

August 31, 2011

Mr. Dan Ruben

Executive Director

Equal Justice America

Building II – Suite 204

13540 East Boundary Road

(804) 744-4200

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben,

As a second-year law school student at Santa Clara University, School of Law, I would like to sincerely thank you and Equal Justice America for giving me the invaluable opportunity to make a difference. Coming from the receiving end of public service, it was truly a life changing experience to be at the giving end of public service.

Overcoming insurmountable obstacles, to be the first in my family to graduate from college and pursue a Juris Doctorate, is a manifestation of my hard work and the support of those who believe in me. I will always be immensely grateful to you and Equal Justice America for believing in me.

As a Summer Law Clerk at the Cancer Legal Resource Center (CLRC), it was a privilege to serve people at their greatest time of need. The CLRC is a national non-profit organization that provides free legal related services to people dealing with Cancer. After my aunt was diagnosed and treated for cervical cancer, I personally experienced the pain of seeing how a medical diagnosis can adversely affect entire families. Like many of the callers I served, my aunt primarily speaks Spanish and works very hard to make ends meet. As the only Spanish-speaking summer law clerk at the CLRC, I helped many Spanish-speaking callers that reminded me of my own family. Raised in Los Angeles and born into a poor and immigrant family from Mexico, my experiences helped me better explain legal concepts in relatable terms to callers dealing with extremely difficult circumstances.

My experience at the CLRC surpassed my expectations. I was exposed to immigration law, employment law, housing law, healthcare law, tax law and estate planning. My supervising attorneys were very approachable and eager to help me further develop my issue spotting skills in a professional setting. More importantly, the passion and commitment they showed towards their work, truly inspired me.

I felt a sense of accomplishment every time I helped a caller understand the laws that pertained to their cancer related issue. I knew I was providing a service they would otherwise not have access to. Thanks to the CLRC, I empowered an entire community one person at a time and feel more prepared to take on the challenges of a legal career in public interest.

I feel very lucky to have an opportunity to thank you for the invaluable and transformative difference you have made in my life and in the community you allowed me to serve. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,
Lizbeth Najera Munoz

August 9, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write on behalf of Lizbeth Najera at the end of her summer with us at the Cancer Legal Resource Center. I am a Staff Attorney at the organization, was one of Lizbeth's supervisors, and could not speak more highly of her.

The Cancer Legal Resource Center (CLRC) is a joint program of Loyola Law School and the Disability Rights Legal Center, whose mission it is to promote the rights of people with disabilities and the public interest in and awareness of those rights by providing legal and related services. The CLRC, where Lizbeth worked, provides free information and resources on cancer-related legal issues to cancer survivors, caregivers, health care professionals, employers, and others coping with cancer. In her work here Lizbeth was very organized, competent and kind in all areas: direct services client contact, writing, and research.

All of the people that the CLRC works with are in great personal need, since they are dealing with cancer; many of the CLRC clients are in financial need as well. Lizbeth is bilingual in Spanish and English so was able to help with the underserved Spanish-speaking cancer community who are often most vulnerable because of their difficulty in communicating with their medical team and in accessing state and local resources due to language barriers. Lizbeth was extremely sensitive to this difficulty and had a wonderful way not only of clearly conveying legal resource information to clients, but also of doing so with compassion.

Lizbeth showed initiative from the beginning of the summer by asking to meet with supervisors individually to understand our path, to learn more about the organization, and how to develop her skills. She expressed curiosity in learning about estate planning within public interest work so together we developed a research project on the Medi-Cal Estate Recovery Program. Because of her great work ethic and product, when our organization recently received an article request on a similar topic, we asked her to co-author it. Concerning her research, she always checked in to make sure she was on the right track and on schedule, which she was.

Lizbeth was lovely to work with and I believe that Equal Justice America made a great choice in selecting her for a summer grant.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance or provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Laura Riley