

August 28, 2009

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 express my gratitude to Equal Justice America for providing funding for my summer internship at the Brooklyn Family Defense Project (BFDP). I received a fellowship from your organization last year as well, and I thank you for the continued support.

In addition to providing legal representation to low-income parents in child welfare cases, BFDP promotes access to the services necessary to build safe and stable families. I enjoyed learning more about child protective proceedings and appreciated the opportunity to participate in high-quality family defense work.

As an intern, I provided general assistance to two of BFDP's staff attorneys. A major component of my internship involved drafting a variety of motions. I wrote two motions seeking to compel visitation, one motion seeking to obtain a suspended judgment, and a motion seeking to return a child to his mother's care. I also interviewed many potential witnesses and medical experts for upcoming fact-finding hearings.

The highlight of my summer was representing a client at a fair hearing before the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. After the client's children were removed from her care and placed in foster care, her shelter allowance was decreased. Consequently, our client's housing was threatened, even though her case had not yet reached the fact-finding stage. At the hearing, I presented several laws and regulations indicating that the reduction was erroneous, since the child services plan included a goal of returning the children to their mother. The judge agreed with my interpretation of the law, and our client's shelter allowance was restored.

When I began this internship, I was already committed to the field of public interest law and interested in a career in family defense work. My summer experience only enhanced my interest in this area of the law. Thank you again for helping to make this opportunity possible.

Sincerely,

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