

August 13, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to thank you for helping to fund my summer at Southern Migrant Legal Services (SMLS) in Nashville, TN. I had an outstanding summer at SMLS. I felt welcome and valued from the day I set foot in the office and am truly sad that the summer has come to an end.

I did substantive work that was interesting, educational, and above all, useful to the attorneys in the office. Whenever I researched a legal issue—ranging from employment law issues to discovery to agency law—the attorneys were interested in and responsive to my opinions on the subject. Far from merely a student there on a temporary basis, I was treated like and felt like a member of the team. Furthermore, by spending three months at SMLS, I was able to see what civil litigation is all about, from the tedium and strategy involved in discovery, to the intricacies of client and case management, to the research and institutional knowledge that is necessary for knowing how to best approach and deal with judges or opposing counsel.

In addition to standard legal work, the attorneys at SMLS allowed me to have significant client interaction. I conducted intake and substantive interviews with clients by phone, attended client meetings, led a Know Your Rights presentation, and went on a three-day outreach trip to Louisiana. The very nature of SMLS's work—representing migratory farmworkers—makes face-to-face interaction with clients and workers less frequent, and so the opportunity to speak to workers at length about their legal rights and problems was absolutely invaluable. The trip to Louisiana, in particular, stands out. For three days, I, along with another intern and a paralegal, interacted with dozens and dozens of workers who were in Louisiana on temporary work visas. Although one is told and instinctively knows that the life of a farmworker is difficult, there is simply no replacement for seeing the housing in which the workers are required to live, standing out in the mid-afternoon 105-degree heat yourself while conversing with workers, and seeing the astonishment turn into gratitude when people see that you've driven long distances on tiny roads to look for and talk to people just like them. It was truly something that I will not forget.

I could go on and on about the experience I had this summer. Simply put, the combination of the substance of the work, my particular assignments, and the interactions I had with the attorneys and other staff in the office made it truly unforgettable. Although I have always been committed to a career in public interest law, this summer introduced me to a specific type of work that I hope to pursue, so much so that I hope to return to SMLS on a fellowship after graduation. Thank you to Equal Justice America for making this experience possible.

Sincerely,

Briana Beltran  
New York University School of Law Class of 2011

**Southern Migrant Legal Services**

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August 20, 2010

Via email to [katie@equaljusticeamerica.org](mailto:katie@equaljusticeamerica.org)

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to evaluate Briana Beltran, NYU class of 2011, who served as a summer law clerk at Southern Migrant Legal Services (SMLS) this year thanks in part to funding provided by Equal Justice America.

This summer, Briana worked with all of the attorneys at SMLS on a variety of written tasks. She took on research assignments, and wrote detailed legal memoranda, on multiple issues under Title VII and the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Protection Act (AWPA), all of which proved to be very useful to ongoing cases. In assisting with discovery on a Title VII case, Briana also researched objections to discovery and helped to draft responses to and requests for discovery.

Briana also had a great deal of client interaction this summer. She attended client meetings, did intake, and conducted detailed phone interviews with multiple clients to draft declarations that will be submitted as a part of their T-visa applications. These interactions were almost exclusively in Spanish and covered complicated and sensitive issues. In all instances, Briana was thorough, understanding, and successful.


Furthermore, Briana took us up on opportunities to get out of the office for a variety of reasons. She attended multiple trainings, both local and out-of-state. She drove to Frankfort, KY with another summer law clerk to attend a hearing relating to litigation that SMLS has brought over the refusal of Kentucky state officials to release records relating to its administration of guestworker programs, reporting back to the office later in the week about the hearing. Over one weekend, she went to the small town of Lewisburg to participate in a Know Your Rights training for local workers and helped to draft a new flyer, in English and Spanish, for the occasion. The next weekend, she went on a three-day outreach trip to Louisiana with another intern and SMLS's paralegal. As SMLS has a six-state service area and represents only clients who are migrant

farmworkers, such outreach trips present the main opportunity for SMLS personnel to interact in person with the workers whom they serve and are thus very important to our office. The trip went very well—Briana and the two others returned from the trip having distributed every last outreach booklet and flyer to workers in Louisiana.

In summary, Briana's summer at SMLS was very successful. She willingly took on many tasks, from detailed research assignments to time-consuming out of town trips. She clearly learned a great deal about the nature of legal service organizations generally, and representing farmworkers specifically, during her summer internship, and we were very happy that she chose to spend her summer with us doing this type of work.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

  
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Douglas L. Stevick

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