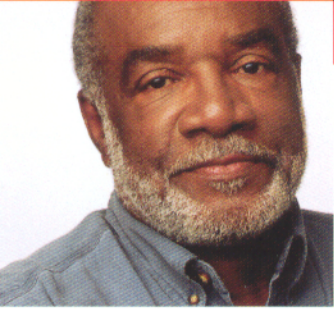




Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2004-2005



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA
LAW STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

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EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA
LAW STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

ANNUAL REPORT • FISCAL YEAR 2004-2005

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EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA LAW STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

Since 1993—working to protect children and families in need.

The promise of equal justice is the promise of America. “With liberty and justice for all,” are the words recited every day by our nation’s

80% of the legal needs of the poor are not being met.

(American Bar Association)

schoolchildren. It is a promise that has not been kept. The American Bar Association estimates that the United States 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, women and children victimized by domestic violence do not get the legal help they desperately need. The elderly and poor have no recourse when they fall prey to scams in the marketplace. Families are wrongfully evicted and forced into homelessness. Bureaucratic abuse and neglect go without remedy, often causing families to lose life-sustaining benefits. **There can be no justice for those who must face these struggles without the help of an attorney.**

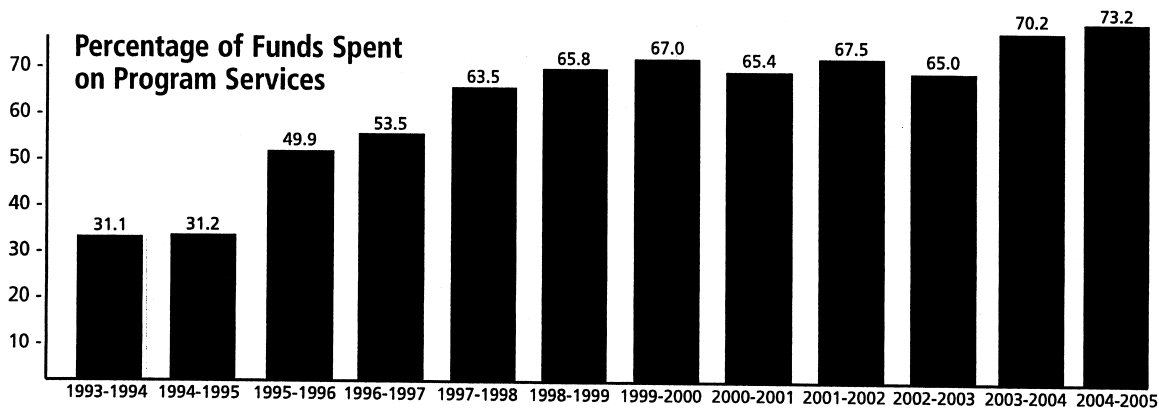
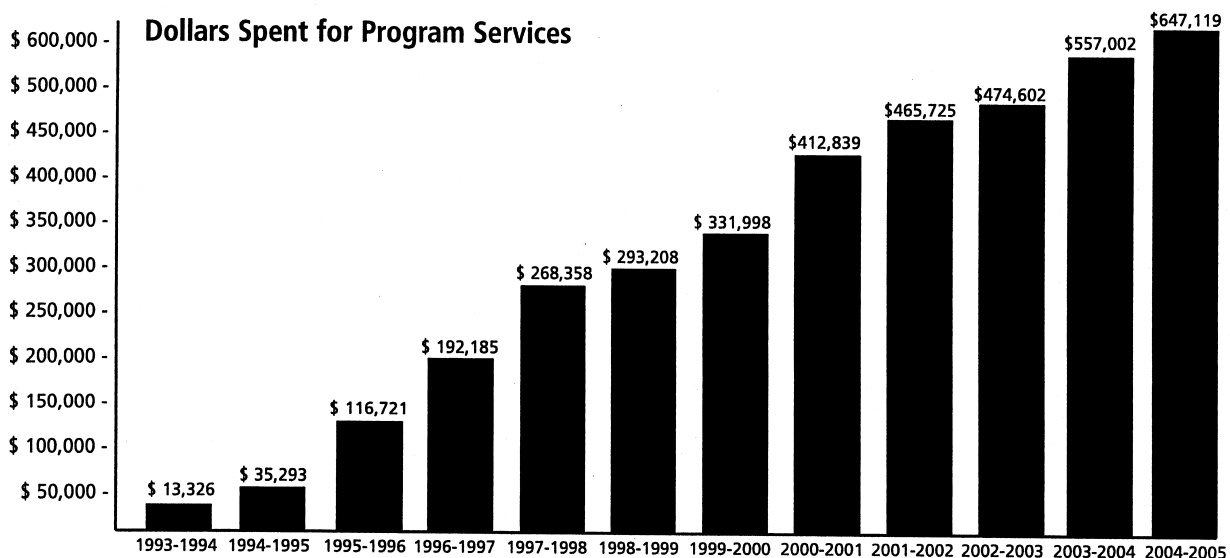
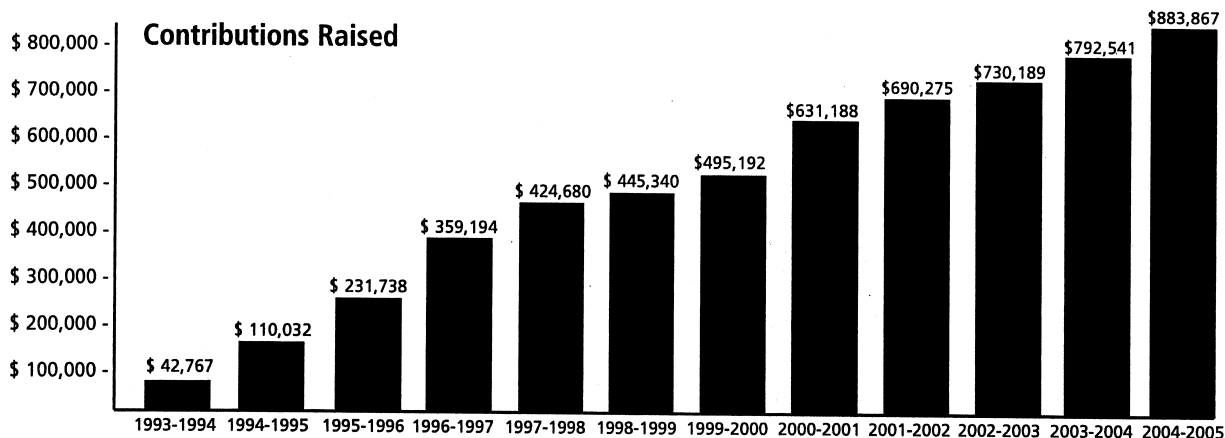
Who We Are

Equal Justice America is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1993. EJA has become a national leader in providing opportunities for law students to work with organizations that deliver civil legal services to those most in need. Our efforts expose a new generation of law students to the urgency for pro bono assistance to our most vulnerable citizens. Students at 45 law schools now have the opportunity to take part in the Equal Justice America Fellowship Program.

What We’ve Done

- Equal Justice America has sponsored fellowships for close to 1,500 law students to work with nearly 200 legal services organizations across the country. Interning under the supervision of experienced attorneys, our fellowship recipients have provided crucial assistance to low-income clients struggling through the complexities of our civil justice system.
- EJA has paid out more than \$3.75 million in grants and has provided approximately 400,000 hours of free legal services with programs that work to protect the rights of the poor.
- In September 2002, we began funding two-year post-graduate EJA fellowships, launching the public interest careers of outstanding young attorneys. More than \$520,000 has been committed to these post-graduate fellowships.
- In September 2000, Pace University Law School established the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic with a major grant and a continuing commitment from EJA. We have contributed more than \$200,000 to the EJA Clinic, which has become an integral part of the Law School’s highly regarded clinical program.
- In the past year, 73.2% of the contributions raised by Equal Justice America went to Program Services. This percentage puts us on par in our fundraising efficiency with such well-established organizations as the American Heart Association, Habitat for Humanity International and the Wilderness Society.

Twelve Years of Growth



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

“Once again, I would like to thank Equal Justice America for its steadfast and critically needed support for John Jay Legal Services, the free legal clinic at Pace Law School. Your generous ongoing support for the *Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic* has permitted us to provide compassionate effective legal assistance to people with a variety of disabilities, some quite profound. We look forward to our ongoing partnership.”

– **Vanessa Merton**
Associate Dean for Clinical Education
Pace University Law School
White Plains, NY

“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

“Thanks to Equal Justice America, we have four new student fellows who are this semester's student directors of the Yale Law School Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) project. The project is one of the most successful student projects to come out of the law school and is a demonstration project for law schools and legal services' programs throughout the country. It provides critical services to victims of domestic violence who come into the courthouse and attempt to file orders of protection on their own. The project is now considered to be a permanent part of the law school programming.”

– **Patricia Kaplan**
Executive Director
New Haven Legal Assistance Association

“Over the past several years Equal Justice America has provided funding for more student interns at GBLS than any other organization. EJA Fellowship recipients have been a tremendous help to our staff in providing legal assistance to the most vulnerable members of the Boston community.”

– **Robert Sable**
Executive Director
Greater Boston Legal Services

“On behalf of the staff Board and most importantly the clients of Public Counsel, I wanted to 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

“This summer we were privileged to work with two Equal Justice America fellows. Our experiences in the past have always been very rewarding and this summer continued the tradition of fine students assisting with our work. Without EJA, our law student internship program would be significantly smaller. We enjoy working with the highly skilled law students and appreciate the enthusiasm they bring to our organization. With the support of EJA, we receive a dose of freshness and a renewal of passion for our mission. Thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of the program.”

– **Gail Lorenz**
Administrator of Volunteer Services
Colorado Legal Services

“I want to thank you and Equal Justice America for your wonderful program, which over the years has put several law students to work with us here at Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc. (LSGMI). I know that for more than a decade Equal Justice America has put law students to work with legal aid and legal services programs throughout the country. On behalf of LSGMI’s Board, staff and especially its clients who come to LSGMI with very pressing legal problems, I’d like to express our tremendous gratitude for the help and support you have given us. As you know, we are great fans.”

– **Maria L. Soto**
Deputy Director
Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.



**Report from Sheila Hayre
on her Two-Year Post-
Graduate EJA Fellowship
at the New Haven Legal
Assistance Association**

*“I have seen how legal intervention can
empower clients to transform their lives
in radical ways.”*

Unlike most of my fellow Yale law graduates, after finishing law school and clerking, I wanted to remain in New Haven and work as a public interest lawyer.

Given the paucity of public interest job openings in New Haven, without Equal Justice America's two-year fellowship, I would likely have found myself facing the prospect of either leaving New Haven in search of public interest work or remaining here but starting my career at a local for-profit law firm.

"I am indebted to Equal Justice America for making possible my work at New Haven Legal Assistance and for making the continuation of my work here a reality."

Thanks to Equal Justice America, for the past two years, I have worked as a staff attorney at New Haven Legal Assistance Association (NHLAA) providing direct legal services to the poor. As my two years as an EJA fellow draw to an end, I have received the welcome news that NHLAA is able to offer me a permanent position so that I can continue doing the work I feel I have only just begun.

I specialize in family law—including divorce, alimony, child custody and visitation, and child support—and immigration. As one of only a handful of attorneys who speak Spanish at NHLAA, I have found myself working primarily with monolingual Spanish-speaking clients. At night, I teach pro-se divorce classes in Spanish. As my experience with this population grows, I have become painfully aware of the absence of basic Spanish-language services for these litigants, services which are available in English because they are viewed as necessary to preserve access to the courts. For example, although the local courts offer a myriad of basic informational pamphlets to assist the growing number of pro se litigants, there are rarely corresponding pamphlets in Spanish. While state law requires parents to attend parenting education classes before they can divorce, there are no such classes offered in Spanish in New Haven or its environs. Time and time again, I encounter monolingual Spanish litigants who are forced to show up in court on the day of the hearing in a contested custody case without any idea what the legal papers they were served with say. All this occurs despite the recent news that Hispanics—no longer African-Americans—are the largest minority group in New Haven. I recently met with the Litigation Director here at NHLAA, and, in the upcoming year, I plan to redouble my legal and non-legal efforts to address these deficiencies in our system.

In addition to handling more traditional family law cases, I am one of the few legal aid attorneys in

the state who offers basic immigration advice and assistance to the exploding population of immigrants here in New Haven and in Connecticut as a whole. In particular, I assist immigration clients in preparing and submitting VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) self-petitions. This immigration remedy permits an abused spouse or child of a United States citizen or permanent resident to “self-petition” for lawful immigration status without the cooperation of his or her abuser. In partnership with an immigration expert at the Yale Law School’s Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization, I also participate in an outreach clinic, in which we educate documented and undocumented immigrants about immigration law in general, advise attendees about their rights, and answer questions.

Together with a handful other legal services attorneys here in the state, I developed and implemented a series of immigration trainings to educate domestic violence shelter advocates and legal aid lawyers statewide about the special issues facing immigrant survivors of domestic violence. I continue to train professionals who interact with this client population—including law enforcement, court personnel, and shelter advocates—about topics such as basic immigration law, exploring domestic violence through diverse cultures, and immigration remedies for domestic violence survivors.

The stories of my clients are often far from heartening. I work with clients who are terminally ill, some of whom have died while I was representing them. Other clients of mine suffer from crippling mental disabilities that hinder them from acting in their own best interests. As is the case with anyone working with survivors of domestic violence, I have had clients return to their abusers, only to regret their decision, or, especially in the case of undocumented immigrants, calculate somewhat unassailably that they are better off returning and enduring the abuse than facing alone the uncertainties and instability that their illegal status makes inevitable.

But especially with the immigrant population, I have seen how legal intervention can empower clients to transform their lives in radical ways. I am

inspired by those who walk through our doors with incomes that are either non-existent or well below the poverty line and who leave our office with incomes that would render them ineligible for our services and with plans that promise a hopeful, new future. I am indebted to Equal Justice America for making possible my work at New Haven Legal Assistance and for making the continuation of my work here a reality.

Sheila Hayre
Yale Law Class of 2002



**Report from Amy Carroll
on her Two-Year
Post-Graduate EJA
Fellowship at MFY
Legal Services in
New York City**

“I was attracted to MFY as a host because it prioritizes both providing direct representation to poor and low-income New Yorkers and collaborating with community-based partners on broader campaigns for change.”

I would like to thank Equal Justice America for its invaluable support of my work with the Workplace Justice Project at MFY Legal Services, Inc.

With EJA's assistance, I have had the opportunity to undertake exciting legal advocacy on behalf of low-wage workers as well as provide technical and legal assistance to community groups organizing on behalf of the working poor in New York City.

“Our commitment to building collaborations with community-based organizations complements this direct service work.”

After completing my clerkship in the Eastern District of New York, I was eager to begin advocating for low-wage workers on employment-related matters. I have long been interested in the central role work plays in people's lives – and in the lack of power many low-wage workers have on the job. In particular, I am interested in issues facing so-called “contingent workers” – subcontracted workers, independent contractors, and others not fitting the definition of the traditional employer-employee relationship. These workers face even greater abuse – working beyond the protection of the country's basic wage and hour and anti-discrimination laws. Also, I am committed to advocating on behalf of immigrant workers who typically work the longest hours, for the lowest pay, and face disproportionate rates of non-payment of wages.

I was attracted to MFY as a host because it prioritizes both providing direct representation to poor and low-income New Yorkers and collaborating with community-based partners on broader campaigns for change. The first ten months of my fellowship with MFY's Workplace Justice Project have exceeded my hopes in every respect.

Much of our direct service work comes from our weekly hotline and bi-monthly clinic. Through these sources, we are able to help a broad cross-section of the low-wage workforce in New York City on a wide variety of issues ranging from non-payment of wages, violation of minimum wage and overtime laws, discrimination, and unemployment insurance. These intake streams help us stay current with the issues actually affecting New Yorkers every day. And our advice and brief services are typically the only source of legal assistance that low-wage workers can access. Indeed, many of the clients referred to our hotline and clinic come from other legal service providers in the city who do not have the employment law expertise that MFY has developed.

Our commitment to building collaborations with community-based organizations complements this direct service work. Relationships with community partners allow us to use legal tools to support what such groups do best: organize the community to fight for its rights. In my time here, I have helped solidify existing partnerships and forge new ones.

The role we as lawyers play varies widely, depending on the needs of the community group. At the most basic level, I serve as a legal resource to answer organizers' questions, direct them to resources and information, and take referrals of clients. With other groups, I have run community-based workshops on workplace issues including health and safety, basic employment law protections, and the rights of undocumented workers on the job.

My work with the Fifth Avenue Committee ("FAC"), a group based in Brooklyn, provides the best example of the key role lawyers can play in supporting community organizing. Before I arrived, FAC had contacted MFY for advice on a problem the group had uncovered in the grocery industry throughout the City: nighttime janitors, often working alone, were locked inside the stores overnight without access to an emergency exit. The stores often padlocked the emergency exits shut from the inside or locked gates closed over doors from the outside. The janitors, who usually worked 10-12 hours a night, had to wait until the next morning for the store's manager to unlock the store and let them out. In light of New York's tragic history with the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, it is shocking that such practices continue today.

FAC asked MFY to research possible litigation over the practice that could dovetail with a community campaign. When I arrived, I was immediately attracted to the issue because the janitors fit exactly within my project. The stores subcontract the cleaning service to an outside contractor who hires and dispatches the janitors. Thus, the stores are arguably not the "employers" of the janitors, even though they control their work environment in a key way: they lock the janitors inside overnight.

We filed suit on the anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire against two stores in the Bronx where we allege the practice occurred. Notably, the case is a tort lawsuit, raising claims of false imprisonment, negligence, gross negligence, and infliction of emotional distress. When I started my fellowship, I never imagined that my first major litigation would involve novel tort theories, instead of traditional employment law.

The case garnered extensive media coverage, which prompted the Fire Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to finally take an active role to address the problem. At the same time, MFY provided technical drafting assistance to the City Council on a bill that raises the fines for locking workers in overnight. This fall, the bill passed the Council and was signed into law by the Mayor. Importantly, the bill requires a series of targeted inspections by the Fire Department each year and provides for a private right of action.

In my mind, perhaps the greatest victory to date in the campaign is reflected in stories from janitors. They report that stores not involved in the litigation are making a point of leaving a door unlocked overnight, citing fear of possible litigation as the factor that prompted them to change their practice. A single case in the Bronx, involving two stores and three plaintiffs, has the power to push an entire industry to alter a life-threatening practice.

This campaign provides a perfect example of how lawyers can provide key support for community organizing: by undertaking strategic litigation on an issue in collaboration with a community partner, MFY could leverage its limited resources to benefit workers far beyond the clients we directly represent.

I look forward to the second year of my fellowship and thank Equal Justice America for their generous support. Without them, I would not have the opportunity to engage in this exciting work.

Amy Carroll
Yale Law Class of 2004



**Report from Jennifer
Ornelas on her Two-Year
Post-Graduate EJA
Fellowship at
Break the Cycle**

“Working in public interest law was my goal throughout law school and without this fellowship, I may not have been able to have worked in a nonprofit organization.”

Break the Cycle is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded specifically to address dating and domestic violence in the youth population.

Break the Cycle is the nation's first and only nonprofit organization whose mission is to engage, educate and empower youth to build lives and communities free from dating and domestic violence. Break the Cycle furthers this mission by providing young people, ages 12 to 22, with preventive education, free legal services, advocacy and support.

“As many as one in three teenagers will end up in abusive relationships and it is critical that they are able to obtain the assistance that they need.”

My Equal Justice America Fellowship began in the fall of 2003 and coincided with a major expansion of Break the Cycle. Based in Los Angeles since its inception in 1995, three new offices were opened that fall, in San Francisco, Washington, DC and New York City. I worked as a staff attorney in the San Francisco office for two years.

I learned a great deal during my two-year fellowship and am grateful for the opportunity that Equal Justice America provided. Working in public interest law was my goal throughout law school and without this fellowship, I may not have been able to have worked in a nonprofit organization.

My EJA Fellowship at Break the Cycle was exactly the kind of work that I wanted to be doing. I enjoy working with teenagers and working on dating and domestic violence issues. I feel that I played an important role in helping to launch this organization into a new city and in establishing the Education and Legal Services Program. I have presented Break the Cycle's law-based preventative education program to approximately 2,500 young people in San Francisco which makes me feel that my work is having a positive impact. Similarly, I feel that I have made a positive impact for my clients. I have enjoyed the relationship with my sponsoring organization, especially the working relationship that I have developed with the organization's other staff attorneys.

As many as one in three teenagers will end up in abusive relationships and it is critical that they are able to obtain the assistance that they need. A young person faces many obstacles when trying to access services so it is important that nonprofit organizations work to ensure that their services are as accessible as possible. One of the benefits of Break the Cycle's services is that the staff attorneys visit high schools and after school groups. This way, young people that may need help have access to attorneys who can assist them.

Sometimes, it seems difficult to assess the impact of my work. Not all of my cases, very few in fact, are resolved in a traditional way. Initially, I had thought

that a similar process would be followed in all of my cases: Step one would be meeting with a new client and conducting an intake; Step two would entail filling out the application for a domestic violence restraining order and filing the application with the court; Step 3 would involve making sure the respondent was served a copy of the temporary restraining order, and Step four, the final step, would involve representing my client at her or his hearing for a permanent restraining order.

As I have found, there is rarely a neat and tidy “beginning, middle, end” process in my cases. Many of my cases stop after Step 3 and do not ever reach the final phase of obtaining a permanent order. There is often no final, legal resolution because my clients frequently decide, for various reasons, not to continue with the legal process. That is, as I am continually finding, the nature of working with the population that I serve. I have learned to readjust my expectations and now realize that making an impact will not always mean securing a final order from the court. As an attorney, that is what I had been programmed to view as an “accomplishment” or a “success”, but as I have learned, that is not always what my teenage clients view as a successful resolution to their crisis. I’ve realized that I’ve made an impact in my client’s lives simply when they begin to feel safe again. There is one client in particular that best illustrates this point.

I met with Client X last month. She had called our office and, sounding scared and frantic, asked to meet with us the next day. We met at her school because she did not have transportation to come to my office. A typical client intake meeting lasts for one to one and one half hours. My meeting with client X lasted for over five hours. This was in part because I spent quite a bit of time calling various police departments, trying to find out the status of the Emergency Protective Order she had been issued the previous day.

Client X had been kidnapped by her ex-boyfriend who, after tying her hands together, gagging, and physically abusing her, drove her across county lines before eventually releasing her. She had reported this

to the police and because of the nature of the crime (it began in one city and ended in another), there was confusion about which police department was conducting the investigation as well as what police department was responsible for ensuring that the ex-boyfriend was served with the Emergency Protective Order that had been issued. As I contacted the various police departments and was transferred from one office to another, I remember thinking how exasperating and frightening this process would be for a recent victim of domestic violence, let alone a teenage victim of abuse.

Another reason that this client meeting took so long was because her ex-boyfriend called three times while I was meeting with her, each time promising to leave her alone if she dropped any and all legal action against him and threatening to hurt her if she did take any legal action against him (including filing for a restraining order). Each time he called, she tearfully begged him to leave her alone. Each time she hung up the telephone, she was visibly shaking with fear, and probably with exhaustion, as she had been too scared to sleep the night before. After each call, I tried to calm her down and assure her that we would find a way to make sure he would leave her alone.

Typically a straight A student, Client X had missed a week of classes and had not been able to complete homework assignments or take exams because she was too frightened to leave her home. She explained that she had tried, but it was just too difficult for her to concentrate on her school assignments. It was a startling reminder of how young my clients are when she worriedly asked me whether I thought her teachers would let her make up the tests she had missed.

We spent several hours discussing her options and the best way she could keep herself safe. She was terrified that if she pressed charges or filed for a restraining order, he would carry out his threats against her. She felt that she was at an impasse—thus far, he had obeyed the Emergency Protective Order and had stayed away from her (although he had violated it daily by calling her). If she didn’t file for a restraining order, the EPO would expire and there

would be no court order protecting her. If she did file for a restraining order, he might make good on his threats to hurt her. She wanted to believe that after being served with the EPO by the police, her ex-boyfriend had realized that she would not take any more of his abuse and would leave her alone in order to avoid any more trouble with the police.

She felt almost certain that if she pressed charges against him, he would retaliate against her and so decided not to pursue that option. She was unable to decide whether or not to file for a restraining order and decided to wait a few days and then decide. Before I left, she and I created a fairly elaborate and detailed safety plan. When I left, I remember feeling very afraid for her safety. I spoke with her every day for the next week and met with her one more time to discuss her legal (and non legal) options for keeping herself safe. We spent a lot of time discussing all the provisions of a DVRO and she seemed especially relieved when I told her that I could have the application filled out and ready to file as soon as she gave me the word. She said that it made her feel better to know that she had a lawyer "on her side".

Ultimately, Client X decided not to apply for a domestic violence restraining order. She believed that she would be safer by not involving the legal system, convinced that she would be in more danger if she did so.

I've spoken with her several times since our initial meeting and each time she sounds more confident and tells me that she is starting to feel safe again. Thus far, her ex-boyfriend stopped contacting and threatening her. She has begun attending her classes and has made up all of the homework and tests that she missed. This case was not resolved through a typical Step 1-4 legal process. In fact, there was no legal resolution whatsoever. It did give me a certain sense of resolution and success, however, when, a few weeks later, she called and excitedly told me that she thought she had aced her physics test.

Client A, a 19-year-old wife and mother, was verbally and physically abused by her husband for three years before seeking help. Her husband repeatedly threatened her life and threatened to take their daughter and leave the country if she ever reported that he abused her. We were able to help her obtain a permanent restraining order against her husband and won sole physical and legal custody of her daughter.

Client B, a 17 year old, had a baby with her abusive boyfriend. Over the course of three days, he held her captive in his house, physically and sexually abusing her. He punched and kicked her so hard that she was left with deep bruises all over her chest and arms. Several times over the three days, he held a knife to her neck and threatened to kill her. He eventually let her leave his house to attend school and she knew that if she returned to his house, he would kill her. He knew where she lived and where she attended school and she was scared that he would find her. We were able to secure her and her daughter a space in a safe house so that he would not find her and obtained a temporary restraining order against him.

Jennifer Ornelas
Stanford Law Class of 2003



**Report from Sharon Jones
on her Two-Year Post-
Graduate EJA Fellowship
at Southern Minnesota
Regional Legal Services**

“By focusing specifically on cases that involve sexual violence, I can make sure that the special needs of sexually victimized women and children are met and that the civil legal system becomes more receptive to their issues and claims.”

Due to the generous support of Equal Justice America, I am currently holding my “dream job” as an Equal Justice America Fellow at Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS) in St. Paul, Minnesota, providing comprehensive legal services to victim/survivors of sexual violence.

My fellowship allows me to use my law degree to help women and children navigate the complicated civil actions and government services that they need to establish, or maintain, their safety following a sexual assault.

“Developing these skills early in my legal practice will enable me to take on increasingly complex cases as my fellowship progresses.”

I chose SMRLS as my sponsoring organization because it has historically been at the forefront of domestic violence law, having helped to establish the first shelter for battered women in the United States, developed and defended the Minnesota Domestic Abuse Act, and created the statewide Battered Women’s Legal Advocacy Project. The attorneys at SMRLS, like myself, recognize that while there is some overlap between the legal issues of victim/survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence, there are also important distinctions, which require new models of service delivery. By focusing specifically on cases that involve sexual violence, I can make sure that the special needs of sexually victimized women and children are met and that the civil legal system becomes more receptive to their issues and claims.

My fellowship has three main components; I am: providing direct services to victim/survivors of sexual violence; developing collaborative relationships with local social service organizations; and evaluating SMRLS’s institutional response to cases that involve sexual violence. In doing so, I am able to build upon my prior experience as an advocate at the Sexual Violence Center in Minneapolis, and as a member of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, which provides legal services to low-income persons in Eastern Massachusetts.

SMRLS is the ideal organization to house my fellowship. In addition to the organization’s leadership on issues of domestic violence, the St. Paul office serves a diverse population, which reflects the changing demographics of the upper mid-west. There are a substantial number of immigrants and refugees in St. Paul, including Hmong and East Africans. Also, SMRLS is nationally recognized for its commitment to high quality legal services and was at the forefront of efforts to establish written legal

practice standards, including specific practice standards for protecting the safety of victim/survivors of domestic violence. Through the support of Equal Justice America, I am able to both serve clients I care passionately about and to benefit from the experience and professionalism of my co-workers at SMRLS.

The first five months of my fellowship, which began in September, have been devoted to gaining the skills necessary to be an effective advocate, beginning to represent individual clients, and developing relationships with community groups and organizations. In November, I participated in a NITA training designed to develop trial advocacy skills for protective order hearings, including cases based on sexual assault. I have also attended local substantive trainings and plan on attending the upcoming fourth annual Sexual Assault Law Institute training. Developing these skills early in my legal practice will enable me to take on increasingly complex cases as my fellowship progresses.

My caseload is quite varied, and I continue to find new opportunities to assist victim/survivors of sexual violence. I have secured Orders for Protection for both child and adult survivors, including a non-English speaking refugee, guided interested family members through juvenile court dependency proceedings, helped non-abusive parents protect their children in custody and parenting time cases, and filed several divorces. Because of my work in the Family Law Unit, other attorneys at SMRLS are becoming more attuned to issues relating to sexual violence in their own cases, and are more quickly identifying situations where it may be a factor for their clients.

Local social service agencies have responded very positively to my efforts. After one trial, an advocate told me: "We've never been able to get an Order for Protection, based solely on sexual assault, when the opposing party contested the order from that judicial officer before." I have met with multiple agencies to discuss the civil legal needs of victim/survivors and issues of access to legal services. In response, I was asked by the local rape crisis organization to participate in its on-going training

for its hotline volunteers, to help them understand the differences between the civil and criminal justice systems and how to identify cases that can be referred to SMRLS. In addition, I was recently asked to participate in a legislative planning group to discuss possible options for the termination of parental rights when children are conceived through sexual assault. The goal of such legislation would be to ensure that victim/survivors of sexual violence are not further victimized by their perpetrators or by paternity laws when they choose to give birth to such children.

I am very grateful to Equal Justice America for its extremely generous support, and look forward to continuing to do rewarding work on behalf of victim/survivors of sexual violence throughout my fellowship.

Sharon Jones
Harvard Law Class of 2003



**Report from Suzy Lee
on her Two-Year Post-
Graduate EJA Fellowship
at the Coalition Against
Slavery and Trafficking
(CAST)**

*CAST is the first and only
organization in the United States
exclusively dedicated to fighting
the trafficking of human beings to
the United States.*

In the past six months of my Equal Justice America Legal Services Fellowship at the Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST) , I have expanded and developed my projects and broadened my knowledge of the legal issues that affect victims of trafficking.

CAST is the first and only organization in the United States exclusively dedicated to fighting the trafficking of human beings to the United States.

“CAST’s approach to providing services for its target population is unique because it combines many different types of services under the umbrella of a single organization.”

It is a multi-ethnic human rights organization whose mission is to assist persons trafficked for the purpose of forced labor and slavery-like practices and to work toward ending all such human rights violations. As an EJA Legal Services Fellow, I provide direct legal services to trafficking survivors, teach legal education seminars, train students and other attorneys on human trafficking issues, and advocate for sensitive responses to and expanded rights for trafficking victims and survivors.

CAST’s approach to providing services for its target population is unique because it combines many different types of services under the umbrella of a single organization. In addition to legal assistance, CAST offers a comprehensive set of social services through its intensive case management system. Through this program, CAST clients receive medical care, counseling to deal with the trauma of their trafficking experiences as well as help with education, housing, job training, and other services. CAST’s training and advocacy departments also provide media training for those of our clients who wish to participate more actively in the anti-trafficking movement. Working within this type of integrated organization, while presenting challenges unusual to traditional lawyering, has been extremely rewarding. CAST’s efforts create the opportunity for survivors to conquer great obstacles and become independent, empowered members of American society.

As I’ve become more experienced as a legal services attorney, I have been able to greatly increase the number of clients I assist, as well as the types of services I provide. I filed, and obtained, T-visas for six clients and their family members. Some of these clients had been waiting for years for immigration relief. I have also worked closely with civil attorneys who represent CAST clients in civil litigation against their traffickers. In the past six months, several

clients have won jury trials and settlements that have helped to compensate them for some of the injuries that they incurred. I have developed working relationships with federal and local law enforcement while representing clients who testify in the criminal case against their traffickers.

Through my direct legal services work, I have identified the need for attorneys working with victims of trafficking to have an understanding of international and foreign law. Many of my clients have legal issues in their countries of origin that require resolution. These issues are primarily related to family law. As our clients receive T-visas and seek to reunite with their families, conflicts created by their long absences – absences which, for victims of stigmatizing crimes like forced prostitution, cannot be explained to their families – can require me to research foreign laws on marriage, divorce, and custody. Other clients have outstanding debts related to their trafficking that may be enforceable in their country of origin. In helping my clients resolve these issues, I have begun to partner with attorneys in foreign countries. In the coming year, I hope to expand on these partnerships and develop strategies for international client service that could speed the often lengthy and confusing processes.

In addition to my direct services work, I have also been running CAST's Legal Clinic. In the first months of my fellowship, I created a basic curriculum and began teaching monthly seminars on the criminal, civil, and immigration law that affects victims of trafficking. In the past six months, I have expanded the clinic to include a larger range of issues, including housing, employment, and consumer law. I have recruited attorneys from firms and other legal services organizations to conduct the trainings in specific areas of law.

Finally, in 2005, AB-22, California's anti-trafficking legislation was passed and signed into law. CAST's legal and advocacy departments worked on the legislation, creating a coalition of organizations to lobby for legislation that was victim-centered. As a member of the legal team, I helped draft portions of the legislation and participated in the advocacy

and lobbying process. It was a unique opportunity to experience the political negotiations involved in developing state policy, and in the end, California passed one of the most progressive, victim-centered anti-trafficking acts in the country.

Thanks to Equal Justice America and its supporters for making this work possible.

Suzy Lee

Harvard Law Class of 2004



**Equal Justice America
Law Student
Fellowships
2004-2005**

List of Fellowships Sponsored by Equal Justice America During Fiscal Year 2004-2005

Law Student Fellowships

Fall 2004/Spring 2005

- Dana Ahn, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, White Plains, NY Fall/Spring
- Anagha Apte, Georgetown, Migrant Legal Action Program, Washington, DC, Fall
- Maria E. Diaz Bancalari, University of Texas, Political Asylum Project of Austin, Spring
- Chris Beatty, New York Law School, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Spring
- Katie Caldwell, University of Chicago, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, Spring
- Joyce George, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Amanda Gilbert, University of Chicago, Chicago Legal Clinic, Spring
- Heather Goldner, Temple, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Fall
- Gina Guarienti, Yale, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Lynne Kalker, New York Law School, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, Spring
- Brian Kennedy, Boston College, South Middlesex Legal Services, Framingham, MA, Spring
- Jessica Maiman, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Barbara Maldarelli, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Jack McGhee, Rutgers University, The Legal Aid Society, New York City Fall
- Rochene McLinn, DePaul University, Chicago Legal Clinic, Fall
- Abja Midha, Yale, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Brian Miller, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Heather Morris, American University, Women Empowered Against Violence WEAVE, Washington, DC, Fall/Spring
- LaTina Norman, Chicago-Kent, Chicago Legal Clinic, Fall
- Benjamin Novick, Yale, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Jaime Diane Parks, Columbia University, Catholic Charities Community Services, New York City, Fall
- Jennie Pasquarella, Georgetown, D.C. Employment Justice Center, Fall
- Darya Pollak, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA Fall
- Lilah Rosenblum, American University, D.C. Employment Justice Center, Spring
- Marc Silverman, Yale, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Fall/Spring
- Brian Sullivan, University of Colorado, Colorado Legal Services, Spring
- Lesley Tse, Fordham, Welfare Law Center, New York City Fall
- Eimi Thompson, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Mark Tsai, Pace University, Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic, Fall/Spring
- Heather Vitale, Georgetown, Advocates for Justice and Education, Washington, DC, Fall
- Julie Waters, Boston University Children's Legal Services, Boston, MA, Spring
- Leah Wawro, Wayne State, Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI, Fall
- Adrienne Winney, Temple, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA, Fall
- Katherine Zeisel, NYU, Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York City, Fall

Law Student Fellowships

Summer 2005

- Lubna Alam, University of Michigan, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Hathy Albright, Rutgers, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Emily Bajcsi, Boston College, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Michael Barker, Georgetown, Covenant House Washington, DC
- Amal Munas Bass, Harvard, Homeless Advocacy Project, Philadelphia, PA
- Jedd Bellman, University of Michigan, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Kari Beyer, John Marshall, Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic, Chicago, IL
- Sydney Bird, Columbia, Catholic Charities Community Services Immigration Legal Services, New York City
- Jenny Braun-Friedman, Brooklyn, South Brooklyn Legal Services
- Peter Bryce, Georgetown, Migrant Legal Action Program, Washington, DC
- Rebecca Cantu, Boston College, Boston College Immigration and Asylum Project
- Lauren Castaldi, Georgetown, Ayuda Legal Aid, Washington, DC
- Lisa Charbonneau, UC Hastings, Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI
- Jenny Chung, UCLA, Los Angeles Center For Law And Justice
- Erin Cobb, DePaul, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Rachael Coen, NYU, Boston College Immigration and Asylum Project
- Donielle Colich, UC Hastings, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Tarique Collins, University of Pennsylvania, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Andrea Cortinas, Boalt Hall, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid
- Heidi Craig, Cornell, Farmworker Legal Services, Rochester, NY
- Jennifer Crook, Loyola, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Kate Crosby, University of Michigan, Legal Services of South Central Michigan
- Roxane Crowley, Temple, SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Douglas Cuthbertson, Fordham, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Geoff Davenport, NYU, Make The Road By Walking, Brooklyn, NY
- Natalya Dobrowolsky, Catholic, D.C. Law Students In Court Program
- Sarah Doll, University of Colorado, Colorado Legal Services
- Lauren Elfant, Temple, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA
- Meghan Fennelly, Georgetown, Public Advocates, San Francisco, CA
- John Fiore, Harvard, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- Kevin Frankel, Columbia, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Runa Ganguly, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Legal Assistance
- Rachel Garland, Temple, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA
- Kenneth Garrett, Harvard, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Jocelyn Getgen, Cornell, Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Law Project, Brooklyn, NY
- Fionnuala Girard, Suffolk, Children's Legal Services, Boston, MA
- Lauren Goldman, Suffolk, Boston Medical Center, Family Advocacy Program
- Sathya Gosselin, Cornell, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid
- Graham Green, Harvard, East Bay Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA
- Jennifer Grock, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA
- Rachel Gurvich, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Aaron Haas, Harvard, Legal Aid Society Of Cleveland

- Amber Haggins, Howard University, Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Washington, DC
- Nicole Hancock, University of Virginia, Legal Aid Justice Center, Charlottesville, VA
- Yaa-Asantewa Hargrove, Howard University, Advocates For Justice And Education, Washington, DC
- Terri Harper, George Washington University, The Fairfax Bar Pro Bono Program, Fairfax, VA
- Melanie Hirsch, NYU, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- Alicia Hudelson, University of Minnesota, Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis
- Matthew Hughes, George Washington University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Alexander Hunt, University of Virginia, Legal Services of Greater Miami
- Edmund Jalinske, George Washington University, Migrant Legal Action Program, Washington, DC
- Catherine Jang, University of Michigan, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii
- Brian Kennedy, Boston College, South Middlesex Legal Services, Framingham, MA
- Emily Kernan, Harvard, National Center For Youth Law, Oakland, CA
- Dalia Khalili, UC Hastings, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA
- Clare Kirui, George Washington University, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Brad Kondracki, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Legal Assistance
- Amy Kortas, University of Colorado, Chicago Legal Clinic
- Priya Sazawal Koul, Chicago-Kent, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago
- Andrew Kramer, University of Wisconsin, Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI
- Jasmine Krishnan, Georgetown, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- Jamal Lacy, Suffolk, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Kate Lawson, Suffolk, Victim Rights Law Center, Boston, MA
- Sergio Leal, Columbia, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc.
- Sohyun Lee, University of Pennsylvania, SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Heather Levy, Suffolk, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Carmen Lewis, Boston University, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Lauren Liebes, Southwestern, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- William Lim, Fordham, South Brooklyn Legal Services
- Sandra Lora, Boston College, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Daniel Luna, UC Hastings, La Raza Centro Legal, San Francisco, CA
- Morgan Lynn, Georgetown, Women Empowered Against Violence (WEAVE), Washington, DC
- Leah McGowan, University of Michigan, University of Michigan Law School Clinical Law Program
- Christian McNamara, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Daniel McNeely, George Washington University, DC Law Students In Court Program
- Ajua McNeil, Howard University, Break The Cycle, Washington, DC
- Joe MacNeille, George Washington University, People's Law Resource Center, Washington, DC
- Eren Magri, NYU, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Robert May, Columbia, Legal Aid Society, New York City
- Noah Metheny, Boalt Hall, Positive Resource Center, San Francisco
- Lisa Minc, DePaul, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Sean Morales-Doyle, Northwestern, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Deborah Morgan, American University, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Chicago, IL
- Mark Nabong, Georgetown, Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services, Washington, DC

- Sarah Nelson, Harvard, Legal Aid Society of Orange County, CA
- William Ngan, Boston College, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Olivia Nix, Albany, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- Lateef Nurmohamed, Columbia, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center Emezie Okorafor, University of Chicago, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Nora Phillips, DePaul, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Melinda Podgor, University of Illinois, Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Champaign, IL
- Christina Powers, Georgetown, Boston College Immigration & Asylum Project, Newton, MA
- Vianey Ramirez, UC Hastings, Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Atlee Reilly, University of Minnesota, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services.
- Vanessa Ridley, Harvard, Bay Area Legal Aid, San Jose, CA
- Dominick Robinson, Rutgers, Essex-Newark Legal Services, Newark, NJ
- Margaret Robinson, Northwestern, Public Interest Law Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Caroline Rothert, Harvard, National Center For Youth Law, Oakland, CA
- Michael Rubin, Fordham, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
- Meira Russ, Boston University, Legal Aid Society of New York City
- Eve Rutzick, UCLA, Harriet Buhai Center For Family Law, Los Angeles, CA
- Rebecca Ryan, University of Texas, Advocacy, Inc., Austin, TX
- Chaim Dov Sacks, George Washington University, Legal Services for New York City
- Kristi Schaeffer, Columbia, Florida Legal Services, Inc.
- Tracy Schloss, University of Michigan, Lawyers For Children, New York City
- Brian Seeve, Harvard, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- Karen Shen, University of Michigan, Legal Aid Society of New York City
- Melanie Shui, St. John's, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Brian Shull, Harvard, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- Claudia Silva, University of Illinois, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Zachary Silverman, Georgetown, Legal Counsel For The Elderly, Washington, DC
- Ian Spechler, University of Texas, Advocacy, Inc., Austin, TX
- Kristen Stanley, Cornell, Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY
- Jeffrey Stephens, Harvard, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- Brian Sullivan, University of Colorado, Colorado Legal Services
- John Swingle, Harvard, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, Jacksonville, FL
- Bryan Swiss, NYU, Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake, UT
- Summer Sylva, Cornell, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation
- Sharona Tabacznik, Brooklyn, Legal Aid Society, New York City
- Danni Tang, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Sydney Tarzwell, Columbia, Urban Justice Center, New York City
- James Temple, NYU, The Legal Aid Society, New York City
- Laura Tolan, University of Michigan, Pro Bono Advocates, Chicago, IL
- Johnny Tran, UCLA, Public Law Center, Santa Ana, CA
- Anna Trepetin, UCLA, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Los Angeles, CA
- Dianna Truong, Harvard, Harvard Law School Legal Services Center
- James Vandette, St. John's, Queens Legal Services

- Monica Vela, University of Michigan, Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Vi Vu, Cornell, Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, CA
- Carolyn Walther, NYU, The Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY
- Nicole Webster, George Washington University, Lawyers For Children America, Washington, DC
- Brandon Weiss, Harvard, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Kirsten Westerland, University of Colorado, Colorado Legal Services
- Heding Yang, NYU, Legal Services for New York City
- Grace Zaya, Loyola, Chicago Legal Clinic

Legal Services Organizations Where Equal Justice America has Sponsored Law Student Fellowships

- Advocacy, Inc., Austin, TX
- Advocates for Justice and Education, Washington, DC
- 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
- Battered Women's Justice Center, White Plains, NY
- Bread for the City, Washington, DC
- 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
- Boston Medical Center, Family Advocacy Program
- 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
- Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services, Washington, DC
- 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 Law Center, Washington, DC
- Children's Law Center of Los Angeles
- Children's Law Center of Massachusetts
- Children's Legal Services, Boston, MA
- Columbia Legal Services, Seattle, WA
- Community Legal Resources, Detroit, MI
- Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA
- Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto, CA
- Cornell Legal Aid Clinic, Ithaca, NY
- Covenant House, Washington, DC
- 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 Law Clinic, White Plains, NY
- Essex-Newark Legal Services, NJ
- Fairfax Bar Pro Bono Program, Fairfax, VA
- Family Advocacy Program, Boston Medical Center
- 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
- Harriet Buhai Center for Family Law, Los Angeles, CA
- Harvard Law School Legal Services Center, Jamaica Plain, MA
- Harvard Legal Aid Bureau
- HIV & AIDS Legal Services Alliance, Los Angeles, CA
- Homeless Action Center, Berkeley, CA
- Homeless Advocacy Project, Philadelphia, PA
- Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, FL
- Kentucky Legal Services
- Knoxville Legal Aid Society, TN
- Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Champaign, IL
- La Raza Centro Legal San Francisco, CA
- Lawyers for Children, New York, NY
- Lawyers for Children America, Washington, DC

- Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Legal Advocates for Children & Youth, San Jose, CA
- Legal Aid Association, Detroit, MI
- Legal Aid Bureau, Chicago, IL
- Legal Aid Clinic, St. Louis University Law School
- Legal Aid & Defender Service, Pontiac, MI
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- Legal Aid Justice Center, Charlottesville, VA
- Legal Aid of Central Texas
- Legal Aid of Marin County, CA
- 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 Cleveland, OH
- Legal Aid Society of Hawaii
- Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, MN
- Legal Aid Society of New York City
- Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Legal Aid Society of Orange County, CA
- Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY
- Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake, UT
- 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 Corporation of Central Massachusetts
- Legal Assistance for Seniors, San Francisco, CA
- Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Washington, DC
- Legal Information for Families Today, New York, NY
- Legal Services Center at the Door, New York, NY
- Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, San Francisco, CA
- Legal Services of Central Michigan
- Legal Corps of Los Angeles
- Legal Services of Dutchess County, NY
- Legal Services of Greater Miami
- Legal Services of New Jersey
- Legal Services for New York City
- Legal Services of Northern California
- 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
- Los Angeles County Neighborhood Legal Services
- Lutheran Family and Community Services, New York, NY
- Make the Road by Walking, Brooklyn, NY
- Medicare Rights Center, New York, NY
- Mental Health Advocacy Project
- Merrimack Valley Legal Services, Lowell, MA
- MFY Legal Services, New York, NY
- Michigan Poverty Law Program
- Migrant Action Legal Program, Washington, DC
- 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
- National Health Law Program, Washington, DC
- 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
- Palm Beach County Legal Aid Bureau
- Pennsylvania Health Law Project
- Philadelphia Legal Assistance
- Piedmont Legal Services, Charlottesville, VA
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Maine
- Political Asylum Project of Austin, TX

- Positive Resource Center, San Francisco, CA
- Pro Bono Advocates, Chicago, IL
- Pro Bono Partnership, Newark, NJ & White Plains, NY
- Public Counsel Law Center, Los Angeles, CA
- Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia
- Public Justice Center, Baltimore, MD
- Queens Legal Services, NY
- Rhode Island Legal Aid Bureau
- Rocky Mountain Children's Justice Center, Denver, CO
- Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Law Project, New York, NY
- Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, New York, NY
- Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Chicago, IL
- SeniorLAW Center, Philadelphia, PA
- South Brooklyn Legal Services
- Southeast Texas Legal Clinic
- Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services
- South Middlesex Legal Services, Framingham, MA
- Stanford Community Law Clinic, East Palo Alto, CA
- Sugar Law Center for Economic Justice, Detroit, MI
- Tenderloin Housing Clinic San Francisco, CA
- Texas RioGrande Legal Aid
- Texas Rural Legal Aid
- Uptown People's Law Center, Chicago, IL
- 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
- Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington, DC
- Women Against Abuse Legal Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Women Empowered Against Violence, Washington, DC



Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic

Annual Report 2004-2005

*Training future lawyers and providing
free legal services to low income
disabled persons of all ages.*

I. Introduction

Completing its fifth 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 and their families

Pace Law School's clinical offerings, under the umbrella of John Jay Legal Services, 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 full-time clinical faculty, students enrolled in clinical courses perform all lawyering functions normally reserved to lawyers admitted to practice. In addition to the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic, John Jay Legal Services also provides representation to individuals by student attorneys enrolled in the Securities Arbitration Clinic, the Criminal Justice Clinic and the Immigration Justice Clinic. In addition to these "live client" clinics, field work in the non-profit legal arena is available to students through the Legal Services/Public Interest/Health Law Externship.

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 focused on learning lawyering skills are supplemented with readings directly relevant to disability law.

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.

For the 2004-2005 academic year, the Clinic was again offered as a two-semester course. Students 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 spend on average five hours per week per clinical credit on case-related work.

During the 2004-2005 academic year, seven students were enrolled in the Clinic. In addition to these seven students, two student who had participated in the clinic during 2003-2004, received field work credit only during the fall semester.

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 five years, including SKIP of New York, Mt. Vernon Board of Education, the Parent Connection at the Westchester Institute for Human Development, the Program for Family Support at North Central Bronx Hospital, and Westchester ARC. 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. Several cases completed during the year were begun during the previous year.

Lifetime and Estate Planning

In a case that began in 2003-2004, a student attorney obtained permission from the Westchester

Surrogate's Court to establish a special needs trust for G., the mentally retarded son of L.C. who is his guardian. The trust was funded with proceeds from the sale of real property G inherited from his grandmother. The student attorney drafted the trust document and petitions to the Surrogate's Court for permission to sell the real property and fund the trust. As a result, G. will continue to receive Medicaid benefits and will be eligible for group home services when his mother is no longer able to care for him. G.'s modest inheritance can be used to pay for needs not covered by government benefit programs.

A student attorney counseled two clients who are residents of a local nursing home. The clients hoped to leave the nursing home and live independently in the community. The student thoroughly researched their options and advised them that they could place their income in a special needs trust and remain eligible for Medicaid once they found suitable housing in the community.

Another student attorney drafted wills for Mr. and Mrs. L., an elderly couple with no children. The clients were counseled extensively by the student and chose to sign health care proxies and durable powers of attorney to ensure that their financial and personal affairs are handled if they become incapacitated.

A student attorney drafted a will for Mr. F, the widowed father of a disabled child. The will appoints a guardian for minor children and establishes a special needs trust for the disabled child.

Wills are also being drafted for Mr. and Mrs. G., a young couple with minor children. Although they are low income, the G.'s wanted to make sure that their children were provided for in the event of their deaths and were counseled concerning the need to appoint guardians and trustees if they die before all of their children reach the age of 18.

Guardianships

We worked with nine 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.

Guardianship petitions have been filed in six of the cases, one in the Bronx, and four in Westchester. One case involved a guardian who wished to appoint a new standby guardian. Decisions appointing the petitioners as guardian have been received in two cases; we expect decisions in the other cases soon. Work on the remaining three cases is proceeding over the summer.

Social Security Cases

In August 2004, a student attorney represented M.B., who suffers from several chronic conditions, at a hearing before a Social Security administrative law judge. After the hearing, which was handled by the student attorney, the judge ruled that Mr. B. was disabled under the Social Security Act and awarded back benefits from the date of application. Because of this determination, Mr. B. was also awarded a disability pension from his union.

Community Outreach

The Rose Simon Program, a program serving children with developmental disabilities in Mt. Vernon, held a day-long program for parents in late May. Gretchen Flint, faculty supervisor, conducted two workshops about guardianships and financial planning. The clinic students drafted an information sheet for parents that explains in simple language what parents need to know about guardianship when their disabled children turn 18. In the fall, student attorneys will return to Mt. Vernon to assist parents who wish to initiate guardianship proceedings.

In early June, Prof. Flint was the featured speaker at a meeting of the Westchester Chapter for the National Alliance of the Mentally Ill. This well-attended meeting focused on eligibility for Social Security Disability and SSI.

III. Plans for the Future

Two students have agreed to continue to work on on-going cases over the summer. This represents a high degree of professionalism on their part and will ensure continuity in representation.

Ten students have enrolled in the Clinic for the 2005-2006 academic year. We will continue to offer high quality representation to disabled persons and their families in Westchester and neighboring counties.



Letters from Legal Services Organizations

Annual Report 2004-2005

Section 2

JOHN JAY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
PACE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
78 NORTH BROADWAY
WHITE PLAINS, NY 10603

VANESSA MERTON
ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION
PROFESSOR OF LAW

TELEPHONE: (914) 422-4333
TELEFACSIMILE: (914) 422-4391
E-MAIL: VMERTON@LAW.PACE.EDU

December 31, 2005

Dan Ruben, Esq.
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan:

Once again I would like to thank Equal Justice America for its steadfast and critically needed support for John Jay Legal Services (JJLS), the free legal clinic at Pace Law School. Your generous ongoing support for the *Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic* has permitted us to provide compassionate, effective legal assistance to people with a variety of disabilities, some quite profound.

Pace law students are learning how to serve this population and meet the challenges of communication and decision-making with clients whose abilities to see, hear, speak, read, write, or understand are impaired. This experience, with close supervision by Professor Gretchen Flint, a skilled and knowledgeable faculty member, makes it far more likely that *EJA Clinic* graduates will be inclined and able to provide *pro bono* service to such clients upon graduation.

Nearly 60 Pace law students have enrolled in the *EJA Clinic* since it opened with a major grant from EJA in the fall of 2000. Your continuing support has made the *EJA Clinic* a vital component of our clinical program.

The seminar portion of the program offers students the building blocks necessary for effective representation: 1) thorough grounding in the complex substantive law relevant to the disabled, such as health and income benefits, and surrogate decision-making; and 2) simulation-based training in basic lawyering skills such as interviewing, counseling, case planning, and negotiation.

In their casework, students use these tools on behalf of clients who otherwise would have no access to representation. Among those represented have been clients challenging denial of Social Security Disability benefits, parents seeking guardianship of their adult developmentally disabled children, and Medicaid recipients needing appropriate home care and equipment. The *EJA Clinic* has delivered successful outcomes to many of our clients.

On behalf of the students and faculty of Pace University School of Law, and of the past, present and future clients of the *Equal Justice America Disability Law Clinic*, we thank you and all your contributors for making these accomplishments possible. We look forward to our ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Merton
Associate Dean for Clinical Education
and Professor of Law
Executive Director, John Jay Legal Services, Inc.



Homeless Advocacy Project

A legal aid project of the Philadelphia Bar Association

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Philadelphia, PA 19102
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Email: marsha@philalegal.org
www.homelessadvocacyproject.org

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August 5, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II - Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Amal Munas Bass

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am the Senior Staff Attorney with the Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP), a nonprofit organization in Philadelphia that provides free legal services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. I was in the fortunate position this summer to supervise intern Amal Bass, an Equal Justice America fellow and Harvard law student. Amal was a wonderful addition to our program.

Amal had a wide range of experiences during her internship at HAP. She met with prospective clients while conducting intake at area homeless shelters and soup kitchens. Under attorney supervision, Amal maintained her own client caseload, assisting clients on a wide array of civil legal matters including, but not limited to, welfare benefits, federal disability benefits, private and subsidized housing, identity theft and other credit problems, and issues relating to identification. Amal also prepared educational materials for our clients and other shelter residents on topics relevant to their efforts towards independence and self-sufficiency.

In addition to her own client work, Amal provided critical assistance to HAP staff attorneys on their cases. She also conducted legal research and prepared memoranda of law on issues relating to HAP's broader systemic advocacy efforts to help protect the rights of homeless Philadelphians.

Amal also played an integral role in HAP's annual self-evaluation process. Under

"...helping to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness."

Dan Ruben
August 5, 2005
Page two

the auspices of HAP's Standards and Monitoring Committee, Amal worked with HAP's other summer intern to survey former clients on their satisfaction with the legal services they received by HAP staff and volunteers. Amal developed the survey questionnaire, analyzed the survey results and prepared a written report for the Standards and Monitoring Committee. This report will be utilized to ensure that HAP operates as effectively as possible in meeting the needs of the clients we seek to serve.

Amal's dedication to our clients and HAP is remarkable. She enjoyed working with our clients and was particularly sensitive when working with our more fragile clients. Despite having completed her internship several weeks ago, Amal continues to return to our office almost every day to follow-up on cases that she handled earlier in the summer and to continue researching issues important to our advocacy efforts.

Thank you for your support of Amal's work with the Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP) this summer. Speaking on behalf of the entire HAP staff, we will miss her greatly when she returns to her studies at Harvard.

Very truly yours,



Michele Levy



ALCC

AIDS LEGAL COUNCIL of CHICAGO

August 22, 2005

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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**JAMES MONROE SMITH
OUTREACH PROJECT
AT THE CORE CENTER**

Room 4-260
2020 West Harrison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612
312.572.4766 tel/fax

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, Virginia 23112
Building II – Suite 204

Re: Priya Koul

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you for funding Priya Koul's Equal Justice Fellowship this summer. Due to Equal Justice America's generosity, the AIDS Legal Council of Chicago was fortunate enough to work with an enthusiastic and bright advocate.

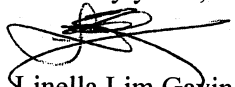
Priya worked on a number of projects during her summer. Her projects covered direct advocacy in the areas of Social Security disability, public aid, insurance, guardianship, wills and powers of attorney, debtor/creditor, and confidentiality. From my discussions from Priya, her favorite aspects of her position this summer were the direct client contact she had and the unique combination of direct advocacy and policy work available at the Council. In addition to the direct legal service work, Priya also became involved in discussions regarding how Medicare Part D will impact the HIV community and attempted to persuade the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts of America to adopt and post a non-discrimination policy with regards to HIV/AIDS. Priya came to the Council with some life experience but very little legal public interest experience. Priya left this summer with a good general knowledge of public interest law.

One of Priya's greatest attributes is her maturity. Unlike many law students that enter law school directly after undergraduate studies, law is a second career for Priya. Priya came to the Council with experience in the medical field. Priya had insight and passion where most law students only have enthusiasm. While realistic, Priya approached each new legal issue with gusto.

Priya's second greatest attribute is her fearlessness. Priya never backed down when advocating for a client. Having had past experience in the business world, Priya refused to be complacent and would not accept other people's refusal to do their jobs.

Priya was a wonderful addition to the Council this past summer. I am certain she will succeed in her public interest pursuits. Thank you again for giving us the ability to hire Priya this past summer.

Sincerely yours,


Linella Lim Gavin
Staff Attorney



*The Legal Aid Society
of Rochester*

Alan S. Harris
President & CEO

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Rochester, NY 14614
office: (585) 232-4090
fax: (585) 232-2352

Genesee-Orleans
Youth Advocacy Program
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Batavia, NY 14020
office: (585) 344-2580 x5716
toll free: 1 (800) 641-6132

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Youth Advocacy Program
6 Court Street, Room 105
Geneseo, NY 14454
office: (585) 243-7049
or (585) 243-7944

September 26, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building 11, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, Virginia 23112

Re: Equal Justice America Summer Fellow – Carolyn Walther

Dear Mr. Ruben:


During the summer of 2005, I had the privilege of supervising Carolyn Walther's fellowship with our office. Carolyn worked in our Domestic Violence Program, and her work was exceptional.

Carolyn's writing skills were the best that I have seen from a law student intern, and her research skills were very strong as well. She was highly reliable and professional. Perhaps more important, she showed fantastic enthusiasm for our work with poor battered women, and she showed maturity and empathy in her dealings with our clients. She was generally self-directed, and she demonstrated good common sense and professional judgment. She also knew when to seek supervision, and she took direction well.

Pursuant to a Practice Order issued by the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Fourth Department, Carolyn handled several court appearances in Family Court under my supervision. She demonstrated exceptional ability in this area as well. She not only was well prepared and well spoken, she was able to think on her feet and respond to unanticipated questions from the judge and the clients.

In sum, Carolyn was an exceptional intern, she will be an outstanding public interest lawyer, and I would welcome her back in a heartbeat! Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information about her fellowship.

Very truly yours,


Cynthia J. Carroll
Program Director, Family Law Unit
ccarroll@lasroc.org

xc: Carolyn Walther

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Mr. Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building II, Suite 204
Midlothian, Virginia 23112

Dear Dan,

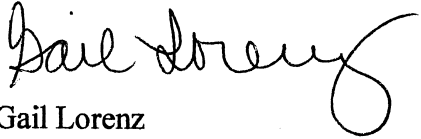
This summer we were privileged to work with two Equal Justice America fellows. Our experiences in the past have always been very rewarding and this summer continued the tradition of fine students assisting us with our work.

Brian Sullivan worked with the Statewide Advocacy and Support Unit. "I have worked for Colorado Legal Services for 26 years and few summer interns have impressed me as much as Brian. Brian is bright, personable, hard working and reliable," reports Linda Olson, Senior Attorney with the Unit. Brian organized complex files, interviewed and consulted with clients, compiled data for a complex litigation project, wrote advice letters to clients, researched and drafted a client's civil rights complaint, and handled correspondence and closing memoranda for numerous individual clients. He began researching and updating the law in a manual on Colorado's landlord-tenant law. Brian was particularly skilled at unraveling complex fact patterns and synthesizing the information into persuasive and accurate memos and briefs. He worked quickly and efficiently. Brian donated far more hours to assisting us than his fellowship required out of simple dedication to our mission and enthusiasm for the work. He returns to the University of Colorado this Fall for his last year of law school.

Sarah Doll worked with the Denver Intake Unit. Her duties included interviewing indigent and/or elderly persons who were seeking legal assistance for a large variety of civil legal issues. Through the process she probed and defined the client's legal issues, accurately recorded the facts and prepared for staff meetings to review cases for representation, advice or referral. When necessary, she contacted a variety of sources to determine the specifics of a client's situation. She performed this job professionally, competently and graciously. In addition to the interviews she completed, Sarah also revised and clarified advice letters to clients regarding bankruptcy and "breaking a lease" after researching applicable updates. She revised and updated the subsidized housing brochure that is given to clients and wrote new form letters regarding paternity cases. Sarah wrote an advice letter to a client regarding her rights under the Uniform Child Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act and how to proceed. After the summer fellowship, she returned to the University of Colorado for her second year of law school.

Without EJA, our law student internship program would be significantly smaller. We enjoy working with the highly skilled law students and appreciate the enthusiasm they bring to our organization. With the support of EJA, we receive a dose of freshness and a renewal of passion for our mission. Thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail Lorenz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gail Lorenz
Administrator of Volunteer Services



September 28, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Morgan Lynn

Dear Mr. Ruben:

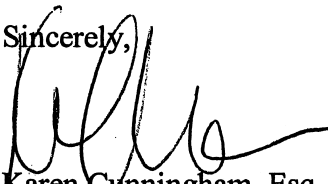
I am writing to thank you again for giving Morgan Lynn a fellowship to work at WEAVE this summer and to tell you how much we appreciated having her here. Morgan worked full time in the Teen Dating Violence Program and was a tremendous help. She worked on a wide variety of projects and did them all equally well. Morgan worked closely with several of my teen clients, helping them to understand what was happening in their cases and providing support to them in court. For several of them, she served as the main point of contact at WEAVE and always responded to their needs with great patience and empathy. Morgan also helped to prepare some of their legal cases by drafting pleadings and interviewing potential witnesses. Because of Morgan's assistance in these areas, we increased our capacity to serve additional teens this summer.

In addition to providing litigation assistance, Morgan completed several important research projects. Some of her research on the finer points of the Intrafamily Offenses Act will enable us to be better prepared for unique issues that arise when representing minor petitioners in civil protection order cases. Other research projects were part of a larger initiative led by WEAVE to review best practices around teen dating violence and to propose legislation that will remove some of the barriers teen victims face when seeking legal protections and support services such as counseling, shelter and public benefits.

Although Morgan did wonderful legal work, I also appreciated her willingness to do less glamorous tasks such as helping me to organize my files and gather statistics about my clients and the teen program. She approached these tasks with as much enthusiasm as the others knowing that efficiencies in our internal functioning enable us to provide more and better services to clients, a goal to which she is clearly committed.

Morgan was truly a pleasure to have in the office both because of the good work she did and because of her warm personality and her bright spirit. Thank you again for the fellowship that enabled her to work with us this summer and for your continued support of WEAVE.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Cunningham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karen Cunningham, Esq.
Director, Teen Dating Violence Program

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August 4, 2005

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

Re: **Kenneth Garrett, Summer Law Clerk**

Dear Mr. Ruben:

We are writing to thank Equal Justice America for their support of Kenneth Garrett, one of our best summer clerks this year. Kenneth has been a real asset to the Education Unit within the Children's Rights Project, and he has greatly assisted many special needs students during his 10 weeks at Public Counsel.

One of the cases that Kenneth worked on was that of a 17-year-old boy with serious learning disabilities named Ryan. Ryan is eligible for special education, but he consistently failed to get the services he needed and was entitled to get under law. Even now, Ryan can only read at the third grade level. Kenneth poured over hundreds of pages of education records, which resulted from Ryan bouncing from one school to another. Kenneth identified numerous violations of state and federal education law, and wove these violations together with a heartfelt narrative about how the public education system had failed Ryan. This document will be filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings as a Request for a Due Process Hearing (Attachment "A"). We are optimistic that it will result in much needed compensatory services for Ryan.

While at Public Counsel, Kenneth also created an education brochure to help parents advocate for their children (Attachment "B"). This brochure, still in draft form, will be widely distributed in the Los Angeles County area, especially in under-served geographic areas with lots of at-risk youth.

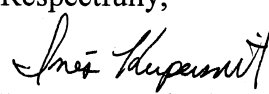
In addition, Kenneth took the lead on drafting and researching a compliance complaint regarding disability discrimination under federal and state discrimination laws. This task took a high level of writing and

researching skills, and Kenny was able to process facts, law, and the various issues involved and create a complaint that was exceedingly persuasive.

Kenneth also helped research and draft testimony, which was presented to the federal Office of Special Education regarding the need for various amendments to the proposed regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004. (Attachment "C")

In sum, Kenneth used all of his oral and written advocacy skills this summer and impressed our office with his dedication and commitment to the clients and to the challenges of the job.

Respectfully,



Inés Kuperschmit, Esq.
Staff Attorney



Laura Faer, Esq.
Staff Attorney



Taking action to end poverty

Writer's Direct Line: (312) 368-5229

August 25, 2005

BY FACSIMILE AND U.S. MAIL

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, Virginia 23112
Fax: 804-744-6789

Re: Deborah Morgan, EJA Summer Fellow 2005

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I write to thank you for providing a summer fellowship to Deborah Morgan, who worked as a law student intern with us at the Shriver Center this summer. Debby was an outstanding intern and friendly colleague. We sincerely appreciate the support that Equal Justice America gave her, without which we could not have had the opportunity to work with her.

Debby was one of only three interns we selected this summer from approximately 200 applicants. Because we fund no interns directly, we must find outside funding sources like EJA for each. Debby worked from May 23 to July 29 for 35-40 hours per week (totaling roughly 375 hours) doing a wide variety of our work, but focusing on direct civil legal services to the poor.

Debby worked on numerous projects this summer, including:

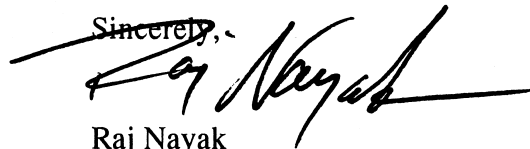
- interviewing and preparing a TANF client with a mental illness for an administrative hearing because her benefits had been wrongfully terminated;
- researching and writing on a range of legal issues to assist staff attorneys with pending litigation on various issues, including provision of public benefits and preservation of affordable housing;
- helping to develop community education materials on the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), an Illinois law that provides workplace protections for victims of domestic and sexual violence, which will be translated into Spanish and Polish and distributed throughout the state; and

- attending community meetings with local immigrant groups and social service providers to discuss how to improve access to services for limited-English proficient Illinois residents.

Debby excelled in each of the wide variety of projects we gave her. She conducted thorough research and wrote clear and concise memos. Debby was especially helpful for projects that took advantage of her unique expertise regarding issues important to limited-English proficient populations in particular.

In all, we had an excellent experience with Debby. We once again wish to thank Equal Justice America for providing this opportunity. Please feel free to contact me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

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

Raj Nayak
Equal Justice Works Fellow /
Staff Attorney

NEW HAVEN LEGAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION, INC.

426 STATE STREET
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October 14, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II-Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

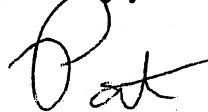
Dear Dan:

Thanks to Equal Justice America, we have four new student fellows, Erin Bradrick, Raquiba Huq, Robin Preussel and Samuel Wiseman, who are this semester's student directors of the Yale Law School Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) project. This project is one of the most successful student projects to come out of the law school and is a demonstration project for law schools and legal services' programs throughout the country. It provides critical services to victims of domestic violence who come in to the courthouse and attempt to file for orders of protection on their own. The project is now considered to be a permanent part of the law school programming.

I would also like to add that we are so grateful to you for sponsoring a two-year post-graduate EJA fellowship for Yale alumna Sheila Hayre. Sheila has combined her bilingual ability and interest in immigration law to provide training, outreach and representation to the Hispanic community. She has developed an expertise in providing assistance to immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence, a population that was incredibly hard to reach prior to Sheila's work with us. She helps them with all aspects of their legal problems, from protection from the abuser to help with the legal papers necessary for immigration, called VAWA self-petitions. It has been a tremendous addition to our resources and for our clients.

Again, I cannot thank you and the Yale Law School alumni enough for supporting the work that we do at legal services and helping us to expand our limited resources in such a constructive and positive way. On behalf of the low-income community that we serve, many thanks.

Sincerely yours,



Patricia Kaplan
Executive Director



LEGAL SERVICES OF GREATER MIAMI, INC.



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June 7, 2005

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II-Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Equal Justice America Fellowships for University of Miami law students

Dear Dan:

I want to thank you and Equal Justice America for your wonderful program, which over the years has put several law students to work with us here at Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc. (LSGMI). We are very excited that you now plan to offer EJA Fellowships to University of Miami law students. Presently, nine of our attorneys and our Executive Director are University of Miami law graduates.

EJA Fellowship recipients placed at LSGMI have done an excellent job interviewing clients, drafting letters, memos and pleadings, and working on cases under the supervision of our staff attorneys. At a time of growing budgetary constraints for legal services programs, your fellowships have allowed us to expand our resources, thereby giving us the chance to serve more clients.

I know that for more than a decade Equal Justice America has put law students to work with legal aid and legal services programs throughout the country. On behalf of LSGMI's Board, staff and especially its clients who come to LSGMI with very pressing legal problems, I'd like to express our tremendous gratitude for the help and support you have given us.

Now that Equal Justice America will be offering fellowships to University of Miami law students, we look forward to expanding the successful relationship we have begun. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information, or if I can be of any assistance to EJA. As you know, we are great fans.

Very truly yours,

Maria L. Soto
Deputy Director

cc: Marcia K. Cypen



**Letters from Equal
Justice America
Fellowship Recipients**

Annual Report 2004-2005

Section 3

MORGAN J. LYNN

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan Ruben,

Interning with Women Empowered Against Violence (WEAVE) has been one of the most rewarding and fulfilling experiences of my life. I write not only to thank you for providing me with the funding to participate in such a meaningful program, but also for providing the financial assistance that makes it possible for law students like me to work around the country to provide legal services to those who cannot afford to pay for them. The work you do with Equal Justice America is phenomenal and I feel incredibly lucky to have been a part of it during my summer internship.

As I told you in my application letter, I went to law school with a desire to learn how to best empower communities and work for social change. This summer, I did just that. Working with WEAVE, I was able to use some of the tools I learned in the classroom to assist clients. More so, I realized that the “tools” of legal social change are learned in action – watching adept lawyers argue cases, hearing stories of client successes, and the sheer osmosis-like learning that goes on at organizations like WEAVE. This summer I was able to work closely with Karen Cunningham, the Director’s of WEAVE’s Teen Dating Violence Program. Karen and I worked with about a dozen clients, each of whom are young women under the age of 25. I was given the opportunity to interview clients, draft motions and petitions, and sit in on oral arguments in court. I also was given a crash course in D.C. court procedure – the “this is where this form is filed when” version of navigating the court that is so vital to attaining success in cases. These were not skills I could have learned by reading a book, and I am hugely grateful for the opportunity to have been able to do them at WEAVE.

This summer, I also conducted research on specific nagging questions relating to domestic violence cases and case law in the District. At first, being asked to research questions that lawyers with decades of experience were unable to answer seemed daunting. But I was able to use the skills I had learned in the classroom to investigate legal nuances and to find information that was helpful for the attorneys at WEAVE. I was also given the opportunity to participate in community outreach and public policy projects conducted by WEAVE. While these arenas are some of which I have worked previously, working to educate the public and policy makers about domestic violence was more fulfilling than anything I had done before.

Probably the most inspiring part of my summer experience was meeting attorneys who had been working as advocates for many years and who still woke up every morning with a passion to continue doing justice work. Following my experiences at WEAVE, I have no doubt whatsoever that law school and the life of public interest law is the place for me. Again, thank you greatly for providing me the opportunity to participate with such an incredible organization and to learn as much as I have.

Sincerely,



Morgan J. Lynn
Georgetown University Law School

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

September 6, 2005

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I would like to thank Equal Justice America for the assistance you provided me this summer and to highlight for you some of the most rewarding aspects of my summer internship as an Equal Justice America Legal Services Fellow.

As a legal intern at South Brooklyn Legal Services (SBLs) in the Family Law Unit, I assisted in the representation of domestic violence victims in Family Court and Supreme Court proceedings for orders of protection, custody, visitation, child support, and divorce. My summer internship offered me exposure to new aspects of the law and engagement in hands-on practical legal work. I can honestly say that each day of my internship presented me with new and exciting challenges, experiences, and rewards.

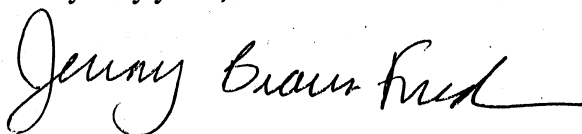
I found that perhaps some of the most memorable and invaluable experiences during my summer internship were the occasions on which I directly interacted with clients, speaking with them on the phone, interviewing them, and preparing them for trial. Through these interactions, I had the opportunity to relate to the clients' experiences in a way otherwise unimaginable – I came to see the strength and perseverance of these women and also the extent to which they valued and relied upon the legal advice and support they received from me as well as from the supervising attorney. I am fortunate that I will continue my work at SBLs this Fall and continue my involvement in the cases - and lives- of some of these incredible women.

I also learned enormously from observing my supervising attorneys in court and assisting them in preparation for trial, including drafting motions, preparing exhibits, subpoenas, and other pre-trial legal documents. I gained significant insights into the substantive and procedural workings of Family Court as well as the procedures for orders of protection, custody, visitation, child support, and divorce cases. Through such efforts, I also had the opportunity to advocate for clients with police departments, district attorneys, opposing counsel, the children's attorneys, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and financial institutions, all of which improved my understanding of and familiarity with the inner workings of these various entities.

In all, it was truly exciting to use my research, writing, communication, and Spanish language skills in a practical setting, to aid in my ability to provide legal services to the poor. I was thrilled to work at an organization that provides legal services to the poor within my local community, the community where I both live and attend school.

Thank you once again. I would be happy to expand upon my experiences.

Very truly yours,



Jenny Braun-Friedman
Brooklyn Law School, 2007

August 31, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Below is the text of a short speech I gave at a summit for law students pursuing public interest internships this summer in Boston. I am extremely grateful to Equal Justice America for providing me the opportunity to have the experiences I describe.

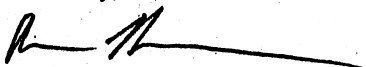
"My name is Christian McNamara and I'm a second year law student at Harvard. It has been my distinct privilege to spend the summer as an intern in the Employment Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services. In this capacity, I have had the opportunity to work closely with a dedicated group of attorneys fighting to protect the rights of Massachusetts' most vulnerable workers. The weeks I have spent at GBLS have driven home the importance of legal service providers to the pursuit of social justice. Given that GBLS limits representation to households with incomes below 125% of the federal poverty line, the successful resolution of our clients' legal difficulties can mean the difference between families staying afloat and families descending into the nightmare of homelessness and despair.

Our clients come to us with a range of work-related issues. Some have been unjustly denied the unemployment benefits offered by the state to assist those between jobs. Others have not been paid even the meager wages that they have earned doing some of society's least desirable, yet most essential tasks. In many instances, the assistance of a skilled advocate can render what seems an insurmountable obstacle from the client's perspective into a very manageable problem. Some of my most vivid memories from the summer involve sitting in the waiting room at the Department of Unemployment Assistance, surrounded by individuals about to enter hearings to determine their eligibility for much needed benefits. Unfortunately, these individuals often do not have representation, and the looks of anxiety and confusion on the faces of those forced to navigate what can be an overwhelming process alone was enough to remind me of the vital role played by legal services providers.

The constant contact attorneys in the GBLS Employment Unit have with individuals attempting to seek the legal system's protection results in extensive firsthand knowledge of the shortcomings of existing laws. Accordingly, GBLS attorneys are involved not only with direct client representation, but also with lobbying efforts aimed at passing worker-friendly legislation. This summer has seen GBLS advocating for a wide range of initiatives, from a bill mandating paid sick days for employees to legislation establishing a bill of rights for temporary workers. While funding restrictions prevented me from being directly involved in these lobbying efforts this summer, it was extremely encouraging to see legal services providers involved in systemic campaigns in addition to assisting individual workers with their own problems.

One of the unexpected aspects of my summer experience has been the extent to which working in the Employment Unit has required developing expertise in other areas of the law. A wage claim against an insolvent employer involved considerable research on Bankruptcy Law. Assisting a client who was being paid in cash under the table meant learning about the tax code. My summer experience has highlighted for me the importance of taking a wide range of classes in my remaining years of law school. Additionally, the opportunity to gain practical legal experience while assisting marginalized individuals fight for their rights has fueled a desire to take advantage of Harvard's clinical offerings. I am extremely grateful to the attorneys and staff of Greater Boston Legal Services for an amazing summer experience."

Sincerely,



Christian McNamara
Harvard Law School

MONICA ■ MARIE ■ VELA

August 26, 2005

Mr. Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am a second year student at the University of Michigan Law School who just completed an Equal Justice America Fellowship, funding my memorable summer internship with Women Against Abuse Legal Center (WAA) in Philadelphia, PA.

I will have vivid memories of this summer for years to come, and the lessons I learned will stay with me throughout my career. Although I knew a lot about working with domestic violence victims before I entered this summer internship, I had never experienced how challenging and rewarding the work can be first-hand.

I served a low-income community of a large number of minority women who had been abused by their partners or family members. Many of them have never had a sense of community. My legal skills were used to give these women the ability to make choices for themselves. We never told a woman what the best choice was, since she knows her life and situation better than anyone else does. Instead, we gave her the resources and legal options to be able to make those choices.

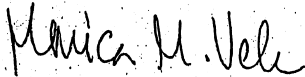
I knew I would make a difference this summer if I could help even one woman feel safe. It turns out, many women told me how much safer they felt. I had worried that a protection from abuse order might just be a piece of paper to some people. To others, though, it means empowerment. These women in many cases have been told what to do and when to do it at every moment. By taking advantage of their lives, they take the first step towards being independent, should they choose that route. Many of these women voiced that they wanted an attorney and felt more comfortable having someone there to represent their interests, since they were so afraid to face their abusers in court. Our agency often provided that representation. The behind the scenes work that the interns did allowed for the attorneys to do their jobs better. I subpoenaed witnesses, requested medical records, corresponded with clients, or did whatever was necessary to assist with a case. This included conducting the relevant research for other more in-depth cases. Having this variety of intern duties (research, intakes, court advocacy), allowed me to have an interesting and diverse experience. It also allowed me to see various aspects of the same case.

I provided direct legal services to many more clients than I imagined I would when I originally applied to EJA. The majority of my clients came from women who I met at court when working as a WAA court advocate twice a week. I would sometimes meet these same women again when I brought them into the office for an intake. After conducting an intake, I would hear the woman's story about her filing incident for a protection from abuse order, then present the case to the staff attorneys to see if we would be able to provide legal representation. I also interacted with clients when they walked into our office with questions or needed assistance completing paperwork to modify their existing orders. Other clients I worked on behalf of were those for whom I conducted research (for the attorneys on their cases). This research was directly relevant to their protection from abuse and custody proceedings.

I still hope to obtain permanent employment in the public sector regarding women's law and policy after graduation. After this internship, my interests in family law have solidified. Last time I wrote you, I said that I hoped to develop stronger ties with the community in Philadelphia - I feel like my WAA, EJA internship allowed me to do this - to connect with low-income women and those who needed help the most. I learned about their neighborhoods, their communities, and their needs. I learned about the ways that a legal services organization, like ours, could connect them with social services to help get their lives in order.

This fellowship opportunity allowed me to have a memorable and rewarding summer, while assisting a large number of women who otherwise would not have had legal options. Thank you for extending me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Monica M. Vela".

Monica M. Vela
University of Michigan Law School
May 2007

August 25, 2005

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Mr. Ruben:

I want to thank you again for selecting me to receive an Equal Justice America Summer Fellowship. Without it I would not have been able to participate in D.C. Law Students In Court's wonderful summer internship program. The internship allowed me to use the legal skills I learned in school to really make a difference in the D.C. community and allowed me to be a more socially conscious lawyer. Because of my work at the clinic I am now dedicated to public interest work and hope to continue to work in the field in the future.

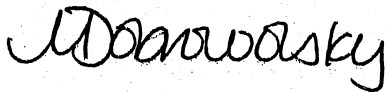
This summer I had various responsibilities. My weeks were broken up between conducting office intake and investigations/research. Twice a week at the office and once a week in court I would conduct intake at our walk-in clinic. I would usually see between two to eleven people per day while doing intake and would encounter problems ranging from landlord/tenant issues to custody to bankruptcy to libel. Most people who came to the clinic could not afford an attorney and felt like they had nowhere to go. For the most part the clinic specialized in landlord/tenant law and therefore when I conducted intake in court it was at the D.C. Superior Court Landlord/Tenant branch. Every day after roll call, people would seek our help. Sometimes they were in court for the first time and didn't even understand what they were being sued for. Other times they would come to us seeking representation for trial that afternoon. To assist them, I would often draft *pro se* answers and pleadings, ask for continuances, and negotiate with opposing attorneys to reach a settlement. The rest of my week was spent investigating the claims of individual who had come into the office during intake, researching various topics to help prepare for trial, and helping file paperwork at the court.

This summer people would come to me every day threatened with eviction, living with substantial housing code violations, or simply needing one thing fixed that their landlord refused to do. I helped a woman get re-certified for her Section 8 housing voucher after she had been erroneously terminated. I helped another woman in drafting a settlement agreement and payment plan with her creditors and ensured that she would no longer be harassed by phone calls. I helped countless families get much-needed repairs to their apartments, which sometimes included moderate to substantial rent abatements.

Most of my summer was spent writing *pro se* answers and pleadings and preparing people for trial against landlords who refused to make repairs and harassed them to move out because they wanted to convert the building to condos. I could help most people, but sometimes there was literally nothing I could do. However, I learned this summer that while some people just want a quick fix, others just need someone to take them seriously for once. I have never before realized that the same agencies that are supposed to help those in need are often the ones that cause them the most frustration. I have seen people go to the housing office and be ignored, yelled at, and turned away for no better reason than that the person working the desk hated her job. I have seen people who have been to every legal services agency in the city only to be turned away and be one day away from eviction. Often the fact that I let them get everything out and made one or two quick phone calls to see if anything could be done made all the difference.

My summer experience was truly amazing and I thank Equal Justice America for giving me the opportunity to work for the clinic. D.C. Law Students In Court was warm, welcoming, encouraging, and supportive throughout the entire summer and I learned more about being a lawyer in the real world than I think I could have anywhere else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natalya Dobrowolsky".

Natalya Dobrowolsky
Catholic University of America
Columbus School of Law
Class of 2007

August 31, 2005

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I want to begin this letter by expressing my sincere appreciation to everyone at Equal Justice America. I found my summer internship to be a great learning experience and very rewarding.

I worked in the Government Benefits and Consumer Affairs Department of Queens Legal Services. When I first arrived at my internship, I was in awe of the volume of work the attorneys had to tackle each and every day. By the time the internship ended, I found myself swept away in the bustle of the office and learned to love the fast-paced, client-centered environment.

I had an excellent experience that could not be duplicated working in any other sector of the legal profession. The attorneys at Queens Legal Services were passionate and energetic and served as mentors throughout the summer. I was able to get real, practical experience and interact with clients on a regular basis. Because of the office's busy environment and the crucial role that interns played within the office, I gained invaluable skills this summer that will surely benefit me during my career.

Throughout the summer I carried a fairly heavy caseload of about five or ten active cases. By the end of the summer I probably worked, in some capacity, on a total of about thirty different cases. My responsibilities varied from researching and drafting briefs and memos to sorting out clients' government benefits issues or negotiating with opposing counsel in a case involving an unconscionable contract. The variety of cases exposed me to unfamiliar areas of the law and provided me with insight as to how a practicing attorney works within different legal concentrations.

By far the greatest benefit of the internship this summer was the opportunity for client interaction. I was able to meet with clients from varied cultural and economic backgrounds. While every client had a different legal issue or need to be addressed, a common theme echoed by all clients was appreciation. I truly believe I did good work this summer and helped those who could not help themselves.

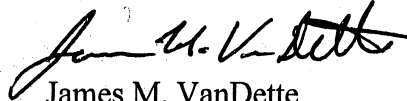
The highlight of my summer came two days before my internship was scheduled to end. Earlier in the summer, Liz Shollenberger, the Director of Government Benefits and Consumer Affairs at Queens Legal Services, assigned me a case involving roughly two and a half years of retroactive disability benefits. Liz wanted to find out whether our

office should take the case and whether there was a reasonable chance of success for this client. Since our client exhausted her administrative remedies, her case was not in federal court. I looked at federal case law and drafted a detailed memo on my opinion of the case. After Liz read the memo, she was encouraged by my research and contacted the Assistant U.S. Attorney in order to ask for a remand and new trial to the administrative level. The U.S. Attorney admitted he was unfamiliar with our case, so Liz offered to send him my memo. A few weeks after receiving the memo, the U.S. Attorney contacted Liz and stated that not only did he agree with us that the case should be remanded, but he suggested that the Commissioner of Social Security grant benefits to our client.

This outcome came as a surprise to both Liz and me. Never did we expect that the U.S. Attorney's office would grant benefits without a new trial. In fact, Liz characterized this result as "unprecedented." Regardless of how rare the result was, I was just excited that our client would now enjoy a more financially stable life.

Once again, I would like to thank Equal Justice America for making my experience at Queens Legal Services possible.

Yours truly,



James M. VanDette
St. John's University
School of Law
2007

August 29, 2005

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 2004, 13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, Virginia 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer Equal Justice America selected me as one of its fellowship recipients. For ten weeks I helped provide legal services to low-income clients at the Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC) in Charlottesville, Virginia. I do not believe there is a better place to spend the summer after one's first year of law school, and I am grateful that Equal Justice America allows students the luxury of working there for free.

There are several different practice areas at LAJC, and I worked in the General Civil Advocacy division. The attorneys in this department focus primarily on housing issues, employment discrimination, and predatory lending. I was part of a team of three interns, and our supervisors took great care in ensuring that we were each exposed to a variety of cases and a variety of tasks. This breadth of experience was exactly what I was looking for and is one of the reasons working for LAJC was so rewarding. From interviewing clients to legal research to speaking with witnesses to conferring with opposing counsel – we did it all.

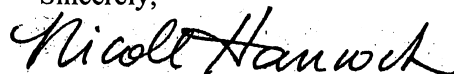
Practicing law differs greatly from reading and theorizing about law, and actually *doing* what real lawyers do helped to bring me back to reality after an intensely intellectual first year. Contact with clients was integral to this process and was my favorite aspect of working at LAJC. Helping the clients makes stress of law school worthwhile and reminds a student at an overwhelmingly corporate-centered school that there is more to life than scoring a job with the nation's top law firm.

In many ways, I feel that I learned more in ten weeks with LAJC than an entire year of law school. One project in particular gave me not only legal knowledge, but "real life" knowledge as well. I was given a stack of mortgage papers and a book on the Truth in Lending Act and was instructed to determine whether the lender had complied with all necessary laws. Prior to that moment I had never even seen mortgage papers, nor could I tell you the difference between the APR and the interest rate on a loan. After navigating the documents and TILA statute, however, I now know the ways creditors try to conceal fees – a skill that will prove useful in my own life as well as in assisting clients.

I came to law school with the purpose of practicing public interest law, and my internship with LAJC confirmed my intent. Not only did I get to use my abilities to assist people less fortunate than myself, the most important objective, but I also got to work in a dynamic and fun environment. The staff at LAJC is committed to fighting for the rights of poor people and their drive is contagious, but they also always seem to be having a great time and enjoyed life outside of the office. For me, public interest law is a life-style choice – the choice to work for the greater good and also the choice to give yourself time of your own.

Thank you, Mr. Ruben, for enabling me to work for a fantastic organization like the Legal Aid Justice Center. I enjoyed a terrific summer, and it is only the beginning of a career in public interest law, whether it is with another legal aid agency, as a public defender, or in another worthwhile capacity. Hopefully, my fellow Equal Justice America Fellowship recipients will report the same thing.

Sincerely,



Nicole Hancock
University of Virginia, 2007

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
13540 E. Boundary Rd.
Building II, Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 23112

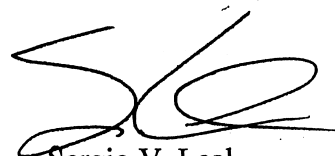
Dear Mr. Ruben,

I would like to thank you and your organization for sponsoring my summer and allowing me to work with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. With your generous grant, I was able to handle my living expenses while engaging in extremely rewarding work. The memories I take with me will be with me for the rest of my life and because of this experience I plan to become involved with the public interest sector as an attorney.

One of the great things about working with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid this summer was how they utilized my skills from the very beginning. On my first day there, immediately following my brief orientation, the recruiting coordinator introduced me to one of my supervising attorneys. The attorney told me that she had been awaiting my arrival and immediately assigned me the task of researching and writing two memos on areas of law unfamiliar to her. We were representing a mother in a child custody dispute. Feeling a bit overwhelmed, I took on the assignment with the urgency an advocate must feel; I did not want this woman to lose her child! After my two memos, I wrote a brief that my supervising attorney later submitted to the judge. Although I only had a minimal role in this case, I fell as if I had an immediate impact in someone's life.

Working with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid has shown me that there is a large demand for these services but not enough resources to assist everyone. Organizations, such as Equal Justice America, provide a great benefit to people in need. I thank you not only for my grant, but for all the funding you provide to other students nationwide. This experience enlightened me on the lack of public interest resources and I now better understand the public interest's plight in terms of funding. I vow that if I am not directly in the public interest trenches as an attorney, I will at the very least help fund these efforts. Again I thank you very much for this opportunity and fully support your continued efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Leal', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sergio V. Leal
Columbia Law School
Class of 2007



Report of Independent Auditors

Annual Report 2004-2005

Section 4

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JUNE 30, 2005

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
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JUNE 30, 2005

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Statement of cash flows	4
Notes to financial statements	5
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Schedule of expenses	6 - 7

MICHAEL W. HULTZAPPLE, CPA

2220 Hanover Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Telephone (804) 677-4343

Board of Trustees
Equal Justice America, Inc.

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Equal Justice America, Inc. as of June 30, 2005, and the related statement of activities and statement of cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statements. 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, 2005, and the Results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of American.

Michael W. Hultzapple, CPA
October 20, 2005

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
Statement of Financial Position
June 30, 2005

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash	\$ 36,896
Contributions receivable	<u>138,105</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>175,001</u>
Property and equipment - at cost (notes 1 and 3)	29,801
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(19,208)</u>
Net property and equipment	<u>10,593</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$ 185,594</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	
Grants payable	<u>\$ 184,546</u>
Total Liabilities	184,546
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	<u>1,048</u>
Total Liabilities and net assets	<u><u>\$ 185,594</u></u>

The accompanying notes are in integral part of these financial statements

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2005

Public Support and Revenue		
Public support:		
Contributions	\$ 883,867	
Revenue:		
Interest Income	1,337	
Total Public Support and Revenue		\$ 885,204
Expenses		
Program services	647,119	
Management and general expenses	90,477	
Fund raising expenses	147,222	
Total Expenses		<u>884,818</u>
Expenses in excess of public support and revenue		\$ 386
Net Assets at Beginning of Year		<u>662</u>
Net Assets at End of Year		<u><u>\$ 1,048</u></u>

The accompanying notes are in integral part of these financial statements

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
Statement of Cash Flows
Year Ended June 30, 2005

Cash Flows From Operating Activities:	
Public support and revenue under expenses	\$ 386
Adjustment To Reconcile to Excess Public Support and Revenue Over Expenses	
To net cash provided by operating activities:	
Depreciation of property and equipment	\$ 3,616
Cash Flows from Investing Activities	
Purchase of Equipment	\$ (4,600)
Changes In Operating Assets and Liabilities:	
Increase in contributions receivable	(4,446)
Decrease in accrued expenses	(857)
Increase in grants payable	<u>30,869</u>
Total adjustments	<u>24,582</u>
Net cash used by operating activities	<u>24,968</u>
Net decrease in cash during the year	24,968
Cash at July 1, 2004	<u>11,928</u>
Cash at June 30, 2005	<u><u>\$ 36,896</u></u>

The accompanying notes are in integral part of these financial statements

MICHAEL W. HULTZAPPLE, CPA

2220 Hanover Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Telephone (804) 677-4343

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Board of Directors
Equal Justice America, Inc.

The audited financial statements of Equal Justice American, Inc. and our report thereon are presented in the preceding section of this report. The following financial information is presented for purposed 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.

Michael W. Hultzapple, CPA
October 20, 2005

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
Statement of Expenses
Year Ended June 30, 2005

Program Expenses:

Grants	\$ 606,789
Program Administration:	
Employee Benefits	307
Executive Director's Salary	24,833
Health Insurance	2,925
Miscellaneous	153
Office Salaries	7,078
Office expenses	138
Payroll Taxes	1,850
Postage	356
Rent	2,390
Telephone	301
Total	<u>\$ 647,119</u>

Management and General Expenses:

Bank Charges	244
Computer Software	1,184
Depreciation	3,616
Employee Benefits	717
Executive Director's Salary	24,833
Health Insurance	6,824
Insurance	350
Miscellaneous	129
Moving Expense	329
Office Salaries	31,154
Office expenses	138
Payroll Service	1,642
Payroll Taxes	4,318
Postage	1,778
Professional Fees	9,270
Rent	2,390
Repairs and Maintenance	474
Supplies	484
Telephone	602
Total	<u>\$ 90,477</u>

See Accountants' Report on Supplementary Information

EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA, INC.
Statement of Expenses
Year Ended June 30, 2005

Fund Raising Expenses:

Credit Card Fees	8,560
Employee Benefits	1,024
Executive Director's Salary	24,833
Freelance Writer	750
Graphic Design	5,990
Health Insurance	9,748
Mailing List	5,995
Offic Salaries	45,782
Office expenses	1,108
Office Salaries	16,529
Payroll Taxes	6,168
Postage	4,978
Printing	3,376
Rent	4,780
Shipping	297
Supplies	1,815
Telephone	5,121
Temporary Office Help	173
Training	195
	<u>\$ 147,222</u>

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