

August 31, 2014

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my appreciation for having been selected as an Equal Justice America Fellowship recipient this summer. My experience interning with Illinois Migrant Legal Assistance Project (IMLAP), a part of LAF-Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, has been very rewarding. Without EJA funding, I would not have had the opportunity to advocate on behalf of the hard working farmworkers who harvest the foods that end up on our tables.

As an IMLAP intern, I helped provide free legal services to migrant, seasonal, and H-2A farmworkers. This summer, I saw that farmworkers in this country face many challenges. These challenges include accessing public benefits, having to work in unsafe conditions, living in unsafe housing, immigration matters, and wage theft. Thanks to EJA, I worked directly with IMLAP's supervisory attorney to inform farmworkers about their rights and assist with their legal claims.

I worked with roughly fifty clients this summer. Many of my clients, like thousands of others, were recruited to come work in Illinois for the detasseling season. Detasseling is the process of preparing corn plants for cross-pollination by removing the tassel, the top part of a corn plant. One client in particular had a great impact on me; his name is Salvador. Salvador turned to IMLAP when he needed help accessing public benefits.

Salvador, a low paid migrant workers, applied for expedited SNAP Benefits (food stamps) to help make ends meet. Several weeks passed since Salvador applied for food stamps but he had yet to receive his benefits. He turned to IMLAP for assistance. During my time with Salvador, he would share his stories of working long hours in the field, his desire to support his family, and wanting his children to have a better life. I was more than happy to translate inform, and helped him obtain the food stamp card.

Again, I am grateful for EJA's support. Thanks to EJA, I helped empower the hardworking individuals who feed our nation.

Best Regards,
Santiago Del Real
DePaul University College of Law
Class of 2016