

## PLACEMENT REPORT — CLASS OF 1981

For the first time in five years we report a small, albeit significant, decline in the total percentage of employed graduates (down from 96.8% to 94.25%). The causes seem obvious: a sluggish economy and tight restrictions on government hiring. The latter cause was dramatically illustrated in January of 1981 when a half-dozen third year students had the Federal Government withdraw accepted offers, putting these students back into the job market late in the season. The former reason is more difficult to analyze. Some employers indicated that the economy had not reduced legal work, but had, rather, created cash flow problems which prevented them from hiring new personnel. Other analysts also pointed to the continued strong growth of in-house corporate legal staffs as a detriment to large firm hiring. The net effect of corporate growth, however, may not be negative.

Several other factors indicated more difficulty in job hunting. The number of grads who opened their own offices increased from one in

1980 to 13 in 1981 (one is an unusually low number, but the increase is still significant if compared to the average of 4-6 over the last five years). Other students accepted "soft" jobs, such as limited term or contract jobs. More graduates considered that the jobs they did accept are "second-choice."

Fortunately it should be noted that despite these negative trends more than 90% of our graduates continue to report that they are employed within six months of graduation. We also can report that despite a tight market the average salary climbed over 7% to \$21,800, and a new record number of interviewers visited on-campus, 167 compared to 159 last year. The number of interviews conducted in these sessions topped 3500.

In comparing the type of employment selected during the last three years, we find the percentage in private practice at a peak in 1981. The 53% in private practice for 1981 was equalled only once (1975) in the last seven years and is substantially higher

than our average figure (44.75%). At least part of the increase can be attributed to the approximately 5% of the class who opened their own offices. The drastic drop in government jobs is shown here. This year's 5.6% is not only well below our average of 13.1%, but is also the lowest figure we have ever reported.

Geographically the most significant trends are the steadily increasing number of graduates locating in Minnesota (4 in 1979, 9 in 1980 and 12 in 1981) and the sharp increase in those choosing Texas (from 2 in 1979 to 7 last year). While the Class of 1981 went to 21 different states, more than 66% did remain in Wisconsin with an astounding 31.5% remaining in Madison despite decreased hiring by the State. The percentage locating in Milwaukee remains at a steady 11 to 13%. Other out-of-state locations which are popular include: Illinois, particularly Chicago; Washington, DC, although fewer since federal cutbacks; and the New York city area.

### TYPES OF PRACTICE

	1981	1980	1979
Private firms	129	109	102
Self employed	13	1	8
Total	142 (52.6)	110 (47.8)	110 (41.5)
Public service/interest (inc. legal services, public defender, etc.)	15 ( 5.6)	17 ( 7.4)	20 ( 7.5)
Business/corporate	23 ( 8.5)	19 ( 8.2)	25 ( 9.4)
Government	15 ( 5.6)	31 (13.5)	22 ( 8.3)
Prosecutors	10 ( 3.7)	15 ( 6.5)	20 ( 7.5)
Judicial clerkships	27 (10.0)	19 ( 8.3)	28 (10.6)
Military	3 ( 1.1)	n/a	n/a
Academic (inc. faculty, staff, cont. education)	15 ( 5.6)	n/a	n/a

Roughly 40% of all graduates provided optional salary data. All categories reported increases in average salaries except state/local government. The average increase was 7.6%. The lowest salaries for small firm private practices has remained steady in recent years, although more of these firms find that a higher starting salary or early partnership consideration may be necessary for recruitment and retention.

As mentioned in last year's report, dissatisfaction with a "first-

come-first-served" interview sign-up procedure led us to discard it for this year. In its place we instituted a "bid system" which, in effect, auctioned off interview spaces. A few minor complaints or problems surfaced, but most students and employers were well satisfied. Because manual record keeping was a problem some changes for 1982-83 will be made. They are intended to correct book-keeping problems, however, and should not change the theory of the process.

### STARTING SALARIES

	Range	1981 Ave.	1980 Ave.
Private Practice			
Small firms (less than 12)	\$13,000 to \$21,000	\$15,500	\$14,500
Large firms	\$16,000 to \$37,500	\$25,000	\$22,000
Government			
Federal	--- to \$20,700	\$20,700	\$19,000
State/ local	\$12,000 to \$20,600	\$18,600	\$18,600
Business/corporate	\$15,500 to \$34,000	\$21,700	\$19,000
Public Interest/Service	\$13,200 to \$18,600	\$15,800	\$15,500

### ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

The Gargoyle has noted the increased interest of the practicing bar in law office economics. Firms are weighing the merits of competing copiers, considering advanced word processing equipment and sending documents by private mail to help hold down costs. Are you neglecting another substantial cost of doing business, your staff? We offer the following memo as a suggestion to control the spiraling costs of absenteeism.

To: All Personnel

Re: Absenteeism

*It has been brought to the attention of the management that the attendance record of this office is a disgrace to our gracious benefactor, who, at your own request, has given you your jobs with so fine a firm. Such frequent absenteeism makes it*

*necessary for us to revise our policies: The following changes are in effect as of today ...*

*SICKNESS: No Excuse ... We can no longer accept your doctor's statement as proof; if you are able to go to the doctor, you are able to come to work.*

*LEAVE OF ABSENCE: (For an Operation) We no longer allow this practice. We wish to discourage any notions about surgery. We believe as long as you are an employee here you will need all of whatever you have and you should not consider having anything removed. We hired you as you are, and to have anything removed would certainly make you less than we bargained for. Operations already contracted for which cannot be cancelled with-*

*out penalty will, manifestly, require a downward renegotiation of salary.*

*DEATH: (Other Than Your Own) This is no excuse ... there is nothing you can do for the decedent. We are sure that someone else with a lesser position can attend to the arrangements, if any. However, if the funeral can be held in the late afternoon, we will be glad to let you off one hour early, provided that your share of the work is enough ahead to keep the job going in your absence.*

*DEATH: (Your Own) This will be accepted as an excuse, but we must insist upon two weeks' notice, as we feel it is your duty to teach someone else your job.*