

Dan Ruben  
*Executive Director*  
Equal Justice America  
13540 East Boundary Road  
Building II – Suite 104  
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer, I worked for the Children’s Law Center in their Family Permanency Project, helping adult caregivers seeking custody of children about to enter foster care, or foster parents seeking adoption or guardianship of children already in their care. I researched evidence issues and legal questions, and prepared memos on my findings. I also helped attorneys prepare for trial, writing motions and drafting witness examinations.

This internship was the first time I have been able to stay involved with a particular case for more than one assignment, and I loved it. I want to practice public interest law because I want to be able to directly help people who need it, and I was able to do just that. I was able to help a woman who took in her younger cousins, whose parents had abandoned them, as she sought appropriate educational placements for them. I was also able to help a young man seeking custody of his younger siblings after the death of their mother; he had been the children’s primary caretaker during their mother’s illness, but their father, though for years absent and behind in child support payments, challenged the young man’s standing.

The case I was most involved with was a contested adoption proceeding. The children in question had been bounced around the foster care system for seven years; though our client had been seeking guardianship/adoption since shortly after they entered the system, for various reasons he had yet to get his day in court. The case finally went to trial at the end of my internship period, and I spent the largest portion of my time assisting in preparations for the trial. I researched many evidentiary and legal issues, including matters related to some important expert testimony, as well as drafting the direct and cross examinations of a couple of witnesses. I sat in on pre-trial conferences and witness preparations, and was able to observe a substantial portion of the actual trial.

Though I don’t yet know the outcome of many of these cases, I am proud of the work I did this summer at Children’s Law Center, and it has fueled my determination to continue helping families in need as they navigate the legal system. I am also grateful for the

opportunity I was given to help those families – an opportunity I would not have been able to take advantage of without funding from Equal Justice America, for which I sincerely thank you.

Sincerely,  
Amy J. DiBiasio  
Georgetown

August 30, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Amy DiBiasio served as a summer law clerk in the Family Permanency Project at the Children's Law Center (CLC) during the summer of 2011. The Family Permanency Project assists adult caregivers seeking to adopt, obtain guardianship or obtain custody of children, many in the foster care system, and also represents children as guardians *ad litem* in complex custody cases. As part of CLC's summer law clerk program, Amy participated in several brown bag lunches addressing professional development for lawyers, and attended internal and external attorney trainings on various areas of the law. Amy also successfully completed CLC's trial skills program.

Amy worked with several attorneys in the Family Permanency Project and completed a diverse set of projects throughout the summer. Amy drafted several memoranda analyzing topics such as third-party standing in custody disputes and the law of evidence in the District of Columbia. Amy also drafted two motions, one addressing service on an opposing party and the other analyzing the waiver of the doctor-patient privilege. Most notably, Amy was heavily involved throughout the summer with trial preparation for a highly contested adoption case. She assisted with witnesses, compiled exhibits, attended a pretrial conference and observed portions of the trial.

Amy was a true asset during her time at CLC. She demonstrated strong research and writing skills and was professional, responsible and met the competing needs of several attorneys at one time. Amy had an excellent demeanor and demonstrated enthusiasm for each of her assignments. She also proactively sought out work and exhibited a readiness to take on new tasks at any time. Amy expanded her knowledge of family law and used that knowledge to provide invaluable assistance throughout the summer.

It was a pleasure to have Amy as a law clerk at CLC. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Heather Fine  
Supervising Attorney