

Dan Ruben
Executive Director at Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
1340 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Mr. Ruben,

This summer, I had the pleasure of working with Kids Voice, an organization that represents children involved in the child welfare system. A majority of the children we represented came from families who fall below the federal poverty guidelines. I had the opportunity to take part in various parts of the legal process including attending family conferences, representing at hearings, as well as client visits. My experience allowed me to have numerous client interactions allowing me to interact with the children I advocated for.

I was able to visit the children in their placements to be able to build a personal relationship with them so I could appropriately advocate for their best interest. One client in particular I was able to take to the park and discuss with him his current family situation. He expressed to me what he wanted and how the courtroom process confused him. I communicated to him that my job was to ensure that his best interests were my main goal in the courtroom and that I would ensure to advocate to make sure he has a safe place to go home to. This conversation allowed us to build a strong bond where he felt comfortable confiding in me about any concerns or fears he had about his current situation.

Another client I represented was a child in a shelter hearing that was not being properly cared for by his family. I was able to represent that it is in the child's best interest to stay in his current placement until his parents were able to get the help they needed. The child was then ordered to remain in his placement. This hearing allowed me to give the child a voice, who may

not otherwise have one. I was able to represent his best interest in the courtroom to ensure his safety.

I am thoroughly grateful for the opportunity to provide support and advocacy to children of low income families in the welfare system. Without this scholarship from Equal Justice America, I would not have had the opportunity to provide legal support to those children in need. I would like to thank you for granting me the scholarship to allow me to devote my summer to this type of work that has installed within me a passion to help those in need.

Sincerely,

Andrew Yetzer

Duquesne University School of Law

Graduation Date: May 2018



Frick Building
437 Grant Street
Suite #700
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

T: 412-391-3100
F: 412-391-3588
www.kidsvoice.org

August 24, 2017

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director, Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to you to evaluate Mr. Andrew Yetzer's summer fellowship at KidsVoice, which I supervised. KidsVoice represents children who are court active in foster care in Allegheny County. Our office sees upwards of 5,000 children each year. We work in regional teams, working together as social workers and attorneys to give a full spectrum representation, making sure all needs are addressed and met. We act as Guardian Ad Litem in most cases, representing what the child's legal and best interests are to the court.

Mr. Yetzer, who became a certified legal intern early on this summer, did an excellent job throughout his time in our office. Such a good job, in fact, that he was offered to stay on for the fall semester and receive law school credit for his work.

Mr. Yetzer spent the first few days and weeks learning what we do. How we interact with kids, attending meetings, what court is like, and even how to prepare questions and information to be presented in court (direct and cross examination of witnesses). As this was his first experience doing actual, hands on legal work, it was vital for him to take the time to learn these skills. He took to this quickly and showed aptitude in learning these skills.

Mr. Yetzer helped to draft motions throughout the summer and showed a lot of improvement each time he worked on a pleading.

Mr. Yetzer worked very well with our clients and shows a high level of compassion and understanding for what they are experiencing. Mr. Yetzer did very well attending

meetings, not only in a supervised capacity but quickly started attending meetings independently as well.

Mr. Yetzer showed talent in doing research and preparing for court by reaching out to witnesses and other system players. Mr. Yetzer, while nervous at first, rapidly became accustomed to presenting in court. He was able to gain skills necessary to be a good trial lawyer, including but not limited to thinking on your feet and not being chained to a script of questions.

Mr. Yetzer also really liked working with other attorneys in our office, attending meetings for them, and even helping during busy shelter hearing days to interview witnesses and present brand new cases coming in in an emergent matter.

I am excited to continue to work with Mr. Yetzer in the fall. He has become an asset to our team and is a pleasure to work with as a person.

Yours very truly,

Lauren E. Catalano

Lauren E. Catalano
KidsVoice Staff Attorney