



# COVER LETTER

## & Other Application Materials

### 2022-2023

- Writing Sample
- Transcript
- Statement of Interest
- References

Office of Career Services  
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## COVER LETTER AND OTHER APPLICATION MATERIALS

This guide is designed to provide drafting and formatting suggestions for the following documents:

- Cover Letter;
- Reference List;
- Writing Sample;
- Transcript/Grade Sheet; and
- Statement of Interest.

The tips and strategies below are general guidelines and suggestions. The counselors in the Office of Career Services are available to provide advice on the content and format of your application materials. Please call 315-443-1941, or stop in to Suite 214, to schedule an appointment.

### **I. COVER LETTER**

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The cover letter plays a critical role in your job search. A cover letter is often viewed as your first writing sample.

Your cover letter should be a concise, well-written business letter that introduces you, highlights your credentials and requests an interview. Three paragraphs are generally sufficient. The following topics should be covered in an effective cover letter:

- Your purpose for writing;
- Your interest in the position/employer;
- Your writing ability and attention to detail;
- Experiences from your resume that are particularly suited to this employer;
- Relevant information that may not be included in your resume; and
- Some evidence that you have done your research on the employer.

### **II. BEFORE YOU GET STARTED**

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Before you begin drafting your cover letter, research the firm or organization.

- Review the firm/organization's website
- Google the firm/organization's name and the name of the person who will receive your letter.
- Confirm the spelling, address and appropriate salutation for the recipient from the firm/organization's website or a phone call
- Contact students and/or alumni who are or have been employed by the firm/organization to learn about their culture and values
- Network with other attorneys in the community who are familiar with the firm/organization
- Refer to the firm/organization's NALP (National Association for Legal Career

Professionals) form, if it is a member ([www.nalpdirectory.com](http://www.nalpdirectory.com))

After you have researched the firm or organization, make a list of your skills, attributes or accomplishments that correspond to the position for which you're applying (consult your resume to remind yourself of these things). For example, if the posting indicates that the employer is seeking a candidate with strong legal research and writing skills, you should include in your list examples of memoranda or motions that you have researched and prepared for other employers or for class if you haven't yet had a legal position.

### **III. SUBSTANCE OF YOUR COVER LETTER**

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There are three sections to a cover letter: first, the introduction; second, the "meat" of the letter, in which you highlight why you are a good candidate; and finally, the conclusion.

#### **Paragraph #1/Introduction**

In this section, you should:

1. State that you are a student at or a recent graduate of Syracuse University College of Law;
2. Indicate your year in law school or your year of graduation;
3. If you are a graduate, include your current bar status;
4. Mention the specific job opening for which you're applying (if there is one) or the general role in which you're interested (if you're not responding to a particular posting);
5. Mention any geographic connection you may have to an employer's location; and
6. If possible, end this paragraph with a succinct sentence explaining why you would be an asset to the employer. You will then demonstrate that assertion in the next paragraph.

#### **Paragraph #2**

This paragraph is the "meat" of the letter and is the most difficult part to write well. You need to address two questions thoroughly but concisely: why them, and why you. The employer wants to know why you are applying for a position with their organization, in particular (as opposed to the law firm down the street, or the public interest organization next door). This is why you absolutely must conduct your research before you start writing. This is also why cover letters need to be tailored to each employer. One common mistake applicants make is to talk about how the position is going to benefit *them*. An employer wants to know how you are going to benefit *the employer*, rather than the other way around.

Some things you could mention in this section include the organization's culture, size, geographic location, nature of the work, dedication to diversity, or some other value that both you and the organization hold.

The next question you need to address in the middle paragraph (why you?) offers an opportunity to market yourself. Discuss the skills and characteristics that you possess that are specifically mentioned in the job posting. Demonstrate the truth of the claims you're making by providing examples.

If the job posting states that research and writing is a major role of the position, mention the amount and type of research and writing experience that you possess, and how you acquired it. As an example, if you are applying for a position with a tax firm or governmental agency that involves tax work, describe any relevant experience you've had that involved tax. Perhaps you have an undergraduate degree in finance or accounting, or you've had an internship or summer associate position with the IRS or another employer focused on tax. Also think about *transferable skills*. For example, if you lack formal experience in the particular practice area (such as tax law), think instead about related skills, such as prior experience as an accountant or financial advisor, or any roles that required attention to detail. These are skills that will transfer to your practice as a tax attorney and deserve mention in your letter.

No specific experience? No problem!

If you are applying for a position for which you lack the specific experience or requirements, focus instead on the general legal skills that many legal employers seek, such as strong research and writing skills, detail orientation, and the ability to analyze and summarize large amounts of information.

General tips:

- Avoid defensive "less than" statements;
- Focus on the positive/maintain an upbeat attitude throughout your letter;
- Use a professional, matter-of-fact tone.

Proofread! Twice. Then have someone you trust proofread it again.

**Remember: it is not about what the position might do for *you*, but what *you* can do for the employer.**

## Conclusion

Your cover letter should close by expressing your strong interest in conversing with them about what you could bring to the position. If the employer is located in another city or state, you could mention that you would be happy to travel there at the employer's convenience (and your expense). You should include your cell number and indicate that you look forward to hearing from them, and thank them for considering your application.

## IV. FORMAT

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The format for a cover letter is the same as for any business letter. The date should be in the upper left hand corner, followed below by the name, title, and address of the person to whom you are writing. The appropriate salutation is "Dear \_\_\_\_\_:". If the job posting does not offer a name of a recipient, research the employer's website to see if the recruiting

coordinator or HR manager is listed, or simply call the employer and ask. Be very straightforward if you call to inquire for the name of the appropriate person: "I'm applying for \_\_\_\_\_ position with your organization and am looking for the name of the person to whom I should address my cover letter." If the individual on the other end of the phone knows the answer, they will tell you. If, however, you still can't find a name, other acceptable salutations include "Sir or Madam:" (not gender neutral), "Dear Hiring Manager:" or "Dear Committee Members:" (if you're applying to a corporation, ed institution, or non-legal organization, they typically use search committees).

## V. COMMON MISTAKES

Below is a list of the most common mistakes made when drafting a cover letter. Use our checklist in the next section to ensure that you avoid these pitfalls.

1. Not researching the employer prior to starting your cover letter.
2. Making conclusory statements without providing support: "I am motivated and a hard worker." (but not giving any examples)
3. Being overconfident: "I'd be perfect for you..."
4. Focusing on what *you'll* get out of the job: "Working for you would give me a great opportunity to get experience." (remember: it's not about YOU)
5. Focusing on the negative/what you don't have: "Even though I do not have a background in..." (say this positively)
6. Structuring your letters chronologically. Relevant strengths should be stated first.
7. Beginning the letter with "My name is..."
8. Beginning each sentence the same way ("I (verb)": Try to vary your sentence structure.
9. Not using a colon after the salutation. A comma is for a friendly letter to a friend!  
It's: "Dear Mr. Smith:"

### SALUTATION/CLOSING NOTES:

Ms./Mr. Full Name, Esq. is the incorrect format.

Judges should be addressed as follows: Honorable Full Name.  
Then, on the line below, put the full name of the Court.

The salutation to a judge is as follows: Dear Judge [Justice\*] Last Name:  
When writing to a judge, close your letter with "Respectfully" instead of "Sincerely."

\* Use Justice for judges that sit on a "Supreme Court" - for example, NY State Supreme Court

## **VI. COVER LETTER CHECKLIST**

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### **GENERAL FORMATTING TIPS:**

- Did you include your name, address, telephone number and email address at the top of the letter? (similar to the format of your resume)
- Is the letter addressed to a specific person?
- Is that person's name spelled correctly? Did you include the correct prefix - Ms. or Mr.? Judge or Justice?
- Is the employer's name spelled correctly?
- Did you use a colon after the salutation?
- Did you state the correct address for the employer?
- Is the letter brief/one page in length? Aim for three paragraphs and no more than four.
- Did you avoid copying language from the sample cover letters in this guide?
- Did you italicize the name of any law journals, books or magazines?
- Did you keep the letter simple, clear and concise?
- Did you check your cover letter for typographical errors? Is your grammar correct?
- Did you sign your letter?

### **PARAGRAPH 1 (INTRODUCTION):**

- Did you state your class year, law school and the kind of job for which you are applying?
- If someone referred you for the position, did you mention that person?
- Did you mention any specific geographic ties to the area?

### **PARAGRAPH 2:**

- Did you start this paragraph with a strong topic sentences setting the stage for what you are going to talk about (/how you are a good fit)
- Did you explain why you are interested in that employer specifically?
- Did you draw on concrete examples from your school and work experience that illustrate your claims?
- Did you add more depth to, rather than simply repeating, what's on your resume?

### **PARAGRAPH 3 (CONCLUSION):**

- Did you state that you would like to discuss the position further?
- Did you thank the reader for their consideration?
- If you are applying to an employer in another city, did you offer to travel to that particular area at their convenience?

**ANITA JOBB**  
123 Jamesville Drive  
Syracuse, New York 13202  
ajobb@syr.edu  
315-555-1234

December 20, 2022

Lillian Moy, Esq.  
Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc.  
55 Colvin Avenue  
Albany, New York 12206

Dear Ms. Moy:

I am a first-year student at Syracuse University College of Law writing to express my strong interest in a summer 2023 internship with the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc. As a native of Albany, I plan to return to the area for the summer.

I am dedicated to pursuing a career in public service. Upon beginning law school, I joined the Syracuse Public Interest Network (SPIN), a student-run organization that encourages and supports students seeking public interest work and community service opportunities. My interest in helping people stems from my previous work at an elder care facility. Through this position, I gained experience organizing functions for the residents to encourage socialization and assisting with the day-to-day operation of a healthcare facility that is subject to many rules and regulations. My desire to work with indigent clients and my legal research and writing skills, make me a good candidate for an internship with your office.

I have enclosed my resume, writing sample and references for your consideration. I look forward to further discussing my qualifications and interest in your organization. I may be reached at the telephone number or email address listed above. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Anita Jobb**

Anita Jobb

Enclosures



**THOMAS L. JOHNSON**  
245 Smith Blvd., Apt. 94  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
(315) 222-4567  
[TJohn5@aol.com](mailto:TJohn5@aol.com)

Format your contact information to match the top of your resume.

There should be two hard spaces between your contact information and the date.

November 30, 2019

Jeffrey Jones, Esq.  
Regional Director  
US Department of Justice, Environmental and Natural Resources Division  
47 K Street  
Washington, DC 11101

Everyone should have a title. Use either "Esq." for attorneys, or "Ms./Mr." for non-attorneys (but do NOT use both "Esq." and "Ms./Mr."). For judges, use "Hon." or "Honorable".

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am a second-year student at Syracuse University College of Law and I am extremely interested in pursuing a career in environmental law. I am writing to you regarding a 2022 summer internship with the Environmental and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Justice.

My decision to concentrate on environmental law stems in part from my previous work experience and undergraduate degree from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. This past summer, I gained valuable exposure to the legal aspects of environmental issues while working as a legislative intern in a New York State Assembly office. My academic and work experiences have given me the opportunity to meet with many environmental law practitioners and professionals. I am knowledgeable about a variety of issues that your office deals with such as air and water quality maintenance, wildlife protection and pollution prevention, among others.

I am confident that my academic performance, strong research and writing skills, and firm commitment to the environment would result in valuable contributions to your organization. I have enclosed a copy of my resume for your review. I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to discuss my interest and qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

Thomas L. Johnson

**3L sample resume and (on next page) cover letter that highlights resume details relevant to the position.**

**J. Dee Siragusa**  
124 College Lane • Syracuse, NY 13210  
(555) 247-9876 • siragusa@syr.edu

**EDUCATION**

**Syracuse University College of Law, Syracuse, NY**

Candidate for J.D., May 2023

**GPA.:** 3.41, Top 19%, 35/193

**Honors:** *Syracuse University Law Review*, Associate Member; Dean's List (All Semesters); Robert F. Koretz Memorial Scholarship recipient

**Miami University, Miami, FL**

B.A. in Political Science, *cum laude*, May 2019

**Minor:** History

**GPA:** 3.61

**Activities:** Volunteer youth baseball coach

**EXPERIENCE**

**Syracuse University College of Law, Syracuse, NY**

**Research Assistant, January 2020 to Present**

Assist with research and writing article on mandatory arbitration clauses in employment contracts. Analyze whether employees with Title VII employment discrimination claims are more or less likely to succeed in an arbitration proceeding, versus having the ability to litigate their claims in court. Conduct research into employee appeals of employment discrimination claims, and the likelihood of success. Perform research into the National Labor Relations Board application, or non-application, of the "clearly repugnant to the Act" standard in their review of arbitration awards.

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, DC**

**Legal Intern, June 2022 to July 2022**

Drafted 10 appellate decisions on behalf of the EEOC, Office of Federal Operations, regarding employment discrimination claims initiated by federal government employees. Reviewed administrative record to determine whether reversible error occurred by dismissing employment discrimination claims. Conducted research regarding Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and reviewed numerous past EEOC decisions to assist in making a final determination on whether the appeal was properly dismissed.

**Utica Corporation Counsel, Utica, NY**

**Legal Extern, August 2020 to May 2022**

Conducted extensive legal research in defense of the City of Utica, NY, and drafted office memoranda regarding worker's compensation law, landlord tenant liability, § 1983 civil rights litigation, and general municipal liability with regards to injuries sustained on municipally owned property. Successfully argued the summary judgment motion on behalf of the City of Utica in the New York Supreme Court, Oneida County.

**State Attorney's Office, Montgomery County, Rockville, MD**

**Legal Intern, May 2020 to August 2020**

Conducted substantial research to assist two Assistant State's Attorneys in their prosecution of gang-related crimes, including aiding-and-abetting law, law related to gang member counter-surveillance of police officers, the admissibility of certain pieces of evidence, and the legality of off-duty police officers carrying their weapons onto school property. Observed trials prosecuted by the Montgomery County State's Attorney, and observed various aspects of trial preparation, including police officer interviews, attorney meetings, and witness preparation.

**INTERESTS**

Golfing, skiing, and traveling.

**J. Dee Siragusa**  
124 College Lane • Syracuse, NY 13210  
(555) 247-9876 • siragusa@yahoo.com

March 1, 2020

Mr. Howard Amee  
Attorney Recruiting Coordinator  
Connors & Fine, LLP  
140 Ruby Street, Suite 100  
Buffalo, NY 14202-4040

Dear Mr. Amee:

I am a third-year law student at the Syracuse University College of Law. I am seeking the opportunity to interview with Connors & Fine for a Labor and Employment Law associate position. As the 2019-2020 Robert F. Koretz Memorial Scholarship recipient, a College of Law scholarship awarded to a third-year law student who has demonstrated an interest in labor relations and employment law, I am committed to pursuing a career as a labor and employment law attorney. I have included my resume and transcript for your review.

I have dedicated my academics, extracurricular activities, and work experiences to furthering my knowledge and understanding of labor and employment law. Working for both a labor law professor at the College of Law, Robert Rabin, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, has provided me with the opportunity to improve upon my legal writing and research skills. The positions have also allowed me to gain significant exposure to areas of law which the Labor and Employment Practice Group routinely deals with—namely, the laws governing employment discrimination and matters brought before the National Labor Relations Board.

In addition, my involvement in *Syracuse Law Review* has strengthened my editing skills and my attention to detail. I have also taken courses related to labor law, and participated in the Syracuse Law NYEx Program, which allowed me to gain further course credit and practical experience through a position at the office of Utica City Corporation Counsel. There, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture to educate the heads of all city departments about employment discrimination and other employment law matters.

I believe my strong academic record, experiences, and enthusiasm towards labor and employment matters make me an excellent candidate. I look forward to speaking with you in the future about my qualifications and interest in Connors & Fine. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

J. Dee Siragusa

J. Dee Siragusa

**Gregory T. Graduate**  
111 Scholar Ave.  
Syracuse, NY 13244  
(315) 123-4567, ggraduate@abcxyz.com

February 17, 2020

Andrew Attorney, Esq.  
Truth & Justice, LLP  
555 Main St.  
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Mr. Attorney:

Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for an associate position at Truth & Justice beginning in June 2020. I am a May 2018 graduate of Syracuse University College of Law and I am currently serving in my second year as a staff attorney for the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Fourth Department. I would like to work in a small firm with an active employment practice and a reputation for litigating significant and complex civil and criminal cases.

I am excited to learn that Truth & Justice is accepting applications to fill associate positions because your firm's practice areas and the profiles of your associates and partners reflect my own interests and experience. Through the Syracuse University College of Law NYEx Program, I sought opportunities to work on diverse issues in a variety of settings. I was an extern at the Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, and was an intern for both the Federal District Court and for a General Counsel at a non-profit organization. My experience as a law clerk for the Appellate Divisions has provided me with the opportunity to continue to improve my legal writing and analytical skills as well as gain significant exposure to areas of the law which your firm practices - administrative, criminal and civil.

I am also interested in working at Truth & Justice because your associates and partners have consistently demonstrated support for civic involvement and participation in bar-related activities. I am currently a member of the Onondaga County Bar Association New Lawyers' Section. I was also active in other community organizations during the five years I was Executive Director of a social service agency prior to attending law school.

My clerkship, work and professional experience have helped me decide how I want to use my law degree. I feel that Truth & Justice is the type of firm in which I would like to practice and that I would bring relevant experience, interests and great enthusiasm. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Gregory T. Graduate

Gregory T. Graduate

## VII. EMAILING YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS

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If the employer states a preference for email or another format besides traditional mail, e.g., fax, follow his or her guidelines. If you are sending your materials electronically, and no file format is specified, you should convert your application materials to PDF to preserve formatting. Document file names should include both your first and last name as well as the type of document (resume, cover letter, writing sample, etc.) to make it easier on the recipient to store and locate these files.

It is recommended that you send a PDF of a **signed** cover letter. Support Services (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) or the Office of Career Services can assist you with this process.

**Email Timing Tip:** Do not send emails on Friday afternoon or on Saturday. They are likely to get lost in the bulk of email received over the weekend, especially if the person doesn't have a chance to respond.

**Tip:** Do not use the "Read Receipt Requested" or the "Delivery Receipt Requested" feature.

### **Sample Email: Sending your Cover Letter and Resume Electronically**

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If you don't have the "saved sent items" feature enabled, always send a "Blind Copy" (Bcc) to yourself in case you need to follow-up.

Always send attachments as PDF files.

To: [RachelRollinson@lawfirm.com](mailto:RachelRollinson@lawfirm.com)  
Bcc: [cjcamron@syr.edu](mailto:cjcamron@syr.edu)  
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2022 11:18 AM  
Subject: Summer Employment Application—Candice Camron  
Attachments: Candice Camron Resume.pdf, Candice Camron Cover Letter.pdf

Dear Ms. Rollinson:

I am a second-year student at Syracuse University College of Law writing to apply for a summer 2022 internship with your firm. I have attached a copy of my cover letter and resume. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Candice Camron

Syracuse University College of Law  
J.D. Candidate, May 2023  
B.A., University of Southern California, May 2019  
(315) 555-1324

You should include basic information to help the reader if he or she needs to come back to your email.

## **VIII. FOLLOW-UP**

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If you have not received a response from an employer after two or three weeks, you may telephone (or email if that is the employer's preferred method of communication) to inquire about:

- the timing of the employer's decision-making;
- the status of your application (including making sure that they received it); and
- whether they need any additional materials.<sup>1</sup>

If the employer is not currently interviewing, you may inquire into the timing for contacting the employer in the future.

A follow-up call or email demonstrates a sincere interest in the employer, suggesting to the employer that they were not just a part of a mass-mailing list. Furthermore, this approach suggests that you are assertive—a desirable trait for attorneys. But remember, it is a delicate balance between persistence and enthusiasm and aggressiveness and over-exuberance.

It is recommended that you keep track of all employers to whom you have sent cover letters and resumes by maintaining a list of names, dates, responses and results of interviews. An Excel spreadsheet is often a good format for tracking employers.

**Follow-up calls and emails are not always desirable or practical for every application; if you are unsure, speak with a counselor in the Office of Career Services.**

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<sup>1</sup> Unless the employer requests "No phone inquiries."

**Sample Email: Follow Up on Application Sent**

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**To:** [RachelRollinson@lawfirm.com](mailto:RachelRollinson@lawfirm.com)  
**Bcc:** [cjcamron@syr.edu](mailto:cjcamron@syr.edu)  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 28, 2022 9:46 AM  
**Subject:** Follow Up: Summer Employment Application—Candace Camron

Dear Ms. Rollinson:

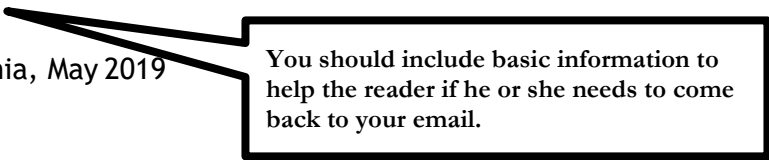
I recently applied for a summer 2022 internship with your firm, and I'm writing to confirm that you received the cover letter and resume I emailed to you on February 15. I remain very interested in the opportunity to work with Law Firm LLC. Please contact me if there are any additional materials I can provide to support my application and candidacy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Candice Camron

Syracuse University College of Law  
J.D. Candidate, May 2023  
B.A., University of Southern California, May 2019  
  
(315) 555-1324



You should include basic information to help the reader if he or she needs to come back to your email.

## IX. REFERENCES

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Employers often want independent verification of a job applicant's abilities. When a prospective employer asks for references, be ready to furnish the names, addresses (mailing and email) and telephone numbers of your references.

Before starting your interviews:

- Gain permission from the employers/professors you intend to use as references (you never want your references to be unaware that you will be relying on them, and you should avoid using a reference that is only willing to give faint praise);
- Your references should include a law professor and/or employers that are familiar with your work. In some cases, a professor from your undergraduate studies who may be familiar with your work is acceptable;
- Relatives, doctors or clergy for whom you have not worked are not appropriate professional references;
- Three references should be sufficient in most situations; and
- References should be listed on a separate sheet using the same masthead used for your resume and cover letter.

**Tip:** If an employer wants references, the employer will ask for them. Do not send them initially and **do not** include "References furnished upon request" on your resume.



## Example: Reference List

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**Stephanie D. Johnson**  
109 Slocum Heights  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
(315) 443-1941 sdjohn@syr.edu

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### References

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Let your references know that you are supplying their names for a particular position.

Your references should be people who personally know you and your work. You should NOT use the person with the most senior title if they are only an acquaintance and have only “heard about your work from others.”

**Mary Cicci, Esq.**  
Cicci, Jefferson, Able and Moskow, LLP  
500 South Salina Street  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
cicci@cjamllaw.com  
(315) 451-1234  
*Supervisor, 2019 Summer Intern Position*

**Professor Samuel Aba**  
Visiting Professor  
University of Arizona  
James E. Rogers College of Law  
Suite 227  
Tucson, AZ 85721  
saba@law.arizona.edu  
(520) 555-1000

It's okay to use a reference that no longer works for your school/previous employer. Use their updated contact information.

*Torts and Constitutional Law Professor*

**Professor Maria Hunt**  
Professor of Philosophy  
University of Maryland  
R. M. Black Hall  
College Park, MD 00963  
mhunt@maryland.edu  
(202) 382-1846

*Professor for three classes, including “The Philosophy of Law”*

## X. WRITING SAMPLE

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Writing samples must consist only of your own writing. Writing samples should not be heavily edited works and should not be from a group project.

You should have a writing sample ready to bring to every interview. The following are a few important things to remember about writing samples:

- Employers appreciate writing samples that are brief. Writing samples should be five to seven pages long, if the employer does not specify a length;
- If your writing sample was prepared in conjunction with a course, make sure that it is reprinted so that the instructor's written comments are not included in the copy you plan to submit to employers. **You can also change the font style - your professor may require one style, but for employment purposes, if you upload your writing sample to Symplicity, please use Times New Roman or Arial font; and**
- If you are using a writing sample developed during employment, you must first obtain your employer's permission to do so. **Be sure that the names of the parties, along with any other identifying information are removed or changed, whichever is appropriate.**

If you are offering only a portion of a document, or if the document's context is not clear, you should begin with a brief introduction (formatted consistently with your resume, cover letter and reference list). You can include the following information (where applicable):

- Whether the sample was submitted for class or during the course of your employment;
- That you received permission from your previous employer to use the writing sample; and
- That, due to the length of the original writing sample, you have omitted certain sections (you can outline the sections that you omitted).

### ***Examples:***

"This is an excerpt from an appellate brief written for a legal communications course; several issues have been omitted in the interest of shortening the sample."

"The following writing sample is being used with permission of the supervising attorney. All identifying names and information have been changed."

## **Example: First page of Writing Sample**

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Suzanne Student  
Writing Sample  
Spring 2022

**This is an excerpt from an Appellate Brief concerning a fictional restrictive covenant written for my Legal Communications and Research II class; several issues have been omitted in the interest of brevity.**

### **PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

On February 4, 2012, the plaintiff-appellant Adam Bronson brought suit against Jackson Michael for the breach of a restrictive covenant and refusal to pay the liquidated damages specified in an employment contract. Both parties moved for summary judgment. Bronson now appeals the Decision, Order and Judgment of the Supreme Court, County of Tyler (the “Order”) granting the defendant’s cross motions for summary judgment and declining to enforce either the restrictive covenant or the liquidated damages provision. This brief is submitted on behalf of Jackson Michael, who asks that the decision of the Supreme Court be affirmed.

### **QUESTIONS PRESENTED**

1. Did the lower court properly determine that a restrictive covenant is unenforceable as a matter of law when a professional who hires an associate and experiences a large increase in his business prohibits his former associate from working for a period of five years at his expensive, newly-constructed home office within thirty miles of the employer’s office to support his wife and disabled son in an area where there is a need for more professionals?
2. Did the lower court properly hold that a liquidated damages clause is unenforceable as a matter of law when a professional attempts to collect \$175,000 in damages after hiring an employee who helped to double his business, and then experiences only a 10% drop in his newly- enlarged revenue when that employee leaves in violation of a restrictive covenant?

## **XI. TRANSCRIPT/GRADE SHEET**

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Transcripts are available electronically from the Registrar's office. Visit their site: <http://registrar.syr.edu/students/transcripts/>

Students may not use their Advising Transcript for applications; this prohibition is clear in the instructions on the document: "For internal purposes only. Not to be released to another party."

### **Transcripts and Symplicity CSM**

Syracuse University College of Law's online system for job and event postings, Symplicity CSM, does not support the official electronic version of your transcript provided by main campus, as it is an encrypted document. Once you have access to your transcript, you will need to print it, scan it as a PDF, and save it as a new document before uploading it to Symplicity CSM. Or, under the Print feature, select "Microsoft Print to PDF" and save as a new PDF.

## **XII. STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

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A few employers will ask for a statement of interest. A statement of interest is not the same as a personal statement that you would use to apply to law school. Think of a statement of interest as a reformatted cover letter in which you don't use the business letter format. A good statement of interest will identify your background, skills, and experience that are relevant to the position for which you are applying. To help you prepare to draft a statement of interest, ask yourself a few questions:

*Why am I interested in this position? What is it about the organization's mission or the duties entailed in the job that are drawing me to the position?*

*What skills, expertise and other qualities are the employer seeking? Which of these skills do I have?*

*What examples can I give to support my assertion that I have those skills?*

### **EXPAND ON YOUR RESUME**

As you draft your statement of interest, keep in mind that the statement will be supplemented by your resume. The statement of interest gives you the opportunity to concentrate on a few of the details from your resume, showing how these experiences directly relate to the position to which you are applying. When discussing your present and/or past education or work experiences, the key is to be specific, but also make it interesting. Be sure you make it clear how the information you are providing demonstrates your ability to handle the job for which you're applying.

- Avoid empty, vague, clichéd adjectives, such as meaningful, important, challenging, invaluable, rewarding, etc.
- Resist using a passive voice and employ as many action verbs as possible.
- Be concise.

### **FORMAT**

Your statement of interest should not be in a letter format. The recommended format for a statement of interest is as follows:

- Type your name, address, telephone number, email and date centered at the top of the page;
- Type "Statement of Interest" then the name of the employer; and
- Start your statement (see example on the next page).

### **REVIEW**

Before sending your statement of interest to an employer, ask the following questions:

*Does my statement read like it was written by someone who is interested in the position specifically, or by someone who is looking for any job?*

*Is the tone of my statement formal and professional?*

*Does the statement clearly demonstrate my skills without overstating my expertise and experience?*

*Does my statement have spelling or grammatical errors?*

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**Statement of**

**Interest**

**Office of the Nassau County District Attorney**

I am interested in the criminal law field, specifically as a criminal prosecutor, because it is the field where people can receive justice for harms they endured. A prosecutor has a special responsibility to advocate for victims and the community. This advocacy can be in oral or written form.

I have prepared for the oral advocacy throughout law school as a member of the Advocacy Honor Society's Trial and Appellate Divisions. So far, I have competed in the 1L Moot Court competition, where I finished as a quarterfinalist in a field of 60 participants, the Grossman Trial Competition, and the Mackenzie Hughes Appellate Advocacy Competition, where I finished as a finalist in a field of 30 teams. I also took Appellate Advocacy and Trial Advocacy courses that focused on criminal law.

Moreover, I have diligent research skills that will support the written form of advocacy. As a reporter for the *Impunity Watch Law Journal* and as a Research Assistant at the Institute of National Security and Counterterrorism, I have conducted a variety of research on legal and policy topics. I have also written legal and policy documents in Appellate Advocacy, Atrocity Law and Policy, and legal writing courses.

Furthermore, I have focused my internships to gain the skills to succeed in the criminal law field. After my first year of law school, I interned at the Cook County State's Attorney Office in their Family Justice Center. Throughout this internship, I collaborated with an associate district attorney on several domestic violence cases. Last summer, I was an intern with the Queens County District Attorney's office, where I worked in a trial bureau. I assisted attorneys in researching issues and writing motions for felony and misdemeanor cases.

Finally, the criminal law field also matches my professional goals. I want to help people who are victims of crime, work in an engaging environment, and provide a service to my community. I specifically want to work in Nassau County because I have friends and family from the county. They have spoken highly about their home community, and I would work hard to ensure their community remains safe. I also grew up in the Chicago Area suburb, so I am comfortable living in a community adjacent to an urban community. For the foregoing reasons, I feel I am a qualified candidate to work with the Nassau County District Attorney's Office.