

To: Dan Ruben,
Executive Director- Equal Justice America

August 21, 2016

Dear Mr. Ruben,

A legal internship at the Sergeant Shriver National Center on Poverty Law has very little direct client interaction. However, my summer was spent researching and providing support for strategic and impact litigation and public policy on diverse public interest topics.

I had the opportunity to put into use my skills in legal writing as well as course material in administrative law, poverty law, property, and criminal procedures. With all of this, I researched and wrote a memo on standing for a housing discrimination case that was defending an affordable housing proposal when the municipality was blocking its approval. The case. The case is already in court and the municipality was alleging that the plaintiffs, our clients, did not have standing to charge discrimination. This is a large housing development that, if the case succeeds, will guarantee quality housing to hundreds of low income tenants.

I also researched and wrote a memo to consider the level of deference owed by the court in relation to a HUD guidance that states that a blanket policy to deny public housing to anyone that has a criminal record is discrimination because of the disparate impact of the policy. This HUD guidance potentially can affect many tenants, since so many people under the auspices of the justice system today (incarcerated or on probation, or with other alternative sentencing) risks losing access to safe public housing.

I accompanied one of the advocates to a meeting where they are organizing members of a project-based section 8 housing development who are at risk of losing their benefits, or being forced to move, since the owner does not want to renew his contract with HUD. The advocate works together with community organizers to guarantee the rights of the tenants. I provided translation for a tenant who did not speak English.

I also researched access to health care for undocumented immigrants in our state- seeking to provide an economic analysis of whether it would be more cost beneficial to provide basic insurance and thus guarantee healthier workers, less uncompensated emergency room costs, ambulance costs, and other hidden costs. Potentially this could assist thousands of undocumented residents in the state.

My work included other similar research, such as case law regarding a tenant's right to invite guests to his/her residence, and whether or not a landlord who receives federal funding has a right to ban guests, and whether the landlord also has a right to evict tenants who have "banned" guests on the premises.

I worked on letters to all of the municipalities in Illinois who, because of local statutes, risked violating a state law that prohibits evicting tenants because they have called for emergency

assistance too many times, thus, potentially being perceived as disruptive tenants, in the case that the reason the tenant is calling has to do with her/his being a victim of domestic violence, being charged with a crime related to his/her victimization, or because she/he is disabled and requires emergency assistance.

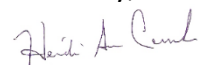
I also did a case review for the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act of Illinois, so that the advocate could guarantee an updated working manual for employers as well as lawyers and others seeking information on how the Act has been used and what is possible. Additionally, I researched the other states to see what states have similar acts defending victims of violence and giving them the possibility of going to court, seeking medical, legal, and other support without risking the loss of their jobs.

Finally, I researched the background of compliance requirements when housing developments must make an apartment and the public passage to the apartment accessible. The purpose was to see what has been done as far as voluntary compliance agreements with housing developments, what are remedies available and how does HUD define the limits of terms like "undue burden" in this case, and the "replacement costs" of a housing development. The goal of this was to hold housing developments responsible for making living space compliant to specific needs of disabled clients.

In summary, while I cannot cite any specific number of clients that I served, the work I did hopefully enabled the lawyers and advocates at the Shriver Center to better be able to defend their clients, their cases, and in many cases, a collective group of people related to housing, health care, and access to justice.

Thank you for making this opportunity possible,

Sincerely,



Heidi Cerneka

Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Anticipated graduation- May, 2017.



August 29, 2016

VIA EMAIL ONLY

katie@equaljusticeamerica.org

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

Re: Heidi Cerneka, Summer 2016 Intern

Dear Mr. Ruben,

On behalf of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, I write to thank you for the opportunity to host Heidi Cerneka as an Equal Justice America fellow this summer. The Shriver Center works to ensure that laws and policies provide low-income people with access to adequate health care, decent housing, a safety net, and opportunities to achieve their full potential. We advocate for positive policy and systems changes on a range of issues, including asset building, budget and taxes, community justice, economic justice, education, health care, housing, and challenges facing women and girls. Most importantly, we ensure that the voices of marginalized people are heard. We are grateful for Heidi's dedication to, and assistance with, our mission.

Heidi provided over 350 hours of service to the Shriver Center between May 16 and August 12, 2016. As an intern, she contributed to our advocacy team's work by conducting research, participating in advocacy projects, and engaging in strategic planning around specific advocacy pieces and our organizational mission.

Heidi performed traditional legal research and writing in pending and anticipated complex litigation. The topics were often complex matters of federal law. She appropriately answered questions for research, and was willing to seek guidance from attorneys to ensure the expected result was reached.

She also performed research related to our policy advocacy and training work. For example, she performed important research related to our office's publications of a manual on the Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA). She also participated in brainstorming sessions with other law interns on several legal issues, including access to child care assistance payment for undocumented caregivers, and a

coalition working on legislative initiatives around reentry of persons with criminal records.

Along with our other summer interns, Heidi participated in training sessions designed to introduce interns to public interest practitioners and a variety of practice areas.

We found Heidi's participation in all areas to be insightful and enthusiastic. She clearly desired to produce a quality product. She worked conscientiously and diligently to meet deadlines and all requirements of our summer internship. We are grateful for her presence at the Shriver Center this summer, and for her contributions to our work, and are likewise grateful to Equal Justice America for the opportunity to have hosted her.

Sincerely,

Jeremy P. Bergstrom
Senior Staff Attorney