

August 15th, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My name is Joseph Fiore and I received an Equal Justice America Summer Fellowship, which was sponsored by Bingham McCutchen. Thank you very much for your support—without this financial aid, I would not have been able to accept a fulltime unpaid internship with Children's Rights in New York City.

Over the last ten weeks, I worked with a nonprofit called Children's Rights whose mission is to reform failing child welfare systems across the United States through targeted class action litigation. Children's Rights relies heavily on unpaid legal interns and I spent my summer assisting several experienced attorneys with legal research and writing as well participating in strategy sessions for upcoming litigation. It was an incredible learning experience and I would highly recommend the internship to future EJA recipients.

The highlight of my summer was creating a "Named Plaintiff Digest" in preparation for litigation against the state of Texas. The Texas foster care system is one of the worst performing in the country and Children's Rights is currently engaged in the discovery process of a class action suit against the state. Collecting information about the named plaintiffs through a thorough analysis of state documents is an incredibly important aspect of building a strong case against a child welfare system, and so a majority of the legal interns were assigned to research particular plaintiffs. During this process, I learned a great deal about foster care systems in general and read in horror about the life of a particular named plaintiff. While in the "care" of Texas, the named plaintiff whom I researched had been sexually and physically abused, moved hundreds of miles away from his immediate family, extremely over-medicated, and shuffled to over ten different placements. Knowing that the work I conducted in preparing a chronicle of this named plaintiff's life will directly influence the path Children's Rights takes in its class action suit against Texas was incredibly rewarding and exciting.

Further, I believe that this experience was incredibly unique. Very few organizations are able to take on such vast and complicated litigation. Class action lawsuits require the careful attention of highly experienced attorneys at every step. Having the opportunity to learn under the watch of these attorneys enriched my legal knowledge and certainly

inspired me to continue my pursuit of a career in public interest law. Also unique to this experience was being able to be a part of an organization that attempts to create true and lasting change throughout entire systems. While working with Children's Rights, I was able to contribute to the formation and monitoring of an improvement plan for the state of Michigan. Through this process, I was able to see first hand the statistical and anecdotal improvements that Michigan has implemented since settling with Children's Rights two years ago.

Again, thank you very much for your support. I truly believe that my work this summer will have a direct positive effect on the lives of the children whom Children's Rights sets out to protect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Fiore".

Joseph Fiore
Boston College Law
Class of 2014