

**Waitlist:** Applicants who are not offered fellowships are put on a waitlist in ranked order. PILA will let you know if you are in the top 20 on the waitlist. Whether PILA will be able to fund applicants on the waitlist is unpredictable because it depends on other students declining their grants. Most offers to fund students on the waitlist have occurred in the first week of May.

## **The Fellowship Application & Tips for Success**

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### ★ Interview (25%)

Applicants will have a 15-minute interview with 3 members of the PILA Board. The purpose of the interview is to get a greater sense of the applicant's commitment to public service and chosen internship position(s) as well as how the position(s) further the applicant's career goals. The same criteria are assessed in the written application. In deliberations, interviewers will identify and share their evaluations using the blind application number, not the name of the applicant.

*Dress in interviews is casual.*

### ★ The Written Application (75%)

Each member of the PILA Board (15 people) will individually read and score Parts III and IV of each application.

These materials are evaluated on the following criteria (totaling 75%):

1. **Commitment to public service (25%):** *Indicators of commitment to public service can include:*
  - Longstanding commitment to public service generally and/or to particular issues
  - Leadership roles and/or initiative in public interest pursuits
  - Connection to past pursuits and proposed summer position(s)
  - Personal stories or reflections demonstrating your commitment to public interest and/or the particular position(s) you are applying for
  - Character and quality of your *pro bono* hours, public service hours, and other law school activities
  
2. **How the position furthers the applicant's career goals (25%):** *Indicators of how the position(s) further your career can include:*
  - Connections between the summer position(s) you are applying for and your identified career goals
  - Explanation of how the position(s) will help you determine your career goals
  
3. **Pro bono and public service hours (25%):** *How PILA evaluates hours:*
  - 25% of each application is an objective score based on the number of *pro bono* and public service hours completed at the time the application is submitted.
  - In determining the score, *pro bono* hours are weighted more heavily than public service hours. 1 *pro bono* hour equals 1.5 public service hours.
    - *Note:* This weighting in no way affects the minimum hours required for eligibility. Each applicant must have completed the minimum hours (15 for 1Ls, 35 for 2Ls) in actual, unweighted hours by the time the application is submitted.

**TIP:** In writing your essays, do not respond mechanically to these bullet points. They are meant to provide guidance and transparency, not to prescribe a formula. Genuine responses will be more successful.

## ★ Financial Need

### **Use of the financial need score:**

Each applicant has a “merit score” and, if you choose to complete Part V, a “financial need score.” The merit score, as explained above, is composed of a written application (75%) and an interview (25%).

In the first phase of deliberations, fellowships will be awarded to applicants with the highest merit, with no reference to financial score. In the second phase of deliberations, applicants’ ranks are adjusted to reflect financial need. Applicants with high financial need will be boosted somewhat in the rankings. Applicants who did not demonstrate need will not be affirmatively penalized, however their rankings may go down since those with need are boosted. High financial need cannot save an otherwise weak application, but it can boost the chances of an average application.

### **Confidentiality of financial information:**

Once you turn in your application, your financial need form will be separated from the rest of your application. The financial need form contains no identifying information except an identification number. *Only* the PILA President and the Disbursements Director see these blind financial need forms to determine a financial need score. In deliberations, the rest of the PILA Board may see only the financial need score but no other financial information. All information discussed in deliberations is confidential.

## **Definitions of Pro Bono and Public Service Hours**

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**Public Service Hours:** Uncompensated hours during the academic year (including fall, winter, and spring breaks) spent volunteering in non-profit or governmental activities that directly benefit disadvantaged populations, the environment, animals, or the broader community beyond the university, including hours spent doing charitable work through a student organization.

### Examples of Hours That Qualify:

- Tutoring or mentoring disadvantaged populations
- Volunteer work with city agencies or local non-profits other than UVA (e.g. trail maintenance for Charlottesville Parks and Recreation; volunteering at the Humane Society; building for Habitat for Humanity)
- Soliciting donations for a charitable cause or event where a majority of the net proceeds go to charity (e.g. raising money for natural disaster relief or disease research).
- Charitable or educational work through a student organization (e.g., teaching kids through Street Law, election monitoring through LawDems or Law Republicans).
- Organization and coordination of activities that qualify as pro bono or public service hours (e.g. organizing for Alternative Spring Break)

### Examples of Hours That Do NOT Qualify:

- Student organization activities that primarily benefit law students or others in the UVA community (e.g. planning student events, fundraising for an organization’s general fund, attending general meetings, PILA 1L rep responsibilities, etc.).
- Partisan activities (e.g. canvassing for a candidate, fundraising for a political party, lobbying).
- Travel time for public service hours.
- Hours completed during the summer when school is not in session.
- Double-counting hours as public service hours that are already counted on your application as pro bono hours.
- Hours not completed by the time you turn in your application. *However, if you are going on an upcoming Alternative Spring Break trip or have some other activities planned, please note that in the “other law school activities” section.*

*If you are unsure about whether a particular activity qualifies as a public service hour, please contact Sarah Johns (sdj2d), PILA Disbursements Director, or Ashley Matthews (abm6w), PILA President.*

**Pro Bono Hours:** work that qualifies under the Public Service Center’s definition of *pro bono*:

1. Law-related work;
2. Supervised by a licensed attorney or law school faculty member;
3. For a nonprofit organization, government office or agency, or private law firm providing *pro bono* services to under-represented people or groups;
4. Not for academic credit or financial compensation; AND
5. Undertaken during the academic year (includes winter break and spring break projects but not hours worked during the summer break)

*Note:* The Public Service Center (PSC) maintains separate records of students' *pro bono* activities. You must report your *pro bono* hours on this application even if you have already reported your hours to the PSC. You do not need to have submitted a *pro bono* work log to the PSC in order to report your hours on this application.

*If you are unsure whether a particular activity qualifies as a pro bono hour, please contact the Public Service Center.*

### **Amount of Fellowships and Cap on Summer Earnings**

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PILA will award fellowships of up to **\$3,500** for first-year students and up to **\$6,000** for second-year students. You may be required to pay taxes on the award.

The cap on earnings is \$8,000 *before* taxes. First-year students may earn up to an additional \$4,500 (for a total cap of \$8,000) and second-year students may earn up to an additional \$2,000 (for a total cap of \$8,000). Earnings that count toward this cap include payments in the form of salary or stipend from your public interest employer, as well as any outside fellowships or grants awarded for your work. Earnings from a second non-legal job will not be counted against the cap.

Grantees should inform PILA as soon as they become aware they will earn or have earned more than the cap. Any amount exceeding the cap will be deducted from the fellowships, or, if the grantee has already received the fellowship, the grantee will return the excess amount. *Promptly informing PILA of and/or returning any amount exceeding the cap is extremely important as it allows PILA to award the funds to students on the waiting list.*