



OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Included in this packet are **sample cover letters** for applications for positions as:

- [A Summer Associate at a law firm, applying directly;](#)
- [A Judicial Intern in a judge's chambers;](#)
- [An In-House Intern in the legal department of a company \(general\);](#)
- [An In-House Intern in the legal team of a start-up company;](#)
- [A Summer Associate at a law firm, applying via the Early Interview Program.](#)

SAMPLE 1L SUMMER ASSOCIATE COVER LETTER

630 West 113th Street, Apt. 503
New York, NY 10025

January 2, 20XX

Ms. Sara Smith
Director of Legal Recruiting
Thomas & Thomas LLP
123 Avenue A
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am a first-year student at Columbia Law School, writing to apply for a 20XX Summer Associate position with Thomas & Thomas LLP. I learned about your firm at the Commercial Litigation Panel held at Columbia Law School last October. Having been raised in San Francisco, and having completed my bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley, I look forward to returning to San Francisco this upcoming summer and upon graduation. I am particularly interested in the firm's Litigation practice.

Through my prior experiences, I have developed strong time management, writing, research, and analytical skills, which I am refining at Columbia Law School. At Columbia, I am also developing the oral advocacy skills required for litigation. In the Foundation Moot Court course at Columbia, I am conducting legal research and drafting our team's appellate advocacy brief. Next semester, I will present our arguments orally in the Moot Court competition. Previously, as an intern in the Office of U.S. Senator Joseph Douglas, I balanced extensive research on business and economic affairs with timely responses to a high volume of daily inquiries from constituents. Additionally, my work as a Research Assistant for the Department of Political Science at University of California, Berkeley, and the related research that I completed for my senior thesis, have prepared me for the demands of analyzing evidence in complex litigation matters. For these projects, I synthesized large amounts of data, reviewing international trade agreements, conducting literature reviews on economic development initiatives, and preparing summaries of the same.

Please find attached my resume and a writing sample. I will forward my law school transcript as soon as grades become available. If you need anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me at jjob@law.columbia.edu or 917-888-8888. I will be in San Francisco over the winter break (December 22-January 11) and would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you then to discuss my qualifications and interest in the position. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph Job

SAMPLE JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP COVER LETTER

435 West 116th Street, Apt. 4A
New York, NY 10027

December 1, 20XX

«The_Honorable» «Full_Name»
«Court_General»
«Court_Specific»
«Street1»
«Street2»
«Street3»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Salutation» «Last_Name»:

I am a first-year student at Columbia Law School and am interested in an internship position in your chambers for the upcoming summer. A judicial internship with your chambers would be an excellent opportunity to refine my legal writing and research skills and to gain exposure to the litigation process. Having grown up in the Midwest, I am also interested in pursuing a legal career in Chicago and would appreciate the opportunity to learn more about that jurisdiction.

Through my academic experiences and internships, I am developing the skills to become an effective litigator. At Columbia, I am honing my oral advocacy, research, and writing skills as a member of the Phillip C. Jessup Moot Court Team. As a history major at Colgate University, I strengthened my writing and research skills while working on my undergraduate thesis, which explored the political background and passage of the Venkman Amendment to the Trade Act of 1977. I also refined my writing and editing skills as Senior Editor of the *Colgate-Maroon Times* and as an Editorial Intern for the *South Shore Record*. Over multiple summers as a manager at a busy concession stand, I also learned how to manage responsibilities in a fast-paced environment.

My resume and a writing sample are enclosed. If you would like to speak with a reference, please contact [role], [name], at [email address] or (212) xxx-xxxx. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my candidacy. I am available by telephone and would be available to meet in person from December [x to y] and from January [x to y]. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Julianne Student

Enclosures

SAMPLE IN-HOUSE (GENERAL) INTERNSHIP COVER LETTER

435 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027
(212) 854-0000
uni@columbia.edu

February 1, 20XX

Michelle Offer, Esq.
General Counsel
Independent Film Studio
1 Wiltshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90210

[Dear Michelle,] [Dear Ms. Offer:] [*Salutation depends on the industry – see your OCS counselor for further advice.*]

I am a first-year student at Columbia Law School and am seeking a legal internship position at Independent Film Studio for Summer 20XX. [*Include reference to a referral or event as applicable, i.e.:* As a member of the Entertainment, Arts, and Sports Law Society at Columbia, I have attended several events this past semester, including a panel that included an in-house counsel from your company.] Due to my strong interest in entertainment law, I plan to work in the Los Angeles area following my graduation from Columbia.

I believe my past experiences working in fast-paced professional environments means that I could contribute significantly to Independent Film Studio's legal team. As a paralegal at Partner & Partner, I executed multiple time-sensitive projects with accuracy and speed, completed projects with minimal guidance, and communicated information to attorneys in an efficient and time-sensitive manner. Further, while a paralegal at Major Network, I worked closely with the lawyers on a variety of legal issues, ranging from assisting on the M&A of a local satellite network to trademark infringement. I also regularly interfaced with business counterparts within the network as well as outside counsel.

I am particularly interested in a summer internship within the Business and Legal Affairs Department at Independent Film Studio because of my focus on business, intellectual property, and entertainment law and, specifically, my interest in supporting the commercial interests of a media company while helping it to navigate legal hurdles. In fact, at the aforementioned Columbia Law School panel on in-house legal careers, I was intrigued to hear about the intersection between intellectual property issues and business contracts. I look forward to working on assignments that involve similar questions next summer.

I am confident that my experience and skills will enable me to make a positive contribution to your department and company. For your review, I have enclosed my resume. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jana Job

SAMPLE IN-HOUSE (START-UP) INTERNSHIP COVER LETTER

435 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027
(212) 854-0000
uni@columbia.edu

February 1, 20XX

Michelle Offer, Esq.
General Counsel
Tech Corporation
100 West 42nd Street, Suite 100
New York, NY 10027

Dear Michelle,

I am a first-year student at Columbia Law School writing to apply for a summer legal internship. I first learned of a legal internship opportunity at Tech Corporation through [*name of contact, if applicable*]. With extensive prior experience at a high growth software company, I believe that I can offer a unique skillset to your company's continued growth this summer.

I have long been interested in a career that contributes to the development of the global tech market. Prior to law school, I experienced the rapid growth of a start-up software company. At Fruugal, I was a member of the business development team and worked closely with its senior management, general counsel and in-house lawyers. When I joined the company, I was one of 50 employees; by the time I left for law school, the company had grown to multiple offices, including an overseas office. It was a rewarding experience to see the fruits of our labor as the company fulfilled its innovative ambitions.

My unique hands-on experience at Fruugal enabled me to develop skills that are well suited for the particular challenges of a leanly staffed and quickly expanding legal department. While at Fruugal, I worked on projects that included issues in corporate governance for the company's subsidiaries and international joint ventures, due diligence management for our Series C fundraising, acquisitions of companies, and the march toward an initial public offering. I was also involved in the negotiation of commercial contracts and analyses of product launches in new markets, which often entailed analyses of legal implications. In addition, I regularly communicated with product teams to manage simultaneous work streams under sudden deadlines. I hope to bring these skills in project management, resourcefulness and strong attention to detail to your team this summer. I believe that my entrepreneurial spirit and business acumen would be a strong fit with Tech Corporation's culture.

I have enclosed my resume as well as my law school transcript. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Joseph Job

SAMPLE COVER LETTER FOR THE EARLY INTERVIEW PROGRAM

630 West 117th Street, Apt. 5D
New York, NY 10025

July 1, 20XX

Mr. Michael Smith
Director of Legal Recruiting
Partner & Partner LLP
10 Park Avenue, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10178

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am a second-year student at Columbia Law School, writing to apply for a 20XX Summer Associate position with Partner & Partner LLP.

I have acquired research, writing, analytical, and client relationship skills in my prior positions and in my studies at Columbia Law School. This summer, as a Legal Intern with the New York Legal Assistance Group, I am cultivating client communication skills by conducting client intake interviews. At Columbia, I developed legal research and writing skills by participating in the Foundation Moot Court in my first year and, in my second year, I will continue to develop these skills as a Staff Member of the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*. Previously, through my work as a paralegal at Humbug, Fodder & Kant, I gained experience with the demands of a complex litigation practice by analyzing evidence, assembling witness preparation materials, and responding to the needs of trial counsel working on complex securities litigation matters. Since then, by taking Transnational Litigation as my elective at Columbia Law School this past spring, I have broadened my knowledge of cross-border dispute resolution.

With my background and skills, I am confident that I would make positive contributions to Partner & Partner as a Summer Associate. Being fluent in French and having studied in Paris, I am well-suited to Partner & Partner's global outlook and well-positioned to contribute to the firm's cross-border practices. I am pleased to be interviewing with your firm at Columbia Law School's Early Interview Program on August 1. I can be reached at moffer@law.columbia.edu or 212-738-5695. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle Offer