

August 11, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

Thanks to the generosity of the EJA Fellowship, I was able to spend my summer working at Ayuda, Inc. Ayuda is a non-profit organization located in Washington, DC that provides low cost legal services to low income immigrants throughout the DC metropolitan area. Since the summer internship with Ayuda is unpaid and my law school does not offer any funding for unpaid summer internships, the EJA Fellowship really made my summer experience with Ayuda feasible.

The summer internship at Ayuda involved a lot of direct client services as well as various research projects. As an intern, Ayuda gave me a full caseload and the sole responsibility of completing various cases for my own clients. I had two Violence Against Women Act "VAWA" cases, where I was able to help two victims of domestic violence petition for legal status on their own based on the abuse they suffered at the hands of their United States citizen spouses. I also had several "U-Visa" cases, where I completed application for undocumented individuals who were victims of severe crimes. These individuals were eligible for U-Visas because they helped law enforcement officials investigate the crimes they suffered.

One of the most rewarding experiences this summer was working on three "T-Visa" or human trafficking visa cases. Before coming to Ayuda, I did not know much about human trafficking and now I have completed and filed three T-Visa applications for individuals from the Philippines. I was able to work on these clients' personal statements, learn about labor trafficking, and the legal requirements of applying for a T-Visa through my internship with Ayuda.

On top of my own personal load of cases, I also worked on several research projects for various asylum cases. Mostly, I had to research the political and social conditions in various countries and determine whether there was in fact enough evidence to support different asylum claims. I researched American case law, various country condition reports, newspaper articles from other countries, along with scholarly articles.

Overall, with the help of this fellowship award I gained many skills needed to work with Washington, DC's low income immigrant population and fulfilled my passion to work with impoverished immigrants. Without this fellowship I would not have been able to fund my summer internship with Ayuda, Inc. and I am very appreciative of the support EJA gave me this summer.

Sincerely,

Nelly Montenegro

University of Illinois College of Law
Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2011



Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice of America

August 16, 2010

**RE: Nelly MONTENEGRO
Fellowship Evaluation**

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing in regards to Nelly Montenegro, an EJA fellow with Ayuda this summer. Ayuda is a non-profit community-based organization offering legal and social services to the low-income immigrant community of Washington, DC and beyond. Nelly worked in our Immigration Unit as a summer intern and I was one of her supervisors.

Nelly was an excellent intern. From the outset, Nelly was able to jump in and take on a very heavy caseload, largely because she came to Ayuda with great experience. Throughout the summer (from May 17th to August 6th), Nelly handled her own active caseload of immigration cases, including U-visa applications for victims of crime, VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) applications for victims of domestic violence, asylee adjustments of status, naturalization, advance parole, and T visas for victims of human trafficking. Additionally, Nelly was present at Ayuda during two extensions of TPS (Temporary Protected Status), the first for Hondurans and Nicaraguans and the second for Salvadorans. Nelly was always ready and willing to help us handle the walk-in clients who came to renew their TPS. She was responsible for almost all aspects of her cases: communicating with clients, performing relevant research and translation, collecting documents, drafting cover letters and client personal statements, and

advocating for clients with law enforcement and other agencies. to name a few of her
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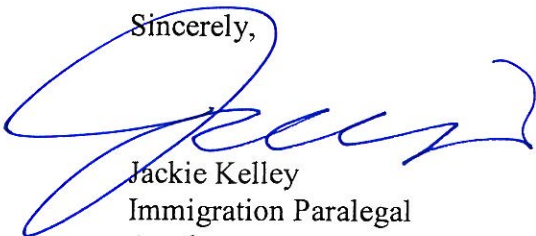
responsibilities this summer. Nelly went above and beyond to ensure her cases were well prepared, organized and thorough. Nelly brought dedication and thoughtfulness to all her assignments and her work product was excellent. She was able to work both independently and in conjunction with Ayuda's attorneys and paralegals.

Nelly's clients loved her because she approached her cases with warmth and a genuine concern for her clients. As many of our clients have suffered great tragedy or abuse in their lives, the worth of Nelly's patience and compassion cannot be overestimated. I genuinely believe her clients recognized how much hard work Nelly put into their cases; this was evident to the staff as well. Nelly often stayed late to continue working on assignments and even came in early several days to get a head start on her work. As Ayuda has no shortage of clients and a constant demand for our services, this dedication from an intern was valued to the highest degree. Nelly definitely earned her fellowship award this summer.

I wish to make it clear that Ayuda was extremely happy with Nelly's work product, dedication and commitment to Ayuda and her clients throughout the summer. She was also a pleasure to work with, as she had a great attitude and sense of humor. We hope that Nelly comes back to the DC area because she would be an asset to our organization. She can count on Ayuda for a glowing reference in the future.

Please contact me if you need any further information or have any questions at jackie@ayuda.com or at 202-387-4848 ext. 123. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Jackie Kelley
Immigration Paralegal
Ayuda