

August 29, 2010

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

Re: Summer Fellowship Experience

Dear Dan Ruben,

I am a third year student at Columbia Law School and I received Equal Justice America's Summer Fellowship. This summer I had the fortune of interning at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) in Los Angeles, California. I write to express my deep gratitude to Equal Justice America and to share some of the highlights of my fellowship experience.

I come from an immigrant farm worker background and my experiences growing up have greatly influenced my career choices. From an early age I decided that I wanted to be a lawyer and advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable sectors of our society. I consider myself to be extremely fortunate for having spent my summer at MALDEF, one of the leading civil rights organizations in the country.

At MALDEF I had the opportunity to work on a variety of assignments, including legal intake, document translation, and research and writing on matters related to education and labor. This summer, MALDEF filed a class action lawsuit against 24 Hour Fitness alleging discrimination in pay and promotion against women and minorities. I had the opportunity to conduct some legal research on this matter and I contacted some of the potential class members. The discrimination at 24 Hour Fitness was widespread and the putative class members were often looked over for promotions, denied the same opportunities as their white male counterparts, and transferred to low grossing clubs where they were unable to earn enough commission. It was great to speak with the class members and assist the attorneys in providing relief for their claims.

I also had the opportunity to do background research and assist in interviewing a client who had been subjected to racial discrimination in a public school. The client had been under a lot of stress and had become the target of racial attacks in her city of residence. I learned a lot from my research and I greatly enjoyed working with the client and providing her with much needed support.

In addition to my work, one of the highlights of this summer was meeting former California Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso during an event organized by MALDEF in his honor.

Justice Reynoso was the first Latino to be appointed to the High Court of California and he has had a remarkable career in civil rights. His unwavering commitment to social justice, his continued involvement in the community, and his passion for mentorship are a true inspiration.

MALDEF is known as “the law firm for the Latino community” and it was an honor to work there this summer. I am very passionate about issues of social justice and it meant a lot to me to be able to work with some of the leading attorneys on issues of great significance to my community.

I am also extremely thankful for the support of EJA. Pursuing a public interest career can be a challenge for students who cannot rely on their family members for financial support. The EJA Summer Fellowship is an invaluable resource because it enables more of us to serve our communities and pursue careers in public interest law. Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,

Rosa Erandi Zamora  
J.D. Candidate, 2011  
Columbia Law School



# **MALDEF**

**Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund**

September 10, 2010

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

Re: Evaluation of 2010 Fellow Rosa Erandi Zamora

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you for sponsoring the fellowship of Rosa Erandi Zamora, a summer law clerk in our office. As the Western Regional Counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) in Los Angeles, California, I helped to supervise Ms. Zamora's legal work. Ms. Zamora provided critical legal assistance in a variety of matters.

Ms. Zamora assisted me in a race discrimination investigation for a public school student. She researched potential state law claims and the administrative procedure for filing a complaint with various governmental entities. Her legal research was thorough and her legal memorandum was well-organized and clearly written. She provided me with the information I needed to evaluate the client's legal options. In addition, she assisted me in interviewing the client. She was able to identify gaps in factual information and to solicit the information necessary to fill those gaps. She was diligent in following up with the client to gather additional background as questions arose after our review of the evidence. Ms. Zamora was very reliable and provided very quick responses to additional requests for research as new questions arose.

Ms. Zamora also conducted legal research related to a class action employment discrimination lawsuit against 24 Hour Fitness. She researched options for seeking monetary damages for the plaintiffs in the case. She also interviewed potential plaintiffs who contacted MALDEF to determine their eligibility to join the lawsuit as plaintiffs and the strength of their claims. She performed these tasks with professionalism and diligence.

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In addition, Ms. Zamora participated in several presentations we organized with prominent Latino legal leaders. She participated in a lunch discussion with California Supreme Court Justice Carlos Moreno. She visited federal district court Judge James Otero's chambers for a discussion of the hearings she had observed in his courtroom. She also participated in a video presentation on the life of former California Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso entitled "Sowing the Seeds of Justice" and participated in a discussion forum with Justice Reynoso after the video. In addition, she participated in a presentation by our attorneys on the legal issues in the challenge to Arizona's SB 1070 law and a meeting with our President and General Counsel, Thomas Saenz.

Ms. Zamora was an important member of our legal team and made substantial contributions to our legal work last summer. We are grateful for the opportunity you provided to her to work in our office. Should you wish to speak with me further, please contact me at (213) 629-2512, ext. 121.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Ramirez". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Sincerely yours," text.

Nancy Ramirez  
Western Regional Counsel