

Dan Ruben  
Executive Director  
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am happy to say that I am writing to inform you that I just completed the best work I have done in my life thus far while at the Chicago Legal Clinic this summer. I mean that both in terms of the type of work I participated in, and the quality of work I submitted.

I primarily did family law for the working poor on Chicago's predominately African American west side: helping abused women obtain orders of protection, drafting motions for child support for single mothers, interviewing clients and potential clients and learning a great deal about lives far harder than my own. I spent a great deal of my time in court, observing Clinic lawyers and even representing clients myself once I obtained my 711 license. Highlights include standing before a judge to prove up my first plenary order of protection case on behalf of an abused woman, seeing the value of preparation firsthand during a pretrial conference in a judge's chambers when the judge actually winked at my supervising attorney and myself while opposing counsel shuffled through our motion after arriving 30 minutes late, and seeing the relief on the face of a client whose divorce from an abusive husband had just been finalized.

I also did some work on behalf of ex-convicts seeking clemency from the governor—these are individuals who, to the man or woman, have incredible life stories of redemption and are seeking a second chance. After Governor Blagojevich spent the last several years essentially ignoring pleas for pardon, it was exciting to be part of the first clemency deadline where the

applicants could actually look forward to a timely response—I have never been happier to stay at work until 10 p.m. to make sure everything got done.

Indeed, while I said before that I just “completed” the best work of my life, the truth is that I hope that I have not completed it just yet. This summer has left me convinced that public interest is what I want to pursue after I graduate, and that family law help for the abused and underprivileged is something that I am deeply passionate about. Equal Justice America helped to make this possible, and for that I am grateful.

Sincerely,

Drew Curle

University of Illinois College of Law

Class of 2010