

BARBARA P. TEXIDOR

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

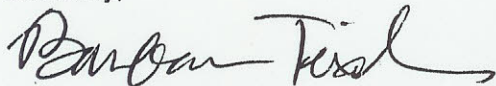
I would like to thank you for allowing me to have a wonderful experience at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area this summer through Equal Justice America's generous summer grant. It was one of the most educational summers for my professional as well as personal growth.

During my summer with the Lawyers' Committee, I worked on various assignments in all three of their practice areas – race, immigration, and poverty. Primarily, I participated in intake interviews with individuals seeking asylum and other humanitarian aid in the U.S. and wrote up the case memos so that the Lawyers' Committee could assess whether to assign a pro bono attorney to the client or refer them to other low cost attorneys. The clients included a young man who had survived the civil war in Guatemala, a woman from Eritrea escaping a repressive government that forcibly conscripts young men, and a woman from El Salvador who had been battered by her husband since she was thirteen years old. It felt powerful to be able to advocate for the cases I thought were strong.

While at the Lawyers' Committee, I also had the opportunity to work with the homeless rights project. Although I have lived in San Francisco all my life and I have been aware of the vast homeless population here, I did not learn of the legal issues that affect their daily lives until this summer. Many homeless individuals are given traffic citations just for being homeless, such as sleeping in public, and then many receive arrest warrants for not appearing in court. This pattern affects any future hope of overcoming the barriers that keep them homeless. I also helped a homeless individual file a small claims petition against the city for taking and losing her property. Additionally, I witnessed San Francisco policy in action at the Homeless Project Connect, an event that occurs every month to provide a wide array of services instead of cash to the homeless. I was happy to be able to provide some legal help to the individuals that came up to our booth.

My time at the Lawyers' Committee was also spent on various other tasks that included research and writing memos on access to educational records and voting rights. Most important of all, I consider my summer at the Lawyers' Committee as a wonderful and monumental experience for me because I learned more about myself that I ever have, and I had such wonderful support from the staff and other interns. Through this internship, I improved my writing and research skills but I also discovered that while I respect the work that civil rights attorneys do, I am much more passionate about the different aspects of immigration law such as asylum, family reunification, and deportation defense. I also learned how important a good working environment could be to the quality of work produced and the professional experience in general. Additionally, the Lawyers' Committee and other interns treated me as a valued professional and we communicated well. Once again, thank you for the opportunity.

Sincerely,



Barbara Texidor
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