

August 26, 2012

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My summer working at Central Virginia Legal Aid Society's Petersburg office was very educational and rewarding. I spent a lot of time working directly with clients, conducting interviews, making phone calls, and being their first contact inside the office. I was also able to develop my writing skills by drafting letters, memoranda, and motions. Working at legal aid was an invaluable experience that I will forever be grateful for, and one that would not have been possible without the financial assistance given to me by Equal Justice America.

A lot of my summer was devoted to custody cases. Central Virginia Legal Aid Society usually only becomes involved in custody cases if one of the parents was a victim of domestic violence. Working with these clients can be emotionally challenging, but also very rewarding. Custody cases are often drawn out and seemingly never-ending. These clients have already been through a lot and the added stress of a custody battle challenges them even more. When speaking with these clients and conducting interviews, a certain amount of finesse and compassion is required. I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to work with victims of domestic violence and help them with their legal troubles. I became close with a few clients who had come to Legal Aid with custody issues. Seeing their relief first-hand and their comfort in knowing that someone was advocating for them and their children was one of the most powerful things I have ever experienced. My time at Legal Aid and work in family law really developed a passion and keen interest in me to pursue that particular field. Family law issues are challenging, stressful, and emotional. Clients, regardless of socioeconomic background, deserve to have someone on their side to help them through the confusion.

I am extremely grateful to Equal Justice America for giving me the opportunity to work at Legal Aid in Petersburg and to help the residents there in a variety of ways. I was able to pursue work that I am very dedicated to and it helped me to find my passion and focus area. I look forward to pursuing family law and learning more about how I can help people.

Sincerely,



Britney McPheron

University of Richmond School of Law, 2014