

June 12, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

The Consumer Rights Unit at GBLs provides under-privileged and overwhelmed individuals with legal assistance to help them fight predatory lending and help them navigate a complex legal system. Through my work with Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) my goal was to provide families and the community with knowledge and the resources to protect their homes and their livelihood. In a current era of economic instability, the mortgage crisis has devastated some of the most vulnerable communities and left them without homes. Massachusetts is currently the only state in the New England area that does not provide homeowners with an opportunity to meet with banks prior to foreclosure proceedings. Having interned this past spring semester with the Consumer Rights Unit, I was able to share my passion for advocacy and build upon the skills and knowledge I had gained in prior internships. This past semester I helped draft settlement agreements, execute a deposition, and research novel issues for a state-wide class action suit. In a suit against an insurance company, I sat in on a deposition to ensure that the insurance company's translator adequately interpreted for our client.

I had a few opportunities to observe hearings in court, but found the most satisfaction working directly with clients. In a bankruptcy case, I worked closely with Maria to help her petition for bankruptcy. Maria is from El Salvador and came to the U.S. as a refugee. Her English skills are minimal, but she is fluent in Spanish. Spanish is my native language and I used my language skills to gain her trust. Often times, immigrants can be weary of disclosing information for fear of being taken advantage of, however, my relationship with Maria enabled me to provide adequate assistance. It took a few sessions with Maria to gain her trust, but I was able to gather pertinent information to enable my supervising attorney to help her expedite her bankruptcy petition. While I met with Maria only a few times, we had a great relationship and she was sad to see me end the fellowship. My supervising attorney on the case is excellent and would finish preparing Maria's petition, but Maria missed having a person who speaks Spanish explain the legal process to her.

Being a lawyer is not solely about being able to use the law to achieve a desired result, it is about wielding the sword of the law to empower vulnerable individuals and provide them with the resources they need to succeed. I enjoyed serving Maria by translating documents and legal issues because I empowered her to take charge of her life. The bankruptcy petition if successful will allow Maria to begin her life anew and improve her quality of life. I enjoy using my

bilingual abilities to help the immigrant community because I know that they are the most vulnerable communities within the indigent community. This fellowship provided me with an invaluable opportunity to realize that civil legal aid is a career I plan to pursue. From my work with Greater Boston Legal Services and the Consumer Rights Unit I pursued a fellowship and will be serving the office again in August to continue my work with the Latino community and empower the greater Boston community to earn back their livelihood.

Thank you for this wonderful life changing opportunity.

Best,

Andrea Carrillo