



LAW OFFICE OF
TEXAS RIOGRANDE LEGAL AID, INC.
Weslaco
300 S. Texas
Weslaco, TX 78596
Telephone (956) 447-4800 Toll Free (800) 369-0574
Fax (956) 968-8823

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Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Sent via email (at request) to: [Katie@EqualJustice America.org](mailto:Katie@EqualJusticeAmerica.org)

**Re: 2014 Equal Justice Works America Summer 2014 Fellowship for John Masio –
University of Texas Law School 1L.**

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am the Team Manager for the Farmworker Division at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc., a non-profit civil legal aid law firm. I write this letter with regard to the summer internship of John Masio, an internship you helped make possible through your generous donation. We greatly appreciate your assistance. We were pleased with John's efforts over the 2014 summer while he was in our main office in Weslaco, Texas. John worked with us for more than 10 weeks at approximately forty hours per week, providing us with substantial and valuable assistance.

Throughout the summer, I oversaw John on a daily basis as he worked on numerous different assignments. John came to us after having completed his 1L year at the University of Texas' law school. We hired him, in-part, because he was willing to work in a rural area and because he had strong legal research and writing skills (which is extremely important as most of our department's cases are complicated ones filed in federal court). After a standard orientation on confidentiality and legal ethics, and an introduction to employment law, John's initial work focused on legal research and writing. He researched many complex questions, including for Motions eventually filed with courts, and he handled in several memos. He did very well on these assignments: he completed them timely, thoroughly, and in a way which made it easier for us to understand an issue without spending much effort explaining or redirecting his efforts.

John was an independent, efficient and careful worker. He was respectful and shadowed me to federal court one day for a hearing in a case. John was also pleasant to get along with at the office and during long road trips for outreach. Over the course of this summer, John's efforts provided great assistance to our clients.

John also helped draft legal documents that were necessary for our cases. Examples of what he drafted include a demand letter, Motions, proposed Orders, a co-counseling agreement, Subpoenas Deuces Tecums and for appearance at Depositions, Answers to Interrogatories and

Requests for Production. Over time, I saw his drafting abilities improve as he became more comfortable with drafting these types of documents. Towards the end of the summer, I gave him sophisticated documents to draft. When his drafts were complete, I had only minimal revisions (which is very good for someone who with only one year of law school). John learned many complicated issues quickly, amplifying our efforts to assist clients and with better quality.

John also assisted in organizing and preparing discovery documents. In particular, he spent many hours reviewing and organizing several hundred pages of discovery documents we received from a large, national defendant in a lawsuit spanning four years (and involving more than 20 workers). Going forward with our case, this service will be a great benefit. For example, John created a chart outlining which critical information we did not receive from the defendant in their responses to our discovery requests and for which we need to follow-up promptly.

John also helped with general farmworker investigatory matters, rather than just individual cases. He investigated the types of farming activity being performed throughout the state of Texas, increasing the organization of our recordkeeping on who is doing what work, for whom, when and where. He also had the chance to perform community outreach in West Texas. Outreach is a critical part of the Farmworker Division at TRLA – without outreach; few workers would know about or, next, exercise their rights. Not only do we get the chance to educate potential clients during outreach, we also investigate farm activity and migrant worker housing in remote areas where we don't have offices. I did not oversee John directly on his outreach trip because he went on this extended trip with paralegals from our project with more than 20 years of experience. John provided me a detailed report of their activities; we will keep it in our records and use it in future seasons or if a case arises as a result of their investigations.

John also graciously assisted TRLA beyond his paid internship. Several weeks after his internship was over, an urgent deadline came up. John willingly assisted me with legal research and writing from his home in Austin to help reach this important deadline, including working very late nights over a holiday weekend.

I sincerely thank Equal Justice America for helping to make John's internship possible. John was a great help to us during this past summer. I hope Equal Justice will continue to make these internships possible, both for the help it provides to non-profit organizations but also for the learning opportunities it provides to students. As an attorney in her 11th year of practice who has always worked for legal aid organizations, I believe it is crucially important to support students interested in exploring the public interest field. Your funding helps make that possible, not only for a summer, but perhaps also for a career once their interests are sparked.

If you have further questions about John Masio's successful internship with TRLA, please contact me at ddwyer@trla.org or (956) 447-4800. I will be happy to speak with you.

Sincerely,

Daniela Dwyer

Team Manager - Farmworker Division
Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc.