

Equal Justice America Fellowship Letter
Emily Houde
August 30, 2015

Dear Dan Ruben,

This summer I had the privilege to work at the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic. It was a truly rewarding and informative experience. Prior to this, I had no experience with immigration law, but I did have some with international human rights law. I was aware of many of the current issues going on throughout the world and violations of human rights taking place in many countries, but it is a completely different experience when you actually meet someone who has been through such a terrible ordeal. Much of my time was spent working directly with clients. I spent the bulk of my time working at the end of the asylum process as my supervisor had many interviews schedule over a few weeks. We worked to prepare the client for the types of questions that an asylum officer may ask, as well as going over their affidavits and history in extensive detail. It was amazing to me how strong these people could be in light of all that they had gone through. What was especially amazing to me was how two of our clients actively talked about how they would work, while in America and after gaining asylum status, to improve conditions back in their home countries and how they still hoped to go back someday under changed conditions and work to improve the lives for the everyday people like themselves.

Additionally, I was impressed with how many of them were getting involved in the immigrant communities in the area to help others who had come to the US from their home country and needed help understanding how things work in the US (such as employment and health care options), as well as helping fellow asylum seekers find attorneys and help. In preparation for the interviews, I also spent a lot of time doing country conditions research and

getting information on how others in similar situations as our asylum-seeker were still being treated badly in their home country.

The most rewarding experience for me has been working directly with two clients who are in the middle of the process at the moment. They do not have their interviews scheduled as of yet, so now much of our time is spent preparing their affidavit. For these two clients especially, their experiences are more recent and it is often more difficult for them to talk about what happened to them. It has been rewarding gaining their trust and helping them understand that my role is really just to help them gain their asylum status. One client in particular has really opened up and been able to share details of their story for the first time with anyone, and these details are going to be crucial to their affidavit for their asylum interview. Above all, the lawyers and other workers at the Clinic have impressed me. They work tirelessly and really go above and beyond to help these people and give them the best representation that they possibly can. I had no idea just how many people there are just in the Boston area seeking asylum, and how few really good attorneys there are that they trust and can afford. While I originally sought this internship to gain more direct experience working with clients, while still using my international human rights knowledge, I have now started seriously considering working in immigration and with asylum seekers and refugees. It really has been an amazing experience, and it was made largely possible by being able to afford living in the city due to this fellowship.

Thank you for all of your help and all that you at Equal Justice America do for law students!

Sincerely,

Emily Houde
Boston University School of Law
Class of 2016

Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic
of
Greater Boston Legal Services, Inc.
and
Harvard Law School

Deborah Anker
Faculty Director
Nancy Kelly
Clinical Supervisor/Senior Attorney
Jane Rocamora
Clinical Supervisor/Senior Attorney

John Willshire Carrera
Managing Attorney
Jeroboam Tisme
Clinical Assistant/Secretary

August 31, 2015

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

Re: Emily Houde, Equal Justice Fellowship at Greater Boston Legal Services, Summer, 2015

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am a Clinic Supervisor for the Harvard Clinic and a senior staff attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services. I had the great pleasure of supervising Emily Houde, a rising second year law student, this summer during her internship at the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic. Our office represents immigrants seeking status in the U.S. who are unable to pay for legal representation. Our priorities include representing those seeking asylum, defensively or affirmatively; unaccompanied immigrant minors; immigrants fleeing domestic violence, inflicted when in the U.S. or abroad; and immigrants who are victims of certain crimes committed in the U.S.

During her time here, Emily was assigned a wide range of tasks. She interviewed clients seeking protection under the U.S. law of asylum, conducted country conditions research on a number of different countries, analyzed how best to present the relevant evidence that she researched for an asylum applicant, and drafted several different types of immigration petitions on behalf of our clients, including an I-589 (Asylum Application), G-639 (Freedom of Information Act Request), G-28 (USCIS Attorney Representation Form), I-765(Authorization to Work) and AR-11 (Change of Address Form).

Emily worked with many different clients from different backgrounds. The cases of the individuals with whom she worked were at various stages of the affirmative asylum process. She assisted in both the preparation of the corroborating evidence for the cases and in the actual preparation of our clients for the affirmative interviews. She met alone with our clients to seek information for the cases. By the end of the Fellowship, she had begun contact with some of their corroborating witnesses. Finally, Emily attended several affirmative asylum interviews. Her assignment was to take notes to provide for the file a rendition of the words of the asylum officer and the client during the interview.

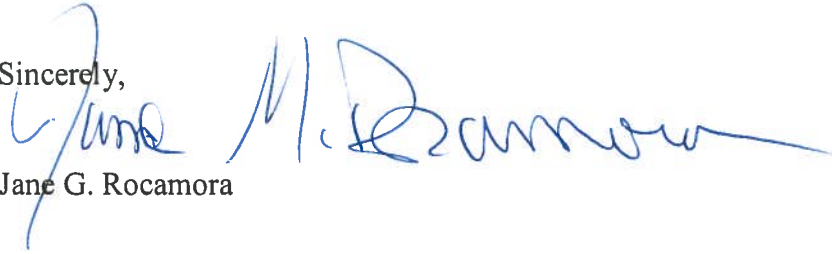
In each of the tasks outlined above, Emily's work was terrific and timely. She happily worked the extra hours necessary to complete the tasks she was assigned. We are delighted that Emily has decided to continue helping our office with two individuals seeking asylum affirmatively and on whose cases she has already begun

work. She is a delightful colleague, and those who seek help from our office are delighted to work with her.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have or further information you need. Thank you so very much for providing the funds that allowed Emily to work with us this summer.

Sincerely,

Jane G. Rocamora

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jane G. Rocamora", is written over the printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.