

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

Dan Mr. Ruben,

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to you and the Equal Justice America organization for the fellowship award I received. During my Spring Semester of my third year I worked as a 711 Law Student Intern at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago (LAF). Working on poverty related cases at LAF was timely, as I had recently completed a course on Poverty Law at my law school. I can truly say that my classroom experience naturally transferred over to the practice of law.

While I was only interning for part-time during an academic semester, I can honestly say that I obtained a breadth of experience with different types of legal issues. My prior background in public interest had exclusively focused on immigration law. However, at LAF I was exposed to variety of cases ranging from custody to unemployment. My interest in working at LAF stemmed from my interest in immigration law. As I worked with immigrant clients, I first hand witnessed they faced a myriad of other legal issues, all of which I could not assist them with at the time. LAF is unique in that they handle just about every legal issue low-income individuals face in the Chicagoland area.

Some of more substantive case assignments I received included a divorce case, a request for loan modification under the federal Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP), and an immigration case involving an immigrant survivor of domestic violence. Each of these cases required a different type of legal analysis and allowed me to practice with different types of legal skills. For instance, I advocated for my clients with loan servicing companies and the Mexican Consulate. In one of my cases, I was able to secure identification in the form of Mexican Passport for a woman who for several years had attempted but failed to secure it on her own given the lack of proof of identity. After writing an explanatory letter and speaking with Mexican Consulate officials, my client's request for special issuance of a Mexican Passport was granted.

In addition to these case highlights, I also conducted in person intake for individuals seeking legal assistance with an even wider range of problems, appeared before court in hearings, and had the opportunity to sit in during case acceptance meetings where LAF attorneys made strategic decisions regarding an individual's form of relief under the law. This exposure for me was the most rewarding because I began to truly see how the law in some instances provided an avenue for lifting people out of poverty but in others it keeps them just as oppressed. Lastly, I also worked on legal research tasks that included writing a legal memorandum on the tortious interference with business relations and

research on evidentiary requirements involving a case of child sexual abuse.

Working at LAF provided me with a first hand direct client experience, a chance to research emerging legal issues and most importantly, it broaden my knowledge of poverty related issues facing our most vulnerable members of society.

I am completely dedicated to a career in public interest law and cannot picture myself in another other setting. The work at LAF this past semester solidified an already strong interest in public interest law. I am truly grateful to the Equal Justice America fellowship for this amazing opportunity that has truly enriched me as a person and advanced my public interest career.

Sincerely,

Angela Hernández
DePaul University College of Law
Class of 2010