

A capital idea

Law schools in capital cities offer outstanding opportunities for students, including a wealth of high-profile externships. And who knows? The governor may even stop by and offer advice. **BY SHERRY KARABIN**

When it comes to buying a home, location is key.

The right location also provides advantages for law students interested in landing government and public policy jobs. If that's their goal, they might want to choose a school in or near a state capital.

Nearly 50 law schools are based in capital cities throughout the U.S. Some capitals have more than one law school. Atlanta has three: Emory University School of Law, Georgia State University College of Law and Atlanta's John Marshall Law School.

University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law is in Sacramento, the capital of California. Erin O'Neal Muilenburg, director of the school's Capital Lawyering concentration, said McGeorge's location is one of the main reasons students select the school.

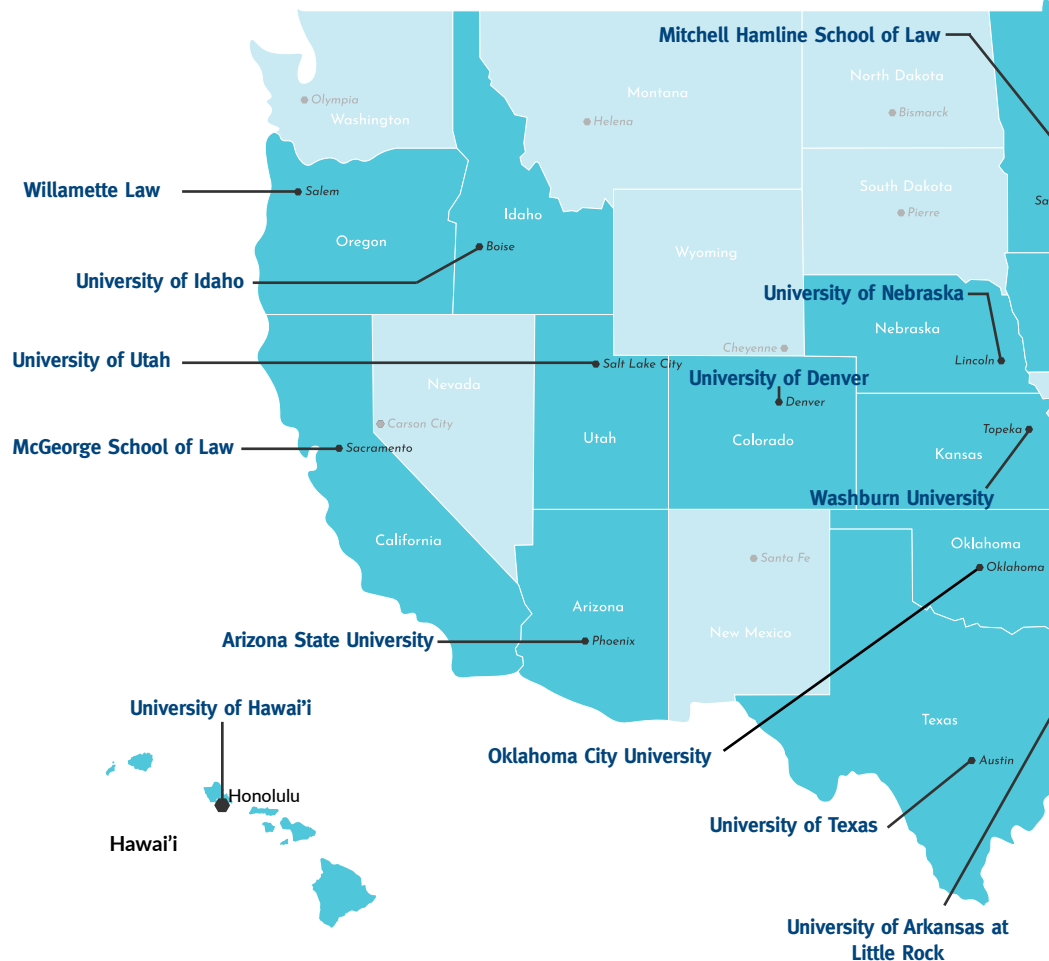
"The Capital Lawyering concentration is part of McGeorge's Capital Center for Law & Policy and attracts students who are interested in working at the intersection of law and public policy," Muilenburg said. "We have McGeorge alumni working at every level of government and legislative advocacy in and around California's capital."

The 14-unit concentration offers government-related externships. In addition, students can get hands-on experience through the school's Legislative and Public Policy Clinic, where they assist clients in drafting legislation and lobbying for its adoption by the state Legislature.

Several students have worked on bills that were signed into California law, Muilenburg said.

The concentration was one of the main reasons McGeorge graduate Arvinder Kaur chose the school.

Kaur, whose family moved to California from India in 1995, earned her teaching credential and master's degree through Teach For America. She wanted a law degree so she could work in the area of edu-



cation policy.

She graduated last May with a concentration in Capital Lawyering and plans to start her career as an associate with a firm that specializes in political and government law.

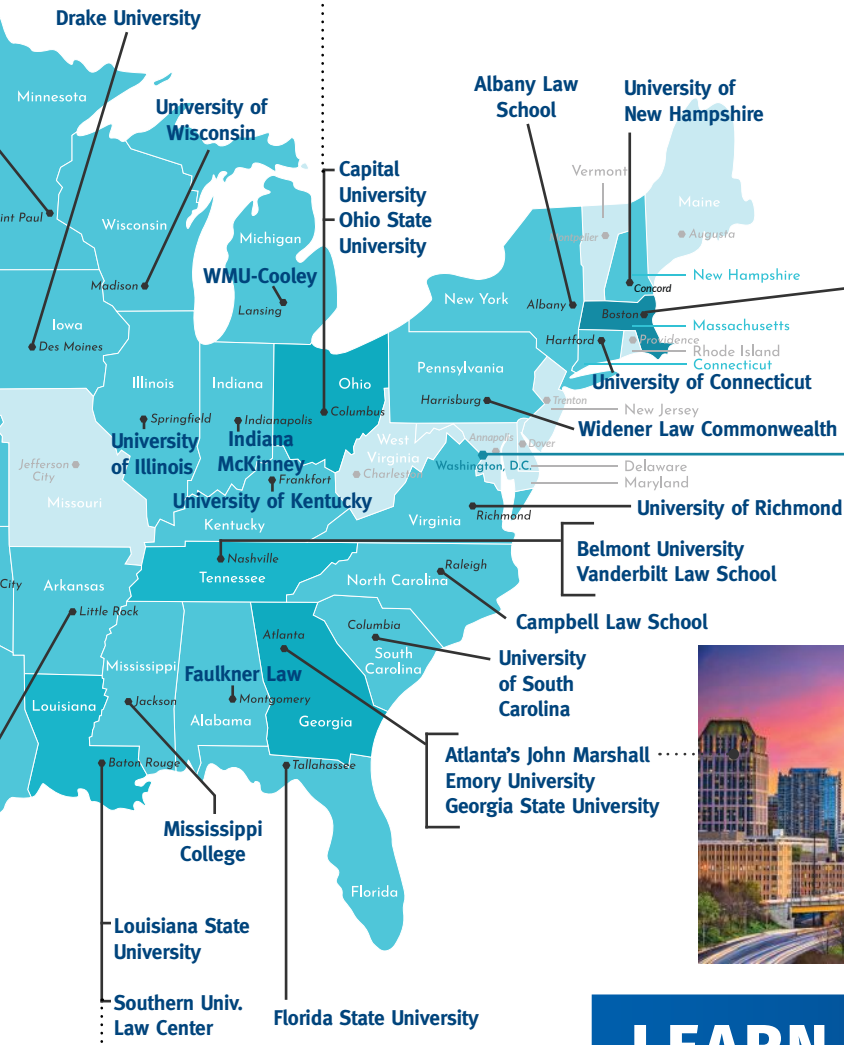
Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law in Indianapolis also places a large number of students in government-related legal positions.

"Because of our location, many students are able to get part-time positions as legislative assistants while taking classes, which can lead to full-time jobs," said Willow King Locke, assistant dean for professional development.

McKinney alums include former U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, who served as director of national intelligence during the Trump administration; and former U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks, who is now a faculty member.

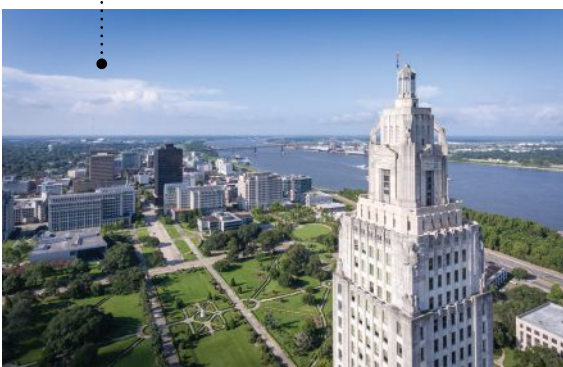
Those who enroll in the Law and State Government program have access to externship and fellowship opportunities within the executive and legislative branches of state government.

"We have students serve as judicial law clerk interns in federal district court, Indiana Supreme Court, the Indiana Court of Appeals, Marion County Superior Court and township-level government," said



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Whittley Pike, senior associate director for professional development.

“We also host symposiums, where students hear from legislators, and have an actively engaged alumni network that is happy to assist students.”

While schools in state capitals can serve as pipelines to state government jobs, those in the nation’s capital can provide access to federal positions.

David O’Brien is director of career and professional development at University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. He said graduates of the school have secured jobs at the Department of Justice, Housing & Urban Development, the Department of Labor and other federal agencies, as well as on Capitol Hill.

“Social justice is part of our DNA, and therefore we attract many students who want to work in public interest and public service jobs that help to make the world a better place.”

DAVID O’BRIEN, DIRECTOR OF CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DAVID A. CLARKE SCHOOL OF LAW

“We are the only public law school in the nation’s capital, and we have a statutory mission to serve the residents of the District,” O’Brien said. “Social justice is part of our DNA, and therefore we attract many students who want to work in public interest and public service jobs that help to make the world a better place.”

The school has a summer fellowship program that provides stipends to students who intern at a government agency, a non-profit or a court. It also offers clinics such as the Legislation Clinic, where students advocate for civil rights and other causes before state and federal legislative and regulatory bodies.

“We often bring in government practitioners, many of whom are alumni, that speak to the students about career and job opportunities and offer students mentoring and networking opportunities,” O’Brien said.