

Mr. Dan Ruben
Founder / Executive Director
Equal Justice America
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Re: My summer at Greater Boston Legal Services

July 28, 2017

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to you as I complete my ten-week summer internship at the CORI Project at Greater Boston Legal Services. I would like, first and foremost, to thank you for enabling me to participate in this important work for the summer. I am proud of the work I was able to accomplish and the important services I was able to furnish. Working with the underserved of Boston's population to help them obtain jobs and housing by means of sealing their criminal records was incredibly rewarding.

Over the course of my ten weeks here at Greater Boston Legal Services, I worked with about forty five different clients. Some of that work entailed processing clients through the intake so that they could begin to work with our attorneys on sealing their records. However, most of that work involved the substantive drafting of petitions and court documents that would enable the actual record sealing. To me, that was most rewarding. Getting the opportunity to talk with individuals, hearing about the hardships they've endured, on account of the criminal justice system, long after they have paid the price for their crimes, was difficult. But, to be able to turn around and help those people get back on their feet, that was rewarding. Our clients would encounter private landlords, and employers, many of whom would reject the clients for housing and job positions on account of charges on a criminal record. It didn't matter if the charges ended in convictions or non-convictions. Nor did it matter if the charges were 10, 20, or even 30 years old. Therefore, to be able to help remove the obstacles these people were facing, and give them a pathway to self-sufficiency and a new life, that was special.

In one particular instance, I worked with a veteran who, while dealing with some mental health issues, built up a criminal record. This veteran paid the price for the crimes, yet still faced obstacles, because of the criminal record, when looking for meaningful income via employment, and a private place to live. The veteran underwent therapy for the

mental health issues, and came to Greater Boston Legal Services for help cleaning up the criminal record so that gainful employment and housing might yet again become available. There was an indescribable satisfaction that I felt when we successfully sealed the entire criminal record, and gave that client a chance at a second, better life. I am proud of that work, as well as all of the other work I did here at Greater Boston Legal Services.

Thanks again to you, Mr. Ruben, and your team at Equal Justice America, for helping me out with this opportunity, and for allowing me to participate in the program as an Equal Justice America Summer Fellow. This was a great and rewarding summer, one that I will not soon forget.

Sincerely,

Dov Gottlieb
Harvard Law School,
J.D. Candidate 2019