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Captain's Call

Scholarships Available for Officers Interested in Law Careers

Active duty and full-time support officers interested in a challenging career change can apply for scholarships via the Law Education Program (LEP) announced June 10, in Naval Administrative message 198/10.

The program affords selected Department of the Navy officers the opportunity to earn Bachelor of Laws or Juris Doctor degrees and to serve the Navy and Marine Corps as career members of the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps.

The Navy typically selects seven officers to attend law school each year. Candidates must be serving on active duty as a commissioned officer in pay grades O-1 to O-3 and have no more than six years of active duty service as of their law school class convening date. LEP students have up to 36 months to complete their degree program.

Upon graduation and admission to the practice of law, which in most jurisdictions includes passing the bar exam, Navy and Marine Corps officers will be designated as judge advocates. Upon completion of the Basic Lawyer Course at the Naval Justice School, they are certified as qualified and competent to perform duties as trial and defense counsel of general courts-martial. They will then be detailed to one of several large Naval Legal Service or Region Legal Service Offices where they will be exposed to the many legal areas found in today's Navy, including: criminal, international, administrative and tort law; legal assistance; maritime law and environmental law.

Eligible participants who desire to apply for the FY11 program must submit a letter request and application package via their commanding officer to: Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD), Voluntary Education Detachment, Attn: Code N2A2LEP, 6490 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL, 32509-5204 prior to Dec. 1, 2010. Letters must include the applicant's current work mailing and e-mail addresses and contact numbers.

In addition, all applicants must ensure official college transcripts from each school attended are forwarded to CPPD. Law School Admission Test (LSAT) scores must be received prior to the FY-11 selection board convening in February 2011 but may be submitted by separate correspondence.

For specific guidance on the Law Education Program and application requirements, see SECNAVINST 1520.7F and NAVADMIN 198/10. Questions about the application process should be directed to Billie Colonna, Center for Personal and Professional Development, by phone at 850-452-1807 (DSN 922-1807) or by e-mail at billie.colonna@navy.mil. All other program questions should be directed to Lt. Cmdr. Megan Smith, Naval Personnel Command, at 901-874-4084 (DSN 882-4084) or by email at megan.k.smith@navy.mil.