SECTION II

Resume & Cover Letter Writing

HOW TO WRITE EFFECTIVE RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

This section consists of suggestions about and examples of legal resumes and cover letters. Before scheduling an appointment for a resume critique, please use this information to revise your current resume.

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The Legal Resume: Format and Examples

There are a number of things to keep in mind when preparing your legal resume. First, a legal resume varies in format and content from other types of resumes; therefore, it is probably necessary to revise your current resume frequently. Potential employers will form their first impressions of you while reviewing your resume. Consequently, you want to make sure your resume is a true reflection of your skills, interests, abilities, accomplishments, and even your personality. When employers review resumes, they will usually scan them first, looking quickly for achievements, experience and other highlights. Instead of writing in sentences and paragraphs, use phrases; be concise. Through the judicious use of spacing, highlighting, and underlining you can exercise a great deal of control over the initial thirty-second scan your resume receives by emphasizing those items enhancing your candidacy.

Included in the following pages are: a general resume format; a list of law-related action verbs to draw from when writing job descriptions for the "Experience" section of your resume; "Questions and Answers on Resume Writing"; a number of sample resumes; "Questions and Answers on Cover Letter Writing"; and cover letter samples.

Variations on the standard resume form are encouraged. You may decide to highlight certain information and underplay other details depending on your targeted employer. Notice that, while each sample resume generally conforms to the legal resume format, each is unique.

Be sure to use a substantial grade of stationary in a conservative color (white or off-white); avoid stationary with imprinted fibertone (i.e., flecked or speckled). Your final documents should be perfectly prepared with no errors. Additionally, legal employers are usually interested in obtaining as much information as quickly as possible. Therefore, a resume that calls attention to keywords by using underlining, uppercase letters or bold face type will appeal to employers.

Employers looking for legal talent <u>expect</u> clarity, neatness and evidence of strong communication skills. If your resume is poorly designed, copied, not printed, difficult to scan, hard to understand or contains a typographical error, you will give the employer reason to assume you may not live up to his/her expectations of you on the job.

Remember, your resume is the first "writing sample" an employer will see!

GENERIC SAMPLE

NAME

Street Address City, State Zip Phone Number(s) E-mail Address

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School Wilmington, Delaware

J.D. expected May 20__

GPA/Rank: Competitions: 3.010/Top 25 percent (include GPA only if 3.0 or higher) Include participation in Trial Advocacy, Writing, Moot

Court or Alternative Dispute Resolution Competitions

Activities:

Active participation in student bar association groups

Memberships: Student Member of PA Bar Association

Name of Undergraduate School City, State

B.A. awarded May 20__

Major:

GPA: (or class rank) [Optional]

Honors: Research: Activities: Memberships:

EXPERIENCE

Name of Employer City, State Dates worked

<u>Job Title</u>. Job descriptions (use phrases beginning with action verbs; divide phrases with semicolons or periods; use present tense if still working with this employer; otherwise, the past tense of verbs should be used.

INTERESTS

This section is optional but recommended if space allows.

Law-Related Action Verbs

convicted accepted guided provided handled accomplished coordinated publicized achieved held corrected pursued acquitted corresponded highlighted questioned adapted counseled identified read added implemented recommended created administered critiqued improved reconciled admitted cross-examined increased recorded advised informed rectified debated advocated defended initiated redirected afforded defined reduced innovated aided delivered inquired referred demonstrated instituted reported allocated amended deposed instructed represented analyzed described interpreted researched answered designed interrogated resolved appeared determined interviewed responded revealed applied deterred introduced appointed developed investigated reviewed approved devised launched revised arbitrated devoted litigated ruled argued directed maintained scheduled arranged disseminated selected managed articulated distributed maximized served assembled mediated documented settled assessed drafted mobilized solved edited modified specialized assisted effected monitored attained specified attended elucidated named sponsored authored enforced negotiated strategized observed strengthened balanced engaged billed engineered obtained studied briefed entered operated submitted budgeted established orchestrated subpoenaed catalogued evaluated organized suggested chaired oriented executed summarized challenged exercised originated supervised changed expanded oversaw supported classified explained participated surveyed collected explored persuaded targeted taught combined exposed pinpointed facilitated tracked communicated planned familiarized predicted trained compared competed filed prepared traveled compiled financed presented tried concluded focused prevailed updated conducted formulated produced verified constructed fulfilled processed won consulted gathered proofed worked contracted generated prosecuted wrote convinced governed protected used

Questions and Answers on Resume Writing

Below are frequently asked questions to the Career Development staff. The answers should help you in preparing a rough draft of your resume before your appointment. We may then spend our time clarifying wording and format, as well as dealing with concerns unique to your situation.

Keep in mind that the answers in this handout are only <u>suggestions</u>. There are a variety of approaches you may wish to take in creating your resume.

GENERAL

- Q: What is the purpose of a resume?
- A: A resume serves to introduce you to potential employers in the most favorable light possible, ultimately culminating in interviews. Further, what you include in your resume will influence the interviewer's questions and the tone of the interview in general. You actually exert a significant amount of control over the interview by what you present in your resume.
- Q. How do I begin to write a resume?
- A. The first thing you do when drafting a resume is to take an inventory of everything you have done. To begin this process you are going to make six (6) different lists with the following headings: education, work experience, activities, academics, interests and miscellaneous.

Under **education**, list all post-secondary education including law school, colleges and universities attended, exchange programs, off-campus study, etc. List degrees, month and year obtained or expected to obtain, names and locations of schools, major and minor, and grade point average.

Under **work experience**, list all jobs held full time, part time, paid or unpaid including externships. List the months and years you worked, position, name and location of employer, and your duties and responsibilities. You may also choose to create a separate legal experience section in order to distinguish your legal positions from your non-legal positions.

Under **activities**, list all extra- and co-curricular activities, i.e., organized groups, teams, clubs, community involvements in which you participated in both undergraduate school and in law school.

Under **academics**, list scholarships received, class rank, special recognition and academic achievements.

Under **interests**, list hobbies, travel experiences and special talents.

Under **miscellaneous**, list everything you left out thus far. This list may contain computer languages and software, foreign languages, etc.

DO NOT LIMIT YOURSELF AT THIS POINT; LIST EVERYTHING, EVEN IF IT SEEMS TRIVIAL.

- Q. Now that I have all this information, what do I do with it?
- A. Once you have made your lists, the editing process begins. Ask yourself the following questions for each item listed: Do I feel a sense of pride or accomplishment? Does it relate to what a prospective employer might be looking for? What aspects of my education, experience or skills will be most attractive to an employer? For example, working at Hershey Park as a ride attendant for three years may seem trivial to you, but being a conscientious worker and having the ability to deal with the public during this job may be pertinent information. Which things on my list show different aspects of my personality?
- Q. What do I do once I have identified the most pertinent information?
- A. Organize your information. Review the sample resumes in this packet. Prepare a draft copy of your resume and make an appointment with the Career Development Office to have it reviewed. Once the CDO has offered suggestions, prepare a final product.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Q: Should I include my memberships in student organizations and participation in activities? How should I include them?
- A: In general, well-rounded individuals impress legal employers, so it is recommended that you list your activities on your resume. The next question is, "What are the most important items to put on the resume?" Ask yourself which facts are most important to you, as well as what you are trying to accomplish. If you are trying to emphasize your writing ability or experience, you may include writing for the <u>Widener Law Review</u> or your participation in a writing competition. For future litigators, it may be important to

stress excellence in advocacy skills and training. Consider adding participation in trial competitions or memberships in Moot Court and/or Moe Levine.

PRE-LEGAL EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT

- Q: How much information about pre-legal education should I include? Should I mention high school?
- A: As with all sections of your resume, emphasize your <u>highest</u> levels of achievement. For example, mention serious academic honors and achievements, as well as positions of leadership in organizations. The inclusion of social/recreational activities will help present you as well-rounded. Regarding high school: this information is rarely included unless a specific reason exists for doing so, e.g., you attended a small select prep school or a school that you believe will be of special significance to the employer.
- Q: What if I have little or no legal background or experience?
- A: Probably at least one of your jobs, if not all, facilitated the development of skills and abilities which are used by a lawyer. For example, if you have sales experience or have otherwise dealt directly with people, you have probably developed excellent oral communication skills. Additionally, your participation in undergraduate activities and organizations may provide employers insight into your organizational and leadership skills. Other transferable skills include research and writing, analytical skills, problem solving, supervisory skills, ability to handle large workloads, negotiation skills, and ability to work independently.

Your career goals will influence the manner in which you present your experience. If you have experience in a field in which you wish to continue, it makes sense to include that experience. If your goal is to work for a law firm, emphasize your legal or law-related experience, such as law clerk. Remember to use law-related action words such as "drafted," "interviewed," "argued," etc., to assist you in describing your skills in a legally relevant manner. NOTE: It is recommended that you do not include personal pronouns on your resume.

- Q: What if I have substantial professional experience that is not law-related?
- A: You will want to find a balance whereby you emphasize the fact that you are a person with extensive professional experience, but without over-emphasizing your particular

field. You want to demonstrate that your orientation is now toward a law career, and that skills developed through previous work experience are transferable. An appointment with a Career Counselor will help you determine whether this is an appropriate option.

- Q: What if I have held a variety of jobs that were not on the same professional level to which I now aspire?
- A: You may include a short paragraph summarizing such experiences, e.g., "Held various hospitality industry positions providing the opportunity to build communication/public relations skills." If you worked in order to help finance your education, you may include this information, e.g., "Worked summers throughout college as (include title, separated by commas) contributing substantially to college tuition." See Resume Sample p. 13.
- Q: What if I have little or no work background?
- A: In this case, emphasize positions of responsibility, activities, honors and grades in college and law school, as well as community interests and volunteer activities.

PERSONAL/INTERESTS

- Q: Should I include personal data such as birth date, marital status, and health?
- A: The appropriate emphasis in a resume is on professional qualifications. Personal data is not included.
- Q: What if I took several years off to raise my children? How should this be reflected on my resume?
- A: If your gap in time is more than 6 months, it should be addressed in your resume. Create an "Other Experience" section towards the end of your resume. Briefly state that you were involved with significant volunteer and/or leadership positions (i.e. PTA Treasurer, School Fund Raiser- raised amount in # of years). These are significant achievements and denote skills that are transferable to the legal industry.

- Q: Should I list interests on a resume?
- A: This is an optional section on a resume, which is seen with increasing frequency. The advantage is that by including interests, you make it known you are a well-rounded person, and you create a safe topic of conversation, which can serve as an icebreaker for the interviewer.
- Q: How should I handle affiliations, which may point out a political, religious, or other orientation different from a potential employer?
- A: In order to strike a balance between being practical and being true to yourself, you must decide how important to your identity that affiliation is, and whether or not you can work comfortably with an employer with a different viewpoint. For example, if the affiliation is crucial to your identity, but you could work with an employer with a divergent viewpoint, you may want to de-emphasize the affiliation or leave it out. If you could not work with such an employer, it may be more important that your resume make your affiliation clear to potential employers.

REFERENCES

- Q: What about references?
- A: Ideally, references should be respected individuals in the legal field who are able to speak to your legal abilities. Include references as a separate document to your resume, listing each reference's name, title, work address, and work phone. If the relationship is not apparent, you might also consider including a brief line describing that person's relationship to you, e.g.: supervising attorney at Smith, Jones, and Wilson. You should confirm this information with your references; advise them as to when you will begin your job search, and follow-up with a courtesy copy of your resume for each reference.

BAR EXAMINATIONS/ADMISSIONS

Q. How should I reflect that I sat for a Bar Exam on my resume?

A: One example would be to include a separate section as your first entry on your resume entitled: BAR EXAMINATION(S) and then list "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" July 2014, results pending.

Q: As a graduate, how should I word my bar admission(s)?

A: There are several ways to present your bar admission(s). One alternative is to include separate header entitled "BAR ADMISSIONS" and then list "Supreme Court of Pennsylvania November 2014; Supreme Court of New Jersey, December, 2014; U.S. District Court E.D. Pa., November, 2014." See Resume Sample, p. 22. Another alternative is to center your bar admission across the page and state "Admitted to Supreme Court of Pennsylvania November, 2014:" or "Admitted to Practice Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, November, 2014." In any event, your bar admission(s) should appear at the top of your resume.

MISCELLANEOUS

Q: May I get further assistance with my resume?

A: Yes. After reading the information in this packet you may still want suggestions about specific concerns. Please make an appointment with the Career Development Office counselors to review your resume draft and discuss your career options.

The following is a checklist to aid in resume preparation.

Hold your resume at arm's length to see how it looks
Evaluate the content of your resume
Make important information easy to find
Use action verbs to describe work responsibilities
Use the correct tense (past/present) of action verbs
Review resume for correct capitalization, punctuation and dates

Review resume for consistency in date format usage
Make your name stand out by utilizing bold text, underlining or capital letters
List your current address, email address and telephone number
Match your resume content to the employer and the position sought
Include only accurate information
Review for typographical, grammatical and spelling errors
Eliminate excessive type/font styles, sizes, lines or boxes creating a "busy" look
Avoid excessive blank space on your resume
Avoid excessive repetition of words or phrases including articles like "a," "an" and "the.'

First-Year Student

JOHN J. JUSTICE

1515 Somewhere Street Anywhere, Pennsylvania 17110 (717) 999-9999 ijustice@internet.net

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

Competitions: Alternative Dispute Resolution, *finalist*

Memberships: Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division

Dickinson College

B.A. awarded May 20

Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Major: Political Science

GPA: 3.18

Honor: Dean's List (all semesters); Dickinson Scholar

Activities: NCAA Division III (Centennial Conference), *Captain* – Track & Field

Volunteer: Habitat for Humanity – Chester, PA (semester breaks)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Widener University Delaware Law School

Fall 20

Wilmington, Delaware

Law Library Assistant. Worked in government documents section; maintained tax and labor loose-leaf services; filed state and federal slip laws; assisted patrons in locating the proper reference materials and government documents.

Dickinson College

Fall 20 & Spring 20

Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Resident Assistant. Assisted students in campus residence hall with academic and social issues; developed programming; maintained safety and order in the residence halls.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

*Held various other positions throughout college, including bartender, lifeguard and waiter to finance undergraduate education.

INTERESTS

Softball, golf, theater

Second-Year Student – Extended Division

MARILYN R. SPENCER

mrspencer@anywhere.com 20 Spring Drive Malvern, PA 19111 (610) 541-0000

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

Wilmington, Delaware

J.D. expected May 20___ Extended Division

GPA: 3.013 (Top 20 percent = 3.011) Honor: Certificate of Achievement: Torts

Leadership: Treasurer, Environmental Law and Policy Society

Competition: Pace University Environmental Law Writing Competition - semi-finalist

Lehigh University B.S. awarded May 20

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania cum laude

Major: Economics

Minor: Business Administration

Activity: Chi Omega Sorority, Intramural Sports Coordinator

Study Abroad: University of Cologne (2 semesters), Cologne, West Germany

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Jones & Powell May 20 - Present

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Law Clerk</u>. Conduct legal research primarily in the area of insurance defense claims arising out of medical malpractice suits; draft briefs, memoranda and pleadings; summarize depositions; assist attorney in trial preparation; and observe appellate arguments.

The Honorable Donald E. Wieand

Summer 20

Superior Court of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Judicial Clerk</u>. Analyzed cases submitted to and/or argued before the Superior Court; researched case and statutory law; drafted opinions and bench memoranda and assisted with court week duties.

EMPLOYMENT

Lambert Industries

June 20__ - May 20__

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Account Executive</u>. Assessed customer requirements; generated corporate accounts in excess of \$2 million; procured government business; negotiated pricing structure for purchasing contracts; and reviewed and evaluated new product implementation procedures.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Lehigh University Alumni Club - Board of Directors, Big Brother/Big Sister Program - 3 year volunteer

Second-Year Student – Regular Division

JANE D. DEMURRER

2030 Anywhere Road Somewhere, Pennsylvania 19380 Home (215) 666-6666 • jddemur2030@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

Rank: 10 out of 159

Law Review: <u>The Delaware Journal of Corporate Law</u>, Staff

Honors: Widener Scholar; Dean's Honors List (Fall 20xx and Spring 20xx);

Phi Delta Phi, Harrington Inns of Court

Memberships: American Bankruptcy Institute, Student Membership

Saint Joseph's University

B.A. awarded May 20

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Major: History GPA: 3.46

Honors: Phi Alpha Theta, National History Honor Society

Pi Gamma Nu, Social Science Honor Society

Dean's List (all semesters)

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

United States Bankruptcy Court

Summer 20

Eastern District of Pennsylvania Reading, Pennsylvania

<u>Law Clerk</u>. Researched legal issues related to the United States Bankruptcy Code; drafted judicial opinions; and observed Chapter 11 and Chapter 7 hearings and prehearing judicial conferences.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Macys, Inc. Summers 20__-20__

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Assistant Manager</u>. Supervised and trained staff of 14 employees. Handled all opening and closing procedures, sales meetings and incentive program, bank deposits, receipts and computer level inventory control.

Held various positions throughout college to help finance undergraduate education.

Second-Year Student - Regular Division

John M. Alexander

119 Crawford Lane Blue Bell, Pennsylvania 19099 (215) 444-4444 jmalex@amethyst.net

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

Honors: Certificate of Achievement - Property I

High Grades: Torts I (A); Property I (A+); Legal Methods (A-) Member: Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

The Pennsylvania State University

B.S. awarded May 20

University Park, Pennsylvania

Major: Internal Family Studies
Minor: Business/Liberal Arts

GPA: 3.1/4.0

Honor: University Scholarship - Freshman Year

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Delaware County Legal Services

August 20 to Present

Media, Pennsylvania

Legal Assistant: Assist attorneys representing indigent clients in matters of general practice including divorce, child custody, personal injury and landlord/tenant law.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Dick's Sporting Goods

May 20 to July 20

Christiana, Delaware

Sales: Assisted customers in selection of merchandise; operated cash register; opened and closed department.

VOLUNTEER WORK

County Division Three Little League Coach Division of Youth and Family Services-Big Brother Program

Third-Year Student – Regular Division

U. Charles Cullen, III

1300 North South Road Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17999 (717) 111-1111

uccull@webmaster.biz

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

3.243; (Top 20% of class) G.P.A.: Moot Court Honor Society Honors:

Advocacy Training: Intensive Trial Advocacy Program

Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

Class Representative, Student Bar Association Leadership: Memberships: Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division

Gettysburg College

B.A. awarded June 20

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

3.25 GPA: Major: Finance

Honors: Dean's List (8 semesters)

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Katz & Simmons Summer 20

Media, Pennsylvania

Law Clerk. Conducted legal research on medical malpractice issues. Drafted motions for summary judgment and summaries of depositions. Conducted client intake interviews. Assisted in trial preparation and organized exhibits.

Chester County Court of Common Pleas, West Chester, Pennsylvania Summer 20 Judicial Clerk Intern. Assisted Judge's law clerk in reviewing briefs, petitions and orders; researched criminal law and procedural issues; assisted in trial preparation and trial conferences; drafted opinions.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

September 20 - May 20

Dormitory Resident Assistant. Served as a counselor for 75 coed students in a university residential hall. Coordinated dormitory activities; acted as student liaison in dealing with university administration; performed various counseling functions.

Two-Page Resume

CHRISTOPHER P. ALLEN

2500 East West Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19999 home (215) 555-5555 work (215) 666-6666 c allen456@erols.com

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D./M.B.A. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

Honors: Certificate of Achievement, Civil Procedure Membership: Philadelphia Bar Association, Student Division

School of Business Administration

Chester, Pennsylvania

Honors: Dean's List (2 semesters)

Temple University

B.B.A. awarded May 19

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

summa cum laude

Major: Accounting G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0

Honors: Dean's List (all semesters)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Philadelphia Platforms, Inc.

March 20 - Present

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Controller</u>. Supervise financial management of corporation. Plan and implement budgets and cash flow analysis. Prepare payroll and all corporate tax returns. Oversee computer and manual operations including internal auditing. (November 20_ - February 20_)

Senior Staff Accountant. Prepared tax returns for individuals, corporations and partnerships; provided compilation and review services; represented clients at tax audits and arranged deferred payment agreements with various governmental agencies. *Achievements* – Promoted to Senior Staff Accountant after one year as Junior Staff Accountant. (November 20 – October 20)

Christopher P. Allen Page Two

<u>Junior Staff Accountant</u>. Worked with senior staff accountants to assist with preparation of tax returns; attended client tax audits with senior staff; assisted with other general administrative tasks. (December 20 - October 20)

McTavish and Company

July 20 - November 20

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Junior Accountant</u>. Maintained cost accounting and inventory records and assisted in preparation of monthly financial reports to management.

Safety Insurance Co.

May 20__ - June 20__

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Claims Service Representative</u>. Received and reviewed property and casualty claim reports; recorded statements from involved parties and witnesses and participated in other investigative and claim settlement procedures. *Achievements* – revised claims procedure manual and successfully negotiated 50 claims resulting in 20% cost savings for company.

<u>Office Assistant.</u> Handled high volume of client intakes; performed scheduling and general administrative tasks.

Wilson Temporary Staffing Inc.

May 19 - April 20

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<u>Temporary Secretary.</u> Worked in various business settings on a temporary basis, assisting management with accounting, budgets and secretarial duties, such as web maintenance, filing, and client communications.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Habitat for Humanity Red Cross Blood Drive Representative

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Certified Public Accountant

INTERESTS

Classical music, piano, world history, certified NASCAR Mechanic

Third/Fourth Year Student

Joseph Davis

2525 North Main Street North Ashcroft, New Jersey 19999 (215) 222-2222 joe d@rex.com

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School Wilmington, Delaware

Juris Doctor expected May 20__

GPA: 3.21

Honors: Executive Board Member, Moe Levine Trial Advocacy Honor Society

Oral Advocacy: Semi-finalist, Hugh B. Pearce Trial Advocacy Competition

Argued State's case-in-chief in matter involving collection of fire

insurance policy

Law Review: Case note Writer, <u>The Widener Law Review</u>
Memberships: Association of Trial Lawyers of America

New Jersey Bar Association, Student Membership

American Criminal Justice Association, Student Membership

Villanova University Villanova, Pennsylvania Bachelor of Arts awarded May 20_

Major: Political Science Minor: Criminal Justice

Honors: Pi Sigma Alpha, Political Science Honor Society;

Dean's List – 3 semesters

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Smith, Jones & Brown Cherry Hill, Pennsylvania Summer 20

Law Clerk. Drafted discovery requests and responses in personal injury cases; performed investigative services necessary for preparation of cases including witness interviews, document searches, and filing of pleadings in state and federal courts.

Court of Common Pleas Pretrial Services Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Summer 20

Bail Interviewer. Interviewed defendants prior to preliminary arraignment and assimilated information on prior record, current charges, and court appearance history to determine risk of flight; provided conclusions as to appropriate bail amounts and recommendations to the Presiding Municipal Court Judge for purposes of lodging bench warrants.

Third/Fourth Year Student

Lawrence L. Marks

121 Progress Street Folcroft, PA 19999 (215) 555-5555

e-mail: llmarks3301@mail.widener.edu

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School

J.D. expected May 20

Wilmington, Delaware

GPA: 3.069 Class Rank: Top 25%

Honors: Law Review, Widener Law Journal

Publication: Marks, Lawrence L., The Fourth Amendment in the New

Millennium. 8 Widener L. J. 212 (20)

Activities: Widener New Horizons Club, Vice President

Pennsylvania Bar Association, Student Division

St. Joseph's University

B.A. awarded May 20

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Major: English GPA: 3.5

Honors: Dean's List (7 of 8 semesters)

Activity: Varsity Soccer Team

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Pennsylvania Civil Clinic

May 20 - present

Widener University Delaware Law School

Certified Legal Intern. Conduct legal research; draft pleadings, memoranda and briefs; interview clients; negotiate agreements; represent clients at mediation as well as court hearings pursuant to Pennsylvania Supreme Court Rules 321 and 322.

Smith, Jones & Brown

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Summer 20

Law Clerk. Conducted legal research, prepared motions, and drafted memoranda on a variety of topics relating to corporate law; assisted in trial preparation.

INTERESTS

Golf, Music, U.S. History

REFERENCE PAGE - SEPARATE DOCUMENT FROM RESUME

Lawrence L. Marks

121 Progress Street Folcroft, PA 19999 (215) 555-5555 e-mail: llmarks@law.widener.edu

REFERENCES

Professor Thomas Torts Widener University Delaware Law School 4601 Concord Pike Wilmington, Delaware 19803 (302) 477-3900 (Torts Professor)

John D. Smith, Esquire Smith, Jones & Brown 277 Somewhere Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19999 (215) 999-9999 (Supervising Attorney at Smith, Jones & Brown)

Professor Frances Finance Widener University Delaware Law School 4601 Concord Pike Wilmington, Delaware 19803 (302) 477-3900 (Business Organizations Professor)

Third/Fourth Year Evening Division

Patricia Patent

123 Main Street Anywhere, Delaware 12345 (302) 555-1234 patsypat@gravitas.net

EDUCATION

Widener University Delaware Law School Wilmington, Delaware

J.D. expected May 20___ Extended Division

Rank: Top 30%

Honors: Certificate of Achievement, Legal Methods II

Certificate of Achievement, Patent Law

High Grades: Legal Methods II (A-)

Patent Law (A+) Copyright Law (A)

University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania B.S. awarded May 20_

summa cum laude

Major: Chemical Engineering

G.P.A.: 3.82/4.0

Honors: Dean's List (all semesters)
Activities: President, Engineering Society

Dormitory Resident Advisor

Chair, Special Olympics Committee (Fall 1998)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office Washington, D.C.

June 20__ - Present

<u>Patent Examiner</u>. Determine the patentability of inventions submitted by engineers, inventors and scientists to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Analyze the subject matter of the application for a patent, as well as the prior art to the field. Grant or reject the claims of the application. Possess area of specialization in chemical engineering. Gained knowledge of patent laws and rules of practice using the *Manual of Patent Examining Practice and Procedure*.

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

March 20

INTERESTS

Renaissance Art, Antiques, Gardening, Hot Air Ballooning

Recent Graduate

SARA M. ABRAHAMSON

429 Alcott Drive Wilmington, Delaware 19808 (302) 478-2222 (H) sara m a law374@yahoo.com

BAR ADMISSIONS

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

State of New Jersey December 20 LEGAL EXPERIENCE **Schaffer and Lewis** September 20 to Present Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Associate Attorney. Civil defense firm with emphasis in patent litigation; correspond with clients and provide opinions as to patentability of client's products; assigned an excess of twenty-five files. Law Clerk. Researched legal issues; prepared briefs, motions, pleadings and discovery responses. (November 20 - May 20_) Law Offices of Alan C. Marks May 20 to September 20 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Law Clerk. Firm specializing in personal injury litigation; researched legal issues; prepared briefs, motions, pleadings and discovery; corresponded with clients and interviewed trial witnesses; prepared files for arbitration and trial. **EDUCATION** Widener University Delaware Law School J.D. awarded May 20

Women's Law Caucus

Research: Completed research in the area of Toxic Tort Litigation under the direction of

High Grades: Contracts II; Criminal Procedure; Legal Methods/Analysis, Research & Writing

Student Bar Association, Class Representative

Professor Theresa X. Torts.

Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity

Villanova University Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Wilmington, Delaware

Activities:

Major: Industrial Engineering
Minor: English Literature

B.S. awarded May 20

November 20

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON COVER LETTER WRITING

- Q. What information should I include in a cover letter?
- A. A cover letter should highlight your skills and qualifications as they relate to your targeted employer. This differs from the resume, which highlights your achievements and accomplishments. Your cover letter should not repeat verbatim the information contained in your resume, but instead, demonstrate how your skills can meet the employer's needs. The employer perceives the cover letter as a writing sample and/or work product; therefore, it should be treated as such by you. NOTE: A common pitfall in writing a cover letter is the over-use of personal pronouns to begin sentences and paragraphs. Always review your cover letter to determine if editing is necessary.
- Q. What is the appropriate length of a cover letter?
- A. The cover letter should be written in a strong, concise, but brief manner. It is strongly recommended that a cover letter be no more than one page in length.
- Q. May I use the same cover letter for each employer?
- A. In today's competitive job market, every effort should be made to strengthen your candidacy. Individuality and creativity will pique the interest of the reader while the mass mailing of form cover letters is ineffective and wasteful and easily recognized by the employer. It conveys a lack of research and, therefore, knowledge about the employer, as well as a lack of commitment to wanting to work for that employer. Conducting research on employers before preparing your cover letter enables you to personalize or target cover letters to individual employers.
- Q. How should I address my cover letter?
- A. It is best to address your cover letter to the firm's designated contact person. If this information is not available, it is suggested you phone the firm to acquire the name of the contact person. If you cannot determine who the individual contact person is, use the title of the firm's contact person, e.g., "Recruitment Coordinator," "Hiring Partner," etc. **AVOID** the use of "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern" as salutations.
- Q. What does an employer look for when reading a cover letter?
- A. You should answer the reader's questions, "Why is this candidate interested in my firm/organization?" "What can this candidate do for me (my organization)?" Tell the employer specifically why you want to work for them and also convey to the employer your relevant experience and abilities as well as concrete evidence that you possess those skills necessary to perform the job. Remember that your cover letter is, in a very real sense, a

schematic of yourself. It reflects your personality, your attention to detail, your communication skills, your enthusiasm, and your intellect. Your cover letter and resume are usually all an employer has to decide whether or not you will reach the next phase in the application process -- the interview. These documents are the first Writing Samples an employer reads, as such, they should be concisely written and free of any typographical or grammatical errors.

- Q. How should I address a request for salary requirements in a job ad?
- A. Often it is difficult to determine what a specific position will pay. Although you may be interested, there is a concern that your salary requirements may be too high or too low for consideration for the position. The best way to handle this request is to state a salary range that is typical for the position, e.g., I am currently interviewing for positions in the low to mid sixties. The Career Development Office has salary surveys available to help you determine what the market will bear for the position you seek in your geographic region.

<u>CAUTION:</u> All documents should be spell checked/proofread for errors <u>before</u> sending/mailing to employers.

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

Below is a **standard cover letter format** for reference when creating cover letters.

Your Name
Mailing Address
City, State and Zip Code
Telephone Number
E-mail Address

Today's Date

Contact's Name, Job Title Firm/Organization Name Mailing Address

Dear Mr. (or Ms.) Last Name:

The first paragraph should answer the questions: Why do you want to work for this employer and what intrigued you about the potential position? Start the letter with an attention getter: a statement that establishes a connection with your reader, research conducted, or person who referred you. State something unique about the firm or organization and why it is of specific interest to you. Briefly state what job you are applying for and briefly who you are (1L, 2L, 3L, licensed DE attorney, etc...).

The second and/or third paragraphs should consist of relevant points about the firm's/organization's needs and your qualifications and how you can add value. Reference your enclosed resume here (i.e. As my enclosed resume provides, ...). This is where you need to sell yourself! Relate your skills and qualifications, whether direct or transferable, to the needs of the employer by stating relevant experience, achievements and how it benefits the employer. You should support all statements of your abilities with specific examples of your achievements or job tasks that relate to your abilities. (i.e. "I have excellent organizational skills and in my current position created a new database for client files"...) **Do not summarize your resume**. Keep in mind that the focus of this paragraph should be what you can do for them, not what they can do for you! (You may find it helpful to break this information into two paragraphs, one concentrating on your knowledge, skills and abilities, and a second paragraph relating these qualifications to the employers needs.)

The closing paragraph should pave your way to an interview. Restate your interest in the position and your desire for an interview. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Restate your phone # and email address for their convenience.

Very truly yours,

Your handwritten signature

Your Name (typed)

Enclosure(s) – Use the term enclosure if sending materials by regular mail. Attachment(s) – Use the term attachment if sending materials by e-mail.

FIRST-YEAR SAMPLE

Joshua S. Silverstone

53 Colony Boulevard Building 3, Apartment 1067 Wilmington, DE 19927 (302) 555-9842 josh silrock@gmail.com

(Insert date here)

Joanne Angelou, Esquire Hiring Partner Dewey, Snerd & Angelou, LLC 6822 Delaware Avenue Wilmington, DE 19722

Dear Ms. Angelou:

At your suggestion and Mr. Joseph Bush, I reviewed the information on your website concerning your summer program and was intrigued by the significant opportunities offered for legal research and writing. I have excelled in my legal writing classes and look forward to the prospect of making a positive contribution in your summer program.

As my attached resume indicates, my work background has allowed me to develop numerous job skills applicable to the legal world. As the co-chair of my mock trial team in college, I began my training in public speaking and oral advocacy. As a cashier and later manager for Office Depot in Wilmington, I experienced a high-pressure work environment where I was required to balance competing priorities and keep customers happy while also implementing cost-saving strategies. Currently, I am working part-time as a telemarketer for a local credit card company and have developed my communication and problem-solving skills, which I am confident will help me succeed as your summer intern.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at (302) 555-9842 or by email at <u>josh_silrock@hotmail.usa</u>. Thank you for your consideration of my resume.

Very truly yours,

Joshua S. Silverstone

Attachment

SECOND-YEAR SAMPLE

Kaneesha C. Washington

451 South Cherry Avenue Holland Point, DE 19825 (302) 555-7621 kaneesha.washington@gmail.com

(Insert date here)

Lawrence H. Schwartz, Esquire Schwartz and Associates The Riddick Building, Suite 86015 2400 John F. Kennedy Parkway Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

Your website mentions that your firm represents plaintiffs in products liability and medical malpractice matters. I am very interested in these areas of practice and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to positively contribute to the work at your firm. I am currently a second year law student at Widener University Delaware Law School and would like to be considered for your summer clerkship position as advertised through my Career Development Office.

As my attached resume demonstrates, my background includes a variety of experience that is relevant to your litigation practice. Last summer, I worked with the Bureau of Consumer Protection at the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. That position allowed me to perform a variety of tasks including conducting legal research, writing memoranda of law, counseling consumers on products liability issues and negotiating settlements with business owners. In addition, my work as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for the past six (6) years has taught me how to balance my priorities and provided me with valuable people skills, which I developed further while working for the Attorney General. My EMT experience also exposed me to legal issues related to healthcare, including medical malpractice.

I am confident that my work with the Attorney General has prepared me to contribute to your products liability practice, while my EMT experience will serve you well in the analysis of medical malpractice matters. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at (302) 555-6721 or via email at kaneeshdub@centric.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Kaneesha C. Washington

THIRD-YEAR SAMPLE-FIRM

Jane R. Green

114 Silverside Road Wilmington, DE 19802 (302) 454-2252 jgreen@gmail.com

(Insert date here)

Jonathan F. Gold, Esquire Senior Partner Silver, Gold & Platinum LLC 416 Legal Way, Suite 411 Georgetown, DE 19967

Dear Mr. Gold:

I met your colleague, Janice Emerald, at a Delaware Bar Association function, and she recommended I contact you immediately regarding an open associate attorney position with your firm. After reviewing your website, I was excited to read about your successful Criminal Defense practice. I have a strong interest in criminal defense work and have discussed my relevant experience below. I am currently a third-year student at Widener University Delaware Law School and am on schedule to graduate this May.

As my attached resume indicates, I have had two valuable internships as a Delaware Law student. After my first year, I was selected to work as a summer intern with the Delaware Attorney General's Office. This experience allowed me to participate in each aspect of the criminal justice system and also provided me with practical experience drafting legal orders and memoranda. During my second summer, I interned with the United States Army's Judge Advocate General Corps. While there, I assisted in Courts-Martial and drafted briefs on behalf of the United States of America. My exposure to the prosecution of criminal cases for the State of Delaware and The United States Army has provided me with a valuable and strategic perspective on criminal defense work, which will be of benefit to you in your practice.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. I can be reached at (302) 454-2252 or by email at jgreen@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration of my resume.

Very truly yours,

Jane R. Green

Attachment

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SAMPLE (with prior clerkship experience)

John C. Law

2117 North Widener Avenue New Wilmington, PA 08797 (610) 555-1212 johnclaw@gmail.com

(Insert date here)

The Honorable Richard A. Bean Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas 400 Swede Street, P.O. Box 311 Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Dear Judge Bean:

During this past school year, I had the honor of working as an extern with your colleague Judge LeRoy Mervin. Since he has retired from the bench, Judge Mervin suggested I contact you to express my interest in applying for a judicial clerkship with you during the 2015-2016 term. I am currently a fourth year evening division student at Widener University Delaware Law School. In addition, I am a native of Norristown and intend to practice law in my hometown.

My experience with Judge Mervin exposed me to the challenges and rewards offered while working as judicial clerk. I carried out a wide variety of tasks for the Judge, such as performing legal research, drafting opinions, assisting during *voir dire* and providing support at settlement conferences. These experiences would allow me to make an immediate positive contribution to your chambers should you grant me the opportunity to work with you. In addition, my academic achievements support my ability to positively contribute to your work. For example, I obtained a Certificate of Achievement in Legal Methods II signifying the highest grade in the class. I also performed well above the class average in my Pennsylvania Civil Practice class and the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program.

I look forward to utilizing both my academic and work experience and skills as outlined above and in my attached resume. I would be honored to meet with you to discuss the contributions I might make to your chambers and can be reached at your convenience at (610) 555-1212 or via email at johnclaw@gmail.com.

Thank you	for consid	dering my	application.
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Respectful	lv	
respectia	 J	;

John C. Law

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SAMPLE (NO PRIOR CLERKSHIP EXPERIENCE)

Jane C. Law

2117 North Widener Avenue New Wilmington, PA 08797 (610) 555-1212 janelaw@gmail.com

(Insert date here)

The Honorable Helen T. Thomas Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas 400 Swede Street, P.O. Box 311 Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Dear Judge Thomas:

I am writing to you to express my interest in clerking for your chambers post graduation from law school. I am currently a fourth year evening division student at Widener University Delaware Law School. In addition, I am a native of Norristown and intend to practice law in my hometown.

As my attached resume details, I have served as an intern with two law firms in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. At both of these firms, I conducted legal research and drafted memoranda, briefs and motions. In addition, my academic achievements support my ability to positively contribute to your work. For example, I obtained a Certificate of Achievement in Legal Methods II signifying the highest grade in the class. I also performed above average in my Pennsylvania Civil Practice class and the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program. I am confident that my research and writing experience as well as my exposure to Pennsylvania procedural rules will allow me to make an immediate positive contribution to your chambers.

I look forward to applying both my legal experience and skills outlined above and in my attached resume. I would be honored to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. I can be reached at your convenience at (610) 555-1212 or by email at janelaw@gmail.com.

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Respectfully,

Jane C. Law

Attachment

THIRD-YEAR EXTENDED DIVISION (3ED) SAMPLE - ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Joan E. Barnes

1101 North Oak Road Castle Park, NJ 08062 (876) 555-9263 Joan.E.Barnes@widener.edu

(Insert date here)

Carol E. Gowling, Esquire Executive Director Friends of Coral Reefs 4450 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 200 Washington, D.C. 20034

Dear Ms. Gowling:

In examining your website, I was very impressed by the variety of activities that Friends of Reefs undertakes to educate lawmakers and the public regarding the dangers faced by the reef ecosystem. I would like to be considered for your summer intern position that you listed on PSJD.org. I am currently a third year Evening Division student at Widener University Delaware Law School.

As demonstrated in my enclosed resume, I have been successful in law school. I rank in the top third of my class and performed well in a variety of classes. I received an "A" in my Civil Procedure and Environmental Law classes and will be taking the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program (ITAP) at the end of this school year. Currently, I work as a volunteer at the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic (Clinic) where I have performed legal research and drafted the federal preclusion section of the Clinic's recent *amicus* brief to the United States Supreme Court filed in opposition to proposed state regulations permitting commercial development of Delaware wetlands. While attending law school, I work full-time as a litigation support paralegal with Krump & Stone, LLC, located in Wilmington, Delaware.

I am highly motivated to do everything I can to help stop the devastation of the world's reef systems. For the last eighteen years, I have enjoyed scuba diving on various reefs in the Caribbean, including the fantastic Belize Barrier Reef. I have seen with my own eyes the deterioration of coral structures during that period. Global warming, pollution, careless anchoring practices and mindless harvesting of coral have all contributed to the crisis that reefs face worldwide. I am confident that my academic and work experiences would allow me to positively contribute to the Friends of Reefs mission to protect coral structures located outside the National Park system.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in Washington, D.C. to further explore how I might assist you with your important work. Please contact me at your convenience at (876) 555-9263 or via email at Joan.E.Barnes@widener.edu.

CC1 1		•			
Thank	VOII	tor	VOIII	consideration.	

Very truly yours,

Joan E. Barnes

OUT OF TOWN JOB SEARCH

Your Name Contact Information

Date
Contact person Firm name Address
Dear :
I am presently attending Widener University Delaware Law School and will receive a Juris Doctor degree in May, 20 I am interested in applying to (Name of firm) for an associate position following the completion of my studies in May. After reviewing your website, I was pleased to learn that your firm specializes in (areas of law). In addition, I am quite familiar with and fond of (City name) as I have several friends and relatives who live in the area. (state your connection to the area).
My academic achievements and my legal experience with (name of organization) have provided me with a strong substantive background in (relevant areas of law). Throughout law school, I held positions that often required as much as 20 hours of work each week. My work with clients, including drafting motions and legal memoranda, enabled me to build practical legal skills, which would be of value to your firm. I look forward to putting that experience to work on behalf of your firm.
I have enclosed a resume and writing sample for your consideration. I would be pleased to speak with you about the needs of your firm during the coming year. I will be in (geographic area) (state dates) and would appreciate meeting with you during that period. I can be reached at (phone) or (email). Thank you very much for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.
Very truly yours,
Name

ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION SAMPLES

Letters for Acceptance of Offer

Dear Mr. Reed:

I am very pleased to accept your offer of employment with Smith & Reed. I thoroughly enjoyed my recent visit to the firm to meet with several junior and senior associates in the Corporate Department, including Joan Smith and Tom Peters. I plan to contact them in the next few days to thank them for their assistance in making this important decision.

Thank you and I hope that we will have an opportunity to speak again before I begin next summer.

Sincerely,

Offer received: acceptance/rejection put off:

Dear Ms. Connell:

I appreciate your interest in me for an associate position with your firm. I am still very interested in the possibility of working for (Name of firm). However, in view of the fact that I am considering other possibilities at this time, I am not prepared to make a final commitment. Understanding that you must make some decisions too, I will make a final decision by ______, and will communicate that decision to you. I appreciate your understanding and flexibility.

Again, thank you for your offer.

Sincerely,

Detailed Letter Rejecting an Offer:

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to advise you that, after much deliberation, I will not be accepting your offer to join Smith & Reed. As I am sure you can imagine, my decision was based on a great deal of information obtained over the course of a lengthy recruitment process. Through the candor and forthrightness of you and your colleagues, I was provided with excellent information about Smith & Reed. The friendly and professional demeanor of everyone I met with, coupled with Smith & Reed's outstanding corporate practice, made this a very difficult decision. I would like to thank you again for all of your consideration and assistance in this endeavor, and hope that our paths cross again in the future.

Sincerely,

*It is also good practice to write a note even if you do not get offered the job. In addition to displaying good manners, it is possible that your resume could be kept on file for future openings or be passed on to the interviewer's colleagues who may also be seeking help. Never burn your bridges! Try turning the negative into a positive!

ENTRY LEVEL ATTORNEY/ALUMNI COVER LETTER Jane R. Green

114 Silverside Road Wilmington, DE 19802 (302) 454-2252 jrg@yahoo.com

(Insert date here)

Jonathan F. Gold, Esquire Silver, Gold & Platinum LLC 416 Legal Way, Suite 411 Georgetown, DE 19967

Dear Mr. Gold:

I met your colleague, Janice Emerald, at a Delaware Bar Association function, and she recommended I contact you immediately regarding an open associate attorney position with your firm. After reviewing your website, I was excited to learn about your established Real Estate practice. Prior to law school, I excelled in the real estate field, earning top ratings and a strong reputation for client service. As a student at Widener University Delaware Law School, I set high goals and worked hard, ultimately achieving top academic rankings throughout law school. Currently, I am seeking an entry-level attorney position that will allow me to build upon these successes with a thriving legal team. Accordingly, I am submitting my resume for consideration.

As my attached resume indicates, my academic record and professional experience have prepared me to excel as an attorney. Since my first year of law school, I have demonstrated skill in legal research and analysis. I have received several Certificates of Achievement awarded to students earning the highest grade in a course and have ranked consistently in the Top 5% of my law school class. I also have gained relevant practical experience that will allow me to succeed as an attorney in your firm. As a summer law clerk for Commercial Real Estate Group of Tatum Law & Associates, I assisted in drafting purchase and sale agreements and commercial retail leases. In addition, this past semester, I worked as a judicial extern for the Delaware Court of Common Pleas. While there, I carried out a wide variety of tasks for my Judge including performing legal research, analyzing statutes, drafting opinions, and providing support at settlement conferences. Similarly, my real estate experience provides me with a relevant knowledge base and transferable skills. As a top realtor, I prepared comparable market analysis, drafted purchase contracts, and negotiated for the purchase and sale of properties. My central goal was to provide top-notch client service. As a result, I maintained on-going relationships that garnered repeat business over the course of my career. I am confident that these experiences and my connections to the local real estate community will allow me to make a valuable contribution to Silver, Gold & Platinum.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in further detail. Should you wish to schedule an interview, I can be reached at (302) 454-2252 or by email at jrg@yahoo.com. Thank you for your consideration of my resume.

Very truly yours,

Jane R. Green