

August 31, 2016

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

Dear Dan Ruben,

This summer I had the great pleasure of working at Catholic Migration Services (CMS) in Brooklyn, New York. CMS provides free legal representation to immigrants who are in removal proceedings, at the Immigration Court, as well as legal consultations for immigrants living in a community in Bushwick that also face the immigration system. CMS focusses on a holistic approach where they cater to all the needs of the immigrants, not only helping them with their immigration cases but also providing them protection against any situation relating to their housing or employment.

My goal for this summer was to get as much legal experience as possible from my internship. During my internship, I had the opportunity to interact directly with the clients by conducting numerous intakes. I also had the opportunity to manage my own cases, along with the guidance of my supervisor. This process also entailed preparing every aspect of the client's case i.e. conducting legal research, drafting legal memos and gathering evidence, and much more. Nevertheless, the most gratifying experience was building a trust relationship with the clients in order to portray their stories through their affidavits. Following the organization's holistic approach, I would also help the clients with any other needs that they had, for example, getting information regarding medical insurance, public assistance, and/or helping them subscribe for English classes.

This is not so say that I didn't find myself in the position where I was facing situations that were hard to deal with. This was because some of our clients came to the United States to find a better life for themselves but came to the realization that there wasn't any legal relief based on their profiles. After speaking with the clients for many hours, and learning their stories, it was extremely hard to explain to them that my organization couldn't help them because there weren't eligible for any legal relief. Additionally, it was also really hard

explaining to them that because of the immigration court backlog they were facing a three to four year wait in order for their case to be heard.

After my first internship at KIND, an immigration organization, I was convinced that I wanted to pursue a career in Immigration Law. This internship at CMS not only re-affirmed my interest in Immigration Law but also helped me get more knowledge and experience into what area in immigration I would like to pursue, deportation defense. Also, this internship also helped me envision that the clients not always come to you with a single problem, but with multiple at the time and I got to see the importance of working in an organization that works with holistic approach. This experience at CMS wouldn't have been possible without the support from Equal Justice America, and for this I'd like to extend my most sincere thank you to the organization.

Sincerely,

Katherine Ruiz Boada
JD Candidate 2017
Brooklyn Law School