MILLER CANFIELD

Summer Associate Program Q&A

Q: How are individuals selected for the program?

A: Miller Canfield recruits for the summer program on law school campuses. Resumes from law students who do not attend a school where Miller Canfield interviews also are considered. Invitations for in-office interviews are extended after the on-campus process. During in-office interviews the candidate usually meets with five or six lawyers, some individually, and some in a small group setting (usually lunch).

Q: What do you expect Miller Canfield's hiring needs will be for the current year?

A: We expect to hire 8 to 12 summer associates, 6 to 10 of whom will be second year law students. The firm often hires a limited number of first-year law students for the summer program. We choose our summer associates carefully and we try to hire in anticipation of upcoming needs for entry level attorneys. Our objective is to size the program so that summer associates do not feel that they must compete with one another for offers of permanent employment - that's an important part of creating the team atmosphere we seek. We also try to provide a supportive environment in which our summer associates can excel by stressing communication and feedback.

Q: May a summer associate split the summer with another law firm?

A: Miller Canfield considers requests for split summers on a case-by-case basis. Generally, we require a summer associate to be with us for a minimum of eight weeks. First-year students who are invited to return as a second-year student receive special consideration and accommodation for splitting the second summer.

Q: Will I be expected to work with just one practice group or may I accept assignments from a wide range of practice groups?

A: We encourage summer associates to accept assignments from all practice groups, but our program allows flexibility to select assignments, as well. Summer associates also are encouraged to seek out particular assignments from lawyers within the firm as their interests dictate. Our experience is that varying the assignments enables both the summer associate and us to get a more complete picture upon which to comfortably base an employment decision.

Q: What training programs are available to summer associates?

A: Summer associates are invited to attend a wide variety of training programs. Specifically, they may attend a writing seminar, a practice development seminar, informal gatherings with local judges, and various "field trips" to depositions and hearings and other informational events. Summer associates are encouraged to attend Miller Canfield University. MCU, our in-house training program, offers classes in substantive areas like business and litigation and non-legal classes on topics such as understanding financial reports, using technology, and communication skills. Summer associates also are invited to attend all practice group meetings on a regular basis throughout the summer and special activities are planned with selected practice groups to give summer associates additional exposure to members of those groups.

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Summer associates also learn about the administrative, historical, and professional organization of the firm. They are given the opportunity to meet and talk with the firm's Managing Directors; receive training on the firm's word processing system, electronic mail, Westlaw and Lexis and are introduced to the internal structure of the firm. Finally, each lawyer who gives an assignment is directed to discuss it with the summer associate, and to provide a thorough written evaluation of the work to the summer associate with a copy to the Recruiting Administrator.

Q: What social activities can I expect?
A: The summer at Miller Canfield is not all work. In addition to challenging assignments, summer associates have the opportunity to get to know the lawyers in the firm, as well as each other, at frequent social activities. These activities include kick-off and farewell dinners, the International Fireworks Display, a Tigers game, firm receptions, as well as a canoe trip and informal gatherings at principals' homes.

Q: Which of the firm's offices take part in the summer associate program?
A: Although Miller Canfield is an international law firm, the summer program is conducted primarily from the Detroit office, with some participation by the Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, and Troy offices. Requests to work in our other offices are generally honored based upon the needs of the particular office.

Q: Will I have a mentor?
A: Yes. Each summer associate is assigned an associate and principal mentor. Mentors are encouraged to answer questions, trouble-shoot, socialize, and, if requested, review written work product.

Q: What is the compensation?
Compensation for summer associates is $1,950 per week.

Q: How are hiring decisions made?
A: Hiring decisions are made by the Recruiting Committee within a week following the end of the summer program. Members of the recruiting committee have been active in the summer program and have served as principal mentors to summer associates. Offers generally are for employment beginning after the Bar Exam during the following summer. Special consideration is given to summer associates who will begin federal or state Supreme Court clerkships upon graduation. The firm is generally able to leave offers open for federal or state Supreme Court clerks, for most of the duration of the clerkship. Credit for compensation and principal-consideration purposes may also be given for time spent as a federal or state Supreme Court clerk.

Q: To whom should I send inquiries?
A: Michael P. McGee, Hiring Chair
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