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August 31, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer I had the distinct pleasure of working with Mr. Scott Yousey, who I understand is a 2017 EJA fellow. Mr. Yousey spent the better part of ten weeks working in Public Counsel's Connecting Angelenos to Resources and Essential Services (CARES) program under my supervision as a summer law clerk. During that time, I observed Mr. Yousey make invaluable contributions to the CARES program and grow professionally. I am writing this letter to thank your organization for its support of Mr. Yousey in his summer placement, and to better explain the valuable work that he contributed to our mission.

CARES is a long-standing watchdog program in Los Angeles County which provides oversight in Los Angeles County Department of Social Services (DPSS) offices countywide. CARES provides on-site advocacy for individuals who are applying for, or trying to reinstate, county and state benefits like food-stamps and welfare. Essentially, CARES clerks train other law students on benefits, then supervise those students on advocacy outings in DPSS offices.

As a CARES clerk, Mr. Yousey had to master the basics of county benefits in the first two weeks of his clerkship. On just the second Friday of his clerkship, Mr. Yousey volunteered to co-conduct a three hour benefits training to a group of twenty summer law associates from various firms in Los Angeles. Mr. Yousey demonstrated competent and clear knowledge of the benefits, and did an excellent job training the summer associates. Thereafter, he co-led thirteen trips into DPSS offices across the county, and conducted another three trainings. Mr. Yousey had a strong work ethic throughout, becoming fluent with the myriad benefits in Los Angeles County and an expert on DPSS policies and practices.

Since DPSS offices administrate benefits of last resort (cash aid and food stamps), CARES work also heavily involves working with the most vulnerable and underserved populations in Los Angeles. This work can be difficult and emotionally taxing and can sometime result in compassion fatigue. Mr. Yousey remained an ardent and invested advocate for the individuals he served on his outings. On one occasion, I personally observed Mr. Yousey assist a woman who was going into diabetic shock, helping her clearly

*Past Chairperson

communicate her needs to DPSS which alleviated the situation. Through his help, the woman was able to avoid a trip to the hospital she could not afford, and was able to complete her application for benefits that day. This was just one example of Mr. Yousey's work in the DPSS offices, but, needless to say, it was emblematic of his larger efforts.

In addition to his work in the CARES program, Mr. Yousey also volunteered his time and energy to take on additional research projects for various staff members at Public Counsel. Mr. Yousey completed several memos on issues that related specifically to the populations CARES serves, including an in-depth analysis of recently passed California legislation and its effects on traffic tickets. Mr. Yousey was the first to jump at opportunities to work on legal research and writing projects, but he also took advantage of voluntary brown bag lunches, trainings, and other community events when time permitted.

In short, Mr. Yousey was an invaluable member of the CARES clerks this summer. His work reflected the dedication to public interest that Public Counsel strives for. I would be happy to answer any other questions your organization may have about Mr. Yousey's summer placement. I thank you again for providing Mr. Yousey, and others like him, with the means to take on essential public interest work like CARES during their law school summers.

Sincerely,



Jack Meaney
Staff Attorney
Homelessness Prevention Law Project
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