

Briefs

SALARY STAGNATION ■ FREE ADVICE ■ DIVERSITY DROPS ■ IN MEMORIAM

Associates' Salaries Stagnant; Public, Private Sector Pay Gap Widens

Salaries for associates at law firms were mostly flat for 2009 and 2010, while median salaries fell back in some markets, according to research from the Association for Legal Career Professionals.

Public interest lawyers also saw their salaries remain flat and the divide between private sector and public interest lawyer salaries is as big as ever, NALP said.

“The real story on associate salaries is that they have been largely flat during the recession, and that is actually better news than we might have hoped for,” said NALP executive director James Leipold. “Of more importance is the persistent gap between private sector and public interest lawyer salaries that these two surveys so dramatically document. Even as some private sector associate salaries have fallen back during the recession, this gap has not diminished, and is not likely to diminish in the near future.”

The overall median first-year salary was \$115,000, and ranged from \$72,000 in firms of 2-25 lawyers to \$117,500 in firms of 501-700 lawyers, and \$160,000 in firms of more than 700 lawyers, with the latter figure accounting for 58 percent of reported first-year salaries in firms that size, and also representing the high. The median at firms of 251-500 lawyers remained unchanged at \$125,000, while that at firms of 500-700 lawyers declined by several thousand dollars, reflecting relatively more reporting of salaries of \$110,000, \$115,000 and \$145,000 compared with 2009.

According to the NALP's 2010 Public Sector and Public Interest Attorney



Salary Report, the median entry-level salary for an attorney at a civil legal services organization is \$42,000; an attorney with 11-15 years of experience can expect a salary of about \$62,000. The median entry-level salary for public defenders is about \$45,700; with 11-15 years of experience, the median is about \$76,000. The salary scale for local prosecuting attorneys

is slightly higher, starting at \$50,000 and progressing to \$81,500 for those with 11-15 years of experience. Finally, salaries for attorneys in public interest organizations with issue-driven missions — such as those dealing with women's or environmental issues — start at \$45,000 and rise to about \$71,000 with 11-15 years of experience.

Free Legal Advice Requests Can Be a Burden

Almost two-thirds of attorneys surveyed said friends and family members frequently ask them for free legal advice. While many don't mind helping out, almost one quarter of those polled find the requests to be irritating or burdensome.

“Although most in the legal field take these requests in stride, when someone is approached too often, and by too many people, it can feel like a burden. In these situations, it may be best to make a referral and then move on,” said Charles Volkert, executive director of Robert Half Legal.

The survey of 300 attorneys, conducted by Robert Half Legal, said the lawyers estimated they had given an average of \$5,000 in free legal advice over the last year.

Twenty-four percent said they were asked very frequently for advice by friends and family members; 44 percent said the requests were somewhat frequent and 29 percent said the requests were not very frequent.

Those feeling burdened, irritated or not wanting to get involved with the requests for free legal advice made up 24 percent of the respondents.

Law Firm Diversity Among Associates Shrinks in 2010, National Study Says

The representation of women and minority lawyers in law firms declined between 2009 and 2010, likely a casualty of massive lawyer layoffs during the 2008-2009 recession.

The Association for Legal Career Professionals said that in 2010, the percentage of women and minority partners in law firms across the nation was actually slightly higher than in 2009. But among associates, representation of women and minorities declined slightly.

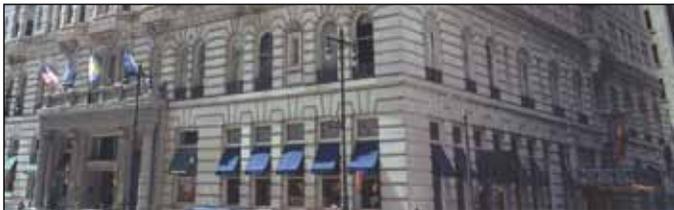
Philadelphia is among the cities at or above average with respect to women. NALP said 19.04 percent of Philadelphia partners are women and 3.97 are minorities. Just 1.39 percent of partners in Philadelphia are minority women. For associates in Philadelphia, 45.79 percent are women and 13.29 percent are minorities, with 7.46 being minority women.

Minorities now make up just 12.40 percent of lawyers at the law firms surveyed, compared with 12.59 percent in 2009. Less than one-third of lawyers at these same firms are women — 32.69 percent in 2010 compared with 32.97 percent in 2009. Minority women now account for just more than 6.20 percent of lawyers at these firms compared with

6.33 percent in 2009.

In the 17 years that NALP has been compiling this information, law firms had made slow progress in increasing the number of women and minorities in the partner and associate ranks. In 2010, that slow trend continued for partners, with minorities accounting for 6.16 percent of partners in the nation's major firms, and women accounting for 19.43 percent of the partners in these firms. In 2009, the figures were 6.05 percent and 19.21 percent, respectively. The change since 1993 has been marginal. At that time minorities accounted for 2.55 percent of partners and women accounted for 12.27 percent of partners. Among associates, the percentage of women had increased from 38.99 percent (1993) to 45.66 percent in 2009, before falling back to 45.41 percent in 2010. Minority percentages had increased from 8.36 percent to 19.67 percent before dropping slightly to 19.53 percent in 2010.

Minority women make up less than 2 percent of the partners in the nation's major law firms. Minority men accounted for just 4.21 percent of partners in 2010. Minorities account for 19.53 percent of associates, down slightly from 2009, and women account for 10.90 percent of associates, down from 11.02 percent from 2009.



Chancellor's Reception Jan. 5 at Hyatt at The Bellevue

All members of the Philadelphia legal community are invited to attend a complimentary reception on Wednesday, Jan. 5 from 5 to 7 p.m. in honor of Rudolph Garcia, 84th Chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

The Chancellor's Reception will be held in the Grand Ballroom at the Hyatt at The Bellevue, Broad and Walnut streets. No reservations are necessary.

This is the event at which even the city's busiest and most successful legal luminaries patiently wait in line to wish their leader and each other good luck in the year ahead.

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For more information about submitting articles, e-mail: tplmag@philabar.org.

IN MEMORIAM

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Peter Platten
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Judge Morton Kruse
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Marvin Comisky
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Nov. 28, 2010, Age 83

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*Have you considered a contribution to the Philadelphia Bar Foundation in memory of a deceased colleague?
For information, call Gene Sirni,
Foundation Executive Director, at 215-238-6334.*