

August 26, 2015

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
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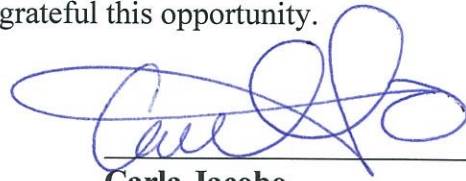
Mr. Ruben:

After my first year of law school I hoped to have a positive internship experience in the summer. My hope was to be part of an organization that helped underserved communities and shared my passion for helping others. Luckily, I had the opportunity to carry out a ten-week internship at Public Counsel in Los Angeles, CA as an intern with the Adoptions Unit (a sub project of Public Counsel's Children's Rights program). Throughout this ten-week period I had the opportunity to work with clients, complete intakes, attend staff meetings, research procedures for Mental Health services for children in foster care, and attend adoption hearings. The opportunity to carry out these tasks during the summer enriched my passion for working within the child welfare system and expanded my understanding of the avenues for advocacy for children being adopted from the foster care system.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my internship with Public Counsel was to assist with the adoption of a two-year-old child out of the foster care system of Los Angeles County. The young child suffered from multiple health conditions, which affected her daily functions such as her ability to chew food and sleep. My introduction to the loving parents adopting this child happened early on in the summer and on the last day of my internship I was able to meet the young child who they were adopting. The parents allowed me to attend the adoption hearing and I was able to witness as the loving parents were granted parental rights. On a professional level, the experience was unlike any other experience I have had in my young career, as I had never attended a hearing in juvenile court. On

a personal level, the experience was deeply moving as I was part of a team a group of individuals who made a positive impact in a family's life—that experience is invaluable.

In my second year of law school, I shall continue my journey with a reinvigorated desire to pursue a public interest career and promote the access of legal services for traditionally underserved communities. My internship at Public Counsel allowed me to build on my interest in public service and fostered my professional confidence. The Equal Justice America Fellowship allowed me to carry out this internship and provide this public service. I am deeply grateful this opportunity.



Carla Jacobo
Whittier Law School c/o 2017

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August 31, 2015

Dan Ruben
 Executive Director
 Equal Justice America

Re: Carla Jacobo, Equal Justice America fellowship

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Please accept this letter in connection with your assessment of Carla Jacobo's Equal Justice America fellowship. Carla was a summer law clerk with Public Counsel's Adoptions Project during the 2015 summer, from May 26, 2015 through July 31, 2015.

Founded in 1970, Public Counsel strives to achieve three main goals: protecting the legal rights of disadvantaged children; representing immigrants who have been the victims of torture, persecution, domestic violence, trafficking, and other crimes; and fostering economic justice by providing individuals and institutions in underserved communities with access to quality legal representation. Through a *pro bono* model that leverages the talents and dedication of thousands of attorney and law student volunteers, Public Counsel annually assists more than 30,000 families, children, immigrants, veterans, and nonprofit organizations and addresses systemic poverty and civil rights issues through impact litigation and policy advocacy.

The Adoptions Project is part of Public Counsel's Children's Rights Project. Adoptions Project staff and pro bono attorneys provide free legal representation to foster parents who are adopting children out of foster care in L.A. County. The Adoptions Project also advocates on behalf of adopting parents to help them obtain additional services and benefits for the children they are adopting, when appropriate.

Carla was a huge asset to the Adoptions Project this summer. She demonstrated strong skills in oral communication, client interviewing, building rapport with clients, writing, and legal analysis. After she completed the training portion of the internship, she conducted intake interviews with new clients, prepared written assessments of the intake interviews, and worked

closely with me on a case where Public Counsel was representing adopting parents in finalizing their adoption of a child with special needs. In connection with that case and under attorney supervision, Carla reviewed and analyzed a large volume of medical records, analyzed the relevant Department of Children and Family Services policies regarding the rates of benefits for foster children with special needs, and drafted a request for a higher rate of Adoption Assistance Program benefits for the clients' child.

Carla also prepared a research memo regarding the process for accessing mental health services for foster youth who are under the jurisdiction of the LA County dependency court but who reside in a different county (e.g., Riverside or San Bernardino County).

Carla showed a strong commitment to social justice work and it was a pleasure to work with her this past summer.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Rachel Stein
Staff Attorney
Adoptions Project
Public Counsel
(213)385-2977, 293