

10th Year Career Development Report

Class of 2003

November 2013

In this report, the Career Development Office offers a snapshot of the employment experiences of the Class of 2003 (“the Class”) in their first ten years since graduating YLS.

The data in this report was compiled from multiple sources.¹ First employment information was provided from the Class to CDO nine months after their graduation.² Information about first non-clerkship employment incorporates the results of CDO’s Post-Clerkship Employment Survey sent to all graduates who clerked immediately after graduation.³ Information about the Class five years after graduation is based on responses to CDO’s 5th Year Career Development Survey.⁴ Information about the Class ten years after graduation is based on responses to CDO’s 10th Year Career Development Survey, as well as independent research by CDO.⁵

First Employer Type

Judicial clerkships and law firms were the most popular first employment choices of the Class. Smaller percentages commenced their careers in public interest (4.9%), government (2.4%), academia (1.5%), and business (2.4%). In terms of post-clerkship employment, 78% of the Class worked for law firms in their first non-clerkship position, while 16% worked in the public sector.

| Class of 2003 | First Job After Graduation ⁶ | First Non-Clerkship Job |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Law Firms | 46.8% | 78% |
| Judicial Clerkship | 42% | -- |
| Public Interest | 4.9% | 11% |
| Government | 2.4% | 5% |
| Academia ⁷ | 1.5% | 3% |
| Business | 2.4% | 3% |

Employer Type Progression

In comparing first non-clerkship employment with employment five and ten years after graduation, we see a progression away from law firm practice toward all other sectors of practice.

| Class of 2003 | First Non-Clerkship Job | 5 Years After Graduation | 10 Years After Graduation |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Law Firms | 78% | 55% | 32% |
| Public Interest | 11% | 11% | 13% |
| Government | 5% | 11% | 16% |

¹ Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100%.

² 98% of the Class responded.

³ 81% of the Class is represented.

⁴ 65% of the Class responded, although not every respondent answered every question.

⁵ 56% of the Class responded, although not every respondent answered every question. Through independent research, CDO obtained information about current employment type and geographic location from an additional 37% of the Class.

⁶ This data reflects first job choices (9 months after graduation) for graduates known to be employed and is rounded to the nearest tenth, as per current ABA requirements. For all other percentages in this report, we have rounded to the nearest half or one. For the Class of 2003, an additional 3% of members of the Class pursued an advanced degree immediately after graduation or upon concluding their clerkships; these graduates are not reflected in this chart.

⁷ Academia includes teaching, research, academic fellowships and academic administration.

| | | | |
|----------|----|-----|-----|
| Academia | 3% | 14% | 22% |
| Business | 3% | 4% | 11% |
| Other | -- | 4% | 4% |

Not factoring judicial clerkships, 31% of the respondents to the 10th Year Career Development Survey indicate that they have worked for a public interest organization at some point in the ten years since graduation and 26% report that they have worked for a government employer. With respect to judicial clerkships, CDO's clerkship tracking informs us that 47% percent of the Class has clerked for a judge at some point in the ten years since graduation.

Employer Type Progression and Gender

Ten years after graduation, women and men from the Class are represented in similar numbers in law firm employment and academia. Ten years after graduation, far more men than women are in positions in government (22% vs. 11%) and far more women are in public interest positions (19% vs. 7%).

| Class of 2003 | At Graduation | | 5 Years After Graduation | | 10 Years After Graduation | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Law Firms | 52% | 40% | 52% | 60% | 30% | 31% |
| Judicial Clerkship | 37% | 47% | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Public Interest | 7% | 3% | 16% | 5% | 19% | 7% |
| Academia | 1% | 2% | 14% | 14% | 25% | 27% |
| Government | 2% | 3% | 10% | 14% | 11% | 22% |
| Business | 1% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 12% | 9% |

Employment Locations

Ten years after graduation, less than half as many graduates are in New York as compared to at graduation. Significantly more graduates are in DC and California compared to at graduation.

| Top 3 Employment Locations | At Graduation | 5 Years After Graduation | 10 Years After Graduation |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| New York City | 40% | 21% | 16% |
| Washington, D.C. | 9% | 22% | 22% |
| California (including all cities) | 14% | 14% | 18% |

Job Satisfaction

In the 5th and 10th Year Career Development Surveys, respondents were asked to indicate their overall satisfaction with their current employment. Overall, 76% of 5th Year Survey respondents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their current employment. Ten years after graduation, 88% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. Among those in law firms five years after graduation, 64% were very satisfied or satisfied with their work, compared to 75% in law firms ten years after graduation. Conversely, the percent of respondents in government, academia, and business responding that they are very satisfied with their work drops ten years after graduation compared to five years after graduation.

| Class of 2003 | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Somewhat Satisfied | | Not Satisfied | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years |
| Overall Satisfaction | 46% | 51% | 30% | 37% | 22% | 11% | 2% | 1% |
| Law Firms | 28% | 25% | 36% | 50% | 33% | 20% | 3% | -- |
| Public Interest | 46% | 67% | 40% | 27% | 13% | 7% | -- | -- |
| Government | 93% | 56% | -- | 28% | 7% | 17% | -- | -- |
| Academia | 67% | 61% | 22% | 32% | 11% | 4% | -- | 4% |
| Business | 80% | 75% | 20% | 25% | -- | -- | -- | -- |

Hours Spent Working

Overall, our alumni seem to be working slightly fewer hours ten years after graduation as compared to five years after graduation. While 71% of the Class reported working 2,000 or more hours five years after graduation, only 67% of the Class reported working that many hours ten years after graduation. The most commonly reported range of work hours for both 5th and 10th Year Survey respondents was 2,000-2,500 hours per year (55% and 47% respectively). Interestingly, the field where alumni reported working the longest hours was government, with 31% working over 2,500 hours.

| Class of 2003 | Less than 1,700 hours | | 1,700- 1,999 hours | | 2,000- 2,500 hours | | Over 2,500 hours | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years | 5 years | 10 years |
| Overall | 7% | 7% | 22% | 26% | 54% | 47% | 16% | 20% |
| Law Firms | 4% | 9% | 19% | 24% | 61% | 50% | 16% | 18% |
| Public Interest | 7% | 9% | 36% | 27% | 29% | 36% | 29% | 27% |
| Government | 14% | -- | 21% | 19% | 57% | 50% | 7% | 31% |
| Academia | 9% | 4% | 27% | 28% | 45% | 48% | 18% | 20% |
| Business | 25% | 9% | 25% | 27% | 50% | 46% | -- | 27% |

Annual Salaries

The 5th and 10th Year Surveys provided different salary range options, making comparisons difficult. What we can report is that:

- Five years after graduation, 73% of those in law firms reported salaries over \$150,000; ten years after graduation, 82% of those in law firms earn over \$100,000, with 12% of them earning more than \$400,000.
- Five years after graduation, 50% of respondents in public interest reported earning between \$75,000-149,999; ten years after graduation, 47% of respondents in public interest report earning between \$100,000-250,000.
- Five years after graduation, 50% of those in academia earned between \$75,000-149,999; ten years after graduation, 75% of respondents in academia report earning between \$100,000-250,000.
- Five years after graduation, 40% of those in business reported salaries between \$75,000-149,999; ten years after graduation, 90% of respondents in business earn over \$100,000, with 45% of them earning more than \$400,000.

Pro Bono

Ten years after graduation, far fewer graduates are doing pro bono work than were doing so at five years out (at ten years only 65% are doing any pro bono work while at five years out 82% were doing some pro bono work). The percentage of graduates doing more than 100 hours of pro bono work per year also declined significantly (from 34% down to 15%)

| Class of 2003 | 5 Years After Graduation | 10 Years After Graduation |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| over 100 hours | 34% | 15% |
| 51 - 100 hours | 16% | 15% |
| 26 - 50 hours | 11% | 12% |
| 1 - 25 hours | 21% | 23% |
| 0 hours | 18% | 35% |

Number of Years with Current Employer

Based on 10th Year Survey results, 39% of the Class has been with their current employer for more than five years, 19% between 3-5 years, 34% from 1-3 years and 8% of the Class has been with their current employer for less than one year.

Number of Job Changes since Graduation

Approximately 60% of respondents to the 10th Year Career Development Survey are in their second or third job since graduation (not including judicial clerkships); 23% have had four or more employers and 17% of respondents are still working for their first non-clerkship employer.

Plans to Stay with Current Employer

With regard to how long respondents plan to stay with their current employer, 45% responded that they plan to stay with their current employer for more than five more years. Fourteen percent plan on staying 3-5 more years and 29% plan to stay 1-3 more years. Only 11% plan on leaving within the year.

Retrospective

The 10th Year Survey asked, “When you began law school, in what area(s) did you envision working ten years after you graduated?” Respondents were able to select one or more choices. Thirty-nine percent selected government, 29% selected academia, 27% selected law firm practice and 14% selected business.

Comparing these responses to where graduates actually work ten years after graduation demonstrates that more graduates are in law firms and business and fewer graduates are in public service than what they originally envisioned.

| Class of 2003 | Where will you work 10 years after graduation? (Select as many as apply) | Actual employment 10 years after graduation |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Law Firm | 27% | 32.% |
| Government | 39% | 16%% |
| Public Interest | 33% | 13% |
| Academia | 29% | 22%% |
| Business | 14% | 11% |
| No Idea | 17% | N/A |

Use of CDO Alumni Resources

Thirty-two percent of 10th Year Survey respondents reported using the CDO website to assist with their career search, and 26% reported having sought advice from CDO regarding career issues since graduation.