

## **Student Defense Legal Fellow Position Description**

### **Summary**

The National Student Legal Defense Network (“Student Defense”) is a non-profit organization focusing on consumer protection in higher education. Through litigation and advocacy, we protect students from predatory lending and other abusive practices by for-profit colleges and other institutions. Since we launched nearly five years ago, Student Defense has earned a track record of success in trial and appellate courts, winning tangible relief for student loan borrowers. Simultaneously, we developed and promoted a policy agenda that has led to substantial debt relief for hundreds of thousands of student loan borrowers and seeks to promote equity and consumer protections across higher education.

Our goal is to create structural change by selecting cases and causes such as curbing fraud and misrepresentations to students, combating reverse redlining practices that target students of color, and obtaining relief for defrauded student loan borrowers.

We created the Student Defense Legal Fellow Program to provide opportunities for new attorneys to gain practical legal experience while enjoying the personal satisfaction of advocating on behalf of students and promoting higher education accountability and reform. Our goal is to recruit and develop a talented pool of attorneys with diverse perspectives to advance the mission of Student Defense. To apply: please send an email with a cover letter, resume, law school transcript, writing sample and three references, to [fellowship@defendstudents.org](mailto:fellowship@defendstudents.org). Please note in your cover letter that you are applying to the Fellow Program.

Student Defense is accepting applications through **April 15, 2023**. The one-year Fellowship will begin in the fall of 2023.

### **Fellowship Duties and Responsibilities**

Student Defense is seeking a first or second-year licensed attorney, including current judicial law clerks (0-2 years of legal experience) and current 3L’s who plan to sit for the bar in 2023, to serve as a Legal Fellow, with a specific focus on litigation and advocacy related to predatory student lending and other abusive practices harming students.

### **Responsibilities include:**

- Serving as a member of the litigation team in class-action and impact litigation on behalf of student loan borrowers against for-profit colleges and predatory companies;
- Working on all aspects of litigation, including case development, discovery, depositions, motion practice, and trials;
- Conducting investigations, using FOIA and other tools, into the effectiveness of government oversight of predatory colleges;

- Coordinating federal and state advocacy work on student lending issues;
- Representing clients in litigation involving the Administrative Procedure Act, Equal Credit Opportunity Act, FOIA, and other areas of consumer law.
- Contributing to higher education policy research and writing through the [PEER](#) Project, which is a joint initiative on accountability between academics and attorneys at Student Defense.

## **Qualifications**

The ideal candidate will have:

- A law degree and admission to a state bar, or pending admission to a state bar;
- 0-2 years of legal experience (including judicial clerkships);
- Academic achievement coupled with practical legal and non-legal experience that demonstrate a strong work ethic and desire to learn;
- Strong research, analytical, oral and written communication skills;
- Sound judgment and creativity in developing legal theories;
- Expressed interest in litigation and advocacy related to predatory student lending and other abusive practices harming students;
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills and the ability to work independently in a small, start-up environment;
- A commitment to Student Defense's mission, purpose, and values; and
- A perspective that is different from or underrepresented in Student Defense.

Additional desired qualifications: Knowledge of and experience with consumer protection law, Administrative Procedure Act claims, and student lending issues.

Annual salary is \$75,000. Student Defense offers excellent benefits, including health-care.

Location: Washington, D.C. area is preferred; open to remote work.

## **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

Student Defense strongly encourages candidates of color and candidates from underrepresented communities to apply. We are an Equal Opportunity employer and do not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under law.