

Christopher Guerin End of Summer Letter

August 17, 2016

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I have just completed my summer fellowship, and it was a very rewarding experience that I will look back upon for the rest of my legal career. I spent my summer working in the Immigrant Rights Clinic at Lincoln Square Legal Services, Inc. This is the experiential learning clinic at Fordham University School of Law. The clinic has many different departments that take on cases for no charge, and allow students to gain advocacy experience while they are still enrolled in law school. My role for the summer was that of a research assistant, as I worked one-on-one with the supervising attorney on several cases that were ongoing over the summer months. These cases were all immigration related, but spanned a variety of issues which allowed me to gain a wide breadth of experience within immigration law.

During the course of the summer I was able to work on four cases, with some being prioritized more than others. This gave me hands on experience with several immigration issues such as naturalization, asylum, and deportation. Through these four cases I was able to gain valuable experience in client contact as I was able to watch my supervising attorney interact with clients, and was also given many chances to run client interviews on my own. This was a rewarding experience as it allowed me to build a relationship with the client, and help them with the issue at hand while getting to know them and their situation better. In addition to interviewing clients I was also able to work on my research and writing techniques over the summer. For example, in the asylum case that I worked on, I was given the task of researching the human rights conditions in an African country, specifically the treatment of LGBT individuals, so that we could create a binder of materials to present at the client's asylum hearing. This allowed me to work on my research skills, and then I was able to write a memo summarizing my findings for the supervising attorney. The practice itself, and the feedback I was able to get from the supervising attorney was very helpful, and will allow me to continue to shape my writing going forward.

I was also able to help two clients with their application for naturalization. This allows them to become a citizen of the United States, something that is very valued for immigrants who have moved their lives to America and consider themselves members of our nation. This was particularly rewarding because it helped an individual reach a goal that they have been aspiring for, and I was able to assist them in reaching that goal.

The case that saw the most of my time was a deportation defense case for a lawful permanent resident who had been made deportable due to his past issues with the criminal justice

system. We moved for cancellation of removal due to the hardship that his deportation would cause to his family, specifically his son who had a developmental disability. The case is pending the cancellation hearing in November, but most of my summer went into researching issues related to the case, such as the availability of special education services in the country that he would be sent back to. I was also able to schedule and run several client meetings with the client and his siblings in order to get a better picture of his living situation, so that we can eventually explain it to the judge at the hearing. These were valuable experiences because it allowed me to learn how to communicate with clients in an interview setting, and also gave me the gratifying experience of helping the client to work towards remaining in the United States where they have lived for more than twenty years.

Throughout the summer I learned a lot, both through on the job training, and also from working so closely with the supervising attorney and receiving her feedback. It was a very satisfying summer, and one that has let me experience an area of law that I will seek out in the future. Thank you to you and Equal Justice America for making my summer fellowship possible.

Sincerely,
Christopher Guerin
Fordham University School of Law
Class of 2018

August 31, 2016

BY Email: KATIE@EQUALJUSTICEAMERICA.ORG

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

Re: Christopher Guerin

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I write to provide my evaluation of Christopher (Chris) Guerin, a recipient of an Equal Justice America fellowship this past summer. Chris, a current second year student at Fordham University School of Law, worked with me on cases that I supervise in my Immigrant Rights Clinic through Lincoln Square Legal Services, the law firm through which most of Fordham's clinics operate. The clinic is not offered during the summer, so my colleagues and I rely on summer "research assistants" to assist us with case needs. Chris was the only student who worked with me this summer. He was terrific and proved to be a real asset.

From the time that I interviewed Chris for the position to work with me, I sensed that he was a hard worker, capable and mature. He did not disappoint in any way! His legal analysis was often very sophisticated for a student who had only just completed his first year of law school. He completed assignments in a timely and thorough manner, and was eager to get more work whenever he finished anything he had been assigned. He genuinely embraced the different opportunities he had to engage in legal work for and with clients, including, but not limited to, interviewing, legal research, fact investigation, evidence production, different forms of legal writing and advocacy.

I would not hesitate to work with Chris again in the future and would give him my highest recommendation if ever called upon for one. In fact, I had the opportunity to recommend Chris for something recently and I did not pause in doing so. Fordham Law's Dean, Matthew Diller, was approached by an alumnus of the school who was seeking to be connected with a law student to work with him on an asylum case that he was taking on *pro bono*. When I learned of this, I immediately thought of Chris and reached out to him about his interest in this opportunity. I was thrilled when Chris indicated that he wished to possibly pursue it. It was important that a highly qualified and serious student be forwarded to the alumnus and I had no doubt that Chris fit the bill.

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
Re: Christopher Guerin
Page 2

Chris was an absolute pleasure to work with. I believe that he was very deserving of an Equal Justice America Fellowship.

Please do not hesitate to contact me by email at gsolimene@lsls.fordham.edu or by phone at 212-636-6934 if you should need any more information.

Sincerely,

Gemma Solimene
Supervising Attorney
Lincoln Square Legal Services
Clinical Associate Professor of Law
Fordham University School of Law