

MARGARET LUKSHAITIS

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building II, Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 23113

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My experience at the Family Law Project in Ann Arbor, MI was wonderful. I thoroughly enjoyed working with clients and learning from my supervising attorney. I have taken away from this experience a deep appreciation and passion for public interest work which I hope to pursue in the future.

During my fellowship, I gained practical legal experience. I drafted initial pleadings and prepared for service of opposing parties. I was responsible for keeping my clients informed of the developments in their cases and for preparing other legal documents to address their needs, such as temporary motions and proposed judgments of divorce.

As a law clerk, I worked exclusively with survivors of domestic violence. Before this experience, my awareness of domestic abuse was limited. After this experience, I have an informed knowledge of the different types of domestic abuse, including: emotional, isolation, coercive behavior, intimidation, economic, psychological, and physical abuse. My perception of domestic violence has significantly changed. I understand now that abuse is not limited to physical violence. Abuse is about a person's control over another person. Whether that control is economic (giving a spouse an allowance) or isolation (preventing a spouse from having contact with friends or family), the objective is having control over another person's actions and emotions. This knowledge, I am sure will be invaluable at a future professional position. Most importantly, this experience has increased my appreciation for organizations like the Family Law Project who work towards solving social problems such as domestic abuse.

My favorite part about my work was the clients I served. They were some of the kindest people I have ever interacted with. I found that respect and sensitivity are necessary elements to have in order to communicate constructively. With these tools, the interactions I had were effective and enjoyable. Although the situations of abuse I encountered were very upsetting, I managed to put aside my personal feelings and dedicated myself to improving my clients' positions.

I thank Equal Justice America for helping me have such a wonderful experience. I am truly honored to have worked for the Family Law Project and grateful to learn so much about public interest work.

Sincerely,

Margaret Lukshaitis
Wayne State University Law School '14

LEGAL SERVICES OF SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

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August 17, 2012

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building II, Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 2311

Dear Mr. Ruben:

During the summer of 2012 we were pleased to have Margaret Lukshaitis as an EJA law student intern in the Family Law Project (FLP), an office of Legal Services of South Central Michigan. Our office priorities include providing legal advice and representation to indigent clients in family law cases involving domestic violence.

Margaret worked closely and under the supervision of myself and an FLP staff attorney. She also worked with two other summer law interns. We assigned several family law cases to Margaret and she had primary responsibility for the cases. As part of the litigation component of these cases, Margaret conducted interviews with the clients, drafted pleadings including motions with detailed facts and proposed orders, filed pleadings with the court and arranged for service of process. Margaret also made a court appearance on behalf of a client pursuant to the Michigan student practice rule. She also conducted initial client intakes, identified the legal issues and made recommendations at our weekly client intake meetings.

For each of her cases, Margaret was also responsible for maintaining contact with the clients and keeping them informed of the status of their case. This required Margaret to be aware of activity on each case and to communicate with clients by telephone and by letter. Margaret developed good rapport with her assigned clients and was able to communicate legal developments effectively.

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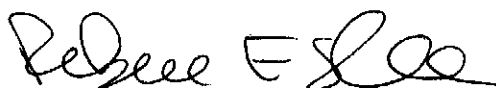
A member agency of the Jackson County, Monroe County and South Central Michigan United Ways

Finally, Margaret was assigned a number of research and writing projects. In particular, we asked her to research military pension and other benefits for a client whose spouse had retired from the military. Her work product was thorough and well-written. It was a great service to the client and to me as her supervising attorney.

Because of Margaret's participation in the EJA program, we were able to provide legal assistance to more clients, including clients in need of legal remedies to address domestic violence. We also believe that Margaret gained valuable experience at FLP. We are confident that Margaret has gained insight into the issues faced by indigent clients, and particularly those attempting to extricate themselves from a abusive relationship.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to future EJA law clerks at the Family Law Project.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca E. Shiemke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "R" and "S".

Rebecca E. Shiemke
Managing Attorney