

August 31, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

This summer I had the opportunity to work with the Michigan Clinical Law Program (MCLP), which was a wonderful experience. Equal Justice America's support allowed me to get hands-on understanding of indigent defense and opened my eyes to the realities of poverty law; as a result, I am now more motivated to find ways to continue to work in this field.

I took the opportunity to work on a range of cases, including landlord-tenant, debt collection, prisoners' rights, and petty misdemeanors. There were also a variety of more minor research issues that we looked into for clients; I often found just as much satisfaction handling these issues, as they had an immediate impact upon the clients' everyday lives. For instance, the research I did regarding how to procure a birth certificate for a housebound client who was unable to simply request one from the Secretary of State was vital. While calling around to figure out the proper procedure and the appropriate agency may not be the most complex of tasks, the ID card that the research will hopefully enable her to get will make an immediate and positive impact on her life.

The MCLP is handling a prisoners' rights case that I spent a significant amount of time on, as well. We just filed the complaint at the end of the summer, and being able to research, contact potential plaintiffs, draft affidavits, and help on the complaint itself gave me unparalleled insight into the work required to simply file such a case, let alone see it through. My respect for the effort that attorneys put into such cases has grown immensely as a result.

I am extraordinarily grateful that I had the chance to do public interest work this summer. Not only did I gain valuable experience in the field, but I also saw how committed attorneys in this area can be. Services like the MCLP are invaluable to those who would otherwise be forced to forego representation due to financial difficulty, and the general sense of appreciation that clients expressed was gratifying. Equal Justice America's support for those who wish to gain experience in such fields is vital, and I am truly grateful that I had the chance to work with the MCLP and both expand my legal research and writing skills as well as counsel clients and appear in court. Having been exposed to so many practical aspects of practicing law is something that is irreplaceable, and Equal Justice America helped make it happen.

Sincerely,

Sarah Manley
J.D. Candidate, May 2014
University of Michigan Law School



PAUL D. REINGOLD
Director

625 S. State Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1215

CIVIL LITIGATION CLINIC

CRIMINAL DEFENSE CLINIC

August 20, 2012

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Re: Sarah Manley

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Sarah Manley has served as one of our summer interns for the past three months, funded in part by an EJA fellowship. I am writing to fulfill the requirements of her fellowship and to let you know that she did an excellent job.

We typically have 3-5 summer intern slots, and we hire using a quick-and-dirty method: we get a one-page letter and CV from 25-30 students, reduce that number down to 15-20 candidates based on the letter/CV, interview the students back-to-back in 10-minute blocks, and make a decision.

Sarah was an easy hire for her straightforward manner, her poise, and her good reasons for wanting to stay in Ann Arbor for the summer. She was a unanimous pick for the internship, and she quickly proved that we had made the right decision in choosing her. Sarah was fast on her feet, sharp, diligent, careful, mature, thoughtful, and easy to work with.

Unlike clinical students during the year – who first-chair their cases and are completely responsible for their own clients – our summer interns function somewhat more like law clerks. They support the faculty, who are trying to move the cases as efficiently as possible. Sarah not only played that role well, but she wanted to and was allowed to take a lot of responsibility for her cases. She worked closely with her clients, drafted pleadings and discovery, appeared in court, and generally stretched the role to get as much out of her internship as she could.

Sarah worked on several smaller cases like a state-court collection action and a senior citizen's issue, as well on some impact cases, including a challenge to Michigan's sex offender registration act in federal court, and a state-court challenge to a parole board policy that converts parolable life sentences to mandatory life sentences. She also took the lead on a parole re-entry project that arose out of a federal court case we did a few years back. Sarah had to interview the parolees and then (in suitable cases) advocate on their behalf to change their default conditions of parole, assigned by the board. She managed the database in addition to preparing the files and writing the advocacy letters to the board.

In sum, Sarah was an outstanding summer intern, and EJA's support helped the Michigan Clinical Law Program stay abreast of its cases and serve its clients during the summer 2012. Best wishes, and thanks for helping us to represent our clients and provide a great summer experience for our 1-L Sarah Manley.

September 23, 2009
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Clerkship Recommendation: Ryan Fuoss

Yours truly,

Paul D. Reingold
Director, and
Clinical Professor of Law