

August 18, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to Equal Justice America for funding my summer fellowship with Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc. I am certain that my experience this summer will prove to be invaluable. I finally had the opportunity to practice civil litigation, and actively represent clients in civil proceedings. After obtaining my 711 license, the attorneys at Land of Lincoln offered me quite a bit of responsibility, and I enthusiastically accepted it. Throughout the summer, I represented low-income victims of domestic violence on Orders of Protection, divorces, and custody cases. I handled court hearings, drafted pleadings and client letters, interviewed clients both in-person and by-phone, and negotiated with opposing counsel and pro se litigants.

I cannot overemphasize the impact that my summer experience has had on me. Before working at Land of Lincoln, I only had vague notions of what it would be like to represent actual clients in court, and a lurking fear of public speaking. After I began to appear in court on a regular basis and see the positive impact that my presence and effort had on my clients, I realized that litigation may very well prove to be my calling. I want to continue to promote my clients' interests, provide sound legal advice, and represent them effectively, thereby helping them protect their legal rights. Without the assistance of Equal Justice America, I would not have been able to dedicate the necessary hours to my clients' cases to truly grasp their extensive legal needs and, subsequently, become someone they could continue to rely on for legal assistance.

During the summer, I communicated regularly with a number of clients. In particular, I worked very closely with one client regarding her divorce and also her case with Social Security Disability (SSD). As I became more familiar with her and her legal needs, I became one of her primary contacts at Land of Lincoln. This client constantly struggled with financial and medical hardships. In large part, these were due to a sudden onset of a number of serious medical conditions, which prevented her from obtaining work as she incurred extensive medical debt. Additionally, she was responsible for debts incurred by her spouse while she was still married, although she and her husband were currently separated. I represented her in her divorce hearing, drafted a sample Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO) to be reviewed by her former spouse's pension management company and, eventually, the court. Further, I assisted her in applying for various charity care programs for her medical debt and succeeded in having much of it forgiven, and began the initial appeals process for her SSD case towards the end of the summer. My contact with this client taught me how to effectively communicate with other clients, and allowed me to better understand the hardships many of Land of Lincoln's clients struggle to overcome.

I will continue to build on my experience at Land of Lincoln by working on similar cases throughout the fall in

a civil litigation clinic offered by my law school. Thanks to the opportunity that Equal Justice America has provided me, my fellowship this summer steered me towards pursuing civil litigation as a career path, with an emphasis on assisting at-risk and low-income individuals. I would strongly encourage other law students to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Equal Justice America in their efforts to gain valuable legal experience, and provide direct legal services to under-privileged clients.

Sincerely,

Aimee B. Roby  
University of Illinois College of Law  
J.D. Candidate 2011



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October 28, 2010

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

**Re: Aimee Roby**

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am the senior supervisory attorney in the Champaign office of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc. During this summer, I had the pleasure of supervising Aimee Roby, as she served as a law clerk in our office. I oversee law students each semester as part of a domestic violence law clinic in conjunction with the University of Illinois College of Law, and I also supervise student law clerks over the summer. Ms. Roby was one of the best students I have had the pleasure to supervise.

Ms. Roby began the summer by going through our office orientation. In that process, she was exposed to the myriad of issues that our office handles, those that low-income individuals and families struggle with on a daily basis. After that orientation, she began working directly with me on my family law cases, most of which involve some degree of domestic violence. Ms. Roby assisted me in interviewing new clients, and within a few weeks, began interviewing new clients on her own. She drafted pleadings for clients seeking a divorce or Order of Protection, including Petitions, Judgments, discovery requests and responses, subpoenas, and Marital Settlement/Joint Parenting Agreements. She was very quick to pick up the basics of drafting pleadings, and soon learned some of the more nuanced issues in drafting pleadings. She was able to communicate effectively with clients, obtaining necessary information and answering questions, under my direction.

Ms. Roby was also able to perform a number of hearings for clients this summer, with her Illinois Supreme Court 711 license. In preparing for these hearings, she learned how to take the Judgment and craft questions that would convey the necessary information to the Court. She worked with the clients to prepare them for the hearing, including the process as well as the questions they would need to answer. On a number of occasions, the Judge complimented her work, or affirmed her by telling the client she



was well represented.

Ms. Roby was a strong contributor to our general office collegiality, as well. She worked at making the law students feel like a group, rather than mere individuals, and interacted well with our staff. She put in many hours in our office, working basically full-time for the summer, and was available to assist with tasks when needed.

Ms. Roby was able to keep track of a number of clients, become familiar with a number of issues related to family law cases, and ask good questions as she worked through this somewhat unfamiliar material. I was quite pleased with her work, and miss her greatly now that she has left to prepare for her return to law school. I am thankful for your agency's participation in her summer, allowing her to work here without the added stress of needing to take a second job.

Sincerely,

Susan L. Zielke  
Attorney at Law