

August 26, 2007

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I write to submit Part I of the Fellowship Questionnaire.

This summer I interned at the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts (CLCM). The CLCM is a private, non-profit legal advocacy and resource center providing direct representation to low-income children in Eastern Massachusetts, and technical assistance and training to lay and professional communities throughout New England on issues affecting children's education, civil rights, custody, health, and welfare. The mission of the CLCM is to 1) provide legal representation to children with complex legal problems; 2) provide information and training to parents, advocates, school personnel, social workers, and other child welfare workers; 3) provide resource and referral information on education, child welfare, and juvenile justice issues; and 4) assist in developing child welfare, juvenile justice, and education policies with a special emphasis on access to equal opportunity for low-income youth and families.

As an intern at the CLCM, I worked under the direct supervision of Barbara Kaban, the Deputy Director and Director of Research and Policy. In short, I assisted her with: 1) researching, writing, and editing two appellate briefs; 2) preparing for a school expulsion case; 3) preparing for a probation hearing; 4) preparing for a revocation hearing; 5) researching and writing an article about pre-arraignment detention of juveniles; 6) researching and writing a literature review for a grant aimed improving outcomes for children involved in guardianship of minor cases in probate court; 7) researching and writing part of an article analyzing the overrepresentation of minority children in Massachusetts' child welfare system; 8) editing grant proposals related to work with gang-involved youth. I also observed child welfare and delinquency proceedings at the Lynn Juvenile Court and assisted clients through the CLCM's telephone assistance program.

More specifically, I worked on eight specific clients' cases:

- Client 1: This juvenile was found guilty of joint venture and conspiracy to commit certain misdemeanors. My supervisor took the case on appeal. I researched relevant statutes, cases, and secondary sources, and wrote memos about joint venture and jury waiver (the juvenile waived his right to a trial by jury without a written and oral colloquy). My supervisor incorporated my memos into her appellate brief. I edited the appellate brief and prepared the accompanying materials.
- Client 2: This client was found guilty as a juvenile on multiple counts of rape, armed robbery, breaking and entering, and assault and battery, and sentenced to life in prison. I researched relevant statutes, cases, and secondary sources, and wrote memos related to

his consent to psychiatric evaluations and the effectiveness of his attorney's assistance during the decision-making process. My supervisor's appellate brief was comprised mostly of language drawn directly from my memos. Finally, I edited the brief and prepared the accompanying materials.

- Client 3: This special education student was facing an expulsion hearing for allegedly stealing a fellow student's cell phone. I sat in on interviews with him, the alleged victim, and potential witnesses. I also summarized his school records, prepared a memo outlining various arguments for his defense, and worked with school officials to obtain relevant documents. Due to our work the student no longer faces a potential expulsion.
- Client 4: This juvenile had an upcoming probation hearing; however, he was unable to attend because he was living with his mother in New York. My supervisor and I set out to get his case closed in Massachusetts. I interviewed his probation officer and therapist in New York, collected and summarized his school and probation records, and sat in on phone meetings with his mother. Ultimately, we got his probation case dismissed in Massachusetts.
- Client 5: This juvenile was committed to the Department of Youth Services until age twenty-one. However, he was very successful in the community and achieved the lowest level of supervision from the probation department. In an attempt to have him discharged from the Department, I wrote a summary of his accomplishments, began drafting a motion for relief, and collected newspaper articles, in which he was mentioned for good deeds, to support his petition.
- Client 6: This juvenile was facing revocation for a violation of his probation. His probation officer sought 90-120 days in a secure facility. I sat in on a preparation meeting with the juvenile and attended his revocation hearing. The hearing officer sentenced him to only 15-30 days, followed by release to a halfway house.
- Client 7: This juvenile was not receiving appropriate special education services. I summarized his education records for the attorney who was working to remedy the situation.
- Client 8: This juvenile was a registered sex offender. My supervisor is currently working on filing a motion to have a reclassification hearing. I researched relevant sex offender registration statutes and presented my supervisor with a summary of my findings.

I co-authored one report and contributed to another:

- Report 1: I analyzed data from Massachusetts' juvenile alternative lockup programs, and particularly data relating to the pre-arraignment detention of children under the age of fourteen. Then, using the data, I wrote a twenty-page report detailing the statutory and constitutional violations of such a practice, overrepresentation of minorities, negative outcomes for detainees, growing population of girls, and fiscal wastefulness of the administering alternative lockup programs.
- Report 2: My supervisor is working with other attorneys to write a report about the overrepresentation of minority children in the child welfare system. I wrote the sections of the report that describe child welfare and "child in need of services" proceedings in Massachusetts.

I assisted with my supervisor's work on one grant and her proposal for another:

- Grant 1: This grant was awarded to the CLCM to study the outcomes for children involved in guardianship of minor cases in probate court. My work on this study included analyzing Massachusetts' probate court data and completing a literature review on the subject (including journal articles, previous probate court studies, relevant Massachusetts statutes, statutory schemes in other New England states, and articles about innovative approaches to guardianship of minor cases and outcomes for kids involved in probate court).
- Grant 2: Over the summer, my supervisor was in the process of applying for a research grant to study the effects of community programs on court-involved, Cambodian youth gang members. I assisted her in preparing the proposal by gathering relevant documents, writing portions of the application, and editing the grant proposal.

I also managed intake calls on our legal assistance phone line. I interviewed the callers, summarized the details of their cases, discussed the presenting issues with staff attorneys, and returned their calls, providing them with advice and information. As an intake worker, I assisted twenty-three clients with "child in need of services," foster care, education law, family law, and emancipation cases.

Finally, my additional, miscellaneous activities included:

- Researching how other states pay defense attorneys to represent indigent juveniles at parole revocation hearings;
- Writing a memo about the constitutionality of extension of commitment hearings;
- Observing delinquency, CHINS, child welfare proceedings at Lynn Juvenile Court;
- Attending the "Youth at Risk Conference" at Endicott College;
- Attending a training presented by the Center for Advanced Legal Studies, called "An Overview of DYS Advocacy";
- Attending a "Know Your Rights" presentation at Straight Ahead Ministries (a nonprofit in Lynn, MA that works with court-involved youth);
- Sitting in on meeting with the teenage brother of an adult arrested for attempted murder to discuss ways he could cope with the situation and help his brother and other family members

Through my internship at the CLCM, I improved my research, writing, and interviewing skills. I also enhanced my understanding of the education, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems through studying and witnessing proceedings firsthand. Moreover, I developed greater knowledge of juvenile defense strategies and the considerations an effective attorney must take into account when representing children with a multitude of issues (e.g. learning disabilities, psychological problems, poverty, domestic violence, etc.). Additionally, I learned more about the inner workings of a nonprofit, legal services agency.

Perhaps most importantly, I worked closely with my supervisor, a seasoned, highly skilled attorney. I witnessed the special way she interacted with her teenage, gang-involved clients and their families. In addition, I observed the ways in which she tailored her research studies reports, interactions with the Department of Youth Services' staff and attorneys, and appearances before judges in a way that made her point firmly and persuasively, but without alienating key players

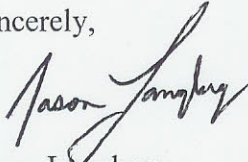
or being too inflammatory. Finally, I experienced the passion and zealous advocacy she provides each of her clients.

I believe that the greatest way that I used my legal skills to improve the Lynn community was by empowering its citizens. As an intake worker I was able to actively listen to people's problems and provide information, feedback, and advice. I also wrote legal memorandum to be used in the defense of clients who otherwise would not be able to afford quality legal representation and to provide them a voice in the legal system. When people feel like someone cares enough to listen and support them, they feel empowered – and empowering people is where positive change begins.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience at the CLCM. I was inspired, learned a great deal, and worked independently, mostly on interesting cases and projects of my choosing. I plan to continue working with my supervisor throughout the academic year. After my internship at the CLCM, I am even more confident in my decision to become a child advocacy attorney.

Thank you very much for making it possible for me to have such a rewarding summer. I greatly appreciate the support of Equal Justice America. Please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Langberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "J" and "L".

Jason Langberg
Boston College Law School
Class of 2009