

**STEPHANIE H. JONES**

08/31/2015

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer, thanks in part to support from an Equal Justice America Fellowship, I had the opportunity to serve as a legal intern for the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE). CRPE represents Latino individuals, families, and communities in California's Central Valley that disparately face environmental hazards.

Environmental justice is a field with much important and interesting work to be done, but relatively few resources with which to do it – CRPE, with five attorneys, is one of the largest environmental justice legal organizations. Because of this, I was able to gain substantial, hands-on experience.

The culminating project of my summer was the most challenging but ultimately the most rewarding. I was asked to draft a section of a reply brief for a federal court of appeals case. In this case, our clients were members of a Latino family challenging the permitting of pesticide application on fields adjacent to schools their children attended. They had been filing administrative appeals for so long that one of our plaintiffs, who was a child when the family began their efforts, is now participating in the case as a father concerned for his own children.

It was an honor to get to play such an active role in seeking justice for a family that had been denied justice for so long. As the CRPE interns saw when we spent a week visiting the communities where CRPE's clients live, the people for whom the organization works are not merely passive recipients of legal services. They are smart, capable, creative, and fiercely dedicated advocates for themselves, their children, and their neighbors. Working alongside them was a humbling experience that transformed my perception of the relationship of legal service providers to under-resourced communities.

I am very grateful for the opportunity I had to work and learn at the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment this summer – an opportunity that would not have been possible without funding from sources like Equal Justice America. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie H. Jones  
New York University