

May 10, 2014

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I have been so grateful to be a director of the Temporary Restraining Order Project this year. It has been a wonderful experience. As a director I did not staff the office as often, but I was also able to talk to all of our wonderful volunteers about their experiences. I helped volunteers problem-solve when they had difficult cases like an applicant filing on behalf of a child (and not herself) or a respondent residing in another state. I also debriefed with volunteers after some shifts, offering advice for how to approach a problem the next time or when they just needed to talk about an emotional client. Interacting with our volunteers was a constant reminder of the breadth of our project and all the applicants we are able to help by keeping the office open five days a week.

I personally worked 5 shifts this year and helped about as many clients. One of the most memorable was the mother of three young children. She had finally left an abusive relationship and gotten an apartment, even though her husband had controlled their finances. Unfortunately, her ex continued to present problems. He showed up when she was dropping the children at school, made a scene that scared the children and did significant damage to her car. After calling the police, she came in with her victim advocate for a restraining order to protect herself and her children.

Helping clients in our office reinforces why I came to law school. It reminds me that there is more to life than tests and papers, providing valuable perspective that is often lacking in the law school community. It is also great incentive to keep studying because I want to graduate so I can represent children in child protection proceedings.

TRO has been a fantastic experience, and I am truly excited to return as a director next year.

Sincerely,

Rachel Judd
Class of 2015 | Yale Law School