

August 25, 2007

Dan Ruben  
Equal Justice America, Executive Director

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you very much for working to provide summer stipends for law students who are committed to public interest law. This summer, I interned with the HIV/AIDS Project at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. It was an amazing learning experience as I worked alongside some extremely talented attorneys.

At the beginning, I found that it was emotionally difficult to work with low-income clients. Many of my clients had multiples issues, and many of these issues were not related to the law. I was overwhelmed by some of their situations and desperately desired to do whatever I could to help. As the summer progressed, I learned to separate our clients' legal issues. I realized that I could best help our clients by helping them with their legal problems, instead of simply pitying them because of their dire situations. I then began channeling my energy to do whatever I could to aid them with their legal issue.

I was able to use my 711 license, which allowed me to represent clients in court under the supervision of an attorney. I covered many status dates in eviction court and family court. Furthermore, I was able to argue a Motion to Quash Service in eviction court.

One of the highlights of the summer was a negotiation settlement that I asked to handle. The supervising attorney did not have high hopes that a settlement would occur. However, she asked me to do what I could. The tenant in this case had been living in a garden apartment that had flooded on several occasions. The flood waters caused damage to the tenant's furniture and clothes. Furthermore, the tenant suffered from medical problems due to the growth of mold. According to the landlord, she had waived one month of the tenant's rent and had even offered the client a different apartment. The tenant in this case was asking for damages, but the landlord had felt that she had already done enough to compensate for the flood damage. I made many phone calls to both the landlord and tenant, and after two days, I was able to negotiate with both parties, and the tenant received \$800 in compensation.

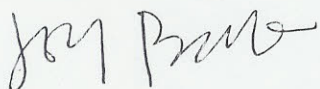
Towards the end of the summer, the majority of my time was devoted to one particular client. This client had sought our help because his application for housing at a Section 8 Project Based apartment was denied. I spoke with the housing management and was told that our client was denied because of his poor credit. The housing management sent me a copy of the credit report that they had used in making their decision and sought to verify each of the entries on our client's credit report. After further investigation and numerous calls to different companies and credit reporting bureaus, I found that several of the entries were erroneous. There was one entry stating that my client owed almost \$5000, but upon investigation, I found that there was no record of such an account. I then followed up with the credit reporting bureau. They also

investigated the matter and found that the account did not exist. Thus, they immediately erased the entry from my client's credit report. I contacted the housing management once again and explained the situation. We had an informal meeting at the site of the apartment complex, but the building manager explained that he did not have the authority to change the outcome. I then contacted the building manager's supervisor and explained the situation. She asked that I send her documentation of all the inaccuracies. She agreed to rerun the credit report to determine whether my client would be eligible for housing at the Section 8 Project Based apartments.

These may appear to be two simple stories. However, for my two clients, it made a world of difference. Furthermore, for myself, I am thankful that I was able to use my time and energy to help these two individuals. I have known for quite some time that I would like to use my law degree to help the underprivileged, but it was amazing to be able to gain the experience that I did. It solidified my desire to help those who simply need another voice to assist them.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to help others this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joy Park".

Joy Park  
Loyola University Chicago School of Law  
Graduation anticipated, May 2008