

August 30, 2006

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I want to say thank you to you and Equal Justice America for your generous sponsorship of my internship with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. My summer fellowship proved to be a challenging and rewarding experience for me as a future public interest lawyer.

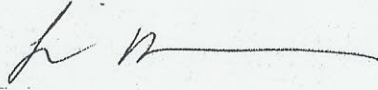
The Lawyers' Committee undertakes a broad range of cases concerning a myriad of civil rights issues. This summer, I worked on behalf of homeless individuals who received citations for sleeping in public, an individual who was prevented from attending a job fair based on his nationality, and refugees from various parts of the world seeking asylum in the United States. Through these clients, I gained exposure to the social and cultural landscape of the Bay Area, and learned much about the benefits and challenges of working on civil rights issues in a diverse urban area. The Lawyers' Committee clientele required me not only to draw from many areas of law, but also to broaden my range of counseling skills as I worked with people from various backgrounds.

More importantly, however, my summer experience challenged my perception of the social costs of civil rights violations. Too often, I hear civil rights lawyering described as an activity that concerns "others," such as ethnic minorities, impoverished or homeless individuals, or non-citizens. As I researched specific issues for impact litigation in the areas of voting rights and the desegregation of K-12 public schools, however, it became clear to me that we all have a stake in civil rights litigation. Everyone in the United States ought to have, among other things, the rights to quality education and democratic participation. It is in the best interest of all of us – regardless of our backgrounds – to work with those who have experienced deprivation and discrimination as partners in a common struggle.

The Lawyers' Committee was founded to advance the rights of people of color, poor people, and immigrants and refugees; at the same time, the organization manifests the philosophy that all Americans have an interest in challenging civil rights violations. As an individual who came to law school with dreams of being a public interest lawyer, it is important for me to work for an organization that demands my best efforts to be a client-centered advocate and to maintain my perception of clients as collaborators and

equals. Working with the Lawyers' Committee illustrated for me that such civil rights law practice is possible. I am deeply grateful for your support of this opportunity, which I hope will serve as an introduction to a lifelong career of working with clients from many backgrounds as a partner in advocacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabrina Balamwala', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sabrina Balamwala
American University Washington College of Law
Class of 2007