

# Briefs

STAFFING LEVELS ■ RECRUITING ■ JOB SATISFACTION ■ IN MEMORIAM

## Staffing Levels to Rise in Second Quarter, Survey Finds

**M**ore than one-quarter of lawyers interviewed recently said they plan to increase staff levels in the second quarter of 2010, while virtually none anticipated declines, according to The Robert Half Legal Hiring Index.

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents said there would be no change in staffing in the second quarter. The survey was conducted by an independent research firm and is based on telephone interviews with 100 lawyers at law firms with 20 or more employees, and 100 corporate lawyers at companies with 1,000 or more employees. All of the respondents have hiring authority within their organizations.

“Law firms that cut deeply during the downturn are planning to add staff to meet existing client demands and prepare for new business,” said Charles Volkert,

executive director of Robert Half Legal. “Delivering superior quality and service requires having the right people in place. Reputation and competitiveness can suffer when a firm is understaffed.”

Nearly half of those surveyed said that it is challenging to find skilled legal professionals in the United States, despite high unemployment rates. A single job posting for an open position can generate several hundred resumes. “The sheer volume of applicants often makes the process more complicated for hiring managers,” Volkert said. “As a result, some firms and departments are relying more heavily on their professional networks, internal referrals and specialized recruiters to identify the best candidates for open roles.”



## Economy Blamed for Drop in Recruiting, NALP Says

**T**he nation's sputtering economy continues to impact the legal industry, with law firm recruiting levels falling in 2009, according to the National Association for Law Placement.

Across employers of all sizes, the NALP said the median number of offers extended for summer 2010 positions dropped dramatically to only seven in 2009 following a previous drop from 15 in 2007 to 10 in 2008. At the largest firms, firms with more than 700 lawyers firmwide, the median number of offers

dropped from 30 in 2007, to 18.5 in 2008, and to just eight in 2009. Similarly, the percent of callback interviews resulting in offers for summer spots tumbled to 36.4 percent in 2009, after falling to 46.6 percent in 2008 from a figure that had remained close to 60 percent for the three previous years. The offer acceptance rate also jumped to 42.8 percent, the highest rate ever recorded.

NALP survey data from law schools and law firms suggests that between 3,200 and 3,700 law school graduates from the Class

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of 2009 had their starting date deferred.

The data comes from *Perspectives on Fall 2009 Law Student Recruiting*, an annual report published by NALP on selected aspects of fall recruitment activity and the experiences of both legal employers and law schools.

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## **Congratulations to our colleague Herman Fala, recipient of the 2009 Dennis H. Replansky Memorial Award.**

This annual award is presented by the Business Law Section of the Philadelphia Bar Association to a lawyer who exhibits superior legal talent and has made unique contributions to, and significant achievements within, the business law community in the Philadelphia area.

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## Most Lawyers Happy With Job Choice

**M**ore than 75 percent of lawyers who passed the bar in 2000 are satisfied with their decision to become attorneys, according to a new study from the American Bar Foundation and the National Association for Law Placement Foundation.

The study, *After the JD II: Second Results From a National Study of Legal Careers*, shoots down the notion that young lawyers are unhappy in their jobs. The study tracked a national sample of nearly 5,000 young lawyers.

"The second wave of results demonstrates the enormous variety of and increasing fluidity of lawyer careers," said ABF director and Northwestern University professor Robert L. Nelson, a principal investigator on the study. "Among the more striking patterns we see is the departure of law firm associates for positions in business as inside counsel. And although we still see some differences in the job choices of women and minorities compared to other lawyers, we find more convergence in careers across these groups than we would have predicted based on prior research."

"We are keenly interested to see whether these patterns hold up in the next wave of data collection, as these young lawyers reach the time in their careers when they will make partner or be forced to find other employment. We will have an historic opportunity to examine the impact of the recent financial collapse on the careers of young lawyers," said Nelson.

The study confirms that young lawyers are extremely mobile, with more than half of graduates changing practice

settings since passing the bar. Despite data that reveals women and minorities had made enormous progress, the study shows that women are more likely than their male counterparts to be unemployed or work part-time.

The final phase of the study should be completed in 2012 and should provide what the ABF called "unprecedented information on an entire generation of lawyers."

### IN MEMORIAM

Theodore S. Coxé  
Mar. 3, 2010, Age 82

Robert J. Klein  
Feb. 20, 2010, Age 68

Gardner A. Evans  
Feb. 8, 2010, Age 77

Henry F. Miller  
Jan. 1, 2010, Age 71

Jacquelyn M. Gray  
Feb. 11, 2010, Age 31

Jonathan Schmidt  
Feb. 26, 2010, Age 36

Lawrence E. Hirsch  
Dec. 31, 2009, Age 71

Franklin H. Spitzer  
Jan. 1, 2010, Age 71

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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.*