

Top 10 Law Schools for Graduates Trying for a Top Job



Summary: *Going to a top law school does not necessarily mean a graduate has the best chances of getting a job at a BigLaw firm.*

The best way to make your money back from law school is to get a job at a top law firm. However, those jobs are hard to find and even harder to keep for more than a year or two. Law school graduates are finishing school with five to six-figures in debt. The fastest way to pay back that debt is to get a high paying salary. Quite often, the only way to get those coveted jobs is to go to a top law school.

So which laws are the best? Vault lists [Columbia](#), [New York University](#), [Harvard](#), [Georgetown](#), [University of Virginia](#), [University of Michigan – Ann Arbor](#), [University of Pennsylvania](#), [George Washington](#), [Fordham](#), and [Northwestern](#) as the top law schools. But what happens when you look at the size of the law school and how many of their graduates go on to jobs at top law firms? Vault found that the list changed quite dramatically.

As Vault explains, “It turns out that Columbia is still the tops at sending its students into BigLaw jobs, though after that the schools change a bit. Giant schools Georgetown and George Washington drop out of the top 10, replaced by relatively-small Northwestern and Stanford.” The report goes on to state that “perhaps the most interesting school on both these lists is Fordham. The NYC law school is ranked only 37th by U.S. News & World Report, but is one of the biggest feeders into BigLaw no matter how you slice the data.”

Their data found that elite law schools are not the only answer when it comes to which law school provides the best chance of getting a BigLaw job. In an article on [LawCrossing](#), Harrison Barnes of BCG Attorney Search explains, “The law school you went to matters – but it does not matter forever. The law school is simply a way to distinguish you from the tens of thousands of people graduating from law school each year. After that, no one cares for the most part.”

The law school an attorney graduates from matters the most the first couple years out of law school. Big law firms assume that someone coming from an elite law school has top grades and test scores. These law firms also look at the location. This is a big factor in what makes Fordham such a successful law school for graduates getting top jobs. The law school is in the NYC metropolitan area, directly feeding their graduates to the firms in the city. Their graduates already have connections to the city.

Barnes added, “Just because you went to a good law school does not mean you are going to fit into the law firm, do the work, stay around, contribute more than you take and be fun to work with. Work ethic, commitment and other factors are far more important than other factors that you may think are important.”

To learn more about the other factors Big Law firms are looking for, read [this](#) article.

What factors do you consider when choosing a law school? Share with us in the comments below.

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