

Excerpts from the 2007 NALP Foundation Attorney Attrition Study

Hiring

- Respondents reported almost 15,700 associates, with about 4,400 hired in 2007 (30%).
- Laterals represented 48 percent of associate hires.
- Women made up 44 percent of associate hires.
- Minorities accounted for about 21 percent of associate hires.

Departures

- Firms reported about 2,600 associate departures in 2007 (almost 17% of associates).
- Women and minority departures were over-represented in departures by 4 percent.
- Sixty percent of departures came from associates hired in 2004 or later.
- Sixty-nine percent of entry-level associates—and 81 percent of lateral associates—left within 5 years.

Reasons for Leaving

- The three reasons for leaving most cited by departing associates were “pursuit of specific practice interests” (15%), “change in geographic location” (14%), and “career change to other legal job” (13%).
- Other factors: “hired by firm client”; “accompanying other departing attorneys”; “desire for to gain a more regular schedule”; and “better support for work-life balance” (all 7%).
- Forty-five percent of all associate departures were “unwanted” by the firm.
- Firms reported that less than 25 percent of departing associates failed to meet quality or productivity standards.

Where Did Departing Associates Go?

- Forty-eight percent stayed law firm associates.
- Eighteen percent became corporate in-house counsel.
- Six percent went into non-judicial government jobs.