

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

May 28, 2006

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to express my sincerest thanks for the generous Equal Justice America Spring Fellowship Award, and for EJA's continued support in my public interest work. EJA has done so much for several of the law students that work in my clinic, as well. I know from the managing attorney at the legal aid clinic where I worked that EJA Awards, such as the Spring Fellowship, are integral to her ability to effectively staff the clinic with law students. So thank you, again, from all of us.

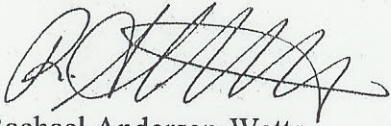
I have finished my first year at that Family Law Project (FLP) in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I worked first as a law clerk and then as a volunteer coordinator. The FLP serves low-income survivors of domestic violence in all matters of family law. It has been exciting and challenging to interact with our wonderful clients and the numerous law student volunteers that our clinic has trained and put to very worthwhile work. As a volunteer coordinator, I worked with my co-coordinator to train law students and run our weekly personal protection order (PPO) clinic. In Michigan, a PPO is a restraining order typically issued to prevent domestic violence and/or stalking. The FLP receives referrals from our local domestic violence shelter, and those in need of immediate protection who were desirous of a PPO were turned over to my coordinator and myself to be assigned to a pair of volunteers. Our volunteers are all students from the University of Michigan Law School who had been trained by the FLP to do everything necessary to petition for and pursue all necessary paperwork involved in filing and service of process to the opposing party.

I know that the experience was a memorable one for our volunteers, and a very positive one for our clients. Thanks in large part to the support of EJA, the FLP is able to hire volunteer coordinators such as myself to focus exclusively on making sure that our clients get a PPO as quickly as possible, and that they each have multiple contacts for help and advice on matters such as enforcement, safety planning, or other legal issues such as housing and immigration. Over the course of the school year, our clinic completed nearly twenty personal protection orders, and directly exposed nearly fifty law students to legal aid work. Several of them went on to volunteer additional time directly to our attorneys in divorce and custody matters as well.

My work at the Family Law Project has been immensely grounding and enriching. It is not always easy to balance law school with work, but it is *always* worth the challenge. The FLP benefits the law school experience for many students almost as much as it enriches the community, and EJA helps ensure that it will continue to do so for years to come.

Thank you from all of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Andersen-Watts', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Rachael Andersen-Watts  
University of Michigan Law School, J.D. 2007