

Jason F. Goldsmith

September 17, 2017

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

Re: Equal Justice America Public Interest Law Fellowship, Summer 2017

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Please accept my appreciation for the Fellowship grant Equal Justice America provided. During my summer internship with Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, I worked on approximately 17 cases, spanning the following practice areas:

- Consumer Finance
- Employment
- Family Law
- Housing
- Public Benefits

CVLAS was an outstanding experience because the interns had primary responsibility for managing their cases. I took a number clients all the way from their first interviews through closing their files. As a rising 2L, I was able to represent a client before the Virginia Employment Commission. I drafted a memorandum in support of my client's appeal, then presented oral arguments before the Special Examiner. I will never forget my first taste of real-world advocacy.

In another case, I turned a "cold file" into a substantial settlement for my client. Because that client faced unique health challenges, I decided to interview her at home. Afterward, I conducted an investigation, issued numerous demand letters, and even reached out to the Virginia Attorney General's Office. Finally, one afternoon last week, I put on a suit and drove to her home again, this time bringing the final settlement letter with me. It is hard to describe how I felt while explaining that she need no longer worry about a problem that had caused her significant stress. In some small way, I felt I had proven "the system" works for regular people, or at least that *it can*.

For each memorable moment, there were many hours of preparation; practicing law is not unlike most endeavors that way. But when that one, well-researched, mercilessly-edited letter, finds the right party, at the right time, and leads to your client's demands being

met, the long hours instantly fade away. Using the law to aid marginalized individuals, like I did this summer, doesn't even feel like work. I am indebted to everyone who made it possible.

The Fellowship from Equal Justice America helped me serve my community while taking a big step toward becoming the relentlessly-compassionate attorney I intend to be. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jason F. Goldsmith
Juris Doctor Candidate, 2019
Richmond Law