

## Off the Radar Construction Law Jobs

*Here are some ideas for new lawyers looking for construction-law related jobs.*

By Brian Gaudet

Assuming on-campus interviews for the summer clerkship programs did not yield the job you were looking for, or you are disenchanted with the type of law you are practicing, where do you look for a construction-law related job, other than posting resumes, searching online job postings and hiring a placement service? Here are some ideas.

Based on my years of experience practicing construction law, I find it to be a relatively tight knit community. While we face off against each other in some cases, we might be aligned in assisting co-defendants in other cases. We practice law together and talk to each other. We complain to each other about how busy we are and whether our colleagues know of anyone we can hire to help. There are many needs that simply are not on the public radar screen. So, how do you find these secret construction law jobs? You have to talk to the right people.

### **Conferences and Seminars**

Many organizations host construction-law related conferences and seminars. You will find them at the national, state, and local levels. By way of example, the American Bar Association, Section of Litigation, Construction Litigation Committee, ABA Forum on Construction Law, ABA Tort and Insurance Practice Section (construction defect and surety related content), and many others that have construction related content. There are also private entities that host national conferences. On the state level, many state bar associations have construction law sections. On the city level, many larger cities also have local construction law sections. These organizations typically host conferences and seminars. Pick a conference or two and attend. While you are there, make a concerted effort to meet people and see if they know of anyone looking for help. You have to do that in a way that makes people want to help you, not run from you, and that is beyond the scope of this practice point. Oftentimes, these organizations will provide scholarships or discounts to law students to attend. Look for those.

Look at those people and firms that are speakers and sponsors for these events. You will discover many construction related practitioners and firms that did not participate in on campus interviews. If they have been selected to speak, you can presume that they underwent some qualification process to become a speaker, whether formally or informally. Those who have been selected to speak are likely to have a large network of construction-law related people that they know. These would be sources to talk to about a potential job, and/or whether they know of anyone who is looking to hire. Again, that has to be done in the right way.

While you are there, make every effort to listen to the sessions and learn as much as you can. As a rule, conference organizers try to set up sessions that cover the hot topics everyone is dealing with.

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### **Articles**

Look for those who write and publish construction-related articles and their firms. This is another potential source of finding folks who may be looking for help. You may find that some of those authors would accept help in writing an article, and then you are on your way to establishing a relationship that might help with your job search.

### **Consultants**

While you are looking for a construction law job, do not ignore the value of talking with the many consulting expert firms that specialize in construction-law related issues such as providing schedule and delay analysis, forensic accounting, as well as technical expertise on construction defect issues. They work hand in hand with construction lawyers in representing clients with construction-law related issues. They will have a broad network too. Most importantly, during conferences, they are often in easily accessible areas doing business development talking with others.

Remember... impressions and relationships matter. Be mindful of how you reach out to people. Be respectful of their time. Try to build relationships. Be present. Talk with people. Look for ways to get involved. Be patient. In your quest to become a construction lawyer, it is ok if you first take a job and learn to litigate in another context first. Some folks who need help want people with demonstrated experience. If you do not have any experience, do not despair. Some lawyers prefer to start with someone who is new to the practice and help them grow in the way that they feel is most effective.