

August 22, 2008

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to thank you and Equal Justice America for helping to fund my summer internship with the HIV Project of South Brooklyn Legal Services (SBLS). The internship was a terrific learning experience, and I am grateful for your assistance in making this summer possible.

Since the HIV Project of SBLS is a generalist practice, I was exposed to an exciting variety of legal issues. While I primarily focused on housing and family law, I also learned about public benefits, advance directives, and general poverty law. In addition to encountering diverse legal topics, my internship involved a satisfying blend of research, writing, client correspondence, and courtroom observation.

One of my main projects this summer involved a case in Brooklyn Housing Court. Several months before our client came to SBLS, he appeared in Court and signed an erroneous stipulation of settlement with his landlord. Pursuant to this settlement, our client consented to an illegal rent raise and agreed that his landlord was owed rent that had already been paid. As a *pro se* tenant with a limited command of the English language, our client was both intimidated and confused by the proceedings in Housing Court. Despite being provided with a translator, he believed that signing the stipulation represented his best chance of staying in the apartment.

When the *pro se* landlord returned to Housing Court to enforce the stipulation of settlement, the tenant turned to the HIV Project of SBLS for legal assistance. In conjunction with my supervising attorney, I met with the client, scrutinized the Housing Court file, and conducted research on relevant legal issues. After confirming that the stipulation reflected an illegal rent raise and receiving proof that all prior rent had been paid and deposited by the landlord, I drafted an Opposition and Cross Motion on behalf of our client. We submitted the documents to the Court, and the Judge ultimately vacated the erroneous stipulation of settlement. Given our client's poor health and the potentially dire consequences of an eviction, this was a very rewarding outcome.

While this case was a definite highlight of my internship, almost all of my summer projects were equally thought-provoking and rewarding. SBLS provides excellent legal representation to low-income individuals and families in Brooklyn, and I was fortunate to spend my summer in such a dynamic, intellectually-stimulating environment. Additionally, my supervisor was a fantastic mentor who went out of her way to provide insightful, constructive feedback.

I began law school with a significant commitment to public interest law. My internship with the HIV Project of SBLS strengthened my dedication to public service and reinforced my interest in legal services work. Again, I deeply appreciate Equal Justice America's generous funding and support of these pursuits.

Sincerely,

Jared Make  
New York University School of Law, Class of 2010