Mark Graff - NOAA Federal

From:	Mark Graff - NOAA Federal
Sent:	Monday, August 27, 2018 4:11 PM
To:	UNC Pro Bono Program
Cc:	Ed Kearns - NOAA Federal; Adrienne Simonson - NOAA Federal
Subject:	Re: UNC School of Law Pro Bono Program - NOAA Project

Hello Graham,

One small grammatical change for clarity:

In the second paragraph, if you could change the sentence as follows, "Additionally, basic spreadsheet function familiarity is needed in order to outline appeal metrics, regular FOIA processing metrics and trends, and to provide recommendations based on those trends."

With that change, I think this is good to go--thank you again for your guidance, and I look forward to a great experience with the UNC Pro Bono program. Best regards,

Mark H. Graff
FOIA Officer/Bureau Chief Privacy Officer (BCPO)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(301) 628-5658 (O)
[redacted] (C)

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On Mon, Aug 27, 2018 at 2:13 PM, UNC Pro Bono Program <uncprobonoprojects@gmail.com> wrote:

> Mark,
>
> Thanks for your response. Now that I know the timeline, I think retaining the training and metric reporting is appropriate. I just wanted to avoid a situation where a lot of work was compressed into a short period. Also, having two students will help alleviate individual burdens.
>
> Please find attached a draft project posting in Word and pdf. Please review and let me know if you approve or would like to make changes. I slightly altered your wording for the posting format. I also added the portion about admin law experience. A very popular professor is teaching Admin law now, and also taught it last year, so there's a big population of students interested in that area. I'm going to send him the posting to share with his class once we finalize it. I think having students with some awareness of the administrative process would be helpful to all involved. If you don't want to include that preference, let me know and I'll remove it.
>
> Once we finalize the posting, I'll distribute it and post it up in school. Then, once volunteers sign up, I'll email you their contact information so you can proceed with next steps.

Thank you,
--Graham

Graham Whittington

Attorney Projects Coordinator
UNC School of Law Pro Bono Program
uncprobonoprojects@gmail.com

Students and Lawyers Making a Difference
http://www.law.unc.edu/probono/

On Mon, Aug 27, 2018 at 1:15 PM Mark Graff - NOAA Federal <mark.graff@noaa.gov> wrote:

Good Afternoon Mr. Whittington,

Absolutely--let me add in the information you need (in red below). For scaling, we can certainly remove the portion about FOIAOnline training and regular case metric reporting, limiting the project to only administrative appeals-related work. Thank you for the feedback and prompt reply.

Mark H. Graff
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On Mon, Aug 27, 2018 at 12:49 PM, UNC Pro Bono Program <uncprobonoprojects@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Mark,

Thank you for registering your organization with our program. Based on the notes you included in the organization description, it seems you have a project in mind. I'm pasting below some further information I'd like to have before submitting a project for you. I've pasted in the project description you provided, as well as some more obvious information, but please fill out the rest.

One thought I'd like to add: The project looks like it will provide a lot of skills-building experience, which is great. It also seems like the commitment would be quite large. As you might imagine, students are busy, and if a project is projected to be more than a 30-hour or so commitment, it might be hard to find a volunteer. To the extent the project is divisible into the various tasks you mention and we break it up, we might have an easier time getting you volunteers. I'm leaving that decision up to you, however. Also, we could go the route of keeping it as is for now, and then reassessing later if we don't get a volunteer for a few weeks. Just let me know what you think.

Information I need:

Proposed Project Name: FOIA Administrative Appeals

Project Description: NOAA is seeking an individual to provide pro bono assistance in preparing proposed adjudications of administrative appeals for FOIA requests, preparing and submitting an organized case file supporting the proposed adjudication, and analyzing administrative appellate rulings to gauge NOAA's effectiveness, and presenting appeal ratios based of the appeal history for its FOIA program. The individual would work closely with NOAA's FOIA Officer, as well as liaise with the Department of Commerce Office of the General Counsel, who has the appellate adjudication authority pursuant to 15 CFR 4.10. A resource seeking to increase their experience and training in the area of Government Freedom of Information Act processes, and the application of Federal Regulations to NOAA's FOIA program, would be a tremendous resource in improving NOAA's efforts at transparency. Although the NOAA FOIA Program is located in Silver Spring, Maryland, this work can be done 100% remotely. The responsibilities will require the ability to quickly review the case history and processing timeline, and identify compliance or non-compliance with FOIA statutory requirements and DOC FOIA Regulations (15 CFR Part 4), and provide a concise adjudication recommendation to the NOAA FOIA Officer for review, and ultimately, to the Department of Commerce Office of the General Counsel. Additionally, basic spreadsheet function familiarity to outline appeal, and regular FOIA processing trends and provide recommendations based on those trends is needed. A basic training on FOIA software (such as FOIAOnline, if necessary) to pull report metrics, and a general FOIA overview training, will be provided.

Will the work be completed onsite or away from your office?: Remote.

Number of Students Needed: 1-2

Estimated Time Commitment: 30-40 hours

Project Due Date: Dec. 31, 2018 (end of 2018 Chief FOIA Officer Reporting Period)

Minimum Class Level (e.g., all classes, 2Ls and 3Ls, just 3Ls): All Classes

Other Necessary Info: There may be a need to arrange secure VPN connection to the NOAA network or obtain a noaa.gov email address. If so, we will arrange for that connection and email address.

Otherwise, if you have any questions or thoughts, please let me know. Thanks again for submitting, and I look forward to helping you get the project off the ground.

Thank you,
--Graham

Graham Whittington

Attorney Projects Coordinator
UNC School of Law Pro Bono Program
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