The Geography of Opportunity: Mapping Lawyer Careers

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Working Paper

This report builds on the last[1] by examining another aspect of the role of geography in structuring lawyer careers: geographic mobility. We examine the geographic distribution and mobility of AJD respondents as well as demographic and social differences between respondents who move across geographic locales and those who stay put by focusing on two types of transitions in lawyers' early careers: from law school to early career jobs, and from early to mid-career jobs. We found in the previous report that different types of legal markets have different stratification systems and that the lawyers who work within these markets have distinct social profiles and stocks of social capital; we find similar status distinctions between respondents by geographic mobility. We find differences between movers and stayers in terms of their social backgrounds, the jurisdictions and markets in which they are employed, the status of the law schools they attended, the practice settings in which they work, and the organizational positions that they occupy by mid-career. Yet we also find that geographic mobility is not explained by status alone; the movement of lawyers over their careers is also contingent upon the location of law schools and legal markets and the credentials that are valued within these markets; the organizational norms found in different practice settings; and the geographic dimensions of different types of job markets.

[1] Dawe, Meghan and Robert L. Nelson. 2021. "Markets and Lawyer Careers." Available online.

Introduction

In this report, we explore patterns of geographic mobility by focusing on two early-career transitions: law school to first job (which we examine with wave 1 data) and first job to mid-career job (which we examine with wave 3 data). Specifically, we look at movement between two types of geographies. The first is geographic location, which we measure by law school state, primary sampling unit (PSU), and wave 3 state (drawing on the legal market types identified by the cluster analysis discussed in the last report). Since we broaden our unit of analysis from PSU to state at wave 3, it is unclear whether someone working in the state of New York at wave 3 is working in New York City or in upstate New York, which are home to vastly different legal markets with distinct opportunity structures and systems of stratification. To combat this ambiguity, we contrast city size at wave 1 and wave 3 by breaking down respondents' geographic locations by size. After examining the geographic distributions and mobility patterns of AJD respondents, we evaluate the status differences between movers and stayers. Since the following analyses trace movement across waves, we limit our analyses to respondents to all three waves of AJD (N=2,020) as we do for other longitudinal analyses throughout the book.

The rest of the report is organized into two parts. Part 1 looks at movement from law school to first job, drawing on GIS mapping and quantitative analyses to illustrate the patterns of geographic mobility among AJD respondents. Part 2 examines geographic mobility between early and mid-careers and compares the personal and professional attributes of movers and stayers. Both parts proceed in the same manner. First, we examine descriptively the geographic distribution of respondents. Second, we look at patterns of movement between these categories. Third, we compare demographic characteristics and other markers of professional status between

movers and stayers, contrasting these two groups by gender and race, law school status, practice setting, earnings, and organizational position.

Part 1: Movement from Law School to First Job

The first part of the report examines movement from law school to first job, drawing on survey data and GIS mapping of mobility between the law schools from which respondents graduated and the PSUs from which they were sampled. For this set of analyses, we define movers as those who moved from the state in which they received their law degree to one of our PSUs, and stayers as those who graduated from law school within one of our PSUs (or a state containing one of our PSUs) and were working in the same PSU at wave 1. Although the maps provide a visual representation of the mobility patterns of our respondents, they do not themselves show the scale of movement or the proportion of graduates who stayed in the same city from which they graduated. As such, we supplement the maps with quantitative data to represent these patterns numerically. As illustrated in table 1, 86.6% of respondents attended law school in a state within which our respondents were sampled. The state with the highest proportion of law school graduates is California (13.6%), followed by Illinois (9.0%) and New York (7.8%).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents across Law School States and PSUs

Law School State	**n**	**%**	*PSU*	**n**	**%**
New York	153	7.8	**New York City**	147	7.3
DC	113	5.7	**DC**	180	8.9
Illinois	178	9.0	**Chicago**	184	9.1
California	268	13.6	**Los Angeles**	176	8.7
			San Francisco	143	7.1
Massachusetts	104	5.3	**Boston**	60	3.0
Georgia	69	3.5	**Atlanta**	120	5.9
Texas	83	4.2	**Houston**	79	3.9
Minnesota	100	5.1	**Minneapolis**	124	6.1
Missouri	77	3.9	**St Louis**	98	4.9
Connecticut	58	2.9	**Connecticut**	86	4.3
New Jersey	37	1.9	**New Jersey**	56	2.8
Florida	80	4.1	**Florida**	93	4.6
Tennessee	69	3.5	**Tennessee**	90	4.5
Oklahoma	86	4.4	**Oklahoma**	90	4.5
Indiana	73	3.7	**Indiana**	87	4.3
Oregon	102	5.2	**Oregon**	128	6.3
Utah	58	2.9	**Utah**	79	3.9
Non-PSU State	265	13.4			
Total	1,973	100	**Total**	2,020	100

Although the majority of respondents graduated from a law school within a PSU state, there was significant movement among our sample between law school and wave 1; table 2 shows one-third of respondents began their careers in a different state from which they graduated. The PSU with the highest proportion of law school movers is DC (62.4%), which is unsurprising given that this jurisdiction houses the vast majority of federal government employment. Other PSUs with high proportions of law school movers are Connecticut (56.1%), New York City (48.6%), and New Jersey (46.4%), and these patterns are likely due to the close proximity of these locales. More than half of the respondents sampled in Atlanta received their legal education out of state, making this PSU somewhat of an outlier. A potential explanation for this finding is that Atlanta is a national legal market yet there are only two law schools in the state of Georgia, which may produce an insufficient supply of lawyers for this type of market.

Indeed, the PSUs with the highest proportions of law school stayers span all different types of legal markets, led by Houston (90.7%), Oklahoma (87.8%), and Los Angeles (76.5%). This likewise suggests that law school movement is a function not only of the types of legal markets found in the destination locales but also of the concentration and types of law schools that are located within geographic locations.

Table 2: PSU by Law School Mobility

PSU		Mover	Stayer	Total
New York City	**n**	69	73	142
	%	48.6	51.4	100
DC	**n**	108	65	173
	%	62.4	37.6	100
Chicago	**n**	51	132	183
	%	27.9	72.1	100
Los Angeles	**n**	40	130	170
	%	23.5	76.5	100
San Francisco	**n**	41	98	139
	%	29.5	70.5	100
Atlanta	**n**	62	58	120
	%	51.7	48.3	100
Houston	**n**	7	68	75
	%	9.3	90.7	100
Minneapolis	**n**	32	90	122
	%	26.2	73.8	100
St. Louis	**n**	30	66	96
	%	31.3	68.8	100
Connecticut	**n**	46	36	82
	%	56.1	43.9	100
New Jersey	**n**	26	30	56
	%	46.4	53.6	100
Florida	**n**	30	63	93
	%	32.3	67.7	100
Tennessee	**n**	28	59	87
	%	32.2	67.8	100
Oklahoma	**n**	11	79	90
	%	12.2	87.8	100
Indiana	**n**	23	56	79
	%	29.1	70.9	100
Oregon	**n**	32	95	127
	%	25.2	74.8	100
Utah	**n**	24	55	79
	%	30.4	69.6	100
Total	**n**	681	1,292	1,973
	%	34.5	65.5	100
χ^2		174.23 (p<.001)		

The gender and racial differences between law school movers and stayers are non-significant, but we do find differences by social background. As shown in table 3, The more highly educated respondents' fathers are, the more likely respondents are to be law school

movers. For example, 39.1% of respondents whose fathers attended graduate or professional school are movers, compared to 27.4% of respondents whose fathers have a high school education or less (χ^2=19.47, p<.001). There is also statistically significant difference in the rankings of the law schools from which these two groups graduated (χ^2=211.23, p<.001). As shown in table 4, nearly 80% (77.8%) top 10 law graduates are movers compared to 30.1% of graduates of law schools ranked 11th or lower. Thus, elite law graduates and respondents from more privileged social backgrounds are most likely to move between law school and first job, and table 5 suggests that these moves are motivated by the pursuit of jobs in high-status practice settings. The wave 1 practice settings with the highest proportions of movers are large law firms and federal government. Roughly half of the respondents working in both of these prestigious settings are law school movers compared to only 34.2% of respondents working in all practice settings. As mentioned above, however, the high proportion of movers working in federal government at wave 1 is also likely to be attributed to the geographic concentration of jobs in this sector.

Table 3: Law School Mobility by Father's Education

Father's Education		**Mover**	**Stayer**	**Total**
High School or Less	**n**	118	312	430
	%	27.4	72.6	100
College Degree	**n**	54	135	189
	%	28.6	71.4	100
Bachelor's Degree	**n**	119	216	335
	%	35.5	64.5	100
Graduate or Professional School	**n**	287	447	734
	%	39.1	60.9	100
Total	**n**	578	1,110	1,688
	%	34.2	65.8	100
χ^2		19.47 (p<.001)		

Table 4: Law School Rank by Law School Mobility

Law School Rank		Mover	Stayer	Total
Ranked 1-10	**n**	154	44	198
	%	77.8	22.2	100
Ranked 11-20	**n**	69	176	245
	%	28.2	71.8	100
Ranked 21-50	**n**	169	252	421
	%	40.1	59.9	100
Ranked 51-100	**n**	122	421	543
	%	22.5	77.5	100
Tier 3	**n**	100	212	312
	%	32.1	68.0	100
Tier 4	**n**	65	158	223
	%	29.2	70.9	100
Total	**n**	679	1,263	1,942
	%	35.0	65.0	100
χ^2		211.33 (p<.001)		0

Table 5: Wave 1 Practice Setting by Law School Mobility

Practice Setting		Mover	Stayer	Total
Law Firm 1-100	**n**	205	531	736
	%	27.9	72.2	100
Law Firm 101+	**n**	247	295	542
	%	45.6	54.4	100
Business	**n**	43	107	150
	%	28.7	71.3	100
Federal Government	**n**	57	44	101
	%	56.4	43.6	100
State Government	**n**	77	228	305
	%	25.3	74.8	100
PI/Non-Profit/ Education	**n**	21	48	69
	%	30.4	69.6	100
Total	**n**	650	1,253	1,903
	%	34.2	65.8	100
χ^2		79.90 (p<.001)		

Next, we present a series of maps illustrating the patterns of law school mobility within our sample. The maps were produced using ArcGIS software, and show movement between different types of law schools and the locations in which respondents were working at wave 1.

All of these destinations are located within our PSUs, but we use x, y coordinates of wave 1 employers rather than PSUs so we can map the exact locations of wave 1 jobs for PSUs that include entire states or parts of states. As a reference, figure 1 shows the location of each of the PSUs with the sizes of the corresponding legal markets indicated by color. The rest of the maps show the movement of respondents in our sample who graduated from various types of law schools. To enhance the readability of our maps and reduce the noise created by outlier moves, we adopted a pair of criteria that must be met for individual cases to be included in the maps. Specifically, at least 10% and n=2 of the graduates from a given law school had to end up in a given destination at wave 1 to be included in our maps, otherwise they were considered anomalous and were excluded from this particular set of analyses. To further clarify the movement illustrated in the maps, tables 6 through 9 indicate the law schools and wave 1 destinations of the respondents included in each map.

Figure 2 shows the movement of respondents who graduated from top 10 law schools as this group is the most likely to move states between law school and wave 1. The map illustrates an overwhelming trend in the pattern of movement for this group into global and – to a lesser extent – national legal markets. Conversely, none of these graduates moved to regional markets. Moreover, the top 10 law schools tend to be located in or near global legal markets, so the of majority of law school stayers also began their careers in these markets. However, table 6 indicates there is substantial variation in the mobility patterns for this group of respondents. For example, 100% of law graduates from the University of Chicago worked in Chicago at wave 1, while graduates of the University of Virginia were equally dispersed among 4 different cities at wave 1: Atlanta, DC, Houston, and New York City. Thus, all of the graduates from the University of Chicago are law school stayers compared to one quarter of graduates from the

University of Virginia. Graduates of New York University and the University of Michigan followed the most diffuse set of pathways, ending up in six different cities by wave 1, whereas all of the movers from Stanford began their careers in the same city: DC. The most common pattern for this group is for graduates from a given law school to end up on one of two or three different cities at wave 1. It is important to note that the number and selection of wave 1 destinations for our respondents is constrained by our sampling strategy. Nevertheless, we see salient patterns of movement between law school tier and the size and location of the legal markets in which respondents worked in their early careers.

The first map suggests that graduates of elite law schools move to global and national – but not regional – legal markets. To further explore whether particular types of law schools feed particular types of legal markets, the rest of the maps illustrate the movement of graduates from different types of law schools (elite, local, and regional) within a single state: Illinois. The two elite law schools located within Illinois are at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, which are ranked 10th and 12th (respectively). Both of these schools are located in Chicago, and 100% of the graduates from these two schools began their careers within this global legal market (see table 7). Thus, we do not include a map for this group as there is no movement for this group, which complicates the thesis that elite graduates are more likely to move. There are four local law schools located within the Chicago-area, and the movement of graduates from these schools is illustrated in figure 3. These schools include Chicago Kent and Loyola (which are tied for 69th), DePaul (which is ranked in the third tier), and John Marshall (which is ranked in the fourth tier). Like the graduates of elite law schools based in Chicago, the vast majority of graduates of these non-elite Chicago-area schools end up in Chicago (95.1%), and only four graduates from these schools began their careers outside of Chicago: two in

Atlanta and two in San Francisco (see table 8). Thus, most of these graduates began their careers locally, which suggests that the legal markets in which lawyers work depend not only on the status of the law schools from which they graduated but also on the geographic location of these law schools. This finding is reflected in the figure 4, which shows the movement of graduates from the regional law school at the University of Illinois, which is located in Champaign Illinois. Again, we see that 80% of the graduates from this school began their careers in Chicago, while only 20% moved elsewhere. As shown in table 9, 3 of these graduates moved to nearby St. Louis after law school, which houses a regional legal market, demonstrating the importance of locality in shaping the mobility of law school graduates. That a higher proportion of graduates of this regional law school did not move to a regional legal market may be somewhat surprising, yet it is important to point out that the University of Illinois has a relatively highly ranked law school (25^{th}). Thus, where lawyers begin their careers appears to be conditioned both by the status of the law schools from which they graduated as well as the supply of law school graduates within and in close proximity of different legal markets.

Figure 1: PSUs by Size of Legal Market

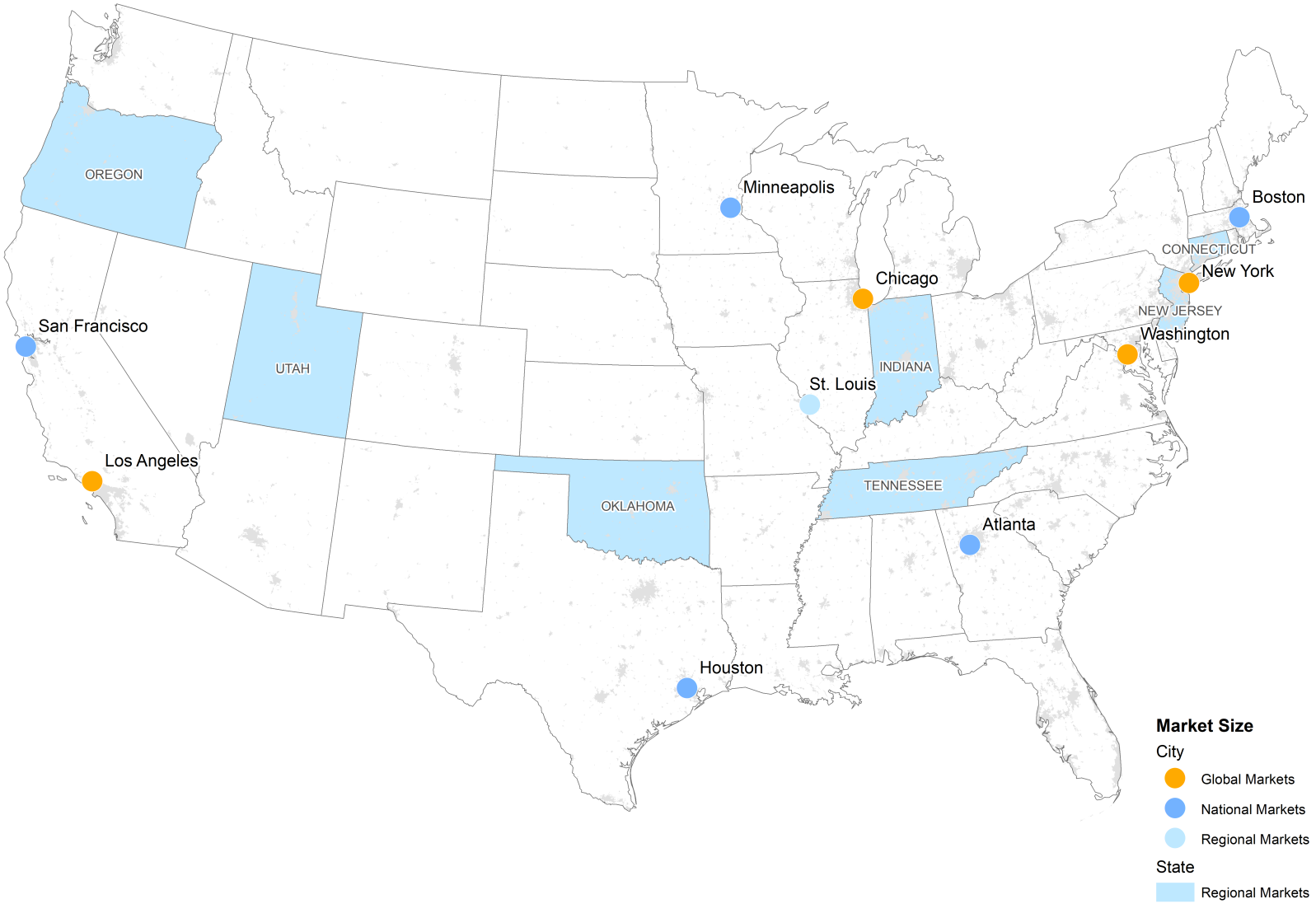
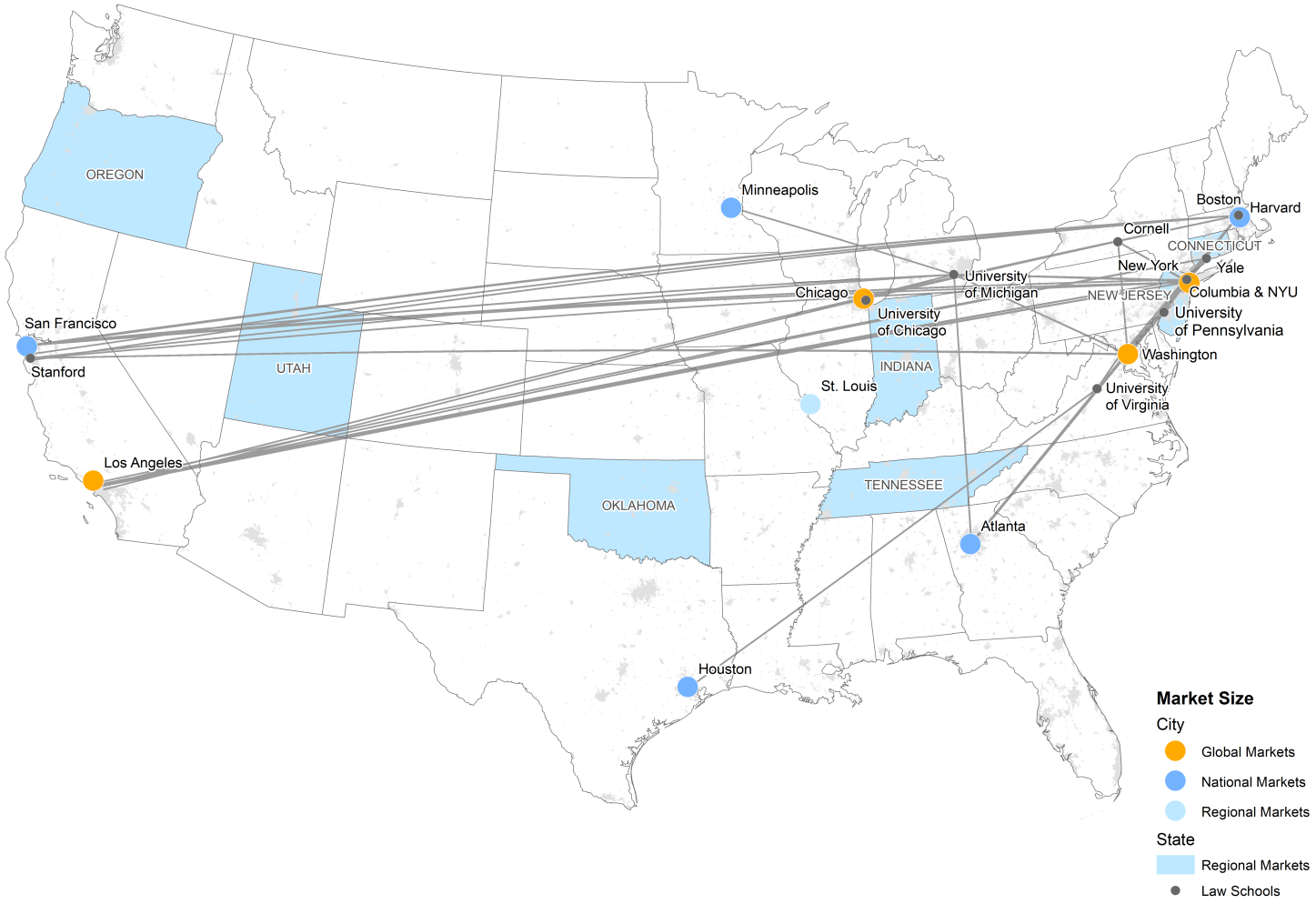


Figure 2: Movement from Top 10 Law Schools to PSU



Note: In order of ranking, top 10 law schools include Yale University (CT), Stanford University (CA), Harvard University (MA), Columbia University (NY), New York University (NY), University of Chicago (IL), University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (MI), University of Pennsylvania (PA), University of Virginia (VA), and Cornell University (NY).

Figure 3: Movement from Chicago-area Law Schools to PSU

Note: Chicago-area law schools include Chicago-Kent and Loyola (both ranked 69th), DePaul (ranked in the third tier), and John Marshall (ranked in the fourth tier).

Figure 4: Movement from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to PSU

Note: The law school at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is ranked 25th.

Table 6: Top 10 Law Schools by Wave 1 City

Law School	**Atlanta**	**Boston**	**Chicago**	**DC**	**Houston**	**Los Angeles**	**Minneapolis**	**New York City**	**San Francisco**	**Stamford**	**Total**
Yale University	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	9	0	0	15
	0	0	0	26.7	0	13.3	0	60.0	0	0	100
Stanford University	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	5	0	8
	0	0	0	37.5	0	0	0	0	62.5	0	100
Harvard University	0	5	0	11	0	2	0	5	6	0	29
	0	17.2	0	37.9	0	6.9	0	17.2	20.7	0	100
Columbia University	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	7	4	0	18
	0	0	0	16.7	0	22.2	0	38.9	22.2	0	100
New York University	2	0	0	7	0	3	0	15	2	2	31
	6.5	0	0	22.6	0	9.7	0	48.4	6.5	6.5	100
University of Chicago	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
University of Michigan	3	0	3	2	0	0	2	3	3	0	16
	18.8	0	18.8	12.5	0	0	12.5	18.8	18.8	0	100
University of Pennsylvania	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	6
	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	66.7	0	0	100
University of Virginia	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	8
	25.0	0	0	25.0	25.0	0	0	25.0	0	0	100
Cornell University	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	5
	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	60	0	0	100
Total	7	5	10	36	2	11	2	48	20	2	143
	4.9	3.5	7.0	25.2	1.4	7.7	1.4	33.6	14.0	1.4	100
χ^2	247.31 ($p<.001$)										

Table 7: Elite Chicago Law Schools by Wave 1 City

Law School	Chicago	Total
Northwestern University	17	17
	100	100
University of Chicago	7	7
	100	100
Total	24	143
	100	100

Table 8: Chicago Area Law Schools by Wave 1 City

Law School	Atlanta	Chicago	San Francisco	Total
DePaul University	0	20	0	20
	0	100	0	100
John Marshall Law School	2	14	0	16
	12.5	87.5	0	100
Chicago-Kent College of Law	0	26	2	28
	0	92.9	7.1	100
Loyola University	0	17	0	17
	0	100	0	100
Total	2	77	2	81
	2.5	95.1	2.5	100
χ^2		12.12		

Table 9: University of Illinois by Wave 1 City

Law School	Chicago	St. Louis	Total
University of Illinois	12	3	15
	80	20	100
Total	12	3	15
	80	20	100

Part 2: Movement from Early to Mid-Career

The second part of the report examines geographic mobility during the next key transition in lawyers' early careers: early jobs to mid-career jobs. We do so by reporting the distribution of movers and stayers in the sample, and by examining the distribution of respondents across wave

1 and wave 3 locales and city sizes; by examining patterns of movement between wave 1 and wave 3 geographies, and by the distribution of movers and stayers across wave 3 states and city sizes; and by examining status distinctions related to geographic mobility.

Geographic Distribution of Respondents at Waves 1 and 3

We begin by examining the distributions of movers and stayers at waves 1 and 3, defining those working in a different state at mid-career from which they were originally sampled as "movers" and those working in the same state in which they began their careers by mid-career as "stayers". Next, we report the distribution of respondents across wave 1 and wave 3 locales and city sizes.

Roughly three quarters (73.9%) of AJD respondents were working within the same state from which they were sampled at mid-career, and only 26.1% of respondents were working in a different state. Table 10 shows the distribution of respondents across PSUs at wave 1 and states at wave 3. There is remarkable continuity between these distributions and all states experience some attrition over time, with the exception of Florida (which grows from 4.6% of the sample to 5.1%) and Texas (which grows from 3.9% to 4.5%). However, in both of these cases only parts of the state were sampled at wave 1 (Houston and Florida outside of Miami) and we include entire states in our wave 3 variable, so this observation is likely an artifact of how the sampling units were defined. We also find that 11.1% of respondents are working in non-PSU states by wave 3 and that 1.2% are working in foreign nations, which account for some of the attrition from PSU states over time. The states or jurisdictions with the highest attrition are DC and Connecticut, both of which lose about one-third of their share of the sample between waves 1 and 3.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents across PSUs and Wave 3 States

PSU	**n**	**%**	*Wave 3 State*	**n**	**%**
New York City	147	7.3	**New York**	123	6.5
DC	180	8.9	**DC**	113	6.0
Chicago	184	9.1	**Illinois**	165	8.7
Los Angeles	176	8.7	**California**	292	15.4
San Francisco	143	7.1			
Boston	60	3.0	**Massachusetts**	46	2.4
Atlanta	120	5.9	**Georgia**	92	4.9
Houston	79	3.9	**Texas**	86	4.5
Minneapolis	124	6.1	**Minnesota**	99	5.2
St Louis	98	4.9	**Missouri**	70	3.7
Connecticut	86	4.3	**Connecticut**	57	3.0
New Jersey	56	2.8	**New Jersey**	37	2.0
Florida	93	4.6	**Florida**	97	5.1
Tennessee	90	4.5	**Tennessee**	74	3.9
Oklahoma	90	4.5	**Oklahoma**	71	3.7
Indiana	87	4.3	**Indiana**	68	3.6
Oregon	128	6.3	**Oregon**	106	5.6
Utah	79	3.9	**Utah**	67	3.5
			Non-PSU State	211	11.1
			Foreign Nation	23	1.2
Total	2,020	100	**Total**	1,897	100

In addition to the geographic locations in which respondents are working, we are also interested in the sizes of these locales as city size is indicative of the types of legal markets in which respondents work and the professional opportunities to which they have access. Our measures of city size are based on the 2000 and 2010 Census population counts of the cities in which respondents' employers were located at waves 1 and 3 (respectively), which were assigned based on the core-based statistical area (CBSAs) and metropolitan division codes associated with the employer cities that respondents provided in the survey. We first examined the distribution of respondents among rural, suburban and urban locales based on the National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties. This scheme defines rural counties as being located within metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with fewer

with than 250,000 residents; suburban counties as those within MSAs with 250,000 to 999,999 residents; and urban counties as those within MSAs with 1,000,000 or more residents. However, this did not provide a meaningful categorization scheme for our data as very few respondent work in rural areas and the vast majority are concentrated in urban locales.[2] To create a more relevant set of categories to fit our data, we created a 4-category variable based on the distribution of the continuous population counts that includes small, mid-sized, large, and mega cities. Small cities have populations of less than 500,000; mid-sized cities have populations of 500,000 to 999,999; large cities have populations of 1,000,000 to 3,999,999; and mega cities have populations of 4,000,000 or more. As shown in table 11, roughly 10% of respondents worked in small cities at waves 1 and 3. The proportion of respondents working in mid-sized cities more than halved between waves 1 and 3, shrinking from 19.3% to 7.3%, while the proportion of respondents in large cities remained relatively steady across waves (decreasing from 53.4% to 41.7%). The most drastic distributional shift is in the proportion of respondents working in mega cities, which ballooned from 18.9% in wave 1 to 40.8% in wave 3. Thus, although roughly half of the sample works in large cities across waves, there is a pronounced movement into the country's largest cities over time.

Table 11: Distribution of Respondents across Wave 1 and Wave 3 City Sizes

City Size	**Wave 1**		**Wave 3**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Small	141	8.3	200	10.2
Mid-sized	327	19.3	144	7.3
Large	904	53.4	819	41.7
Mega	320	18.9	801	40.8
Total	1,692	100	1,964	100

[2] At wave 1, 3.4% of respondents worked in rural areas; 24.2% worked in suburban areas; and 72.3% worked in urban areas. By wave 3, 6.1% worked in rural areas; 11.4% worked in suburban areas; and more than 4 out of 5 respondents (82.5%) worked in urban areas. See https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_02/sr02_166.pdf for definitions.

Patterns of Geographic Mobility

A cross-tabulation of the distribution of respondents across PSUs and wave 3 states (not shown) illustrates patterns of movement across these locales, indicating where the respondents who started out in each PSU were working by mid-career. The relationship between PSU and wave 3 state is highly significant (χ^2=19000, p<.001). The majority of respondents stayed in the same PSU state from early until mid-career, reflecting the finding that about three-quarters of sample members are stayers. However, the proportion of stayers varies across locales. More than 94% of respondents who were sampled in Oregon, Utah, and Tennessee stayed within these states, and over 90% of respondents sampled in Los Angeles/San Francisco and Houston were still working in California and Texas (respectively) by wave 3. This indicates low mobility in and out of these locales, which house more regional legal markets. The major exception to this finding is the case of California, which is home to both global and national markets. In addition to retaining a remarkably large proportion of the respondents who begin their careers in Los Angeles and San Francisco, California also receives a large share of the movers who leave other global and national markets such as New York City, DC, and Boston.

There is significantly more movement in and out of New York, DC, Boston, Connecticut, and New Jersey, each of which houses – or is clustered around – a global legal market. For example, New York receives nearly 40% of its share of the sample at wave 3 from respondents who began their careers in Connecticut (14.5%) and New Jersey (23.4%). This finding reflects the high degree of movement between elite law schools and wave 1 jobs in the Northeast, suggesting a high degree of mobility within this region which is likely due at least in part to geographic proximity.

Table 12 is a crosstabulation of the sizes of the cities in which respondents work at wave 1 and 3 and indicates a highly significant relationship between these two variables (χ^2=766.56, p<.001). The majority of respondents who begin their careers in small, large and mega cities at wave 1 work in cities of the same size at mid-career. The major outlier group is respondents who begin their career in mid-sized cities; only 19% of these respondents work in mid-sized cities at wave 3 while one quarter move to large cities and half move to mega cities. This pattern is likely shaped primarily by movement in the Northeast, with respondents moving from mid-sized cities such as Stamford into large cities like Boston, or to New York City which is mega-sized. There is also a lot of movement between large and mega-sized cities, which house global and national legal markets.

Table 12: Wave 1 City Size by Wave 3 City Size

Wave 1 City Size	*Wave 3 City Size*				
	Small	**Mid-sized**	**Large**	**Mega**	**Total**
Small	78	19	29	9	135
	57.8	14.1	21.5	6.7	100
Mid-sized	17	61	82	161	321
	5.3	19.0	25.6	50.2	100
Large	56	35	538	241	870
	6.4	4.0	61.8	27.7	100
Mega	17	9	44	238	308
	5.5	2.9	14.3	77.3	100
Total	168	124	693	649	1,634
	10.3	7.6	42.4	39.7	100
χ^2	766.56 (p<.001)				

Table 13 shows the distribution of movers and stayers within wave 3 states, illustrating the geographic mobility of respondents in each locale. The relationship between wave 3 state and geographic mobility is statistically significant (χ^2=128.98, p<.001), and there are pronounced differences in the ratios of movers to stayers across locales. These patterns vary by the types of

legal markets that characterize these states as well as the proximity between them. For example, one-third or more of the respondents working in New York, DC, and Massachusetts moved into these states since their first jobs, and each of these jurisdictions is home to a global or national market. These jurisdictions are also located close to each other, and there is a lot of movement within this geographic region as indicated by table 3. At the other end of the spectrum are states with regional markets, which are made up mostly (and in the case of Oklahoma, completely) of respondents who began their careers within these states. Fewer than 10% of the respondents working in Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Indiana, Oregon, and Utah moved into these states from other locales. With the exception of Minnesota, each of these states house regional markets. However, we sampled Minneapolis rather than the state of Minnesota, so this is likely another artifact of the sampling strategy.

Table 13: Wave 3 State by Geographic Mobility

Wave 3 State		Mover	Stayer	Total
New York	**n**	43	80	123
	%	35.0	65.0	100
DC	**n**	39	74	113
	%	34.5	65.5	100
Illinois	**n**	33	132	165
	%	20.0	80.0	100
California	**n**	49	243	292
	%	16.8	83.2	100
Massachusetts	**n**	17	29	46
	%	37.0	63.0	100
Georgia	**n**	15	77	92
	%	16.3	83.7	100
Texas	**n**	25	61	86
	%	29.1	70.9	100
Minnesota	**n**	8	91	99
	%	8.1	91.9	100
Connecticut	**n**	11	46	57
	%	19.3	80.7	100
Missouri	**n**	5	65	70
	%	7.1	92.9	100
New Jersey	**n**	9	28	37
	%	24.3	75.7	100
Florida	**n**	26	71	97
	%	26.8	73.2	100
Tennessee	**n**	4	70	74
	%	5.4	94.6	100
Oklahoma	**n**	0	71	71
	%	0	100	100
Indiana	**n**	3	65	68
	%	4.4	95.6	100
Oregon	**n**	7	99	106
	%	6.6	93.4	100
Utah	**n**	5	62	67
	%	7.5	92.5	100
Total	**n**	299	1,364	1,663
	%	18.0	82.0	100
χ^2		128.98 (p<.001)		

Table 14 indicates the relationship between wave 3 city size and geographic mobility is also statistically significant (χ^2=29.13, p<.001). Somewhat surprisingly, small and mid-sized cities contain the highest proportions of movers (34.2% and 38.0%, respectively), though the

actual numbers of respondents working in these locates are relatively small compared to those in large and mega-sized cities. In contrast, only 23.9% of respondents in large cities and 21.0% of respondents in mega-sized cities moved states between their early and mid-careers.

Table 14: Wave 3 City Size by Geographic Mobility

Wave 3 City Size		**Mover**	**Stayer**	**Total**
Small	**n**	68	131	199
	%	34.2	65.8	100
Mid-sized	**n**	54	88	142
	%	38.0	62.0	100
Large	**n**	192	612	804
	%	23.9	76.1	100
Mega	**n**	166	624	790
	%	21.0	79.0	100
Total	**n**	480	1,455	1,935
	%	24.8	75.2	100
χ^2		29.13 (p<.001)		

Status Distinctions and Geographic Mobility

After analyzing the distribution of respondents across geographic locales at waves 1 and 3, movement between these places, and the distribution of movers and stayers, we examine the attributes of the movers and stayers in our sample. Specifically, we contrast the demographic characteristics, social backgrounds, law school status, practice settings, earnings, and organizational positions of respondents by geographic mobility. In doing so, we build on our findings of status distinctions between different types of legal markets and show that geographic mobility is itself a form of stratification in professional careers. Yet these patterns must be interpreted alongside our findings that run counter to the narrative that elites are more likely to move, such as the somewhat higher proportion of movers in small and mid-sized cities.

There is little variation between movers and stayers by gender or by race; approximately 26% of respondents are movers and 74% are stayers, irrespective of gender. There is slightly more variation in geographic mobility by race, with movers representing a low of 24.4% for African Americans and a high of 26.9% for Asian Americans, however the relationship between geographic mobility and race is not statistically significant. Additionally, although social background is a significant predictor of law school mobility, we find no significant differences in father's education or occupation in by early career mobility. Table 15 shows significant differences in geographic mobility by law school ranking (χ^2=32.44, p<.001). There is a well-ordered relationship between law school status and mobility, with respondents being most likely to have moved if they graduated from a top 10 law school, and they become less likely to have moved as law school rankings lower. For example, four in ten top 10 graduates (37.8%) are movers, compared to fewer than one in five graduates of tier 4 law schools (18.4%). This suggests that geographic mobility is a more common career strategy for elite law graduates, and that movers enjoy a higher status than stayers. However, this also reflects the fact that not all high-status schools are located within global legal markets, so these elite graduates must move to secure employment in these locales.

Table 15: Law School Rank by Geographic Mobility

Law School Rank		**Mover**	**Stayer**	**Total**
Ranked 1-10	**n**	76	125	201
	%	37.8	62.2	100
Ranked 11-20	**n**	74	177	251
	%	29.5	70.5	100
Ranked 21-50	**n**	127	292	419
	%	30.3	69.7	100
Ranked 51-100	**n**	119	425	544
	%	21.9	78.1	100
Tier 3	**n**	73	236	309
	%	23.6	76.4	100
Tier 4	**n**	41	182	223
	%	18.4	81.6	100
Total	**n**	510	1,437	1,947
	%	26.2	73.8	100
χ^2		32.44 (p<.001)		

Table 16 mirrors the patterns in table 15, showing that those who are geographically mobile during their early careers begin in the most high-status practice settings, including large law firms, business, and federal government. At mid-career, movers are more highly represented within large law firms (23.1%) than in smaller firms of 1 to 100 lawyers (16.7%) and are more highly represented than stayers within federal government (43.7%) and business (35.8%). These patterns suggest that movers are able to mobilize the capital associated with their elite law degrees and early career endowments by relocating to jurisdictions in which their credentials are highly valued, facilitating the pursuit and cultivation of high-status careers. Additionally, organizations such as the federal government and business may ask their employees to move or allow them to move while continuing their employment with them. The relationships between mobility and practice setting at both early and mid-career are highly significant (p<.001).

Table 16: Wave 1 and Wave 3 Practice Setting by Geographic Mobility

Practice Setting		Wave 1			Wave 3		
		Mover	**Stayer**	**Total**	**Mover**	**Stayer**	**Total**
Law Firm 1-100	**n**	134	609	743	109	542	651
	%	18.0	82.0	100	16.7	83.3	100
Law Firm 101+	**n**	181	366	547	59	197	256
	%	33.1	66.9	100	23.1	77.0	100
Business	**n**	51	98	149	133	239	372
	%	34.2	65.8	100	35.8	64.3	100
Federal Government	**n**	43	60	103	52	67	119
	%	41.8	58.3	100	43.7	56.3	100
State Government	**n**	59	245	304	51	245	296
	%	19.4	80.6	100	17.2	82.8	100
PI/Non-Profit/ Education	**n**	20	52	72	72	81	153
	%	27.8	72.2	100	47.1	52.9	100
χ^2		64.90 (p<.001)			115.63 (p<.001)		

The data presented in table 17 tell a more complicated story. On average, movers earn significantly more than stayers at wave 1 ($92,605 compared to $79,647) (t=5.08; p<.001). However, by wave 3, the earnings difference between movers and stayers is no longer significant and, on average, stayers earn slightly more than movers ($167,067 compared to $165,534). This (non-)finding may be driven by the large standard deviation for earnings at wave 3, which is far higher for stayers than they are for movers ($226,730 compared to $158,150). Median earnings – which are less sensitive to outliers – are higher for movers than they are for stayers ($130,000 compared to $125,000). However, whether we look at mean or median earnings, the differences by geographic mobility are modest. An alternative interpretation is that mobility is not necessarily rewarded financially, at least not by mid-career. When we divide our sample by gender we find different patterns for men and women. For men, movers out-earn stayers by 6.7% at wave 3 (($197,286 compared to $184,948); but for women, movers earn 13.1% *less* than stayers at wave 3 ($127,824 compared to $147,076). To investigate this finding further, we turn next to the organizational positions that movers and stayers occupy by mid-career.

Table 17: Geographic Mobility by Wave 1 and Wave 3 Earnings

	Mover	Stayer	Total
Wave 1 Earnings			
Mean	$92,605	$79,647	$82,958
Standard Deviation	$58,503	$42,991	$47,758
Median	$80,000	$68,500	$70,000
t-value of difference	5.08***		
Wave 3 Earnings			
Mean	$165,534	$167,067	$166,657
Standard Deviation	$158,150	$226,730	$210,529
Median	$130,000	$125,000	$125,150
t-value of difference	-0.13		

Table 18 shows the distribution of organizational positions among movers and stayers at wave 3, and the relationship between geographic mobility and mid-career position is statistically significant (χ^2=123.17, p<.001). The column percentages indicate that 18.1% of stayers are equity partners, compared to only 9.1% of movers. This reflects the up-or-out structure of law firms, wherein the norm is for associates to either be promoted to equity partner or move out of the firm. That nearly 10% of movers are equity partners by wave 3 suggests that non-trivial proportion of respondents move laterally into other (likely smaller) firms to take on these positions. However, movers also take on associate positions in new locales (10.5% of stayers are associates at wave 3 compared to 8.0% of movers). Stated differently, the ratio of equity partners to associates for stayers is nearly double that of movers (roughly 2:1 compared to 1:1). On the other hand, the row percentages show that a below-average proportion of equity partners are movers (14.8% compared to 25.7% for the overall sample), as is the proportion of associates who are movers (20.9%). Like the earnings comparisons, these patterns complicate other findings which suggest that moving is associated with higher status. Another example is that a higher proportion of movers occupy of counsel or positions within law firms at mid-career (5.1%

compared to 3.1% of stayers). This suggests that some movers may relocate after not surviving the tournament for partnership, seeking lower-prestige firm positions which are characteristic of what Galanter calls the elastic tournament (2010).

However, most of the movement within our sample is into business positions and not firm positions, which we see in the practice setting analyses as well. Inside counsel and general counsel positions account for nearly 20% of the movers, yet this group represents only 14.1% of the overall sample. However, at 35.2% this position does not have the highest proportion of movers. About 40% of law school/academic administrators and managers/consultants are mover and two-thirds of law professors and other types of professors are movers, which is about 2.5 times the average for the overall sample. The exceptionally high rate of movement for professors reflects the nature of the academic job market (rather than legal markets more generally), which requires mobility among job candidates to fill geographically dispersed positions. Thus, the status distinctions between movers and stayers are not as straightforward when we contrast career outcomes as they are when we compare law schools and may reflect greater likelihood of certain kinds of organizations to request or facilitate the geographic movement of their workers.

Table 18: Wave 3 Position by Geographic Mobility

Wave 3 Position		Mover	Stayer	Total	*Wave 3 Position*		Mover	Stayer	Total
Solo Practitioner	**n**	25	137	162	**Judge**	**n**	6	10	16
	row %	15.4	84.6	100		**row %**	37.5	62.5	100
	column %	5.1	9.8	8.6		**column %**	1.2	0.7	0.9
Associate	**n**	39	148	187	**Law Professor/ Professor**	**n**	34	17	51
	row %	20.9	79.1	100		**row %**	66.7	33.3	100
	column %	8.0	10.5	9.9		**column %**	7.0	1.2	2.7
Non-Equity Partner	**n**	31	150	181	**Law School/ Academic Administrator**	**n**	5	7	12
	row %	17.1	82.9	100		**row %**	41.7	58.3	100
	column %	6.4	10.7	9.6		**column %**	1.0	0.5	0.6
Equity Partner/ Shareholder	**n**	44	254	298	**Manager/ Consultant**	**n**	56	86	142
	row %	14.8	85.2	100		**row %**	39.4	60.6	100
	column %	9.1	18.1	15.8		**column %**	11.5	6.1	7.5
Inside/General Counsel	**n**	94	173	267	**Business Owner/Operator**	**n**	11	24	35
	row %	35.2	64.8	100		**row %**	31.4	68.6	100
	column %	19.3	12.3	14.1		**column %**	2.3	1.7	1.9
Contract Attorney	**n**	7	15	22	**District Attorney**	**n**	21	82	103
	row %	31.8	68.2	100		**row %**	20.4	79.6	100
	column %	1.4	1.1	1.2		**column %**	4.3	5.8	5.5
Of Counsel/ Counsel	**n**	25	44	69	**Director (Deputy/ Executive/ Managing)**	**n**	40	104	144
	row %	36.2	63.8	100		**row %**	27.8	72.2	100
	column %	5.1	3.1	3.6		**column %**	8.2	7.4	7.6
Staff Attorney	**n**	37	95	132	**Public Defender (Deputy)**	**n**	1	17	18
	row %	28	72	100		**row %**	5.6	94.4	100
	column %	7.6	6.8	7.0		**column %**	0.2	1.2	1.0
Supervising/ Managing Attorney	**n**	10	41	51	**Total**	**n**	486	1,404	1,890
	row %	19.6	80.4	100		**row %**	25.7	74	100
	column %	2.1	2.9	2.7		**column %**	100	100	100
χ^2		123.17 (p<.001)							

Conclusion

In this report, we have examined the geographic mobility of AJD respondents by observing the location of respondents during law school, wave 1, and wave 3, and patterns of movement across these three points in their careers. We find that geographic mobility is a relatively rare phenomenon; about two-thirds of respondents began their careers in the state in which their law school is located, and three-quarters of respondents were working in the same state at wave 3 as they were at wave 1. However, although geographic mobility is relatively

uncommon, we find some salient differences between the movers and stayers in our sample related to social status. Respondents who graduated from higher status law schools are the most likely to move between law school, early career and mid-career, and respondents from more privileged social backgrounds (as measured by father's education) are the most likely to move between law school and early career. Movers have the most elite law school and early career credentials and tend to move into high-status jobs at wave 3, and most of the movement within our sample is into and out of global markets. These findings suggest that geographic mobility is a form of professional stratification which is advantageous in building careers.

However, other findings complicate the narrative that moving equals high status, and our data suggest that geographic mobility is related to a confluence of factors. Mobility is related to different types of legal markets and the law school credentials they value as well as the geographic proximity of law schools to legal markets. For example, elite law schools promote a global presence and promise their graduates the opportunity for mobility, while lower tier law schools promise local professional and career opportunities. Yet, the finding that all Northwestern and University of Chicago graduates remained in Chicago at wave 1 counters the assertion that elites move more, highlighting instead the importance of proximity to global markets for this group.

Mobility is also conditioned by the organizational norms that characterize different practice settings. For example, the underrepresentation of movers among equity partners at wave 3 reflects the structure of the tournament for partnership in law firms, and settings such as business and federal government both require and facilitate the geographic movement of their workers. Patterns of mobility also reflect the geographic dimensions of certain job markets. For example, law schools are dispersed across the country so law professors must often move to

secure employment in the academy as a matter of course. Additionally, we find that geographic mobility and its attendant outcomes may be conditioned by gender. At mid-career, movers earn more than stayers among men, but we find the opposite for women. This finding suggests women enjoy fewer rewards for their mobility, perhaps because they are more likely than men to be moving as trailing spouses rather than in pursuit of their own career opportunities. Thus, we find that the role of geography in lawyer careers is complex and that the opportunities associated with mobility are shaped by myriad factors, including status, gender, proximity and locality, legal and other types of job markets, and organizational norms in different practice settings.