THURSDAY CAREERS CHATS

Date of Session: 2/16/12	Title of Session: Legal Career without a Law Degree
Alumni Presenter: Kathleen Martin	Class Year: 2006
Title: Recruiter	Employer: TRAK Legal

Notes from Session:

Background

- Interned in NYC, moved there after graduation
- Worked for corporate sales at a bakery, then sales for a very large insurance company, then shoe company...then the recession hit and she became unemployed
- Decided to move to DC, a friend from Dickinson worked for TRAK and could help her work with a recruiter to find a job in the area, the recruiter asked if she thought of working for TRAK
- She has worked in legal department of TRAK for 2 years now, recruits for support positions, HR, marketing, legal depts., communications.

Types of Opportunities

- Legal secretary (Executive Assistant, Legal Assistant, Secretary): Need computer skills, spend time arranging travel and meetings and making adjustments, have direct interaction with lawyers
- Paralegal
 - -Junior (typically recent college grads): commit for 2 years, spend a lot of time doing research, some busy work
 - -Senior Level (certified): 5-7 years' experience, Junior paralegals may report to this person
- Marketing: business development, emails, letters, communication
- HR: benefits and compensation, management of information, hiring
- Accounting and Billing: billing and collections
- IT: a big component of the legal field (legal databases) need a computer science degree and a high GPA
- **An entry-level position is a great way to test the environment

Structure & Sizes of Firms

- Small (1-25ish), medium (25ish-100), large (100+) based on attorney count
- Titles vary depending on the size of the firm (ie. Paralegal versus Secretary) don't get hung up on the title, instead look at the job description to get idea of position
- There are benefits to working for both large and small firms

Miscellaneous Info.

- Many firms ask for a 2 year commitment: be prepared for this, they do it for training purposes and onboarding
- Law firm experience on your resume is helpful, and the reputation of a law firm can look good
- Internships and/or prior experience with a law firm is valuable and looks good
 - -Reach out to local law firms, introduce yourself, and offer to help.
 - -Submit resume directly to firms: nothing wrong with starting small