



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2002-2003

Celebrating a Decade!
1993-2003



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2002-2003

10th Anniversary Edition

1993-2003

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Who We Are...

The promise of equal justice is the promise of America. "With liberty and justice for all," are the words recited everyday by our nation's schoolchildren. It is a promise that has not been kept. The American Bar Association has estimated that this country fails to meet 80% of the civil legal needs of the poor. Unlike criminal defendants who are guaranteed an attorney by the U.S. Constitution, most low-income litigants must face civil adversarial proceedings without the benefit of counsel.

As a result, families are wrongfully evicted and forced into homelessness. Women and children victimized by domestic violence do not get the legal help they desperately need. Abuses and neglect by social service bureaucrats go without remedy. Senior citizens and other consumers defrauded by unscrupulous merchants and lenders have no recourse. All of this because there are not enough lawyers working to protect the legal rights of the poor. There can be no justice for those who must face these deprivations without the help of an attorney.

Equal Justice America is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1993 in recognition of the fundamental absence of adequate civil legal representation for many members of our society. For the past decade Equal Justice America has put law students to work with organizations across the country providing civil legal services to those who need it most. Students at over 40 law schools now have the opportunity to take part in the Equal Justice America Fellowship Program.

What We've Done

EJA has put more than 1,000 law students to work with nearly 150 legal assistance organizations throughout the United States. Working as interns under the supervision of staff attorneys, our fellowship recipients have provided crucial assistance to low-income clients struggling through the complexities of our civil justice system. What began in 1993 as an organization that sponsored just five law student fellowships in its first year, Equal Justice America has awarded more than \$2.5 million in grants and has provided more than 300,000 hours of free legal services with programs throughout the country working to protect the rights of the poor.

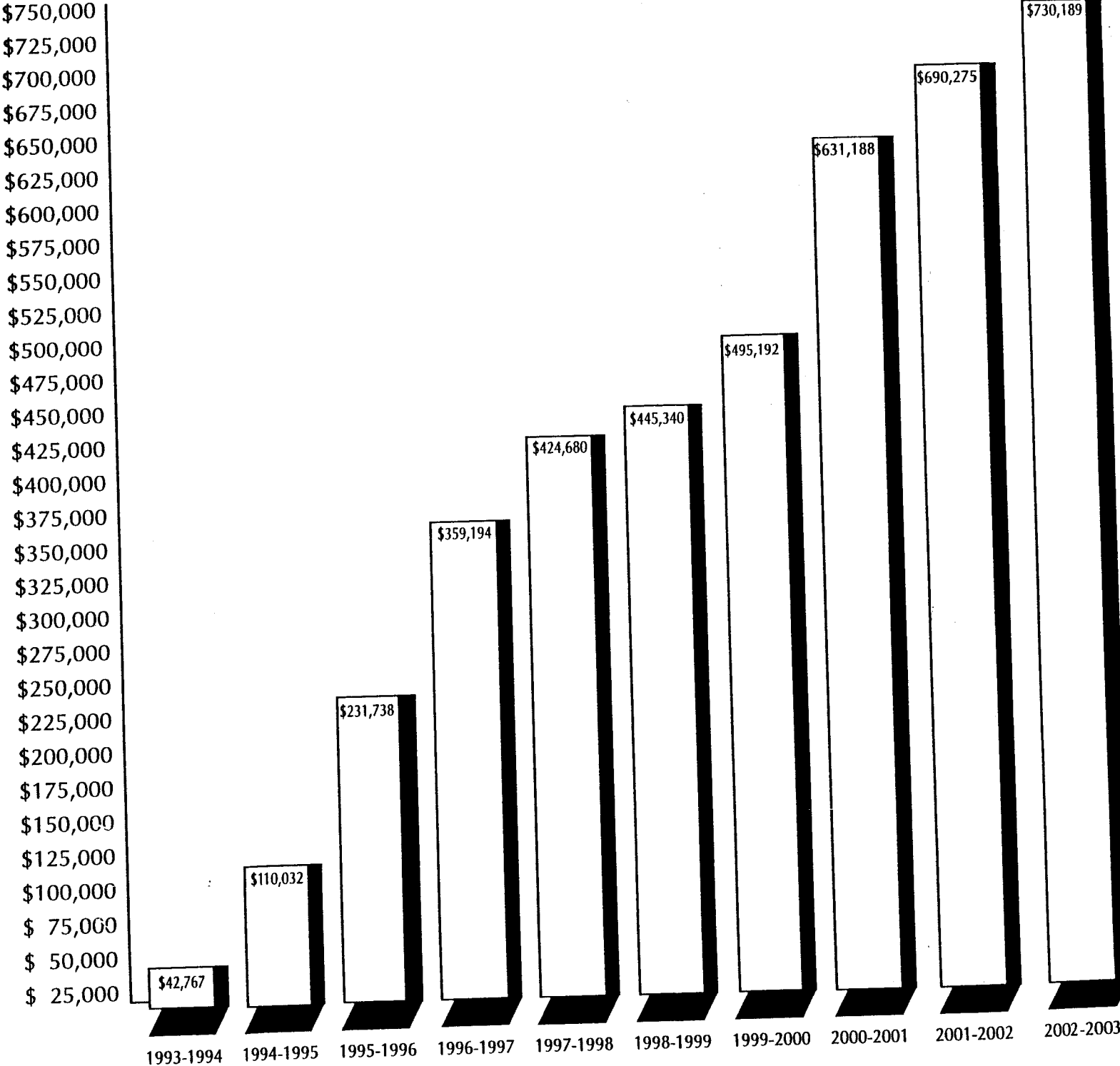
Equal Justice America awarded its first two post-graduate EJA Fellowships in Fall 2002, putting outstanding young lawyers, Amy Hansen and Ali Bers to work on staff for two years at the Support Center for Child Advocates in Philadelphia and Western Massachusetts Legal Services. (See pages 41-52) A third post-graduate EJA Fellowship began in Fall 2003 at Break the Cycle, a growing organization that works with young people to prevent domestic violence. (See page 7)

In the fall of 2000, EJA opened the *Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic* at Pace University School of Law. The clinic has delivered much needed legal assistance to indigent disabled children and adults, while educating law students who are committed to becoming effective advocates for those in need. The EJA Clinic has become an integral part of Pace's highly regarded clinical program. (See pages 53-59)

The *Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic* and the EJA Fellowship Program offer tremendous opportunities for law students and graduates and the fellowships are an enormous help to legal service programs throughout the country that work hard every day to make real the promise of equal justice.

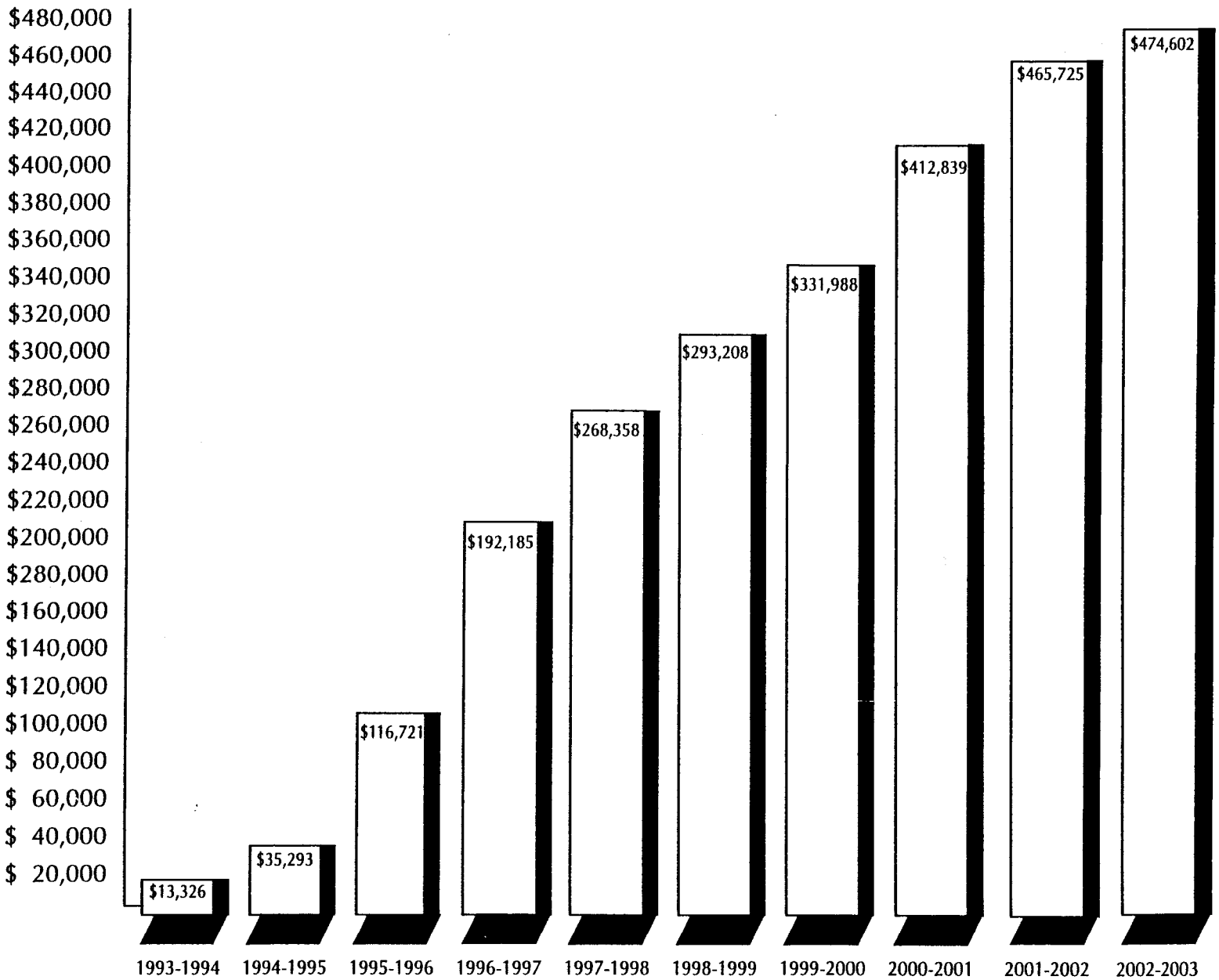
Ten Years of Growth for Equal Justice America

Contributions Raised



Ten Years of Growth for Equal Justice America

Dollars Spent For Program Services





What They're Saying About Equal Justice America...

“How about all lawyers, particularly if you aren't doing your share of pro bono work, send a check to... [Equal Justice America.]”

Nancy Q. Keefe
Gannett Newspapers

“It is with great pleasure and even greater gratitude that I write to congratulate you on the 10th Anniversary of Equal Justice America. Our ability to avoid the most draconian reductions in services can be largely attributable to the contribution made by a corps of highly motivated and dedicated law student interns. The overwhelming majority of these wonderful and indispensable young law students has been financed by EJA. We need EJA more than ever before and the need is nothing less than urgent.”

Martin S. Needelman
Project Director
Brooklyn Legal Services Corp. A

“On behalf of the staff Board and most importantly the clients of Public Counsel, I wanted to congratulate Equal Justice America on its 10th Anniversary and thank you for all you have done to advance equal justice in our community. We are grateful for your support and proud of our collaboration.”

Dan Grunfeld
President/CEO
Public Counsel Law Center
Los Angeles, CA

“While a 10th anniversary is a significant milestone for any non-profit, I'm especially gratified to see EJA's growth—both because your mission is so aligned with our organizational interests and because of the collaborative and flexible interactions we've always enjoyed with EJA. I still remember our conversations about the program when you were first developing the idea. It's amazing to see the growth of EJA from a concept to a real program providing public interest law placements for 200 students a year.”

Robert F. Gillett
Director
Legal Services of South Central Michigan

“During these 10 years, Equal Justice America has quietly and effectively provided important support to the practice of public interest law, by funding law students whose talent, commitment and enthusiasm contributes immeasurably to this work. Equal Justice America's leadership is an invaluable help in ensuring that the next generation of idealistic young lawyers will be able to continue the tradition of public service.”

Christine Todd
Vice President, Administration
The Legal Aid Society of San Francisco



“I am writing to salute Equal Justice America on its tenth anniversary. We at CLS—and even more so our clients—have benefited greatly from EJA’s support. Through the years EJA has provided tens of thousands of dollars in support of our summer and school year internship programs. Without EJA, our law student internship program would be far smaller. One of the wonderful things about legal services work is the presence of young idealistic spirited, highly skilled law students. By making it possible for students to work with us, EJA has helped keep our advocacy fresh and impassioned.”

Catherine C. Carr
Executive Director
Community Legal Services
Philadelphia, PA

“Congratulations to Equal Justice America on your 10 years of commitment to serving the legal needs of the poor and for your contributions to the students who work with Bet Tzedek. We are incredibly grateful.”

Martin A. Kamin
Executive Director
Bet Tzedek Legal Services
Los Angeles, CA

“Please accept our warm and hearty congratulations as you celebrate the tenth anniversary of your wonderful organization. We at the Chicago Legal Clinic have very much appreciated your support for the dozens of internships you have funded. Some of the best and brightest of the nation’s law students have been able to receive substantial funding for fellowships to work as interns in our offices. Some of these students have impressed us so much that they later have become staff attorneys in our organization. Other students have gone on to make substantial contributions to the public interest through other organizations. We are really grateful for our relationship with Equal Justice America and wish you even greater success in the coming years.”

Gerald P. Nordgren
Supervising Attorney
Chicago Legal Clinic

“The support of Equal Justice America has helped us do even more to protect women from domestic violence and put the weight of our judicial system fully behind those who have been victimized. I know that Equal Justice America has a growing reputation for assisting organizations all over the country, which provide legal services to the poor, including many groups that devote much of their efforts to protecting battered and abused women and children. We look forward to continuing our successful partnership with Equal Justice America.”

Victoria L. Lutz
Director, Battered Women’s Justice Center
Pace University School of Law
White Plains, NY

EJA Founder Receives Lifetime Achievement Award at Pace University Law School

“Dan has done more for the practice of public interest law in this country than any other Pace law graduate,” Vanessa Merton, Executive Director, John Jay Legal Services, the highly acclaimed clinical program at Pace University School of Law

“I congratulate Dan Ruben, a rare individual who has made it his life’s work to impact the community on a broad scale and give voice to those in need.” Meredith Blake, Founder and Executive Director, Break the Cycle

Dan Ruben, Founder and Executive Director of Equal Justice America received the Public Interest Law Students (PILSO) Lifetime Achievement Award at Pace University School of Law. Ruben was honored at a dinner event at Pace on March 21, 2003.

As a law student at Pace, Ruben was the founder of PILSO, an organization that raises funds to provide fellowships for Pace law students to do public interest work during the summer. Ruben started the organization, which continues to thrive, as a second year law student. He graduated in 1991 before launching Equal Justice America in 1993.

“Dan left the school much stronger and richer than it was when he arrived,” said Pace Law Dean David Cohen who co-hosted the March 21st dinner with outgoing PILSO President Monica Snitily. “He did that by creating PILSO. But Dan not only created PILSO and left this wonderful legacy; he has also continued to support the law school in very important ways.”

In the fall of 2000, Pace opened the *Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic* with a grant from EJA. The EJA Clinic offers Pace students hands-on practical experience in providing direct legal representation to the disabled in a mentored learning environment.

“Dan has done more for the practice of public interest law in this country than any other Pace law graduate,” Vanessa Merton wrote in an e-mail to her colleagues on the Pace faculty that was read at the March 21st dinner. Merton, in London for the spring semester, is the Executive Director of Pace’s nationally recognized clinical program, John Jay Legal Services. The EJA Disability Rights Clinic has become an integral part of this program.

Meredith Blake, the Founder and Executive Director of Break the Cycle, an organization that works with young people to end domestic violence, sent a fax that was read at the PILSO dinner. EJA has recently joined forces with Break the Cycle and is sponsoring a two-year EJA Fellowship for a Stanford law graduate to work in their newly opened San Francisco office.

“I congratulate Dan Ruben, a rare individual who has made it his life’s work to impact the community on a broad scale and give voice to those in need,” wrote Blake.

Ruben is the third person to receive the PILSO Lifetime Achievement Award. The first two recipients were Richard L. Ottinger, the former Dean of the Law School, a former member of Congress and a member of EJA’s Board of Advisors and Vanessa Merton.

Stanford Law Grad Awarded Two-Year EJA Fellowship in Break the Cycle's New San Francisco Office

"We're very excited about our new partnership with Break the Cycle. They have done such tremendous work with young people to attack domestic violence at its roots." Dan Ruben, Founder and Executive Director, Equal Justice America

"With this exciting partnership, we will stem the tide of domestic violence before it infects adulthood and future generations." Meredith Blake, Founder and Executive Director, Break the Cycle

Equal Justice America and Break the Cycle have joined forces in the fight against domestic violence. As Break the Cycle expands its program into three new cities this year, Equal Justice America has awarded an EJA Fellowship to Stanford Law School graduate Jennifer Ornelas who has begun working in Break the Cycle's newly opened San Francisco office.

Ms. Ornelas, who graduated from Stanford last spring, brings a strong record of commitment to public interest law and to working with young people. During law school, she received an Equal Justice America Summer 2001 Fellowship to work at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. She has also worked with the Teenage Parenting Program at the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County and was a volunteer teacher with the Stanford Street Law Program.

Break the Cycle works to end domestic violence by providing law-based education, free legal services, advocacy and support to young people, ages 12-22. Having built a strong reputation in Los Angeles, Break the Cycle is expanding this year with new offices in San Francisco, New York City and Washington, DC.

"We're very excited about our new partnership with Break the Cycle," said Dan Ruben, Founder and Executive Director of Equal Justice America. They have done such tremendous work with young people to attack domestic violence at its roots. We look forward to working with them and being a part of this crucial effort.

"As a National Founding Partner with Break the Cycle, you are investing in a national community dedicated to empowering young people to end violence," said Meredith Blake, the Founder and Executive Director of Break the Cycle. "With this exciting partnership, we will stem the tide of domestic violence *before* it infects adulthood and future generations."

We ask for the generous support of Stanford law alumni to help us make this partnership a success.



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Currently Offers Legal Services
Fellowships to Students at the
Following Law Schools

- ◆ American University Washington College of Law
- ◆ Boston College Law School
- ◆ Boston University School of Law
- ◆ Brooklyn Law School
- ◆ Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law
- ◆ Columbia University School of Law
- ◆ Cornell Law School
- ◆ De Paul University College of Law
- ◆ Detroit College of Law
- ◆ Fordham University School of Law
- ◆ George Washington University Law School
- ◆ Georgetown University Law Center
- ◆ Harvard Law School
- ◆ Howard University School of Law
- ◆ John Marshall Law School
- ◆ Loyola University of Chicago School of Law
- ◆ New York Law School
- ◆ New York University School of Law
- ◆ Northwestern University School of Law
- ◆ Pace University School of Law
- ◆ St. John's University School of Law
- ◆ Southwestern University School of Law
- ◆ Stanford Law School
- ◆ Suffolk University Law School
- ◆ Temple University School of Law
- ◆ Union University Albany Law School
- ◆ University of California at Berkeley, Boalt Hall
- ◆ University of California Hastings College of the Law
- ◆ University of California, Los Angeles School of Law
- ◆ University of Chicago Law School
- ◆ University of Colorado School of Law
- ◆ University of Illinois College of the Law
- ◆ University of Michigan Law School
- ◆ University of Minnesota Law School
- ◆ University of Pennsylvania Law School
- ◆ University of Texas at Austin School of Law
- ◆ University of Wisconsin Law School
- ◆ University of Virginia School of Law
- ◆ University of Washington School of Law
- ◆ Wayne State University Law School
- ◆ Yale University Law School



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

has Sponsored Law Student
Fellowships at the Following Legal
Assistance Organizations

- AIDS Legal Council of Chicago
- Atlanta Legal Aid Society
- Advocates for Children, New York City
- Alaska Legal Services
- Appalachian Legal Services
- AYUDA Legal Aid, Washington, DC
- Battered Women's Alternatives, Concord, CA
- Bread for the City, Washington, DC
- Battered Women's Justice Center, White Plains, NY
- Bay Area Legal Aid, San Francisco, CA
- Bay Area Legal Services, Tampa, FL
- Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA
- Boston College Immigration and Asylum Project
- Boston College Legal Assistance Bureau
- Break the Cycle, Los Angeles, CA
- Bronx Legal Services
- Brooklyn Legal Services Corp. A
- California Rural Legal Assistance
- Catholic Charities Immigration and Refugee Services, New York, NY
- Center for Arkansas Legal Services
- Central Virginia Legal Aid Society
- Charlottesville-Abermarle Legal Aid Society, VA
- Chemung Legal Services, Elmira, NY
- Chicago Legal Clinic
- Children's Legal Services, Boston, MA
- Columbia Legal Services, Seattle, WA
- Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI
- Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA
- Cornell Legal Aid Clinic, Ithaca, NY
- DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- DC Employment Justice Center
- DC Law Students in Court
- Disability Law Center, Seattle, WA
- East Bay Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA
- Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic, White Plains, NY
- Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Legal Aid Society of Orange County
- Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY
- Legal Aid Society of San Francisco
- Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, CA
- Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Legal Aid Society of Westchester County, NY
- Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Legal Services Center at the Door, New York, NY
- Legal Services of Central Michigan
- Legal Corps of Los Angeles
- Essex-Newark Legal Services, NJ
- Family Advocacy Program, Boston, MA
- Farmers' Legal Action Group, St. Paul, MI
- Farmworkers' Legal Services, New Paltz, NY
- Florida Justice Center
- Florida Legal Services
- Free Legal Aid Clinic, Detroit, MI
- General Assistance Advocacy Project, San Francisco, CA
- Georgia Legal Services
- Greater Boston Catholic Charities, Immigration Legal Services
- Greater Boston Legal Services
- Harvard Law School Legal Services Center, Jamaica Plain, MA
- HIV & AIDS Legal Services Alliance, Los Angeles, CA
- Homeless Action Center, Berkeley, CA
- Kentucky Legal Services
- Knoxville Legal Aid Society, TN
- Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Champaign, IL
- Lawyers for Children, New York, NY
- Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Legal Advocates for Children & Youth, San Jose, CA
- Legal Aid Association, Detroit, MI
- Legal Aid Bureau, Chicago, IL
- Legal Aid & Defender Service, Pontiac, MI
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- Legal Aid of Central Texas
- Legal Aid of North Carolina
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri

- Legal Aid Services of Oregon
- Legal Aid Society of Albuquerque, NM
- Legal Aid Society of Hawaii
- Legal Aid Society of New York City
- Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Legal Aid Society of Orange County
- Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY
- Legal Aid Society of San Francisco
- Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, CA
- Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Legal Aid Society of Westchester County, NY
- Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Legal Services Center at the Door, New York, NY
- Legal Services of Central Michigan
- Legal Corps of Los Angeles
- Legal Services of Dutchess County
- Legal Services for New York City
- Legal Services of North Florida
- Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Legal Services of the Blue Ridge, Boone, NC
- Lifespan Center for Legal Services, Chicago, IL
- Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice
- Make the Road by Walking, Newark, NJ
- Mental Health Advocacy Project
- Merrimack Valley Legal Services, Lowell, MA
- FY Legal Services, New York, NY
- Michigan Poverty Law Program
- Minnesota AIDS Project
- Montana Legal Services Association
- My Sister's Place
- Nassau Suffolk Law Services Committee, NY
- National Center for Youth Law, San Francisco, CA
- National Employment Law Project, New York, NY
- Native Lands Institute, Albuquerque, NM
- Neighborhood Law Project, Madison, WI
- Neighborhood Legal Services, MA
- Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Washington, DC
- New Hampshire Legal Assistance
- New Haven Legal Assistance Association
- New Jersey Legal Services
- New York Lawyers in the Public Interest
- New York Legal Assistance Group
- Northwestern University Legal Clinic, Chicago, IL
- Northern Virginia Legal Services
- North Carolina Justice Center
- North State Legal Services, Hillsborough, NC
- Oregon Legal Services
- Philadelphia Legal Assistance
- Piedmont Legal Services, Charlottesville, VA
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Maine
- Political Asylum Project of Austin, TX
- Pro Bono Partnership, Newark, NJ & White Plains, NY
- Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Public Justice Center, Baltimore, MD
- Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York
- Rhode Island Legal Aid Bureau
- Rocky Mountain Children's Justice Center, Denver, CO
- Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York, NY
- SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA
- South Brooklyn Legal Services
- Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services
- Sugar Law Center for Economic Justice, Detroit, MI
- Tenderloin Housing Clinic San Francisco, CA
- Texas Rural Legal Aid
- Urban Justice Center, New York, NY
- Vermont Legal Aid
- Virginia Justice Center
- Welfare Law Center, New York, NY
- Westchester-Putnam Legal Services, NY
- Western Wisconsin Legal Services
- West Tennessee Legal Services
- Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Women Empowered Against Violence, Washington, DC



**Equal Justice
America**

**Law Student Fellowships
2002-2003**



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA
Law Student Fellowships
Fall 2002/Spring 2003

- Christopher Albin-Lackey, Columbia University, Immigrant & Refugee Services, Catholic Charities, New York, NY, Spring
- Deborah Alexander, Rutgers University, Essex-Newark Legal Services, NJ, Fall
- Alison Altman, George Washington University, D.C. Employment Justice Center, Spring
- Alyse Bertenthal, University of Chicago, Mexican-American Legal and Defense Education Fund, Washington, DC, Fall
- Jed Bodger, Temple University, SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA, Fall
- Melanie Bork, Temple University, SeniorLAW Center, Fall
- Elisabeth Bornstein, University of Chicago, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, Spring
- Nola Breglio, Yale University, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Liyah Brown, New York University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Fall
- Stephanie Bryant, George Washington University, D.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Fall
- Giliane Cherubin, Columbia University, Immigrant and Refugee Services, Catholic Charities, New York, NY, Fall/Spring
- Thomas Craig, Catholic University, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Fall
- Deborah Cuevas, George Washington University, D.C. Employment Justice Center, Spring
- Meehye Do, Chicago-Kent, Chicago Legal Clinic, Spring
- Thomas Douglas, University of Pennsylvania, SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA, Fall
- Pamela Genise, George Washington University, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Fall
- Jeff Gold, DePaul University, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, Fall/Spring
- Eric Goldstein, Southwestern University, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, Spring
- Kerry Halpern, Georgetown University, Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Washington, DC, Fall
- Julie Harcum, Loyola University of Chicago, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, Fall
- Annie Harlan, Yale University, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Taja-Nia Henderson, New York University, Urban Justice Center, New York, NY, Spring
- Stephanie Hepburn, American University, Ayuda Legal Aid, Washington, DC, Fall
- Sarah Renee Holland, Yale University, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring

Equal Justice America
Law Student Fellowships
Fiscal Year 2002-2003
Fall 2002/Spring 2003

- Kristina Holm, Columbia University, Immigrant and Refugee Services, Catholic Charities, New York, NY, Fall
- Lucrecia Jaramillo, New York University, Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York, NY, Fall
- Jill Johnson, Loyola University of Chicago, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, Fall
- Amanda Katz, Brooklyn Law School, Welfare Law Center, New York, NY, Spring
- Joyce Kim, Columbia University, Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, Fall
- Jeremy Kroger, New York University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Fall
- Jennifer Lav, Columbia University, Welfare Law Center, New York, NY, Fall
- Anne Law, Catholic University, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Fall
- Amy Loeliger, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA, Fall
- Amanda Luna, UCLA, Break the Cycle, Los Angeles, CA, Fall
- Robyn Mooers, Fordham University, Sanctuary For Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York, NY, Fall
- Joseph Neugart, University of Texas, Political Asylum Project of Austin, Fall
- Christopher Norton, Southwestern University, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA, Fall
- Elana Olitsky, New York University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Fall
- Amanda Orchard, University of Texas, Political Asylum Project of Austin, Fall
- Esther Park, Georgetown University, Women Empowered Against Violence, Washington, DC, Fall
- Spencer Parr, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA, Fall
- Benjamin Perez, Temple University, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA Fall
- Elizabeth Popolis, American University, Chicago Legal Clinic, Fall
- Camilla Roberson, Columbia University, Welfare Law Center, New York, NY, Fall
- Melissa Roudabush, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA, Spring
- Ji Seon Song, Columbia University, Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York, NY, Spring
- Gregory Sutton, New York University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Fall
- Robyn Swanson, Northwestern, Chicago Legal Clinic, Spring
- Amber Tafoya, University of Colorado, Colorado Legal Services, Fall
- Danielle Thomas, DePaul University, Chicago Legal Clinic, Spring
- Eric Brian Topel, Georgetown University, Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Washington, DC, Fall
- Nicole Vafeades, Southwestern University, Break the Cycle, Los Angeles, CA, Fall
- Stephanie Villinski, DePaul University, National Center on Poverty Law, Chicago, IL Fall



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Law Student Fellowships

Summer 2003

- William Abresch, New York University, South Brooklyn Legal Services
- Julie Ahn, UCLA, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Valissia Allen, University of Wisconsin, Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI
- Kimberly Allman, Cornell, Legal Services of Dutchess County, NY
- Alison Altman, George Washington University, Bread for the City, Washington, DC
- Joseph Ancien, Temple University, SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Ferheena Anwar, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Maria L Banuelos, Hastings, East Bay Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA
- Jennifer Benischek, St John's University School of Law, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Sarah Bennett, Harvard, Appalachian Legal Services, Beckley, WV
- Kristine Bergstrom, Cornell, Legal Aid Services of Oregon
- Rachel Bertin, Hastings, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
- Brooke Betts Georgetown University, The Alliance for Children's Rights, Los Angeles, CA
- Umbreen Saba Bhatti, University of Michigan, The Legal Aid Society, New York, NY
- Julie Black, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Leonard Braman, Harvard, Children's Law Center, Lynn, MA
- Farah Fawcett Brass, University of Illinois, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Rebecca Marie Brisch, Catholic University, The Legal Aid Society, New York, NY
- Christina Brown, Boalt Hall, Mental Health Advocacy Project, San Jose, CA
- Kevin Brown, New York University, Merrimack Valley Legal Services, Lowell, MA
- Heather Buchanan, Cornell, Legal Aid of North Carolina
- Dana Bucin, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Jeremy Butler, Georgetown University, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Washington, DC
- Kelly Bourke Hilgers, Georgetown University, Texas Civil Rights Project
- Karen Chang, Brooklyn Law School, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Joshua Chartier, University of Michigan, Legal Aid & Defender, Pontiac, MI
- Natalie Chin, George Washington University, The Legal Aid Society, New York, NY

Equal Justice America
Law Student Fellowships
Summer 2003

- Melani Clarke, Hastings, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Harrel Connor, Columbia University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Deborah Cuevas, George Washington University, D.C. Employment Justice Center
- Laura D'Afflitti, American University D.C. Employment Justice Center
- Jill Dabrowski, University of Minnesota, Minnesota AIDS Project
- Reed Davis, New York University, My Sister's Place, White Plains, NY
- Irene Dickerman, New York Law School, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Meehye Do, Chicago-Kent, Chicago Legal Clinic
- Sarika Doshi, University of Michigan, The Legal Aid Society, NYC
- Daniel Doyle, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Erin Durba, Columbia University, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Anne Fleming, Harvard, Children's Law Center of Massachusetts
- Paola Garcia, Columbia University In Motion, New York, NY
- Charesa Garrett, Hastings, East Bay Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA
- Melissa Gertz, Rutgers University, Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice, Detroit, MI
- Michelle Goldman, Suffolk University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Michael Gregory, Harvard, Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School
- Karly Grossman, Temple University, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Kate Hallward, Boalt Hall, The Legal Aid Society, San Francisco, CA
- Magda Herrera, University of Texas, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Toya Howard, John Marshall, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Gloria Huang, Harvard, The Legal Aid Society of Orange County, CA
- Juliet Huang, University of Chicago, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Sonja Huang, Fordham, Legal Services for New York City
- Lisa Hurlbutt, Boston College, Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc, Lynn, MA
- Adriana Johnson, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Shanon Jones, University of Chicago, Business & Professional People for the Public Interest, Chicago, IL
- Omar Joseph, Howard University, Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Washington, DC
- Dana Kaplan, American University, D.C. Employment Justice Center
- Sarina Kaplan, Rutgers University, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Sarah Katz, Fordham, Advocates for Children, New York, NY
- Kathleen Kearney, Suffolk University, Family Advocacy Program, Boston, MA
- Adam Kirschner, University of Michigan, Legal Aid Foundation of Chicago

Equal Justice America
Law Student Fellowships
Summer 2003

- Sierra Rose Koch, Wayne State University Law School, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Michael Kremenak, University of Chicago, Chicago Legal Clinic
- Margrethe Krontoft, Harvard, Harvard Law School Immigration and Refugee Clinic
- Nicole Lalich, University of Illinois, Chicago Legal Clinic
- Jonathan Lamberson, Harvard, Legal Aid Association, Detroit, MI
- Nhu Le, Cornell, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Celina Leal, University of Texas, Texas Rural Legal Aid
- Sonya Lebsack, Boalt Hall, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Boston, MA
- Anne Leete, American University, The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Julie Lorenzon, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Erin Lovell, Northwestern University, Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center, Denver, CO
- Michael Lucas, Boalt Hall, The Legal Aid Society of San Francisco, CA
- Gregory Luloff, Northwestern University, Children's Law Center of Massachusetts
- Sarah Mattson, Harvard, New Hampshire Legal Assistance
- Sarah McDonald, University of Michigan, Lawyers for Children, New York, NY
- Brian McLaughlin, University of Virginia, Bay Area Legal Aid, San Francisco
- J Clare McRae, Columbia University, Legal Aid Services of Oregon
- Erica Mecler, Suffolk University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Alexander Mejias, University of Virginia, Legal Aid Justice Center, Charlottesville, VA
- Mtende Mhango, Detroit College of Law, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Miho Murai, Hastings, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Ryann Nieves, Southwestern University, Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center
- Scott Nolen, Harvard, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
- Navin Pant, Northwestern University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Betsy Parrell, University of Minnesota, The Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, MN
- Ryan Pellerito, Detroit College of Law, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Sara Perea, Georgetown University, Hogar Hispano, Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington, VA
- Adia Perry, Rutgers University, Essex-Newark Legal Services, NJ
- Neill Perry, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services

Equal Justice America
Law Student Fellowships
Summer 2003

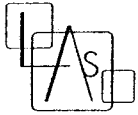
- Laura Pichardo, DePaul University, Florida Legal Services
- Jacquelyn Pinnell, Georgetown University, D.C. Law Students in Court
- Jamila Powell, George Washington University, The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Anna Prakash, Cornell, Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, MN
- Jeremy Price, Hastings, Mental Health Advocacy Project, San Jose, CA
- Mayelin Prieto-Gonzalez, Harvard, Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services, Boston, MA
- Jessica Rickabaugh, University of Pennsylvania, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Michelle Roberts, Boalt Hall, The Legal Aid Society, San Francisco, CA
- Rachelle Rogers, Hastings, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- Kristen Rowse, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA
- Jessica Salsbury, American University, Virginia Justice Center
- Charlotte Sanders, Harvard, Georgia Legal Services Program Atlanta, GA
- Beatriz Sandoval, DePaul University, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Jennie Santos, Boston College, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Washington, DC
- Joshua Shiffrin, Harvard, Tenderloin Housing Clinic San Francisco, CA
- Abigail Smith, Catholic University, Bread for the City Washington, DC
- Laurie Snyder, Temple University, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Jean Soh, University of Michigan, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- John Stefani, DePaul University, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Josh Sternberg, Brooklyn Law School, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Meg Stiaszny, Georgetown University, Legal Clinics Center for Community Solutions, San Diego, CA
- Kelly Stolpman, University of Texas, Legal Aid Services of Oregon
- Paul Stroka, University of Virginia, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Samantha Sturgis, University of Michigan, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Nasreen Syed, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Jill Tauber, Harvard, New York Legal Assistance Group
- Katherine Teitgen, University of Wisconsin, Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Daniel Tenny, University of Michigan, South Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc
- Michelle Thomas, George Washington University, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
- Kareen Turner, University of Illinois, Legal Aid Bureau, Chicago, IL
- Kerri Turner, Suffolk University, Children's Legal Services, Boston, MA

Equal Justice America
Law Student Fellowships
Summer 2003

- Nicole Vanderlaan, Columbia University, HIV & AIDS Legal Services Alliance, Los Angeles, CA
- Dorinda Vassigh, Hastings, Mental Health Advocacy Project, San Jose, CA
- Angela Walker, University of Michigan, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Dan Walker, Cornell, Farmers Action Legal Group, St. Paul, MN
- Holli Wallace, Detroit College of Law, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Christina Wascher, Loyola University, Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
- Derek Watkins, Wayne State University Law School, Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice, Detroit, MI
- Lea Weems, Harvard, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
- Christina Wilkes, George Washington University, Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project, Florence, AZ
- Margaret Williams, George Washington University, D.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Paulina Williams, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Lisa Willis, Harvard, The Legal Aid Society, New York, NY
- Hanna Yang, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Brad Yatabe, Hastings, East Bay Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA
- Mary Ann Young, Suffolk University, The Legal Aid Society, New York, NY



Letters
to
Equal Justice
America
from
Legal Services
Organizations



The Legal Aid Society

EMPLOYMENT LAW CENTER

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their families and communities*

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June 4, 2003

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan,

On behalf of the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center, I would like to express heartiest congratulations and thanks to Equal Justice America upon its tenth anniversary. During these ten years Equal Justice America has quietly and effectively provided important support to the practice of public interest law, by funding law students whose talent, commitment and enthusiasm contributes immeasurably to this work. Through Equal Justice America, countless low-income people have been helped with legal advice, counseling and representation through an increasingly complex civil justice system. With this help clients have successfully supported families, fought discrimination, gained access to benefits, and protected the safety and education rights of children, making important inroads in the struggle to make justice a reality for all members of our society.

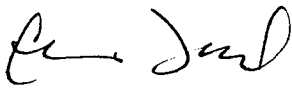
The Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center works to improve the working lives of low-income and disadvantaged people, utilizing an array of strategies including impact litigation, direct legal services and legislative advocacy on behalf of our clients. Equal Justice America Fellows have joined our work with semester and summer funding over the past six years, assisting in litigation and providing services to a growing number of clients. One Equal Justice Fellow staffed our Language Rights Hotline, providing counsel to individuals who suffer discrimination based on English language proficiency or accent. Another provided important research and client follow-up assistance for our Workers' Rights Clinics, and a third Fellow successfully represented several individuals who had been unlawfully denied unemployment insurance benefits. Two Fellows spent summers assisting in advocacy and litigation to protect the employment rights of low-income individuals in transition from welfare to work, contributing to the success of the project.

At least two of our Fellows have gone on to post-graduate public interest practice. Eve Stotland, who received a fellowship in 1998, now practices as a staff attorney at The Door Legal Services Center in New York City, assisting low-income youth in a variety of civil matters. Katie O'Brien Evans, a Fellow in 2000, is now working with LAS-ELC co-counsel on an important U.S. Supreme Court race discrimination case.

June 4, 2003
Page two

We are so pleased to have worked with and mentored these talented young lawyers, and share the pride that you must feel in their demonstrated commitment to equal justice. We are grateful that Equal Justice America recognizes the important work that is being done on behalf of low-income people and provides such meaningful support. Equal Justice America's leadership is an invaluable help in ensuring that the next generation of idealistic young lawyers will be able to continue the tradition of public service. Thank you, and warm congratulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christine Todd".

Christine Todd
Vice President, Administration

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February 28, 2003

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan:

It is with great pleasure, and even greater gratitude, that I write to congratulate you on the 10th Anniversary of Equal Justice America. The birth and development of EJA could not have been more timely and fortuitous for legal services organizations such as ours.

Indeed, over the last eight years in particular, the economic cutbacks and other restrictions imposed upon providers of legal representation to the poor have created enormous caseload and other burdens upon us largely related to resulting staff reductions. Our ability to avoid the most draconian reductions in services can largely be attributed to the contribution made by a corps of highly motivated and dedicated law student interns. *The overwhelming majority of these wonderful, and indispensable young law students has been financed by EJA.*

Dan, without the availability of these summer and school year interns I cannot imagine the additional burdens our staff lawyers would have had to bear and, even worse, the loss of services to scores of clients that would have resulted at a time when they were most needed. And, given the economic picture in the foreseeable future, our need for EJA-sponsored law student interns is surely going to grow dramatically in the coming year.

We need EJA more than ever before, Dan, and the need is nothing less than urgent. We wish you all the success in the world, not only because you deserve it, but because *your* success is *our* salvation. Again, our heartiest congratulations on your 10th year.

Sincerely,



Martin S. Needelman
Project Director

LEGAL SERVICES OF SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

*"...there can be no equal justice where
the kind of trial... (one) enjoys depends on
the amount of money (one) has."*

--Hon. Hugo Black
Griffin v Illinois
351 US 12 (1956)

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April 21, 2003

Mr. Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Dr.
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan,

I am writing to congratulate Equal Justice America on the occasion of its 10th anniversary. Your outstanding fellowship program has been putting students from a number of law schools to work both during the school year and in the summer at Legal Services of South Central Michigan (LSSCM). One particular area of our program which has benefitted significantly from your funding is the Family Law Project, founded by University of Michigan law students, which serves indigent survivors of domestic violence in Washtenaw County.

In addition to the significant community service provided through EJA, the program offers law students the chance for public interest employment. I have long believed that students who are able to work in public interest settings while attending law school are much more likely to continue in public interest careers after graduation. With threatened cuts to legal services funding ever present, your program ensures that these students will continue to have work opportunities, and that our struggling low income clients will at least to some extent be protected from the impact of cuts because student intern services will continue to be provided.

While a 10th anniversary is a significant milestone for any non-profit, I'm especially gratified to see EJA's growth—both because your mission is so aligned with our organizational interests and because of the collaborative, flexible interactions we've always enjoyed with EJA. As you know, LSSCM was one of EJA's "founding partners"—I still remember our conversations about the program when you were first developing the idea. It's amazing to see the growth of EJA from a concept to a real program providing public interest law placements to 200 students a year.

I'd like to congratulate EJA on its 10th anniversary. We thank you for 10 years of support and look forward to continuing the successful relationship we've established.

Very Truly Yours,



Robert F. Gillett
Director

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April 21, 2003

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan:

On behalf of the staff, Board and most importantly the clients of Public Counsel, I wanted to congratulate Equal Justice America (EJA) on its 10th anniversary and thank you for all you have done to advance equal justice in our community.

Your efforts to support outstanding law students in their public interest work has resulted in more justice in Los Angeles. As you know, your support has enabled Public Counsel to assist children get adopted out of the foster care system, fight consumer scams that prey on the elderly, assist non profit organization with their legal needs, help abused women and support our many other endeavors on behalf of those who need justice the most but can afford it the least.

We are grateful for your support and proud of our collaboration. Once again, congratulations and thank you!

Very truly yours,


Daniel Grunfeld
President/CEO

cc: Shari Bartz, Director of Finance and Administration

Executive Committee Member

Bet Tzedek Legal Services

THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE

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Cassandra Stubbs
Skadden Arps Fellow

Jill S. Tabachnick
Jewish Federation/
Bet Tzedek Fellow

Toni M. Vargas
Staff Attorney

Eric M. Carlson, Of Counsel

April 29, 2003

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Congratulations to Equal Justice America and to you on 10 years of supporting and promoting the civil legal needs of the poor by putting law students to work in public interest organizations across the country. We applaud the important work you do and the achievements of Equal Justice America during the last 10 years. Bet Tzedek is fortunate to have had the support of Equal Justice America and we look forward to working with your organization in the future.

Each year your organization has supported our summer program by offering generous awards to students who provide legal services to the elderly, indigent and disabled residents of our community. More recently Equal Justice America has been able to fund several students in our Fall and Spring semester programs. We are equally appreciative for your consistent support of our programs and services.

Again, congratulations on your 10 years of commitment to serving the legal needs of the poor and for your contributions to the students who work with Bet Tzedek. We are incredibly grateful.

Best wishes,

Mitchell A. Kamin
Executive Director

Robin Sommerstein
Human Resource Director/
Volunteer Coordinator

Bet Tzedek Legal Services provides free legal services to needy persons without regard to race, religion or national origin. Bet Tzedek is funded in part by the Jewish Federation Council of Los Angeles, United Way, the State Bar of California, the City and County of Los Angeles, the City of West Hollywood, and private donations. Bet Tzedek (The House of Justice) is a non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

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February 21, 2003

Mr. Daniel Ruben
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan:

Please accept our warm and hearty congratulations, as you celebrate the tenth anniversary of your wonderful organization! You have reason to feel a great deal of satisfaction, as you look back over the last ten years.

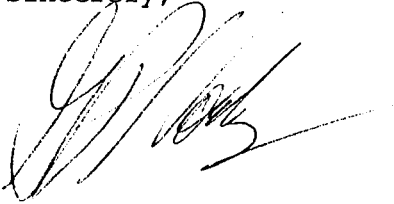
We at the Chicago Legal Clinic have very much appreciated your support for the dozens of internships you have funded. Some of the best and the brightest of the nation's law students have been able to receive substantial funding for fellowships to work as interns in our offices. These fellowships have been both during the school year, on a part-time basis, as well as during the summer, on a full-time basis, for ten weeks.

The students selected for fellowships have had the opportunity to gain valuable legal experience, including consistent client contact, as well as earn a wage, which helps them offset some of their expenses. We have already had dozens of law students funded by Equal Justice America from the University of Chicago, Northwestern, Chicago-Kent, Loyola of Chicago, DePaul, John Marshall, University of Illinois, the Washington College at American University, and Harvard University. Some of these students have impressed us so much that they later have become staff attorneys in our organization. Other students have gone on to make substantial contributions to the public interest, through other organizations.

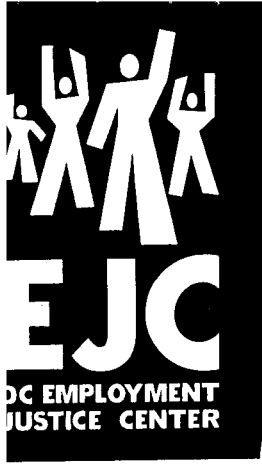
As you know, our Clinic has been serving low-income clients for more than 21 years. We have 17 attorneys and 13 support staff working out of four offices in Chicago, and serve thousands of individuals each year. The student interns have enabled us to assist more clients than we would otherwise have been able to help. In fact, many of our students have been qualified to represent our clients in court, pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711.

If anyone should need further information about the internships you have made possible for our Clinic, they should feel free to contact me directly. We are really grateful for our relationship with Equal Justice America, and wish you even greater success in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Nordgren", written over a horizontal line.

Gerald P. Nordgren
Supervisory Attorney



December 3, 2003

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan:

As I was checking your website for some information, I learned not only that Equal Justice America is celebrating its tenth anniversary, but that you also recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Pace Law School. I write to congratulate you and EJA on such richly deserved honors!

While EJA seems such a simple concept, I know there is nothing simple about what you have accomplished. Many good ideas flounder under the wrong leadership, and fundraising, even for the most worthy causes, is a hard job. The fact that EJA has flourished is a testimony to your vision, but just as importantly, to the leadership and hard work you have brought to this organization.

The DC Employment Justice Center is honored to be a recipient of many grants from EJA to support our law clerk program. Through EJA's generosity, over the past three years, we have been able to hire over a dozen law clerks from D.C. area schools. Not only did these students have a learning experience they could never get in the classroom, but they were also able to do so much good for so many workers. In our three short years of existence, we have recovered over \$800,000 in unpaid wages and benefits for our clients, returned dozens of people to jobs from which they were wrongfully terminated, and won medical care for hundreds of injured workers who were being neglected by their workers' compensation carriers. Without the assistance of our law clerks, many of whom also provide valuable translation services for our Spanish-speaking clients, these figures would be much lower.

We are grateful for EJA's support but more importantly, proud to be associated with and supported by such a wonderful organization. Keep up all your amazing work! Congratulations!

Sincerely,

Judith M. Conti

April 28, 2003

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to salute Equal Justice America on its tenth anniversary. We at CLS—and even more so our clients—have benefitted greatly from EJA's support.

Through the years, EJA has provided tens of thousands of dollars in support of our summer and school-year internship programs. That support has brought us over 20 law student interns since 1997. Our EJA interns have helped us provide direct legal services to our clients on a wide range of problems—from stopping evictions to obtaining disability benefits for children, from protecting workers' employment rights to preserving families' welfare and food stamp benefits.

While providing us and our clients with many hours of skilled legal work, EJA has also helped introduce students to what it is like to make a career in legal services and public interest law. We know that a number of our EJA interns have gone on after graduation to work full-time in legal services and with other organizations dedicated to representing poor people and communities. Other interns have chosen different career paths but as a result of their exposure to our work will continue to serve our clients through pro bono service.

Without EJA, our law student internship program would be far smaller. One of the wonderful things about legal services work is the presence of young, idealistic, spirited, highly skilled law students. By making it possible for students to work with us, EJA has helped keep our advocacy fresh and impassioned.

Again, we wish to thank you for your support of our work and wish EJA all the best in its second decade.

Sincerely,



CATHERINE C. CARR
Executive Director



Letters
to
Equal Justice
America
from
Fellowship
Recipients

August 26, 2003

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My summer fellowship at Family Advocacy Program (FAP) reaffirmed my decision to pursue a career in law. It was a difficult transition from registered nurse to law student and I was unsure if law school had been the right choice for me. After twelve weeks at the Family Advocacy Program, I am back in school and excited about my future in law and nursing.

Before this summer, I had never been in a welfare office, housing authority or probate court. I didn't know which verifications were needed to apply for food stamps, section 8 housing or political asylum. Navigating the system is challenging, regardless of one's previous personal, educational or professional experiences.

Boston Medical Center is a large, urban healthcare facility that treats mostly underserved, low-income clients. Their motto, Exceptional Healthcare Without Exception, truly describes the respect and dignity every client is given when they arrive on campus. A pediatrician started the Family Advocacy Program in 1993, as a response to a pediatric patient's need for legal advocacy. Adequate food, shelter, safety, education and public benefits are necessary to improve health outcomes of poor children. To learn more about the Family Advocacy Program, please visit the website at <http://www.familyadvocacyprogram.org>.

In addition to direct client contact and advocacy, I attended policy committee meetings within the hospital and the community, involving issues such as domestic violence and food stamps. I utilized my professional contacts and affiliations to advertise FAP's annual October conference within the nursing community. I was interviewed for the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society's online publication, Excellence, which can be viewed at http://www.nursingsociety.org/publications/EXCEL_CP2_3Q.html.

By the end of my summer fellowship, I had opened twenty-four cases and completed six cases consults to clinical providers. I transferred three cases to the pro-bono attorneys of a large, private, Boston law firm. I staffed the legal walk-in clinic at the Dorchester House Health Center, establishing a referral relationship with clinical providers. I referred clients to Health Care For All, Project Bread, ABCD, The International Institute and dozens of other Boston-based agencies. In August, I worked closely with advocates at the Haitian Women's Association on a domestic violence case.

The Summer Fellowship exposed me to public interest law at its best, a field I hope to always be a part of. Please feel free to contact me with any questions about my experiences in law school, nursing or at the Family Advocacy Program. I will always consider it a privilege and honor to have been an Equal Justice America Summer Fellow. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Kearney
Suffolk University Law School, class of 2005

Navin Pant
61 Bishop Allen Dr. #6
Cambridge, MA
02139

August 6, 2003

Dan Ruben
Executive Director, Equal Justice America
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive, Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I want to sincerely thank you and Equal Justice America for providing me an unforgettable and truly life-changing opportunity to practice in legal services at Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) through the Summer Fellowship program. Without your fellowship program, it is unlikely that I would ever have been able to spend the summer working in the Welfare Law Unit of GBLS. This summer I worked directly with low-income clients, often assisting them in resolving problems surrounding their critical means of survival, such as cash benefits and food stamps. Indeed, I not only obtained extensive experience in legal services, which I believe will be invaluable to me as I become a public interest lawyer, but I also was able to make a direct impact on people's lives. This has been the most rewarding summer of my life; it reinforces for me why I went to law school—to affect people's lives positively. Further, after working a summer in legal services, I am convinced that without access to justice, equal justice itself cannot exist.

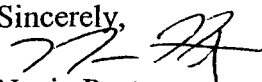
Moreover, I learned how practicing legal services often encompasses understanding the broader implication of legislation. As my previous experience in public interest was in Nepal, I am reminded this summer as an intern in the Welfare Law Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services of the connection between events that take place abroad and laws in the United States. Several weeks ago, I met a client, Ms. M, who had fled domestic violence from her home country in Latin America. She was in the United States legally, but because she had been in the country for less than five years, she was ineligible for welfare benefits. There was a potential exception to this law. Because of welfare laws in Massachusetts, Ms. M would not have been automatically deemed ineligible had her abuse occurred in the United States. However, because her abuse occurred abroad, she was not eligible for any benefits. Welfare laws are punitive against all poor people, especially immigrants. Even if Ms. M qualified for welfare, she would have been required to work or do community service as a result of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Opportunity Act—the name of the act itself connoting assumptions about poor people. While I tried to assist clients with matters concerning their daily lives, I also tried to get an overall, bird's eye view of the problems our clients face. I found helping clients resolve urgent matters affecting daily life extremely rewarding, although I found the demeaning labyrinth of laws set up against poor people to be sobering. Welfare Reform has been especially a topic of interest for both Democrats and Republicans for the past seven years. Spending the summer at GBLS is a great opportunity to truly understand what “reform” means and how people's lives are affected by it.

Navin Pant
61 Bishop Allen Dr. #6
Cambridge, MA
02139

In short, Greater Boston Legal Services is a great place to intern. Attorneys are extremely dedicated to clients. Also, because of state budget cuts, GBLS depends on interns to take on client cases. I was given complete ownership of client cases—from start to finish. There was the right amount of supervision, and people in my group were always willing to help. Further, this was a very intense experience—you really get insight into the lives of people who are facing very difficult circumstances: from disabilities, deaths in the family, to domestic violence. Finally, I highly recommend GBLS to anyone interested in getting a broad range of experience in legal services.

Once again, thank you for selecting me as part of your Summer Fellowship program.

Sincerely,



Navin Pant

Northwestern University School of Law, matriculated Aug. 2002- May 2003
New York University School of Law, JD 2005

Christina J. Brown
383 Avenida Abetos
San Jose, CA 95123

August 20, 2003

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

After spending the last ten weeks as a law clerk with Mental Health Advocacy Project, I can honestly say that my only regret is that it was only ten weeks. During my internship, I have been witness to countless examples of attorneys working fervently and diligently to uphold the rights of persons disadvantaged by low incomes and mental illness. After working with many clients and experiencing both successes and frustrations, I have a new appreciation of both the legal challenges facing persons with mental illnesses and for public interest law. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to Equal Justice America for making this experience possible for me with a 2003 Summer Fellowship.

This summer I was able to gain a more in-depth understanding of the nexus between mental health and the law, as well as specific knowledge in the field of patients' rights. In particular, I learned a great deal about the specific ways in which the law can be used to benefit those persons otherwise disadvantaged by mental illness and poverty. Of the approximately forty-five clients with whom I worked directly this summer, all identified as suffering from mental illness and most received psychiatric services from a county facility. I encountered many incidents in which patients' rights were breached by their mental health service providers, including breach of confidentiality, failure to provide for medical needs or religious needs, failure to respect patients' dignity, holding a patient involuntarily in an unnecessarily restrictive placement, overmedication issues, and unnecessary or overly forceful restraint.

One of the highlights of my summer experience was the great deal of time spent working directly with clients. In one case, I worked with a client who was being held involuntarily in a locked psychiatric facility in the Bay Area, though he wanted to move to a less restrictive placement near his family in Los Angeles. Working with the client's doctor and conservator, I was able to show that the client was not gravely disabled and got his conservatorship dropped, allowing him to move to a less restrictive placement in Los Angeles. In another case, I was able to recover a client's money that had been incorrectly marked by her conservator. Working with yet another client, I was able to investigate patients' rights breached by a mental health facility and help design better training on patients' rights for the facility's staff.

In addition to working with specific clients, I was given the opportunity to participate in projects impacting the larger mental health and low-income community in Santa Clara County. In one

instance, I wrote to a large county mental health provider, urging it to install grab bars in some of its restrooms in compliance with the ADA and to accommodate the large number of its clients with physical disabilities. On another occasion, I worked with county mental health facilities to clarify the rights of mental health service recipients to contract with patients' rights advocates even if they are conserved, and the rights of patients' rights advocates to investigate complaints. These facilities changed their policies to allow county patients' rights advocates better access to client records and more cooperation by facility staff when investigating complaints. I also accompanied other advocates on outreaches in the community, teaching residents at homeless shelters and children in community treatment facilities about their rights and taking reports of violations.

Throughout the summer many clients expressed gratitude for our office's efforts to ensure their rights were not violated or to secure a benefit to which they were entitled. Their gratitude should also be directed to Equal Justice America and your 2003 Summer Fellowship, which made it possible for me to have this incredible experience at Mental Health Advocacy Project this summer. Thank you very much for your commitment to providing legal services to the poor and for allowing me to work toward this goal this summer.

Truly yours,



Christina Brown
University of California at Berkeley
School of Law (Boalt Hall)
Class of 2005

1847 Calvert Street, NW
Apartment 4
Washington, DC 20009

August 27, 2003
Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I've just begun my last year of law school, and thanks to my summer work at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, I am more certain than ever that I want to enter the field of public interest law. My father started his career at a legal services organization in Pennsylvania, and always told me that it was that experience which shaped both his personal and professional life. Today, I feel the same way. This summer was the first time that I have had the opportunity to work with a group of smart, talented, motivated, and dedicated attorneys on meaningful issues. Both the lawyers and the clients at Legal Aid taught me a great deal about the practice of law in the context of poverty. However, although I did gain a significant amount of knowledge about the letter of the law, I believe that the most important skills I gained are those of client interaction. In addition, I also became more intensely aware of the social institutions that create and maintain extreme poverty in the United States.


Working at Legal Aid opened my eyes to the vast differences in the lives of people who live just blocks away from me. The discrepancies in income, education, and support structures was shocking. It is incredible to me to think that most of the middle and upper class residents of Washington, D.C. will never see or know about the vast array of issues that plague those who are forced to live in poverty in this city. At times, I became very discouraged. It was difficult to see the same types of cases again and again, where laws and regulations were being abused or ignored to the detriment of those individuals least able to bear the burden. I spoke with lawyers who had become cynical, and believed that we were not really changing anything. Even on those days when the injustices that flowed into the office seemed endless, I felt that it was better to be there and actually see them and try to deal with them, than to continue to live in ignorant bliss. This is how working at Legal Aid has affected my future. I was not sure that I wanted or would be able to do direct service work. However, seeing the clients' faces when they found out that they weren't going to be evicted, or when they received their Social Security check after months of battling the government for benefits to which they were entitled, I realized that nothing could be more rewarding.

Although my summer was overwhelmingly positive, there were also frustrating moments. I realized that there are definitely limits to the amount of assistance that a lawyer can offer, and that it can sometimes be enormously challenging to try to help clients who are unfamiliar with the legal process or unwilling to cooperate. In addition, I also found it difficult to leave the work at the office at the end of the day. The lawyers and staff at the Legal Aid Society work long hours, and often deal with emotional issues. There were many nights and weekends when I would be at home, but be wondering or worrying about how a specific client was doing. Legal Aid employs several social workers, and they were extremely helpful when it came to figuring

out where to draw the line between helping a client, and teaching the client to help him or herself.

My summer internship at Legal Aid confirmed my desire to enter the field of public interest law, and I am extremely grateful to Equal Justice America for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne K. Leete". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Anne K. Leete
American University Washington College of Law
May 2004

Jonathan Lamberson
8420 Valleywood Ln.
Portage, MI 49024

August 14, 2003

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

First, I must thank you and your organization once again for providing funding to students who work for Legal Aid offices around the country. This was by far the most interesting and rewarding summer work experience I have ever had.

I worked for the Civil Division of the Legal Aid and Defender Association of Detroit, MI (LADA). I was right downtown and dealt with mostly predatory lending cases, along with some landlord-tenant and some probate matters. The reason that predatory lending is such an important area in Detroit is that, because of money pumped into the city by high paying automobile industry jobs during the 1950's and 1960's, Detroit has a very large number of homes and homeowners. Even individuals with meager incomes who qualify for free legal services often own their own home in Detroit. And because these individuals usually have little in the way of a formal education, they become a prime target for predatory lenders attempting to secure an interest in their home.

Most scams I saw over the summer started with a mortgage. Often, these mortgages had exorbitant interest rates and included terms such as balloon payments and prepayment penalties that made them almost impossible to pay off. LADA works to rescind these loans if they can, using as their tools the Michigan Usury laws as well as the Federal Truth in Lending Act (TILA) and Home Ownership Equity Protection Act (HOEPA). By the end of the summer, I knew almost every provision of these laws.

Many other scams begin after a legitimate mortgage goes into foreclosure. Because mortgage foreclosures are posted in the paper, homeowners will then receive letters from dozens of lenders (and bankruptcy lawyers) telling them that they can help save their home. Often these lenders will have the homeowner give title to the house over to them, and they will then give the homeowner the "privilege" of repurchasing the home directly from the lender. Unfortunately, the terms of the re-purchase agreements are often worse than the original mortgage, and in the process the homeowner loses whatever equity they may have had in their home.

The client whom I spent the most time working with this summer fell to a scheme such as this. She owed about \$88,000 on a mortgage on her home, which was valued at \$150,000. When she was about to enter foreclosure, she contacted a lender who had her sign a deed to the house over to him, and then had her enter a land contract repurchasing the property over two years for \$125,000 plus eleven percent interest. The lender actually felt he was doing my client a "service" by ending her foreclosure and by selling her back the house for less than its appraised value. What he doesn't mention is that my client will never be able to pay off the new obligation any more than she could the old one, and she has lost all her equity in the process.

When I first met my client, she had received a summons from the 32nd District Court in Taylor, MI. She had been unable to make her \$1300/month payments and was being evicted from the home she had lived in for twenty years. We were able to settle the District Court case favorably for my client, and then I wrote a complaint we filed in Federal Court in the Eastern District of Michigan to attempt to either get home or her equity back.

August 14, 2003

My boss originally wanted to argue that there had been fraud and coercion at the signing of the contract. While I agreed that fraud was present, I was uncomfortable using this as our only argument. After all, contracts are only very rarely rescinded. Instead, I investigated Michigan Property Law and found that under the circumstances my client described to me, an "equitable mortgage" had been created. The principal of this mortgage was the \$88,000 that the lender had paid off on her old mortgage, not the \$125,000 price of the land contract. Because of this, she still had title to her home. Also, because the lender was charging her so much to repay her loan and only gave her two years to do it in, she was paying interest in excess of 30% a year. This far exceeded the Michigan Criminal Usury limit of 25%. Further, because an unlawful debt had been given, we could bring in Federal RICO claims in order to get treble damages for our client and in order to sue in federal court.

I was only involved in this case at the very start, going to Michigan District Court and writing a Federal Complaint, so I do not know how this case will end. However, I do know that our client is in a far better position now as opposed to when she came to our office. I am hopeful that the work I did this summer will help her regain the equity she lost to these predatory lenders.

I have other stories similar to this one, but my impact this summer goes beyond the dozens of clients I spoke to. It also extends to the other attorneys at LADA who had more time in their unbelievably busy work schedules to work with their clients. I now have a much better understanding of why pro-bono work, and why Legal Aid in particular, is so vitally necessary. This is an experience that I will carry with me throughout my entire legal career.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Lamberson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Lamberson
Harvard Law School
Class of 2005

August 15, 2003

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
3010 Fox Chase Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

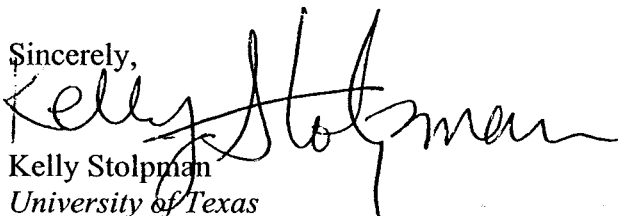
Dear Mr. Ruben,

I would first like to express my deepest gratitude to Equal Justice America for granting me a fellowship this summer. I could never have dreamed that I would have such a positive experience. I spent the summer working at Legal Aid Services of Oregon in the Farmworker Program. Not only did I learn so much about the practical side of being an attorney, I realized that I truly enjoy working for a small, non-profit organization. This clerkship provided me with the chance to see what these positions are really like.

My work at Legal Aid can be placed into two categories: legal research and writing that I worked on at the office and outreach that occurred in the actual farm labor camps. I was fortunate enough to be placed with a very talented attorney, Shelly Latin. She gave me an abundance of exciting and challenging projects to work on and she always followed up with helpful feedback. Memorandum regarding legal issues, demand letters, complaint drafts, and hearing questions are just a few of the documents I had a chance to construct.

I must admit that the field outreach was probably the best part of this job. The workers were very kind to us and receptive to hearing our message. We always brought *El Noticiero*, Legal Aid's free newspaper for the farmworker community, and other information on minimum wage and calculation of hours. This aspect of the job really called upon my ability to speak Spanish (which definitely improved as the summer progressed!)

Now the summer has drawn to a close and I look forward to getting back to my studies. I will be taking a Public Interest Lawyering Seminar that involves an externship that I am completing at the ACLU in Austin. My job at Legal Aid helped me to reassess and strengthen my career goal of working in the public interest sector upon graduation. Once again, thank you for giving me the chance to learn and grow through this practical experience at Legal Aid.

Sincerely,

Kelly Stolpman
University of Texas
Class of 2005



Excerpts
from
Amy Hansen's 1st Year Report
on her
Two-Year Post-Graduate
EJA Fellowship
at the
Support Center for
Child Advocates

SUMMARY

Equal Justice America has created a phenomenal fellowship with enough flexibility to allow me to adjust to the always-changing nature of child welfare work. In particular, the fact that this is a two-year fellowship has given me enough time to be thoroughly trained in child welfare law. As I am now reaching a point at which I feel comfortable and confident in the work I am doing, I am thrilled that EJA has provided me with the means to do this work for another year.

The Support Center for Child Advocates (“*Child Advocates*”) has been extremely supportive of me as a new lawyer, supervising my work carefully while giving me plenty of opportunity to learn my way in the field. I receive support both from my attorney supervisor and from the social work staff at the office, with whom I consult on most of my cases. The goal of *Child Advocates* is to truly address the spectrum of a child’s needs in our representation, and the social work staff is invaluable in ensuring that we are able to do that.

My current caseload consists of twenty-eight children: children who have been abused and neglected, children who are victims of crimes, and children with severe medical and mental health problems.

In addition to her current caseload, Amy has also done intake for 22 new cases and has offered advice and referrals in 20 other cases. She consults on an ongoing basis with a staff social worker whose caseload is 70 children. Amy has made approximately 70 court appearances since she began her fellowship.

Amy has also coordinated a project overhauling and revising Child Advocates’ training manual “How to Handle a Child Abuse Case,” which is the primary resource used by the organization’s volunteer attorneys, guiding them through every aspect of a child abuse case. The manual has served thousands of children over the years by enabling volunteer attorneys to provide quality representation. The manual will serve thousands more children in the future.

My youngest client is ten months old and my oldest is seventeen. I have faced a number of challenges in this first year, including dealing with the emotional nature of this work and working with a system that is overburdened and sometimes ineffective. However I have also achieved a number of personal and professional goals, such as becoming confident in my own judgment about these cases, learning to be an effective advocate in court and, most importantly, developing trusting relationships with my young clients.

I have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to work as a Child Advocate directly out of law school. *Child Advocates* is an amazing organization and the whole staff has been extremely supportive as they have trained me to do the work of representing abused and neglected children.

However, this non-profit agency would never have been able to afford to bring another attorney onto the staff. Thanks to your generosity, I have been able to work without cost to *Child Advocates*, and in return I have the privilege of supporting and fighting for the worthiest clients I can imagine.

The names used in the accounts that follow have been changed to protect client confidentiality.

The Monroe Children

In early February I was appointed to represent four siblings, Brianna (age 12), Justine (age 10), Jordan (age 9) and Nathan (age 5). At the time the case came in, the children were still living with their parents. There were concerns about their safety, because both parents had a history of drug use and because of allegations of domestic violence between the parents.

A social worker from the *Child Advocates* "Families Without Violence" project (a special project that partners with domestic violence agencies in Philadelphia to provide services to the non-abusive parent while *Child Advocates* represents the children) accompanied me on a visit to meet the children. While the home in which they were living was small and overcrowded and the father clearly was using drugs, the mother was in drug treatment and had been clean for nearly a year. She seemed able to meet the needs of her children and she indicated that she would like the assistance of the Families Without Violence project. Therefore, at the initial hearing in February, we requested that the children be permitted to remain with their parents (which the children desperately wanted) and that an intensive service program called Family Preservation be implemented to help the family.

However, over the next two months, conditions in the home deteriorated. Mrs. Monroe began using drugs again and the children began missing school. The parents refused to cooperate with any of the service providers, and the physical structure of the home began to pose a danger to the safety of the children. Additionally, the parents stopped bringing the children to their medical and therapy appointments and medication lapsed for Jordan. I concluded that I could no longer support allowing the children to remain with their parents.

At a very contested all-day hearing in April, I put on a case advocating for the placement of the children in foster care. The judge granted my request and the children were placed that night. The parents were ordered to comply with the drug evaluation center at Family Court. Both parents entered inpatient drug treatment.

At a hearing in July, reports from both parents' drug programs were very positive, and the parents seem to be on the road to recovery. They are visiting with their children, who are doing well in foster care, although they miss their parents very much. As the parents continue in their treatment, we continue to provide domestic violence services to the mother and to ensure that the children receive the therapy they need as a result of having witnessed domestic violence between their parents.

Although the outcome of this case depends on the continued sobriety of the parents, I feel confident that having the children removed was the right decision in this case. It enabled the parents to see the harm their addiction was causing to their family. They were finally willing to commit to the treatment necessary to become able to care for their four children.

Jennifer

Part of my job as a Child Advocate is to ensure that children with severe emotional problems are placed only with families who are able and willing to commit to the long-term treatment necessary for those children. This responsibility put me in a very sad position last week as I had to oppose the adoption of one of my clients.

Jennifer was removed from her mother's care at age 4, when her mother severely beat her older sister. The trauma Jennifer experienced while living with her mother scarred the young girl deeply, and she currently lives in a residential treatment facility receiving treatment for her aggression, her post-traumatic stress disorder, and her attachment disorder. Her mother's parental rights were terminated several years ago, and our long-term goal is to find an adoptive family for now eight-year-old Jennifer.

At the beginning of June, a social worker from the Department of Human Services identified an adoptive family for Jennifer. Without telling me of his plans, he arranged for the family to meet Jennifer and quickly began overnight visits for Jennifer at the family's home. When I learned about the family weeks later, I asked for a copy of the family profile and saw that they were only willing to take children with mild emotional or behavioral problems; Jennifer is one of the most severely disturbed children I have met.

Very concerned about whether this match was appropriate, I began speaking to Jennifer's therapist, the DHS worker's supervisor, and the social worker for the potentially adoptive family. While the family was big-hearted and definitely loved Jennifer as soon as they met her, they had not been given nearly enough background on Jennifer and were not at all aware of the severity of her condition or the amount of ongoing treatment she would need. As these conversations continued, it became clear that this family was not equipped to provide Jennifer with the kind of home she needs.

Although it was very upsetting to take a stand against an adoption for a client of mine who needs a family, I believe that it would have been far worse for Jennifer to be placed in this home and to have the placement fail. I will continue to work with DHS and Jennifer's treatment team until we can identify an adoptive family who is able to deal with Jennifer's condition and I will insist on the appropriate services being put in place prior to any move so that the family and Jennifer will be properly supported and Jennifer's next placement can be with her "forever family."

SUCCESS STORY

Diane

Diane is a twelve-year old girl who has been in foster care for about a year. Her mother is physically and mentally ill and has a serious drug problem. It has been clear for quite a while that she will never be able to care for Diane.

Since Diane entered foster care it has been apparent that she would have a great deal of trouble adjusting to foster families. We felt the best thing for Diane would be to find a relative who could care for her. An aunt and uncle in Florida expressed willingness to take Diane. Therefore, we pushed DHS to begin the process of investigating that home through an Interstate Compact. Unfortunately, the process took ten months. During that time, Diane was moved to four different foster homes as she refused to comply with the rules. During one awful week, Diane ran away from her foster home and was missing on the streets of Philadelphia for five days. When we finally found Diane, I knew we needed to get her out of Philadelphia and into the care of her aunt and uncle as fast as possible.

Luckily, by that point, the Interstate Compact had been approved. However, no final approval had been given by DHS for the transfer to take place. Diane's aunt and uncle were very worried when I told them about Diane having run away and they decided to drive up to Philadelphia to visit her and talk to all of us. I met with Diane's aunt and uncle the morning they arrived in town. They are wonderful people who are very eager to care for Diane and give her a chance to be a child. As they said, "she just needs a chance to be 12 again, to know that she has a home and no one is going to take that away from her." After meeting with her aunt and uncle, I decided I needed to get authorization for Diane to leave with them that day, rather than allow her to stay in foster care any longer.

Since the DHS worker on the case had not returned the two weeks of messages I had left for her prior to that point, I began calling supervisors, administrators and directors at DHS – calling through the levels of bureaucracy until I found someone who was able to authorize Diane's aunt and uncle to take her with them.

Before leaving Philadelphia that night, Diane's aunt and uncle brought Diane to our office to say goodbye to us. She was beaming from ear to ear at the idea of moving in with her aunt and uncle and three cousins. They left that night for Florida, Diane's new home. We are keeping the case open here for six months to monitor her transition into her new home and help her aunt and uncle with anything they need to help Diane adjust. At the end of that time, Diane's aunt and uncle will receive legal custody of Diane and she will be raised in a stable family who loves her.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My court skills have definitely improved over this first year. I am now handling my cases in court on my own without a senior attorney being present. Additionally, I cover cases for social workers when their volunteer attorneys are unavailable. I have become confident speaking in court, in pre-hearing conferences, and in meetings to advocate for my clients. I expect that with continued exposure to this work, I will be better able to effectively handle surprises that come up in the middle of hearings.

I have also progressed in learning my way through the bureaucracies that are involved with child welfare work, such as the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Welfare and Community Behavioral Health as well as various other agencies. I am learning how to get results quickly and effectively and my crisis management skills are improving. I am also becoming more familiar with the variety of services available to families and identifying which would be best for the children on my caseload.

Finally, I have developed relationships with my clients and their families. I visit my clients frequently in order to develop trust with them and to learn what special needs they may have.

CHALLENGES

While I can't imagine loving a job more than I love representing children, there are a number of challenges that I have faced during my first year at *Child Advocates*, some specific to child welfare work and some true of all legal aid work.

Philadelphia's child welfare system is deeply flawed in many ways. The number of children in the system means that far too many cases need to be heard each day in court. The court is not able to allocate the time necessary to thoroughly review each child's case. Often hearings will only last a few minutes, not nearly long enough to address all the needs of the children involved. I consistently have to insist on hearings lasting long enough so I can raise all the important issues for the judge's consideration.

Because child welfare work involves the participation of so many players and agencies, it can be challenging to be sure that each participant is doing his job to achieve a stable, permanent situation for the child. Most child welfare workers are underpaid and have very high caseloads. Additionally, many workers are burned out by the difficult nature of this work.

I also find myself struggling with the emotional nature of this work. As I develop relationships with these children and see some of the terrible things they have experienced and the deprived situations in which they often live, it becomes more and more difficult to leave my job at the office each day. It is a difficult balance, because I want to be affected by the things I witness. Children should not live in these situations, and continuing to be outraged is necessary if I am going to be an effective advocate for these children. However, if I am going to do this work for any length of time, I am also going to need to establish some emotional distance in order to not burn out.



Excerpts
from
Ali Bers' 1st Year Report
on her
Two-Year Post-Graduate
EJA Fellowship
at
Western Massachusetts
Legal Services

SUMMARY

So far, I would rate my fellowship an 8 on a 1-10 scale. The experience has been wonderful, though I feel I should leave a little room for improvement over the next year. The supervision at Western Massachusetts Legal Services (WMLS) has been excellent, and I feel confident that I will continue to get invaluable assistance and advice from my colleagues and supervisors.

Working with individual clients has been most rewarding, though also challenging. It is very challenging to work clients who have tremendous crises in their lives, particularly when they have functional limitations such as mental health problems or learning disabilities (which many do). I have gotten better at anticipating the kind of challenges that I will face in dealing with clients, and am now better able to address them. Developing good working relationships with clients has given me a window into the pattern of problems faced by low-income families in Western Massachusetts who are working (or trying to work). When I do succeed in helping someone, the psychic reward is tremendous.

Substantively, I now feel comfortable with the basics of employment and public benefits law, which are the areas I most often work in. Having been to several trainings and working closely with colleagues and supervisors, I feel that I at least understand the broad outlines of law and policy in employment and benefits. I hope to gain a deeper understanding and become more of an "office expert" in some particular areas of focus, such as child care.

Also on the substantive side, I am very pleased to have started a new area of practice at WMLS, namely, helping clients with "CORI" issues. CORI stands for Criminal Offender Record Information. Often, when people apply for a job or for public housing, a "CORI check" is performed to see if they have a criminal record. What has happened in recent years is that more and more employers are performing CORI checks, and it has become a tremendous barrier to employment for many low-income individuals.

The larger issue presented is whether people should continue to be "punished" for crimes for which they have already served their sentence or paid their penalty. But the immediate issue for many of my clients is that they cannot gain employment, and sometimes housing, often because of minor crimes that were committed years ago, or for drug offenses stemming from an addiction that they have since overcome. I have been helping clients find out what is on their CORI, determine if any charges are eligible for sealing, and advocating with employers who have rejected them. I also have a client who has been unduly harmed by an inaccurate CORI, in that he has been saddled with the criminal record of someone else (see description E.B. in poignant stories). I am pleased to be providing this service to Western Massachusetts, and plan to train my colleagues in the area.

In sum, WMLS has been a wonderful place for me to start my career as a public interest lawyer, and I am looking forward to the second year of my fellowship.

POIGNANT STORIES

- C.P. is the divorced mother of a minor child. She is the victim of domestic violence at the hands of her former husband. Having extricated herself from a violent marriage, she was trying to move on with her life. One thing she wanted to do was become a foster parent. She applied, but was rejected because of a “criminal record.” It turned out that this record consisted solely of retaliatory charges that her ex-husband had brought against her after she had reported him to the police. All charges were dismissed. The foster parent agency had rejected her without even trying to pursue a waiver of her criminal record. I helped her seal the record by filing a petition with the court, and advocated with the foster parent agency on her behalf. The agency agreed to reconsider her application, and C.P. has now completed her training and is awaiting placement of a child in her home. She also hopes that it will now be easier for her to find a job, since her record has been sealed.
- I hope that the case of E.B. will be categorized as a “success story” in my next report. He has been living a nightmare for several years because a man that he knew as a child has used his name when he was arrested. This man has a long and serious criminal record. Now, when someone asks for my client’s criminal record, they receive the record of this other person, with E.B.’s name listed as an alias. He has almost lost jobs and housing because of this. He had been pulled over numerous times by the police, searched in public (pants pulled down), and thrown into jail several times with his mother paying bail, all because the police think that he may be this other person with an extensive criminal record. I am trying to advocate with the Criminal History Systems Board on his behalf, and hope to make it so that he can be “de-linked” from this man who has caused him so many problems.

SUCCESS STORIES

- L.P. is a single mother of two young children. She was taking classes at a community college while receiving welfare. Suddenly, her welfare benefits stopped and she did not know why. I contacted the department, and it was immediately clear that the case had closed in error. They have reopened her case, and she will start classes again in the fall. I hope that she will be able to continue her studies so she has some hope of steady employment when her time limit on benefits runs out.
- A.D. had become ineligible for child care through the welfare department after she was forced to stop working due to complications from a high-risk pregnancy. The pregnancy complications made it dangerous for her to look after her toddler, yet she could not afford to pay for child care services. There is nothing in the regulations to cover a person who falls into this situation, other than adding one’s name to a two-year waiting list, which would obviously not benefit A.D. Yet by negotiating with Office of Child Care Services, I arranged for her to receive subsidized child care until she recovers from the birth of her child. The process involved close interaction with her health care providers, who, in the beginning, did not understand how crucial their documentation of A.D.’s medical problems was to the case. After lengthy negotiations, I finally was able to obtain the needed documentation, and the Office of Child Care Services agreed to provide the care. This outcome was reported to other legal services attorneys around the state by e-mail and through a publication of the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute.

MORE SUCCESS STORIES

- R.C. had worked at a chain retail store in western Massachusetts for nearly four years. Last year, it was announced that the company was closing the store where she worked. Employees were offered a “stay-put” severance package: if they remained working at the store until the day it closed, they would receive two week’s pay for every year they had worked there. R.C. immediately agreed to stay until the last day. Yet just before the closing occurred, she was terminated for three incidents in which she allegedly mishandled customers’ checks. R.C. stated she was in fact responsible for only one of the three incidents, which was a very minor infraction that would not normally result in termination. I contacted the company, making it clear that R.C. would sue on the grounds of breach of the covenant of good faith and fair dealing if they did not agree to give her the severance pay. The company agreed to pay her the full amount, which came to over \$2600.
- D.B. came to Legal Services because her family was about to lose their welfare benefits. She had already gone to an administrative Fair Hearing pro se, but lost. The welfare department was claiming that she had failed to comply with the work requirement. This was true, but D.B., like so many of our clients, was unable to comply with work requirement because she has a combination of physical and mental disabilities that prevent her from working. D.B. should have been given the opportunity to apply for disability status and be considered “presumptively disabled” until a determination was made. She was not given that opportunity and was therefore sanctioned when she did not comply. I worked out an agreement with the legal department of the welfare office whereby her family was reinstated at the full grant amount, and she will be given the opportunity to apply for disability status with the presumption of disability until a determination is made. In this case I worked with D.B.’s therapist, who was very helpful in providing the medical documentation that will be used to determine whether D.B. is disabled.
- E.C. came to our office with a CORI issue. She had recently been fired from a nursing home as a nurse’s aide, supposedly because of her criminal record. She had no convictions on her record, however, only three cases that had been dismissed. Apparently, the nursing home had received information that one of the three cases was still pending, although it had actually closed. I explained to the client that it would be very difficult to get her job back, as employers have wide discretion in their hiring and firing decisions, but that I would do some “soft advocacy” by writing a letter to the nursing home on her behalf. I wrote a letter appealing to the employer’s sense of fairness and emphasizing that E.C. had never been convicted of a crime. I included a copy of her criminal record showing that all cases had been dismissed and closed. I recently received a phone call from my client stating that the nursing home had called her about being “rehired.”

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My personal and professional development has definitely progressed since I started my fellowship at WMLS. Most importantly, I have developed a sense of confidence as an attorney. In the beginning, I felt very uncertain of myself. I wasn't sure what questions to ask my clients. I wasn't sure what to ask the welfare department or employer when I called them up.

As I became more familiar with the substantive law, I improved greatly in my interactions with clients, government agencies, and employers. I now know, for example, that a good way to begin contact with an employer who is adverse to my client is to write a letter explaining the problem. I have certainly developed my letter-writing skills, and now can maintain a polite and professional tone while still making clear my clients' demands and not yielding on any legal rights. I feel I have helped several clients on the strength of my letter writing alone. Also, I am now much more comfortable in dealing with government agencies, particularly the welfare department. I am more of command of the pertinent regulations, and therefore know what to ask for when I call. In addition, even when it's not clear what can be done for a client, I now have the confidence to call up the welfare department, present the issue, and ask for *their* help on the matter.

Although I certainly have developed more confidence and independence, I also have developed a good sense of when and how to ask my colleagues for help. I have become better at spotting all the potential legal issues in a client's case, and asking colleagues from other units (such as housing or family law) for advice and help on topics I am not familiar with.

Finally, I truly appreciate the opportunity to work with such a devoted group of advocates. The lawyers and paralegals at WMLS are a wonderful group of people who routinely go above and beyond the call of duty for their clients. Even though office morale as low as the union attempts to negotiate more reasonable salaries and the threats of layoffs are still looming with the funding crisis, my colleagues keep their sense of humor and devotion to the cause of helping poor people with the legal challenges they face. I have found many people to emulate as I move forward in my career.

MEDIA

I have submitted a brief article for the newsletter of the Pre-School Enrichment Team, which goes out to daycare providers in western Massachusetts. The article describes my project and the services of Western Massachusetts Legal Services in general. It has not yet come out (I will include it with my next report).

A reporter from the Boston Phoenix newspaper is writing a story featuring my "CORI client" who is saddled with someone else's criminal record. She is writing the story because there are two bills now pending before the Massachusetts legislature that would require the Criminal History Systems Board to only disseminate accurate CORI and make it easier to fix errors. My client is a poster child for these bills. The reporter interviewed me as well as my client. I thought the story would be published by the time I sent in this report but it has not yet come out. Again, I will include it with my next report.

CHALLENGES

Dealing with clients: Interacting with clients and establishing good, working relationships with them is one of the most important parts of my job. Although I feel confident that my clients feel comfortable with me and trust me, I sometimes find it difficult to deal with them, for a variety of reasons. First, many of my clients lack the kind of skills and know-how that are often taken for granted in business relationships, such as returning phone calls and keeping in regular contact. Of course, many of my clients have tremendous crises in their lives, and keeping in touch with a lawyer on one particular issue may not be top priority. Also, I am sometimes overwhelmed by the sadness and desperation of my clients' situations. I sometimes become a *de facto* therapist for my clients, as there is often no one else who will listen to their problems. I am glad to help ease their burden, but it is difficult to deal with some of the emotional issues on top of the legal ones. I find that I am often referring my clients to community health clinics for therapy. Twice I have helped clients call a psychiatric hotline because I feared they were suicidal. Finally, many of clients speak only Spanish, and it is a definite weakness that I cannot speak to them directly. The bi-lingual secretaries in my office are extremely helpful in translating, and sometimes my clients bring along friends or family members to help, but I still feel that until I learn Spanish, there will be a degree of removal between my Spanish-speaking clients and me that detracts from our working relationship.

Dealing with bureaucrats: I sometimes find myself staring at the phone, dreading the call I have to make to one bureaucrat or another, usually at the welfare department. Many of these people are outright hostile to legal services attorneys, behave unprofessionally, and certainly are not interested in helping our clients. It was particularly difficult in the beginning, when I was less sure of myself and of the regulatory framework I was working with. As I have learned the regulatory system and have had some success with my clients' cases, I dread these phone calls less. I also try to remind myself that these bureaucrats have very unpleasant jobs and tremendous workloads, exacerbated by recent state budget cuts. I don't think these phone calls will ever be pleasant, but I am slowly learning to dread them less.

Always worrying about funding (and the future): WMLS is experiencing budget strain because of cuts in state funding. We have just lived through a true scare when Governor Romney vetoed all state funding for legal services during the state budget process. Luckily, the legislature did the right thing and overrode the veto, but legal services is still experiencing a significant cut. Morale in the office is low because people fear lay-offs. On top of that, the recently formed union is in the process of negotiating a contract with management, but while that is happening, salaries remain very low...significantly lower than for other legal services attorneys in the area. As an attorney on a two-year fellowship with outside funding, I am able to remain somewhat outside the budgetary woes of the rest of the office. However I cannot help but pick up on the low morale and worry of my colleagues. Also, thinking further ahead, the prospects for WMLS hiring me as a regular staff member when my fellowship is over are tenuous. It is hard to predict what the budget situation will be, how many people will have left the organization, or what positions will be available. I remain hopeful that something will work out, but it is definitely a lingering worry in the back of my mind.



**Equal Justice
America
Disability Rights
Clinic
Annual Report
2002-2003**

I. Introduction

Completing its third year of operation, the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic at Pace University School of Law continues its dual mission of training future lawyers and providing free legal services to low income disabled persons of all ages. It has become an integral part of the Law School's Clinical Program located at John Jay Legal Services and its Health Law and Policy Program.

The Health Law and Policy Program provides Pace law students with the opportunity to gain specialized knowledge in the rapidly expanding field of health law. A Certificate in Health Law and Policy is awarded to those students who demonstrate proficiency in the field by taking a prescribed number of required and elective courses relevant to the practice of health law and related social and economic policy issues.

Pace Law School's clinical offerings enable students to gain proficiency in lawyering skills while representing clients pursuant to a Student Practice Order issued by the Appellate Division, Second Department of the New York State Supreme Court. Under supervision of clinical faculty, students enrolled in clinical courses may perform all lawyering functions normally reserved to lawyers admitted to practice. In addition to the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic, clinical offerings are available in criminal defense, securities arbitration, and the prosecution of domestic violence in cooperation with the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

II. Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic

The Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic provides students with the opportunity to learn and apply lawyering skills as well as the substantive law relating to the rights of disabled persons in a highly controlled and intensively supervised legal practice environment. For most students, it is their first experience with law as lawyers.

In a weekly seminar, students learn and practice lawyering skills such as interviewing, counseling, negotiation, fact investigation, and conducting administrative hearings. The learning

of these skills is integrated with relevant substantive law, including eligibility for the government benefit programs available to disabled persons (Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, Medical Assistance) and the planning tools available to disabled persons and their families (guardianships, wills, special needs trusts). The seminar also provides the opportunity for students to present issues and choices from the cases they are working on and benefit from the critical reflection of their colleagues. Ethical issues are discussed as they arise in individual cases with particular emphasis on the complexities of working with clients of diminished mental capacity. Students learn how to read and interpret medical records and work with medical personnel to describe a client's medical condition using legally relevant terminology. Students also learn how to work with other helping professionals, such as social workers, doctors, nurses and advocates, to identify and meet clients' non-legal needs. Readings from an excellent text¹ for clinical students are supplemented with readings directly relevant to disability law. A copy of the syllabus for the Fall, 2002 semester is attached. During the spring semester, in addition to their individual caseloads, all students worked collaboratively on a particularly challenging case. This group effort enabled the Clinic to handle a case that could not have been managed by one or two students and gave the students the opportunity to learn about and put into practice the very important lawyering skill of collaboration.

Clinic students, either individually or in teams, have primary responsibility for the conduct of their assigned cases. The student lawyer is responsible for planning each lawyering activity, reviewing the plan with the Clinic Faculty Supervisor, conducting the activity and finally, reflecting on the experience and the usefulness of the preparation. Throughout the year, each student engages in client interviewing and counseling, fact investigation and witness interviewing, legal research and analysis, and drafting a variety of legal documents and instruments. Most students have the opportunity to appear before a court or administrative tribunal.

¹ Stephan H. Krieger, et al., Essential Lawyering Skills (Aspen Law & Business, 1999).

For the 2002-2003 academic year, the Clinic was offered only as a two-semester course. This change was in response to our experience that one semester (14 weeks) was too short a time for students to master the building block lawyering skills and go on to apply them meaningfully on cases involving actual clients. Students still have the option of taking the Clinic for between three and six credits each semester. The three credit option is especially appropriate for part-time and evening students, who may be working full-time in addition to attending law school. All students participate in the seminar and each student's case load is tailored to his or her interests and time constraints. For example, a student who is not available during normal working hours will be assigned to cases which involve transactional work only, which can be performed during the evening hours and weekends. Other students with more flexible schedules are assigned cases which may involve day-time appearances before courts or administrative tribunals. Students enrolled in the Clinic for three credits are expected to devote eight to ten hours per week to clinic responsibilities. The time commitment for students enrolled for six credits is 15-20 hours per week.

During the 2002-2003 academic year, a total of six students were enrolled in the Clinic. One student is working over the summer to handle matters which were not completely resolved at the end of the academic year.

The cases handled involved a variety of legal issues faced by disabled persons and their families. Clients were referred by several social service agencies with which we have formed alliances during the past four years, including Westchester ARC, New York Legal Assistance Group, DIHR (Dignity, Independence and Human Rights, a non-profit advocacy serving the developmentally disabled, their families and providers), Westchester Independent Living Center, Westchester Putnam Legal Services, Service Office of White Plains, Richmond Community Services, Visiting Nurse Service of New York, Westchester Residential Opportunities and New York Assistive Technology Advocacy Project. Several former clients have returned to us for additional assistance as they developed new legal needs. All of the clients are low income. They

are unable to pay for the legal help they need and were unable to secure representation from other sources of free legal services.

Social Security Cases

Comments to the Appeals Council were submitted on behalf of two clients who had received unfavorable decisions after hearings before a Social Security Administration Administrative Law Judge. In each case, the student attorney identified errors of law and fact made by the Administrative Law Judge and wrote a brief discussing those errors and urging reversal. Decisions in these two cases are pending.

Students handled applications for waiver of Social Security overpayments for two clients. In each case, the client was charged with an overpayment of benefits. Such overpayments may be waived by the Social Security Administration only if the overpayment was not the beneficiary's fault and repayment would be a hardship for the beneficiary. In each case the student attorneys ascertained that the overpayment was the result of error by the Social Security Administration and worked with the client to demonstrate that repayment would create a hardship. Decisions in these cases are pending.

Lifetime and Estate Planning

Students prepared wills for two elderly clients, who, though of very modest means, wanted to choose who would receive their property after death. The clients were also counseled on the desirability of appointing others to make decisions for them in the event they became incapacitated during their lifetimes. One client had already made these arrangements. The students drafted a power of attorney and health care proxy for the other client.

Guardianships

We worked with four families of disabled adults who needed legal authority to make financial and other decisions for their family member. In each case the family members were extensively counseled about the options available to them and how to manage their relative's funds without jeopardizing their eligibility for government benefits.

After extensive counseling, one family decided to delay legal action since their relative wanted to maintain his independence and all of his needs were being met through informal means.

We are assisting the brother of a mentally retarded woman who recently moved from a group home to a nursing home. The sister's personal allowance had accumulated and her brother will ask the court's permission to use that money to prepay his sister's funeral. Once he becomes his sister's guardian, our client will also be able to participate fully in making medical decisions for his sister.

We are also assisting a former client who wishes to appoint a new standby guardian for her two disabled daughters. The standby guardian who was appointed in the original proceeding has moved out of the area and our client wants to make sure that someone is authorized to take care of her daughters if something happens to her.

The students' major collaborative project involved assisting the mother of a young disabled adult who had received a modest structured settlement. The funds are not enough to pay for the medical and other services the client's son needs, but preclude eligibility for Medicaid. The students researched the options available to the mother and counseled her extensively on the responsibilities she would have as her son's guardian and trustee. The students have drafted a supplemental needs trust and are preparing to obtain approval from the Surrogate's Court for the establishment of the trust and the appointment of our client as her son's guardian.

We assisted a mother who had been appointed her son's guardian resign from that position. Our client did not have the ability to manage her son's funds and was victimized by family members and friends. Last spring, the students prepared an accounting for the client and a petition asking the Supreme Court for permission to resign as guardian. The Court appointed a new guardian for our client's son who has taken steps to secure needed health care and other services.

III. Plans for the Future

Over the summer, one student is assisting with ongoing cases on a volunteer basis.

Eight students have enrolled in the Clinic for the entire 2002-2003 academic year. We will continue to offer high quality representation to disabled persons and their families being served by cooperating social service agencies. Moreover, we anticipate that the Clinic's graduates will continue to use the skills they developed to effectively represent disabled clients once they become practicing attorneys.



**Financial Statements
Report of
Independent Auditors
2002-2003**

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
INDEX TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2003

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Statement of activity and changes in fund balance	3
Statement of cash flows	4
Notes to financial statements	5
Accountants' report on supplementary information:	
Schedule of expenses	6-7

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Certified Public Accountants

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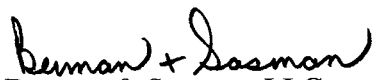
2079 East 65th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11234

Board of Trustees
Equal Justice America, Inc.

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet of Equal Justice America, Inc. as of June 30, 2003 and the related statements of activity and changes in fund balance and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amount and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Equal Justice America, Inc. as of June 30, 2003 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.



Berman & Sosman, LLC

October 22, 2003

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
BALANCE SHEET
JUNE 30, 2003

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash	\$ 16,873
Contributions receivable	<u>123,271</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>140,144</u>
Property and equipment - at cost (notes 1 and 3)	25,201
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(11,993)</u>
Net property and equipment	<u>13,208</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$153,352</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	
Grants payable	\$150,496
Accrued expenses	<u>1,571</u>
Total Liabilities	152,067

FUND BALANCE

Fund balance	<u>1,285</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$153,352</u></u>

See Notes To Financial Statements

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2003

Public Support and Revenue		
Public support:		
Contributions	\$730,189	
Revenue:		
Interest income	<u>596</u>	
Total Public Support and Revenue		\$730,785
Expenses		
Program services	474,602	
Management and general expenses	114,709	
Fund raising expenses	<u>141,523</u>	
Total Expenses		<u>730,834</u>
Expenses in excess of public support and revenue		(49)
Fund balance - July 1, 2002		<u>1,334</u>
Fund balance - June 30, 2003		<u>\$ 1,285</u>

See Notes To Financial Statements

BERMAN & SOSMAN, LLC.
Certified Public Accountants

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2003

Cash Flows From Operating Activities:		
Public support and revenue under expenses		\$ (49)
Adjustment To Reconcile To Excess Public Support and Revenue Over Expenses:		
To net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation of property and equipment	\$ 2,626	
Changes In Operating Assets and Liabilities:		
Increase in contributions receivable	(12,406)	
Decrease in accrued expenses	(439)	
Decrease in grants payable	<u>\$(50,818)</u>	
Total adjustments		<u>(61,037)</u>
Net cash used by operating activities		(61,086)
Net cash used in investing activities		
Payment for purchase of equipment		<u>(12,380)</u>
Net decrease in cash during the year		(73,466)
Cash at July 1, 2002		<u>90,339</u>
Cash at June 30, 2003		<u>\$ 16,873</u>

See Notes To Financial Statements

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 JUNE 30, 2003

NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Fund Accounting:

All funds over which the Board of Trustees has discretionary control have been included in the current unrestricted fund.

Depreciation:

Property and equipment is stated at cost and is depreciated on the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives, generally five to seven years.

NOTE 2: NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Equal Justice America, Inc. is a not-for-profit, charity that provides grants to legal service organizations that deliver civil legal assistance to the poor. It is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Board of Trustees and management employees of the Organization acknowledge that, to the best of their ability, all assets received have been used for the purpose for which they were contributed, or have been accumulated to allow management to conduct the operations of the Organization as effectively and efficiently as possible.

NOTE 3: PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT - AT COST

Property and equipment, is comprised of the following:

Furniture and equipment	\$ 1,185
Machinery and equipment	<u>24,016</u>
	25,201
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(11,993)</u>
	<u>\$ 13,208</u>

BERMAN & SOSMAN, LLC.

Certified Public Accountants

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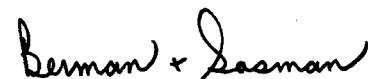
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ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Board of Directors
Equal Justice America, Inc.

The audited financial statements of Equal Justice America, Inc. and our report thereon are presented in the preceding section of this report. The following financial information is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements of the Organization. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in our audit of the financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.


Berman & Sosman, LLC
October 22, 2003

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2003

Program Expenses:

Grants	\$431,134
Program Administration:	
Executive Director's salary	25,180
Office salaries	5,486
Payroll taxes	2,507
Employee benefits	8,071
Telephone	646
Office	376
Postage	379
Stationary & printing	10
Temporary help	<u>813</u>
Total	<u>\$474,602</u>

Management and General Expenses:

Executive Director's salary	\$ 25,179
Office salaries	42,224
Payroll taxes	5,507
Professional fees	11,508
Advertising	189
Bank charges	263
Depreciation	2,626
Employee benefits	8,071
Insurance	491
Office	376
Postage	379
Stationary & printing	10
Rent	6,100
Repairs & maintenance	1,598
Registration fees	1,845
Payroll service fees	1,565
Telephone	1,291
Computer expense	1,840
Equipment lease	1,412
Temporary help	<u>2,235</u>
Total	<u>\$114,709</u>

See Accountants' Report On Supplementary Information

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
 SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2003

Fund Raising Expenses:	
Executive Director's salary	\$ 25,179
Other salaries	61,130
Payroll taxes	7,052
Employee benefits	8,071
Credit card fees	12,024
Office	3,012
Postage	6,828
Stationary & printing	179
Telephone	10,974
Mailing lists	5,169
Temporary help	1,015
Training	<u>890</u>
Total	<u>\$141,523</u>

See Accountants' Report On Supplementary Information

