

August 31, 2017

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you for Equal Justice America's fellowship sponsoring my summer work at the Legal Aid Justice Center's JustChildren program in Richmond, VA. The experience was incredibly rewarding, meaningful, and substantive. Your organization's contribution helped me tremendously this summer and I am very grateful for this opportunity.

The JustChildren Program is Virginia's largest children's law program. JustChildren attorneys provide free legal representation to low-income children who have unmet needs in the education, foster care, and juvenile justice systems. They utilize individual representation, community education and organizing, and statewide advocacy to meet these goals.

My work this summer centered on special education and school discipline cases. I worked with parents and their children to help advocate for them in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and conducted research related to services provided for students with special education needs. This research related to both state and federal statutory law, regulations, and case law. Many of these children also experienced school discipline issues as well, which allowed me to conduct research and review local school boards' Codes of Conduct. Some of these school discipline issues then manifested into criminal charges as well. I conducted research and created a presentation for my supervisor to give to a community meeting about the school to prison pipeline and the rights of students in schools.

A common theme among many of the clients I worked with this summer was trauma. These children had experienced incredible trauma in their lives, which manifested itself in different ways. I also researched and prepared community education materials relating to Adverse Childhood Experiences, how those impact some children, and resource families can utilize to combat these effects.

The opportunity to not only work with JustChildren but to also return and work in the city I called home for eight years was incredibly meaningful. I appreciated the chance to work with such strong parents and mature children and contribute – even if only a small amount – to their educational progress. Thank you again for your contribution to my experience, one which has inspired me to continue working with the Legal Aid Justice Center in the future.

Sincerely,

Lindsay R. Fisher
University of Virginia School of Law
Class of 2019

October 26, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing you today to provide feedback about Lindsay Fisher, a 2017 recipient of the Equal Justice America Law Student Fellowship. Ms. Fisher worked with the Legal Aid Justice Center's JustChildren program this past summer.

JustChildren is Virginia's largest children's law program. We rely on a range of strategies – including individual representation, community education and organizing, and statewide advocacy – to make sure that Virginia's most vulnerable young people receive the services and support they need to lead successful lives in their communities.

As a summer intern, Ms. Fisher's primary duties involved assisting JustChildren attorneys in providing civil legal representation to low-income children and their families to help them solve problems with services provided by the education, foster care, and juvenile justice systems. Ms. Fisher worked with attorneys in our Richmond office to protect our clients' rights to adequate educational services. Ms. Fisher demonstrated exemplar skills in working with our client communities. She was professional, prepared, and always willing to put the client's needs first. Ms. Fisher demonstrated stellar legal research and writing skills. She produced timely and quality work and showed the upmost level of professionalism. She was a team player and an asset to our office this summer.

We offered Ms. Fisher an internship for the summer because she has a commitment to public service and a background of pushing for reforms to better serve our youth. We were very impressed with her work here this summer and appreciative that she had the opportunity to pursue her passions through the generous funding provided by Equal Justice America.

Sincerely,

Megan Lisa Watkins