

Career Planning Center



Writing Effective Letters

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I. INTRODUCTION

Well-written letters powerfully and positively impact employers' views of your candidacy. The type of letter most frequently associated with a job search is the cover letter (sometimes called "letter of interest" or "letter of intent"), a preliminary or "cover" communication to accompany your application materials. There are, however, other types of letters you may compose such as a thank you letter expressing gratitude for any number of things (see, *Guide to Thank You Correspondence* in the *Career Planning Handbook*). This guide addresses cover letters only. Always give thoughtful consideration as to the actual purpose and audience of a letter before drafting it.

Legal employers tend to rely on cover letters when selecting candidates for interviews because writing and reasoning skills are essential skills for practicing attorneys. Failure to meet expectations for quality, structure and content of letters is likely to impact your candidacy. Using example letters and advice from other industries and general online resources may be to your detriment because of the somewhat unique emphasis placed on cover letters in the legal profession.

II. APPEARANCE

Cover letters need to be professional and meet readers' expectations in terms of content and appearance. This section addresses the standard for appearance for letters sent electronically and in hard copy.

A. Electronic Submissions of Letters.

Most employers request that cover letters be submitted electronically either as email attachments or uploaded into online application systems. As such, the electronic appearance of the letter is important in terms of structure and appearance. A cover letter that is being attached and/or uploaded should be saved as a PDF file prior to uploading/attaching the document. Doing so preserves the intended format. After you save the document as a PDF, you should always open the document and confirm that the font size and style remain as intended, that tabs and bulleted points remain aligned, and that the document retained its single-page status. (Most cover letters should be a single page in length.)

The title of an attached letter needs to be professional and informative. Best practice indicates that you should save a letter using your first and last name and with a term that indicates to the reader the nature of the document. You may also want to include the employer name as a quality check to confirm you are attaching the correct letter for the receiving employer, *e.g.*, Joseph.Pagel.Letter.Foley.pdf.

When an employer requests an application be sent by email, the email itself should not serve as the cover letter. A formal business letter should be drafted as a Word document, saved as a PDF, and attached. Cover letters attached to emails must be drafted using the structure of a formal business letter, including a header, inside address, date field, salutation, and closing. See pages 3-5 and 6-11 of this Guide for detailed discussions of formatting and content of business letters. The email should serve as a concise preamble to the attached documents and should include brief statements as to the purpose of your email, your interest in the employer and the position, and a notice of the documents included. For example:

Dear Atty. Williamson:

I am contacting you to apply for the law clerk opening with Jackson, Benn & Williamson, S.C. I am excited about this opportunity because my long-term goals include focusing on family law, and I understand that 90 percent of the firm's practice is family-law related. Additionally, I grew up in New Berlin, so I know exactly where your firm is located.

You will find attached to this email my résumé and cover letter. If you have any difficulty opening either of the PDF documents, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hills

Marquette University Law School
Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 2022
414.555.3413
michelle.hills@marquette.edu

B. Hard Copy Letters.

It is increasingly rare that you will submit an application in hard copy, but when you do, the documents you prepare must meet the standards for quality. This means that the paper, the envelope and the printer must all be top quality. The paper and envelope should exactly match your résumé. Use white, off-white, or pale gray standard letter paper (8½" x 11") of 25% or greater cotton bond. A high-quality bond will significantly enhance the "feel" and appearance of your printed documents. Your cover letter should be printed using a high-quality printer. A laser printer is available for student use in the Career Planning Center.

C. Font Style, Size and Color

Regardless of a letter being sent in hard copy or electronically, the standard for appearance in terms of font style, size, and color remain the same. The font used for your cover letter should be of a style and size that can be easily read and are considered professional. It is *not* necessary that your cover letter and résumé be of the same style type. Cover letters should be prepared using 12-point or 11-point font, *nothing smaller or larger*. The color of the font throughout the entirety of the document should be black. Black font is required irrespective of the document being submitted electronically or in hard copy. Legal documents remain traditional, so highlighting text with font color is not appropriate.

D. Signing Cover Letters

Electronically submitted letters still require signatures. You have several options to execute an electronic signature:

1. Print the letter, sign it in blue or black ink, and scan it back into an electronic file.
2. Create a signature through the Adobe Acrobat Reader PDF program if you have a compatible version.
3. Create an electronic signature using an app like SignEasy or DocuSign.

4. Use the following to denote an electronic signature: */s/ George W. Webb*

The signature block of a letter does not change in format if you are signing a letter that will be submitted electronically. You still end with a closing followed by three blank lines and then your typed name. Place the signature in the space between the closing and your typed name.

Hard copy letters should always be signed in blue or black ink.

Example signature block:

Sincerely,

/s/ George W. Webb

George W. Webb

E. Spacing

Letters should be single-spaced with double-spacing between paragraphs.

F. Error-free

This should be obvious, but too frequently the Career Planning team finds students submitting letters with errors and/or employers share with the Career Planning team errors they found in student-submitted letters. So, we will say it big and bold: **PROOFREAD YOUR COVER LETTER CAREFULLY**. Any error, no matter how minuscule, sends the message: “I don’t care enough about a possible job with you to be thoughtful, thorough and precise. And by the way, I likely won’t be thoughtful, thorough and precise if you hire me.” If your letter has an error, it is highly likely it will end up in the discard pile during the initial screening of applicants.

Any error, no matter how minuscule, sends the same message: “I don’t care enough about a possible job with you to be thoughtful, thorough and precise.”

Common errors found in cover letters:

- Misspelled proper nouns, including employers’ names, recipients’ names, and names of academic institutions.
- Letters addressed to the wrong employer or contact.
- Errors in formatting, such as absence of inside address and date and use of first names in salutations.

III. STYLE AND FORMAT

Although the letters you draft will differ in purpose, there are components of style and format that are consistent for all job-related correspondence.

A. Writing Style

Cover letters must be written in a style and with a tone that are professional and approachable. Word choice and sentence structure set the tone of the letter. Your letters can at the same time be professional and convey your energy and personality. Be deliberate in your vocabulary choices. *Don't copy language from an example letter*, as it may not prove to be a good fit for you. A sentence reading, "I would like very much to discuss the law clerk position with you," and a sentence reading, "I am excited to meet with you to discuss the law clerk opportunity," are both professional and achieve the same goal. Which style is "right" is contingent on your personality and how you want to present yourself to an employer.

Your letters can at the same time be professional and convey your energy and personality.

Advanced writing skills are essential for a practicing attorney, so you should assume that employers will scrutinize your cover letter carefully and critically while assessing your writing skills and, to an extent, your reasoning ability.

B. Length

Although there are exceptions, ordinarily, your letters *should not exceed one full page consisting of three or four paragraphs*.

C. Sentence and Paragraph Structure

Your cover letter should permit a quick, easy reading. To this end, it is best to keep your sentences short and to the point and to avoid long, rambling paragraphs. The fundamentals of good writing apply to cover letters. Paragraphs need topic sentences that are developed by supporting statements. A topic sentence that reads, "My legal experience, business acumen and work ethic will allow me to achieve in this position..." must follow with sentences that discuss all three points -- legal experience, business acumen and work ethic.

D. Page Margins

Use at least one inch left and right margins for your cover letter. Your top and bottom margins can be a bit smaller, *i.e.*, .7 to .75 inches. Margins should balance the use of white space and text on the document. Don't cram text onto the page by reducing margins. The result will be a document that is cluttered and discourages readers from engaging.

E. Format

Lawyers draft letters a lot in practice, so demonstrating an ability to draft a letter that is formatted accurately is important. When writing cover letters, you have three formatting options: (1) block, (2) modified block, and (3) semi-block. The examples at the end of this guide should be used as a reference for proper letter formatting.

The most common layout of a business letter is known as *block* format. Using this format, the entire letter, apart from your letterhead, is left justified and single spaced except for a double space between paragraphs. *Modified* block is another common format. This format has the body of the letter is left justified and single-spaced, and the date and closing are in alignment starting at center of the page. The final - and least used - style is *semi-block*. It is modified block style except that each paragraph is indented instead of left justified.

The letterhead for your cover letter and résumé should be identical.

Your letter should include the same professional letterhead you use on your résumé. The letterhead for your cover letter and résumé should be identical.

IV. BEFORE WRITING: RESEARCH

Your letter should be *employer-centered and employer-specific*. Accordingly, before you send a letter to any prospective employer you must thoroughly research the employer. The information you gather will be used in your cover letter to make the employer feel as though you are particularly interested in and are very enthusiastic about working for the organization. If you are responding to a posted job opportunity, the posting often provides insight into the employer and what they value in a candidate. Otherwise, there are a variety of potential resources for your basic research, with Internet resources and individuals familiar with the employer being the best. When researching prospective employers, look for information such as practice areas, size and growth pattern, location(s), mission or philosophy statements regarding clients and/or the organization's practice, reputation, history or background, awards, "in the news" items, etc.

A. Internet Resources

Depending on the employer in which you are interested and the type of information you are seeking, potentially there are numerous websites containing valuable information. For a discussion of some of the more useful and prominent online resources for information about legal employers, please see the handout titled *Online Research Resources* included in the *Career Planning Handbook*. Employer web pages also are a tremendous source of information and should be thoroughly explored first when available. There are a variety of other websites that should be visited depending on the type(s) of positions you are targeting. We encourage you to speak with a member of the CPC professional staff to identify the online resources that best fit your job search needs.

B. Human Resources

Individuals familiar with an employer are excellent sources of information, particularly for smaller employers with little or no presence on the Internet. Accordingly, networking and informational meetings often are essential. Good resources may include an MCLS student or alum who works for or has worked for the employer, a fellow student who previously interviewed with the employer, attorneys who handled cases where the employer was involved either as opposing counsel or as a client, and/or a member of the CPC staff. These individuals can be the source of inside information, which is often the best information. Inside information enables you to learn what it's really like to work at an employer and other key information such as the employer's needs

and goals and what the employer is looking for in a candidate.

C. Other Resources

The CPC maintains a collection of “Employer Critique Forms,” which are forms that contain feedback provided by Marquette students over the years based on their experiences with employers. In addition, the CPC’s Resource Library contains myriad directories, books, periodicals and other publications containing employer-related information.

V. CONTENT

Your letter should include (i) your street address, phone number and email address, (ii) the date, (iii) the employer’s name and address, (iv) the salutation, (v) the introduction, (vi) the body, (vii) the concluding paragraph, and (viii) the closing/signature block.

A. Address/Date/Employer Address/Salutation.

1. Your Address. Your address is the first content on the page. We recommend using the same letterhead -- containing your street address, telephone number and email address -- that you use on your résumé. This will give your application materials a clean, professional appearance.
2. Date. The current date, with the month written out, should be placed below your header either flush with the left margin or at the mid-point of the page. The date and closing/signature block must be aligned, both having the same left margin.
3. Employer Address and Salutation. The inside address, located below the current date, must include the name and title of the person to receive the letter, the name of the person’s organization, the street address, city, state and zip code.

You should give thoughtful consideration as to who is the best recipient of your letter. Cover letters should *always be addressed to a specific person* rather than to “Hiring Partner” or “Recruiting Coordinator” or a company’s personnel or human

resources (HR) department. *Never* address your letter “To whom it may concern.” If you are responding to a posted opportunity, always send your application materials to the contact person identified in the posting. If you are not responding to a posted opening, the recruiting contact typically can be identified on the employer’s website or simply by calling and requesting the identity of the recruiting contact. For large law firms, recruiting contacts usually are identified on the employer’s NALP Form, which is available online at <https://www.nalpdirectory.com/>.

Cover letters should *always be addressed to a specific person*. Never address your letter “To whom it may concern.”

The recruiting contact for many legal employers commonly is a non-attorney serving a HR/administrative function (*e.g.*, recruiting coordinator/office manager/personnel director). Since attorneys generally play a significantly greater role in the decision-

making process with regards to hiring, depending on the circumstances, it may be more effective to direct a cover letter to an attorney *in addition to* the recruiting contact, *assuming you have some sort of connection with the attorney*. If you send a letter to multiple individuals with the same employer, professional courtesy requires that you indicate in the letter that you also have contacted a colleague of theirs (who you identify with a cc at the bottom of the letter). Small law firms often don't have a recruiting coordinator, office manager or HR administrator, so likely you will be addressing your letters to attorneys.

When sending a letter as part of a proactive job search where you have identified an employer that *does not have a known or advertised position*, you should select a lawyer who is a likely decision maker and/or who has experience practicing in the area of law you hope to pursue.

Salutations ALWAYS should include "Dear" and the recipient's title (e.g., Mr./Ms./Attorney) and last name. First names should NOT be included in salutations.

Salutations ALWAYS should include "Dear" and the recipient's title (e.g., Mr./Ms./Attorney) and last name, e.g., "Dear Ms. Jones." First names should NOT be included in salutations.

B. Introduction/First Paragraph.

The introduction should be brief and should clearly accomplish two objectives: 1) grab the reader's attention thereby enticing him/her to read the rest of the letter; and 2) provide basic logistical information including who you are and what you want.

1. Grab the Reader's Attention. Whenever possible, the opening line should identify a contact/mutual acquaintance and/or articulate a connection with the reader or a specific interest in the person or employer.
 - a. *The name of a contact/mutual acquaintance*. The most powerful and effective opening line comes in the form of "name dropping." Assuming the reader (i) knows the person you identify, and (ii) respects that person, the reference alone might generate an offer to interview, if only as a favor to the person named. Below are two examples of opening lines that employ "name dropping."
 - Suzanne Howe, general counsel of XYZ Manufacturing, a client of your firm, suggested that I write to you. Ms. Howe identified you as a source of information for me as I research law firms in the area with outstanding labor and employment practices.
 - Attorney Jack Taylor recommended that I contact you regarding my interest in securing a summer associate position with Reynolds & Paulsen.
 - b. *A connection with the reader or a specific interest in the person or employer*. If you have no names to drop, the next best thing is to identify a connection or a specific interest in the person or employer.

- I enjoyed reading your profile in the October issue of the *Chicago Lawyer* in which you described how your firm is actively involved in patent litigation in connection with technological advances in the automotive industry.
 - I am interested in working for Havens, Richard & Wilkie in part because of the firm's strong international trade practice. It is my intent to practice in the international trade area, and I have carefully geared my course of study and job experiences towards this goal.
2. Who you are and what you want. In the introductory paragraph, you need to tell the reader who you are and why you are writing him/her. How you define yourself in this regard will vary according to your audience. The following are examples of opening paragraphs (the language that addresses who the writer is and what s/he is seeking from the reader is in italics).
- I was excited to learn that ABC Insurance is again hiring summer law clerks. I understand from comments made by previous law clerks that your company provides diverse and interesting work opportunities. *In addition to being a first-year law student, I am a licensed insurance agent in the state of Wisconsin, and I am enthusiastic about the chance to work with your legal team. I welcome an invitation to meet with you to discuss my qualifications for and interest in this position.*
 - Professor Jackson Woodley and Attorney Elizabeth Peters, who I understand are professional acquaintances of yours, recommended I contact you. Both are aware of my intent to practice elder law and on separate occasions identified Reed, Irving & Krueger as a firm with an outstanding elder law practice. *As a May graduate of Marquette Law School, I am actively searching for an associate position which would give me the opportunity to practice in this field. I am aware that you have not advertised a need for a new associate; however, I appreciate your consideration of the enclosed résumé, and I value meeting with you at this time to learn more about your firm's practice.*
 - I am enthusiastic about the prospect of joining Zimmerman & Dorney as a law clerk for several reasons, including the opportunity the firm offers its clerk to work on diverse legal issues. I am motivated to learn new areas of the law and am very interested in assisting your attorneys on issues involving child custody disputes, personal injury claims and trust and estates. *I am a second-year law student at Marquette University, and I would like to meet with you to discuss my interest in the position currently available.*
 - I am interested in meeting with you to discuss the associate position available with your firm. *I am active in my job search as a third-year law student, so I am familiar with many area law firms. I find Stone, Alliotto & Graf's stated approach to practice refreshing. I like Stone's focus on fundamental skills including writing, researching, negotiating and creative problem solving and feel that my practical experiences and coursework position me to serve your*

clients well. I welcome the chance to talk with you.

C. Body/Second Paragraph.

1. Objective. The primary objective of the body of the second paragraph is to convince the reader s/he needs to meet you by stressing “fit.” To accomplish this, your cover letter should reflect your knowledge of the employer and highlight why you are a good match for the job in terms of your skills and experiences. Accordingly, you should identify specific skills (or qualities) transferable to the work you will be expected to perform, and experience that is relevant and/or demonstrates that you possess the skills you identify. In addition, you should explain why/how your specific skills and experiences will directly benefit the employer.
2. Be Employer-Centered. The letter should be tailored to the employer and to the specific position, showing that you understand the position and that you have researched the employer. If many of your sentences start with “I,” chances are your letter is “candidate-centered” rather than “employer-centered.”

Focus your discussion of your skills and interests as much as possible on the employer -- its work, location, size, reputation, *etc.* If you are responding to a job posting, the framework for the second paragraph should come from the posting. For example, if you are responding to a posted opportunity for which the employer is seeking someone to assist in general litigation and who has strong research and writing skills, the letter should be drafted accordingly.

The letter should be tailored to the employer and to the specific position, showing that you understand the position and that you have researched the employer.

Many employers, particularly government and public interest organizations, are mission driven and prefer cover letters that discuss the applicant’s commitment to the constituencies and/or issues it represents.

The better you can demonstrate that you researched the employer, the better you will be able to express enthusiasm and conviction in your letter about your interest in and specific qualifications for the job. The following are examples of employer-centered second paragraphs. The first two examples are developed from a job posting where the employer makes clear the qualifications they are seeking.

- I appreciate that Waak, Brown & Brixius values hiring a law student with exceptional research and writing skills and solid academic credentials. My academic performance and my research and writing skills position me well to meet and exceed the firm’s expectations. The strength of my legal skills is demonstrated in part by the fact that I was hired as a research assistant for my real estate professor and that I earned honors grades in both of my legal writing courses. As a student intern at the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, I have been able to further develop practical skills through researching and analyzing a wide variety of legal issues.

Finally, my academic performance places me well within your expectations of the top half of my class as I am currently ranked in the top third. I truly look forward to the opportunity to use the skills and experiences I have acquired to the benefit of your attorneys and clients.

- I understand that Jones & Arnett values hiring a law clerk with strong writing skills and who is self-motivated. My prior experiences evidence my strengths in these areas. As a first-year law clerk with a local company, I researched and prepared legal memoranda on a number of issues, which developed my writing skills well beyond those acquired in legal research and writing courses. Moreover, having worked professionally for small companies before law school, I appreciate how each person plays a vital role to the organization and that self-motivation is very important. For example, as a quality auditor for Custom Millwork in Ohio, I worked away from the corporate office and was responsible for setting my own goals, planning my own schedules, and making independent decisions to benefit the company and its clients. I look forward to applying my motivation and writing skills to the work of your law firm.
 - Having spent two semesters as a legal intern in the Milwaukee Trial Division, I am well aware of the qualities necessary to succeed and be effective as an attorney with the State Public Defender's Office. As such, my work experience and legal studies position me to make a seamless transition from legal intern to assistant state public defender. Practicing under the Wisconsin Student Practice Rule, I manage misdemeanor and felony cases, and I regularly appear on behalf of clients in proceedings ranging from intake court to sentencings. Because of the work I have already done on behalf of the Public Defender's Office, I am prepared to immediately take responsibility on cases and managing files. My experiences with Legal Aid Society and Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic also served to develop my practical lawyering skills, including my ability to work well with diverse clients. Finally, my course of study, which includes criminal law and procedure, criminal investigations and trial advocacy, complements the work of the office. I am excited to bring to an attorney position with the Public Defender's Office my knowledge of and enthusiasm for the criminal system and your Office's role in it.
3. Avoid Repeating Your Résumé. Rather than rehashing your résumé, expand on it. Highlight your strengths and point out relevant experiences. Choose a few points about yourself that you know to be of most value to the employer based on your research, then include them in the letter with examples from your background that support these points. Try to communicate intangibles that your résumé does not include – such as leadership, organizational, or advocacy abilities – that would be specifically useful to the position.
 4. Stick to the Facts. Cover letters should contain “hard” detailed data about you, not “soft” abstract information. Avoid boilerplate language or sweeping conclusions without specific examples to back up your statements.

STRONG: My employment history and academic experiences indicate that my writing and research skills compare favorably to your firm's expectations. My skills are

evidenced by my recent employment as an academic support leader for a legal writing and research professor and also by my prior experience as an intern to Justice Bradley of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. As an intern, I wrote numerous bench memoranda and assisted in drafting opinions, including an opinion on the economic loss doctrine, which was argued successfully by a member of your appellate advocacy practice.

WEAK: The enclosed résumé reflects my commitment to numerous activities and organizations and demonstrates my strong work ethic and ability to organize and manage time efficiently and effectively.

D. Conclusion/Last Paragraph.

The objectives of the last paragraph are to be gracious and to clearly identify the next step for you and for the reader. For example, if you are applying to an employer outside Milwaukee and you will be visiting in the near future the area where the employer is located, indicate when you would be available for an interview. It is also a good idea to note your willingness to meet with the employer, regardless of location, on a date and at a time convenient for them. For out-of-state employers, consider a statement of your willingness to travel for an interview at your own expense if the employer is located a significant distance from Milwaukee. In addition, indicate whether you plan to follow up. When sending cold (proactive) letters, you should state that you plan to follow the letter with a phone call, *e.g.*, “I will call within the next two weeks to set up a time to meet.” Below are several examples of a closing paragraph.

- If I have not already heard from you, I will call the week of September 9th to confirm that you received this letter and to determine whether you would like to schedule an appointment for us to meet. Please feel free to contact me at the above-listed information. Thank you for your consideration of my application.
- I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my sincere interest in working for your firm. If I do not hear from you within the next two weeks, I will contact you to determine your interest in meeting with me.
- I want to reiterate my genuine excitement for the summer position with the Madison City Attorney’s Office. The requested documents are included with this letter.

E. Closing and Signature.

Your signature block should be aligned with the date, *e.g.*, if your date is flush with the left margin, so should your signature block. Be consistent in tone with a formal business letter. “Very truly yours,” “Sincerely” and “Sincerely yours” generally are the most appropriate closings. See pages 2-3 of this guide for information about how to format a signature block on letters being emailed or uploaded to online application systems.

After the signature block, skip two lines and type “Enclosure” or “Enclosures” for hard copy applications if other documents are enclosed and “Attachment” or “Attachments” if the documents are being submitted electronically.

VI. ADDITIONAL KEY POINTS

A. Irrelevant or Unnecessary Information and Documents Not Requested.

Do not include personal information that is not relevant to the employer's hiring decision, *e.g.*, you are married with two children. Do not enclose a writing sample, list of references or any other documents *unless specifically requested to do so* by the employer.

B. Use a Paper Clip.

When submitting hard copy applications, you increase the chances of your cover letter remaining with your enclosures by paper-clipping the documents together. Do *not* staple your cover letter to your résumé or any other documents.

Do not staple your cover letter to your résumé.

VII. A FEW FINAL POINTS FOR GRADUATES

A. Shift in Career Focus.

If you are changing the focus of your career, it may be to your advantage to explain this change in direction in your cover letter. Be sure to highlight those skills which are transferrable to the new position.

B. Gap in Work History.

If you have been out of the work force for some time, *i.e.*, a year or more, and you have not been in school during that time, you may want to mitigate this fact in your cover letter. Be certain to mention whatever skills you may have acquired during this period (*e.g.*, as a consultant, through volunteer work, etc.) that could be transferred to the position to which you are applying. Also, indicate if you have kept current or have undertaken study recently to refresh or enhance your capabilities.

C. Confidentiality.

If you are seeking a new position while currently employed, and your employer is unaware of your job search, state in your cover letter that your application is being submitted *in confidence*. A future employer will respect the confidentiality of your communication and will use caution when contacting you and when checking references.

Appendix

SAMPLE LETTERS

On the following pages are 10 cover letter samples. Since each sample letter is very specific to the employer and position, the Career Planning Center *strongly* discourages you from copying any letter, in whole or in part. Your letters should be written to reflect your knowledge of the employers and your understanding of the specific positions you are targeting.

JENNIFER J. JENKINS

200 W. Michigan Ave., Apt. 400 • Milwaukee, WI 53203
(608) 456-7891 • jennifer.jenkins@marquette.edu

February 20, 2021

Atty. Richard Roberts
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
999 N. 92nd St.
PO Box 1997
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1997

Dear Attorney Roberts:

In my personal statements to law schools, I shared that my intent was to utilize my law degree in the field of healthcare and that a long-range goal would be to serve as counsel for a hospital. Upon arriving at Marquette Law School, I began working to build connections in Milwaukee's health law community, which included previously emailing you to make an introduction. As such, I was genuinely excited to learn that Children's Hospital of Wisconsin is adding a law student to its legal team for summer 2021. I recognize this as a unique opportunity to work with and learn from attorneys whose careers reflect what I am working towards. A summer spent immersed in laws, policies and compliance matters that impact a pediatric hospital and clinics is my version of ideal.

My readiness to achieve as a legal intern with Children's Hospital is evidenced in part by my complementary background in healthcare and my commitment to developing legal skills. My interest in healthcare began during my undergraduate studies where I earned a degree in Interdisciplinary Health Services, with minors in Health Care Ethics and Justice & Ethics in the Law. This focus equips me with knowledge of some of the issues that impact healthcare organizations, which I anticipate will allow me to complete projects with a deeper understanding of the hospital's values, mission, and vision. I also bring to Children's Hospital relevant skills that I have sharpened through *pro bono* work. Immediately in my first semester of law school, I began volunteering at the Domestic Violence Injunction Clinic and the Family Law Forms Clinic. Through these opportunities, I learned to effectively communicate with clients and attorneys. Additionally, I advanced my skills in spotting and framing legal issues, which I know will benefit my work as a legal intern.

If given a chance, I will embrace the opportunity offered by Children's Hospital. I hope to be able to meet with you on-campus at Marquette Law School during Spring OCI to discuss the position.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jennifer Jenkins

Jennifer J. Jenkins

Attachment (1)

Sample 2

Mathew M. Hext
4500 W Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233
414-888-9999
mathew.hext@marquette.edu

February 26, 2021

Daniel Wells, General Counsel
Jenkin Department Stores, Inc.
12345 Bylaw Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53051-5660

Dear Attorney Wells:

The enthusiasm with which Marquette Law School student Aryssa Martz talks about her summer legal internship with Jenkin Department Stores motivated me to apply for the 2021 summer position. Through conversations with Aryssa, I learned that she contributed to projects that impacted company policies and were relied upon when advising business divisions. I would love to have the opportunity to do the same. As a first-year student, I am carefully planning my academic and experiential learning to achieve my goal of practicing corporate law, so the practical training your team offers is attractive to me. Add to this the fact that I know Jenkin is a socially responsible corporation, and I am all in. I benefited from Jenkin's generosity as the company gave a grant of two million dollars to my hometown's high school in 2015. I am excited by the prospect of gaining insight into the corporate legal department of one of the nation's largest retailers while giving back to a company I admire by completing projects that are reliable and useful.

I intend to rely upon my previous internships and successful performance in legal analysis, writing and research to complete projects for you and your colleagues that meet expectations and advance the company's goals. I earned a solid first-semester GPA that includes an honors grade in Legal Analysis Writing and Research. This accomplishment is a result of my commitment to excelling in law school, and I intend to make the same commitment to achieving as a Jenkin's intern. Additionally, I do have some legal experience. My practical training includes volunteering at a legal clinic through Marquette Law School and interning with the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office during my undergraduate studies. Through these experiences, I refined my communication skills as I worked directly with clients and attorneys, and I gained perspective as to what it means to practice. I appreciate that deadlines are inflexible and that attention to detail is critical and will be mindful of both as a legal intern with Jenkin.

I included my résumé for your consideration and will be quick to provide any other information that you request.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mathew Hext

Mathew M. Hext

Attachment (1)

ASHLEY M. WELSH

5558 N. 42nd St. • Phoenix, Arizona 85028 • (562)252-2322 • ashley.welsh@marquette.edu

February 3, 2021

Jeffrey Van Horne, Deputy Public Defender
Maricopa County Public Defender's Office
620 W. Jackson Street
Suite 4015
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Attorney Van Horne:

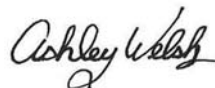
I had the opportunity to intern with the Maricopa County Juvenile Defender's Office the summer after my second year of law school. The experience impacted my career focus as it cemented my desire to use my law degree to advocate for children and those less fortunate. I will graduate from law school in May, and I am contacting you to express my interest in working for your office in your 3L internship program during the summer of 2021 while I prepare to sit for the Arizona bar examination.

My legal experiences and coursework reflect my commitment to government work. In addition to the previously mentioned experience with your office, I also participated in a judicial internship and am currently interning with the Waukesha County District Attorney's Office. All three of these experiences enhanced my understanding of the legal process. Particularly noteworthy is my internship with the Waukesha County DA where I am permitted to practice law under the Wisconsin Supreme Court student practice rule. As a result, I have had significant experience representing the State's interests in preliminary hearings and motion hearings. The courses I have taken prepare me to work in your office as well. I completed every criminal law class offered in the curriculum of my law school, which includes substantive and procedural coursework.

While I am interested in joining the Public Defender's Office in any capacity, I welcome the opportunity to work in the juvenile offender division. I have a long-time interest in advocating for children, which is supported by the initiative I displayed in co-founding the Children and Family Law Society at Marquette Law School and several other entries on the enclosed résumé.

I am pleased to provide additional information if any is required. Furthermore, I am willing to travel to Arizona at my own expense to meet with you to discuss my qualifications and interest in joining the 3L internship program.

Sincerely,



Ashley M. Welsh

Enclosures (1)

Sample 4

CHARLES R. BARRY

237 Inglenook Place
Milwaukee, WI 53214
414-555-5720 | charles.barry@marquette.edu

February 14, 2021

John R. Hoffheimer, Esq.
Attorney Honors Program
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Office of Federal Operations
1801 L Street, N.W., Room 407
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Hoffheimer:

I have a sincere interest in working for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission because of its dedication to ensuring equal employment opportunity through education, technical assistance, and administrative and judicial enforcement of the federal civil rights laws. I witnessed this commitment first-hand while interning as a law clerk for the EEOC this past summer, and I would like to be considered for an attorney position with the EEOC following my graduation from Marquette University Law School in May. With my spirited interest in promoting equal employment opportunity and extensive educational background and experience in Labor and Employment Law, I am ready to contribute to the Commission.

My background and experience are an excellent match with the needs of the EEOC. In addition to being successful academically, currently ranking in the top 20 percent of my class, I gained a broad range of knowledge regarding the theoretical and practical aspects of labor and employment law. Part of that knowledge stems from the completion of an article that will be published in the upcoming issue of the *Marquette Law Review* regarding a clarification of employer liability for supervisor sexual harassment claims brought under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Moreover, Mr. Hoffheimer, I conducted significant research during my current internship with the National Labor Relations Board in Milwaukee regarding the need to modify Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. My experiences with the NLRB and the EEOC provide an excellent foundation in my understanding of government agencies and labor and employment matters. As such, I am well prepared to join your organization as an attorney and make immediate and meaningful contributions.

Please find enclosed my completed application form and my résumé for your review. If you have any questions or if you require any additional information, I would gladly provide you what you need. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles R. Barry

Enclosures (2)

Sample 5

Maria R. Marino

63 W. Franklin Dr., Wauwatosa, WI 53219
(706) 618-2123 • maria.marino@marquette.edu

April 11, 2021

Atty. Jill Stein, Partner
Stein, Franken & Van Erdt
505 Columbus Street
Suite 101
Sparta, WI 54601

Dear Atty. Stein:

I would like to meet with you to discuss the possibility of serving as a law clerk with Stein, Franken & Van Erdt during summer 2021. I appreciate that the firm does not have an advertised need for a law student; however, I am excited to learn more about its litigation and business practices and to talk with you about how I might be able to support you and your colleagues. I am committed to being in Sparta, and I know that Stein Franken & Van Erdt's practice is diverse in representing businesses and individuals. As a first-year student this appeals to me, because I am excited to explore different areas of law. Even if you do not anticipate hiring a law clerk, I would like to meet with you to discuss how your career unfolded in Sparta as a Marquette alum. I will be in the area during the week of May 1, and I would be grateful if we could meet.

My motivation to learn, prior achievements, and work ethic will contribute to my success with the firm. Notable is my commitment to developing practical legal skills beyond the classroom, which I am achieving as a volunteer at a Milwaukee area legal clinic. As a volunteer, I work with clients to identify and frame diverse civil issues and collaborate with attorneys to educate and guide clients towards the best course of action. Additionally, prior to law school, I interned with Havisham & Associates. I excelled in this position and received an offer for permanent employment based on me being thorough and professional in all that I did. I know these same traits will allow me to produce top-quality research and writing on behalf of Stein, Franken & Van Erdt's clients. Finally, I bring to the firm a work ethic that I appreciate is necessary to achieve. In addition to my studies first semester, I assumed a leadership role in the Sports Law Society, participated in a negotiation competition, and, as mentioned, volunteered at a legal clinic.

I appreciate you were not expecting my request to meet in early May, so I plan to contact you with a phone call next week if we have not already connected. Also, I included for your consideration my résumé.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Maria Marino*

Maria R. Marino

Enclosure

Sample 6

Benjamin S. Fitzgerald
1000 Blue Water Drive, Rochester, WI 53002
(262) 777-8888 | benjamin.fitzgerald@marquette.edu

November 15, 2020

Mr. William Smith
Director of Attorney Recruiting and Retention
Yu & Bates, S.C.
888 North Canal Street
Milwaukee, WI 51118

Dear Mr. Smith:

I recently met with your colleague, Charles McConnell, for an informational meeting and his comments about your firm's work and culture sold me on the idea that Yu & Bates is a terrific fit for me professionally. My interests are directed towards representing businesses and corporations, and I know Y&B is considered a leading corporate law firm in Wisconsin. Beyond the challenging work offered, it is also important to me that I join a firm where the culture promotes collaboration and creativity. Y&B's recent honor of being named a top firm for women suggests to me that the firm is intentional in fostering a work environment that promotes creative lawyering and professional satisfaction. I welcome the opportunity to talk with members of the firm's recruitment team about how I can contribute as an associate attorney.

Academic achievement, practical experience, time management skills, and a passion for law are what I offer Yu & Bates. As is reflected in my attached résumé, I am ranked in the top 33 percent of my class. This accomplishment is a result of my work ethic, motivation, and enthusiasm for the study of law. I enjoy studying the law and confirmed while working for a civil litigation firm similarly sized to yours that I have a penchant for practice as well. I thoroughly enjoyed tackling and researching the issues related to discovery and pre-trial activities and welcomed responsibilities to draft briefs and identify experts. I appreciate that thorough research and precise writing are important to my success with your firm. In addition to the positive feedback I received as a law clerk, the quality of my writing and research skills is evidenced by the fact I received the highest grade in my second semester legal writing course. I also bring to Y&B time management skills, which I know are important in order to balance multiple projects with demanding deadlines. Throughout my academic career, I managed successfully full-time studies, leadership roles, part-time employment and volunteer activities. As such, I am prepared to assume the responsibilities of a new associate with Yu & Bates.

In addition to my résumé, accompanying this letter is a list of references. If you need any further information, I am pleased to provide it.

Sincerely,



Benjamin S. Fitzgerald

Enclosures (2)

Phillip M. Greene

100 W. Wisconsin Ave., Apt. 2, Milwaukee, WI 53233
414-757-2262 | phillip.greene@marquette.edu

August 20, 2021

Mr. Michael Farley
NCAA Leadership Development
700 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Dear Mr. Farley:

I am excited to be in a position professionally to apply for the NCAA Postgraduate Internship Program for the 2021-2022 cohort. I enrolled in law school at Marquette University with a goal of parlaying my legal studies into a future in collegiate athletics. Working towards this goal, I spent a semester with the NCAA as an extern with the Office of the Committees on Infractions. The experience affirmed for me that a career focused on collegiate athletics is a perfect fit for my skills and interests. I know that the opportunities the NCAA offers are incomparable in terms of exposure and learning, and I will embrace the chance to return to the organization through the Postgraduate Internship Program.

My sports-specific experience and studies will serve as strong foundations for my work. With respect to collegiate athletics, I am working with a Division I member this fall and have already experienced working with a Division III member. As a result, I will return to the NCAA having been exposed to the many intricacies of collegiate athletics from the perspectives of member schools. Without question, my summer spent with the NCAA OCOI is invaluable in terms of preparing me to be an effective post-graduate intern. I enjoyed being immersed in the daily operations of COI, including being exposed to the thought processes and strategies that are behind decisions. Also, I successfully interacted with representatives from the membership, which I enjoyed doing.

My sports-specific experience further includes contributing to the operations and logistics of a Division I intercollegiate tennis tournament and of the Iowa State Men's Basketball Team, for which I served in a manager role for four years. Because of these opportunities, I am adept at handling competing deadlines, responding to matters with solutions, and communicating effectively with individuals, including coaches, who may have competing interests and ideas. In my role with the Milwaukee Tennis Classic, I prepared media guides and plans and communicated with coaches and sports information directors. I also assisted in maintaining three sites and contributed to logistics ranging from media plans to sponsorships. My hands-on training is complemented by coursework at Marquette Law School, including Amateur Sports, Pro Sports, Contracts, and Sports Advanced Legal Research and Sports Sponsorships.

Additionally, I bring to the NCAA traditional legal skills, including writing, research and analytical reasoning. My legal skills have been honed while completing nearly 100 hours of *pro bono* work and through completing an internship with Catholic Charities where I focused on immigration issues.

My résumé is included. I would love to return to the NCAA as a post-graduate intern.

Sincerely,

/s/ Phillip M. Greene

Phillip M. Greene

Enclosure

Sample 8

JAMES E. JEFFERIES
1111 W. Wellington Street, Apt.162
Milwaukee, WI 53233
920.912.7378 | james.e.jefferies@gmail.com

October 30, 2020

Atty. Madeline McDermid
Goldman, McDermid & Wright, S.C.
650 South Broadway, Suite 200
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Ms. McDermid:

Employment law has been a focus of my practical experiences and legal studies, so I am very excited to submit my application for the position of part-time law clerk with Goldman, McDermid & Wright. Having witnessed the struggles of employees last summer as an intern with the EEOC Enforcement Division, I appreciate how important it is for employees to have zealous advocacy, which is why your firm's job posting captured my attention. I know your representation of clients is focused on employees who have been mistreated or otherwise injured in the course of work and includes civil rights claims. I welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss my qualifications and to learn more about the law clerk position with your firm.

My on-point experiences in employment law and my study of civil rights matters will be foundational to my contributions as a law clerk. With respect to my employment law experience, my internship with the EEOC equipped me with firsthand knowledge of many of the legal issues and struggles employees face. While with the agency, I analyzed hundreds of claims and drafted opinion statements that were relied upon by staff attorneys. My work on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs is also complementary in that I drafted a brief on the issue of a Title VII motion for summary judgment from the employer perspective. This experience gave me a more complete understanding of the strategies of both parties in labor and employment disputes. Moreover, I completed two upper level courses that are relevant to your practice - First Amendment Rights, and Labor and Employment. Finally, as evidenced on my résumé, I have pursued diverse opportunities throughout law school to research, write, and work directly with clients. The totality of these experiences has readied me to provide top-quality analysis and writing on behalf of Goldman McDermid & Wright clients.

I included with this letter my résumé and a writing sample. Please let me know if you require additional information as you consider my application. I may be contacted at the above-provided telephone number and email address.

Sincerely,



James E. Jefferies

Enclosures: 2

Sample 9

MICHAEL L. KING

625 E. State Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202
414.913.2251 | michael.king@marquette.edu

Via Electronic Mail

November 15, 2020

Attorney Scott Spears
The Law Office of Scott Spears, LLC
890 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 2E
Racine, WI 53403

Dear Attorney Spears:

I was highly motivated to contact you after learning you are hiring a law clerk. My legal experiences and coursework are focused on criminal law, so I am well prepared to support you and your associate attorney at The Law Office of Scott Spears. Presently, I am representing clients under a provisional student practitioner license while interning with the criminal misdemeanor division at Centro Legal. As such, I know firsthand the importance for defendants to have strategic and zealous advocacy. The position with your firm is appealing to me because of the opportunity you offer your law clerk to really participate in and contribute to your criminal practice. I look forward to drafting briefs and documents, communicating with clients, courts, and attorneys and otherwise supporting your legal team in advocating for clients.

My on-point experiences in criminal work and courses will permit me to achieve as your law clerk. With respect to my criminal law experience, I have worked on several OWI cases and written memoranda regarding a Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity Plea and a warrantless search challenge. Moreover, I have appeared on record before judges and court commissioners representing the interests of clients of Centro Legal. This has given me a solid foundation for understanding criminal process and procedure. I have complemented my practical experience with relevant coursework, including: Evidence, Criminal Process, Criminal Law, and Appellate Writing and Advocacy. I am excited to rely upon my understanding of the criminal law system and my direct participation in the system while taking on projects at your firm.

I also have strong communication skills, which I know you value. With respect to my writing and research skills, I have had significant opportunities to write on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and a civil litigation firm. While working with these organizations, I drafted a wide range of documents, including motions, briefs, and client correspondence. Also, my ability to establish rapport with others and to communicate well has been a hallmark of my successes in every work setting from a small law firm to the U.S. Department of Justice.

I provided my résumé and writing sample as PDF attachments for your review and consideration. I look forward to arranging a time to meet to discuss my sincere interest in the opportunity with The Law Office of Scott Spears.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael L. King

Michael L. King

Attachments: 2

Lillian A. Weiss

1800 W. Wells St., Apt. 12G • Milwaukee, WI 53233 • 414-767-1234 • lillian.weiss@marquette.edu

March 2, 2021

Atty. Maria Martinez
Martinez & Ingram, S.C.
902 South Water Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Dear Attorney Martinez:

I am contacting you to explore the possibility of joining Martinez & Ingram as an associate attorney. I appreciate that the firm is not advertising a position for a new lawyer; however, because the firm's civil litigation focus so closely mirrors my career goals, I am reaching out to introduce myself and to request a meeting. My attention landed on Martinez & Ingram because of the scope of its litigation practice. I have focused my experiences and studies towards a career in civil litigation. My interests include family law, which I know is your primary practice and that of several of your colleagues. In fact, I received a scholarship from the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers based on my family law studies. Additionally, in reading about Martinez & Ingram's multi-disciplinary approach to practice, I anticipate that I would fit in well, which is why I would like to meet with you.

My practical training and acquired legal skills are such that I can hit the ground running as a new associate. For example, I previously worked for a civil litigation firm where I was given autonomy to conduct research and draft a variety of legal documents, including summons and complaints, motions for summary judgment, and affidavits. Additionally, I served as an intern to the Hon. Justice Rebecca Bradley of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which gave me the perspective of the full life cycle of a case as I reviewed the trial record, analyzed appellate briefs and prepared bench memoranda. Presently, I work in the Office of General Counsel for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a position that stretches my knowledge of federal and state laws.

My practical training is complemented by my experiences at Marquette Law School. Notable is my track record of excelling in writing and research courses, which include Appellate Writing & Advocacy and Advanced Research. My achievement in appellate writing led to an invitation to participate in an honors moot court competition, and my writing skills resulted in my serving as a staff member of the MARQUETTE LAW REVIEW. As I look to the next step in my career, I am excited to rely on my acquired skills to effectively represent clients in civil litigation matters.

I want to reiterate my genuine interest in meeting with you to discuss how I am positioned to contribute meaningfully as an attorney with Martinez & Ingram. Because you were not expecting my application, I intend to follow this correspondence with a phone call next week. My résumé is included for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lillian Weiss

Lillian Weiss

Enclosure