

August 15, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I want to thank Equal Justice America for the opportunity I was given to work as a law clerk with the Special Education Project of the Children's Law Center in D.C. this summer. The work I got to do was varied, and the supervision and training received were very good.

My work ranged widely, as did the needs of our clients. In a given week, I might have observed juvenile delinquency proceedings, written a memorandum on a challenging special education and juvenile justice inter-state jurisdictional question, called therapeutic schools to ask about athletic offerings, and gotten feedback from attorneys on my cross-examination questions in a mock abuse and neglect proceeding.

While I was given research projects relating to the cases of over a dozen clients, I was able to do particularly in depth work for a few of these clients. One such client was A, a young child in the foster care system with severe psychiatric needs. Aside from attending a medication court hearing and collaborating with the attorneys working on A's case, I was called on to contribute to research on the best placement options for this client. I developed a consolidated, detailed list of the programmatic services available at each placement option, which was sent to the attorneys for use in their advocacy for an appropriate placement. This was important as the quality of placements can vary widely, and the attorneys wanted to ensure that A received high-quality care.

On the other end of the age spectrum, B was a high school student client with significant special educational needs. Having missed months of instruction because of school district indifference to special education laws, behavioral challenges, and truancy, B – a teenager reading at an early elementary level – was not on track for success. An attorney at the Children's Law Center worked tirelessly to ensure a more positive outcome for B. To assist the attorney, I wrote several legal memoranda on relevant topics. These topics ranged from the effect of student runaway behavior on special education jurisdiction to the legality of depriving a student of special education services upon school transfer. One memo was used directly by the attorney to help decide the terms of the outcome of B's case.

All in all, this summer was a tremendous learning experience, in which I was able to see the daily life of a public interest lawyer in the field in which I would like to work, to make meaningful contributions to advocacy on behalf of indigent children with special educational needs, and to learn more about the landscape of special education legal practice. I thank you tremendously for the opportunity.

Sincerely,  
Cari Carson  
University of Michigan Law School  
Class of 2015

August 31, 2013

Mr. Dan Ruben  
[Katie@equaljusticeamerica.org](mailto:Katie@equaljusticeamerica.org)

Re: Cari Carson

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I hope this finds you well. I am writing to provide a summary of Cari Carson's work at Children's Law Center ("CLC")<sup>1</sup> this summer. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me at the number below.

Ms. Carson was a law clerk within CLC's Guardian *Ad Litem* (GAL) Project, working with the small team of special education attorneys embedded within the project. As a law clerk, Ms. Carson was able to meet clients, observe family court proceedings, as well as IEP and other school meetings. Ms. Carson completed several short and long term projects over the summer which were extremely beneficial to our work and our clients. She completed several lengthy research and investigation intensive memorandums on defense strategies that have been used by the school district in its defenses to our litigation. Ms. Carson was also able to follow several cases in pre and post litigation stages. In addition to the projects mentioned above, Ms. Carson provided daily support, reviewing and analyzing documents, doing brief investigation of school programs and assisting with training materials. As part of the internship program at CLC, Ms. Carson also attended several internal and some external trainings on family and child welfare law, special education law and trial practice skills.

Ms. Carson is a diligent and thorough researcher, and excellent writer. She demonstrated a firm commitment to public interest throughout the summer, and we all really enjoyed working with her. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

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/s/  
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<sup>1</sup> Children's Law Center works to give every child in the District of Columbia a solid foundation of family, health and education. We are the largest provider of free legal services in the District and the only to focus on children. Our 80-person staff partners with local pro bono attorneys to serve more than 2,000 at-risk children each year. We use this expertise to advocate for changes in the District's laws, policies and programs. Learn more at [www.childrenslawcenter.org](http://www.childrenslawcenter.org).