

# LAWYERS JOURNAL

## ACBA launches Legal Employment Services

By Tracy Carbasho

Who better than the ACBA to serve as a matchmaker between job seekers in the legal industry and potential employers?

After 18 months of researching that question, the bar association decided none was better suited to fill this need in the Pittsburgh legal community. So last month the bar launched ACBA Legal Employment Services.

“We know this market, and we understand the needs of our members and their respective law firms, corporations and agencies,” said ACBA Executive Director David A. Blaner. “This is a good time to launch this type of service. Law schools have reduced class sizes, so there is more competition in the job market for qualified attorneys and paralegals.”

ACBA Legal Employment Services already is sparking the interest of employers who are looking to fill positions and job hunters who are eager to be the top candidate.

“Conducting an employment search takes time. Attorneys are very busy with client matters, and it takes a substantial amount of time to run an ad, review resumes, conduct interviews and complete a background check,” Blaner said. “We can significantly reduce the time it takes for an employer to fill positions.”

After doing its own job search, the ACBA hired attorney Stephanie Zagrocki as director of the new service.

Zagrocki is the primary contact for employers and job applicants. She will interview employers and job-seekers alike and maintain a database of resumes and available positions. After determining which candidates would be a good fit for an employer, she’ll make what she hopes will be a successful match. As part of the process, she’ll also give job-seekers advice on writing resumes and preparing for interviews.

The service got off the ground just last month, and within a few weeks, Zagrocki already had placed a candidate with one firm and provided a local corporation with a candidate to fill a general counsel position.

“I’m not surprised we’re getting so much interest because we can tap into the relationships the ACBA has in the legal community, and we’ll do all of the legwork,” Zagrocki said. “We’ll prescreen candidates by reviewing their resumes,



*Stephanie Zagrocki  
Director of ACBA Legal  
Employment Services*

checking references and helping them plan for an interview with a potential employer. That’s beneficial to busy attorneys and especially small to mid-size firms.”

The service is open to any legal professional and any employer who has an opening for a legal position. The target positions are for lawyers, paralegals, legal assistants, legal secretaries and legal administrators. The placement assistance is expected to be especially helpful for recent graduates and associates with one to seven years of experience.

“Our service is different from others because these are permanent full or part-time jobs, and I prescreen candidates. Employers don’t pay a fee for the services unless they hire someone we provide,” Zagrocki said. “If they hire someone through another service, they don’t pay us anything so there’s no risk involved but they get all of the benefits. We also

have a guarantee that if the person doesn’t work out during the first 60 days, we’ll work to find another candidate at no extra charge.”

Zagrocki said the ACBA’s fees are very competitive and affordable, especially when compared to what a professional recruiter might charge. The flat rate is based on the position, rather than a percentage of the new employee’s salary.

Both Blaner and Zagrocki stress that the new service is in no way a recruitment program. The ACBA will not recruit legal professionals. Rather, individuals who are searching for a job and employers who have an open position must contact Zagrocki.

All available jobs will be listed on *PittsburghLegalJobs.com*. However, the name of the company will not be listed, and individuals will not be able to apply online. They must submit their resume to Zagrocki.

When there is a job opening that might be a good fit for an applicant, Zagrocki will contact the person to ask for a cover letter and possibly a writing sample. She also will conduct an in-person interview with the candidate before submitting his or her resume to the employer. She is willing to work with candidates to find a suitable time and location for the interviews, understanding that some candidates may currently be employed and need to meet at a time that accommodates their work schedule. ■