

August 30, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer I had the wonderful opportunity to do a full time 10 week clerkship at the Legal Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA). I worked in the Asian and Pacific Islander Outreach Special Project (API Project). In this project, I served limited-English proficient APIs by assisting them with legal advice in substantive areas like housing, consumer, immigration, employment, government benefits, and family law.

My job consisted mostly of answering the Chinese Hotline and doing client intakes to see if they qualified for our services. This included consulting with the attorney to give clients legal advice in different areas of law. On average, I received ten to twenty phone calls per day on the hotline. If the clients did not qualify for our services, I referred them to other legal agencies or gave them lawyer referrals for lawyers who could take on their cases. The clients I worked with were mostly victims of crime or victims of domestic violence.

While working at LAFLA, I worked regularly on eight client's cases. This consisted of translating and writing their declarations, filling out legal forms, and translating for the attorney's during the phone conference. I also contacted the clients to inform them of their legal options, obtaining information from them, and updating them regarding that status of their cases.

Aside from working on cases in the downtown office, I also volunteered at the Chinatown Clinic where clients were able to come in for actual legal assistance. While working at the Chinatown Clinic, I did client intakes. This included looking over their letters from the Social Security Administration (SSA) to try to figure out why their government benefits were being reduced or stopped. After consulting on the case with the attorney, I informed clients of the reason why their benefits had been reduced or stopped. I also explained to the clients how they could appeal their Supplemental Security Income (SSI) decision and help them write appeal letters. It was rewarding to see clients' original government benefit amounts reinstated, especially since many of our clients were disabled and relied on SSI payment to get by.

One client that stuck out in particular was a single mother of two children who was in an abusive relationship. I was working on her U VISA immigration paperwork to help her get legal status to stay in America. I wrote a wage demand letter to her previous employer who had refused to issue her last paycheck after she quit her job. Her story stuck out to me because she had to file multiple police reports due to the abuse she endured. Her husband had also made death threats against her

and her family and threatened to take the children away from her as a means of controlling her.

Hearing this client's story, I immediately felt very empathetic towards her situation. I listened to her explain her story to me while she cried on the other end of the line for almost an hour. I learned from this that if I wanted to truly help her and others in similar situations, I needed to keep a level head to help her get past her sadness so she could give me the information I needed to complete her case. Through this experience, I learned the value of serving others while being efficient with my time.

Another case that stuck out to me was a woman who was in a physically, financially, and emotionally abusive relationship. Her husband would force her to perform demeaning tasks designed to torture her mentally and assault her both physically and verbally because he had caught her cheating on him on one occasion. This poor woman would call the hotline while at work whenever she felt that she could no longer take the abuse because she just needed someone to listen to her story and had no one to turn to. My co-worker had also talked to her on a few occasions 6 months prior to my interaction with her. She clearly qualified for our services, but she was so fearful of her abuser that she did not dare to leave him or stand up to him.

Her story made me realize that while we have helped many victims of crimes and domestic abuse, there is a greater population of victims who either do not know of our services or are too scared to reach out for help. It is moments like this that I am super grateful that there are attorneys out there every day working to the best of their abilities to prevent social injustice by changing one person's life at a time. After working at LAFLA, I am more determined and better prepared to work in a non-profit setting to serve my community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joy Yin Chang', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joy Yin Chang
Loyola Law School
May 2019



The frontline law firm for poor and low-income people in Los Angeles

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August 24, 2017

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America

RE: Supervisor Evaluation for Joy Chang

Dear Mr. Ruben,

As required by this fellowship, this letter is provided as an evaluation of Equal Justice America fellow, Joy Chang. I supervised Ms. Chang in her capacity as a law clerk for the Asian & Pacific Islander Community Outreach Special Project (API Project) at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA), from June 2017 to August 2017.

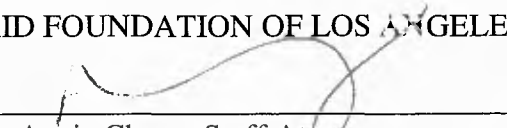
The Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, founded in 1929, is the front-line law firm for poor and low-income residents of Los Angeles County. We provide free civil legal services in the areas of housing, consumer, immigration, employment, community economic development, government benefits, and family law. LAFLA's API Project was founded in the 1990s in recognition of the great need for improved access to justice for limited-English proficient API immigrants. Through our diverse staff of over 130 employees, six community offices, and community and courthouse-based clinics, we provide direct legal services to approximately 12,000 people every year, and we assist over 45,000 individuals and families to become more knowledgeable about their legal rights.

While working at LAFLA, Ms. Chang performed many duties that included staffing the API Project's Chinese language line, and working with attorneys on cases requiring Mandarin language capacity. Ms. Chang understood her duties as an API law clerk and assisted with making LAFLA's services more accessible to monolingual, and/or limited-English proficient clients and community members. In particular, Ms. Chang worked with attorneys foundation wide, including myself, on cases dealing with the issues listed above. She most closely worked with domestic violence survivors and assisted them with their immigration and family law issues. Through Ms. Chang's efforts, she was able to further LAFLA's goal in making its services accessible to all individuals and families with limited English capacity.

Please feel free to contact me at (323) 801-7974 or at angiechang@lafla.org if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

LEGAL AID FOUNDATION OF LOS ANGELES

By: 
Angie Chang, Staff Attorney

Other Office Locations:

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