

August 14, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I received an Equal Justice America fellowship this summer. I wanted to thank you because this fellowship allowed me to intern at Advocacy, Inc. in Austin, Texas. Advocacy, Inc. provides protection and advocacy services for people with disabilities across the state of Texas. Advocacy's clients are all ages and have mental and physical disabilities.

This summer, I worked directly with clients on a number of occasions. I joined Advocacy, Inc. attorneys at Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Center. I also communicated with clients and their families by phone and email in order to prepare for upcoming litigation and for a Medicaid appeal.

I started the summer reviewing discovery documents in an employment discrimination case. I read the documents produced by our client's former employer and I prepared a chart that included relevant information to our case.

My next assignment was to prepare a document request and interrogatories for a deaf client who was not provided with an interpreter in a medical school standardized test preparatory course. I enjoyed the challenge of this assignment in thinking through the questions in order to find the most relevant information to help our client.

Each law clerk at Advocacy, Inc. handles a Medicaid appeal case for children. Texas Medicaid has a history of denying Medicaid services to children although the law states that children are entitled to all medically necessary services. My client, S, suffers from a variety of conditions and her doctor had ordered her 40 hours a week of private duty nursing. Logically, if the doctor orders the nursing services, those services are medically necessary, and it is not the place of Medicaid administrators to deny those services.

I prepared S's appeal by writing letters to request information from Texas Medicaid and her nursing provider. I also prepared letters for S's other physicians to sign in support of her treating pediatrician's order of 40 hours of private duty nursing. I spoke with S's family members while preparing for the hearing. The hearing has been moved to late September, and I plan on returning to Advocacy, Inc. to see S's services reinstated.

I also worked on an appeal in a major litigation of Texas citizens against Texas Medicaid for their consistent denial of medically necessary services. Texas Medicaid and the plaintiffs settled the matter several years ago, but Texas Medicaid has not sufficiently complied with the settlement agreements. I prepared a motion for enforcement of the settlement agreements and Texas Medicaid and Advocacy, Inc. are in the process of discussing settling the matter by changing Texas Medicaid's rules and policies.

This summer was an excellent experience, and after one year of law school I was

inspired to see attorneys in the work place changing client's lives. I see the power that clients have with legal assistance, and I plan on working in public service to help more underserved people receive the access to justice to which they are entitled.

Thank you for this summer fellowship. As I plan to work in public service after graduation from law school, I need to minimize my loans for tuition and living expenses. This fellowship will help me keep my loans as low as possible and has better prepared me for a career in public interest law.

Sincerely,

Mary Murphy
The University of Texas School of Law
Expected Graduation 2011