

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

Dear Dan Ruben:

I spent my fellowship experience as a legal intern in the Housing Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services. I was drawn to GBLS for its unparalleled advocacy on behalf of low income and homeless members of the Greater Boston community. Throughout my internship I worked on eviction cases involving tenants in subsidized housing.

From my first week at GBLS I came to recognize the staff's vast experience on an incredible array of legal issues. From detailed knowledge of the most intricate regulations to the best strategies for navigating a trial, GBLS attorneys impressed me enormously with the depth of their legal wisdom. Over the course of my ten-week internship I have gained essential practical experience from being exposed to so many complex and instructive situations.

By far, my most treasured and rewarding experiences have come from working with and on behalf of clients to achieve the best possible outcome for their cases. At GBLS I first observed, and then learned for myself, how to tailor a legal strategy to suit a client's individual needs. Each client with whom I worked had their own unique set of circumstances, some of which were incredibly dire. All of our clients had very little to no income, and additional challenges – disabled children, pregnancy, mental and physical health issues, lack of access to a vehicle – only compounded the stresses of daily life. Add to all of these factors an eviction case, with the myriad obstacles and dizzying minutiae of the legal system, and it is easy to imagine the constant push and pull of our clients' ever-growing and ever-multiplying needs.

To be able to work to meet those needs, to address them as best we could, and to see and hear the relief from our clients once we were finished was an incredible privilege. This was why I originally decided to attend law school –to develop and hone the skills with which to address the needs of clients, particularly with the stakes so high. An eviction is not only a permanent stain on a client's record, but under certain federal programs it can forever bar a client from accessing subsidized housing in the future. These were considerations I kept at the forefront of my mind as I worked on each case. Every time we settled a case and our client was able to stay in their home, or we discovered while checking landlord rent calculations that the landlord owed our client a significant sum, or we convinced a landlord to agree to address poor conditions in our client's apartment, was a victory.

One of the most memorable and challenging cases of my internship was the one I took on my very first day at Greater Boston Legal Services. It began with me combing through pages upon pages of documents to determine if our client's rent portion had been calculated properly going back years into the tenancy. Ultimately, I discovered a number of miscalculations and determined that a significant amount of money was owed to our client. I composed a letter to

opposing counsel detailing these findings and contacted our client to let them know all that was being done on their behalf. To be able to speak to the client after over a month of working on their case was truly incredible – I could finally put a voice to all the numbers, spreadsheets, and documents. I will never forget the connections that I made with our clients, and the work that I did on their behalf.

This was a wonderful summer experience and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity.

Sincerely,
Dana N. Bach
University of Pennsylvania Law School '18



GREATER BOSTON
LEGAL SERVICES
...and justice for all

Dan Ruben, Esq.
Equal Justice America
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Midlothian, VA 23112

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO KATIE@EQUALJUSTICEAMERICA.ORG

August 30, 2016

Dear Ms. Ruben:

I am writing to evaluate the fellowship of Dana Bach, University of Pennsylvania Law School Class of 2018. Dana worked in the Housing Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services during the summer of 2016, and it was my immense pleasure to act as her supervisor for that time.

Dana worked with me exclusively on eviction defense for families facing non-payment evictions from subsidized housing. The work is fast-paced, stressful, often technical, and emotionally challenging. Many of our clients face limitations that complicate our work with them. In this challenging work environment, Dana excelled in every task assigned to her, including client interviewing, case review and analysis, factual investigation, legal research, writing, and case management.

Perhaps most impressive was Dana's unassuming confidence in completing any task requested. When given an assignment, she never balked or expressed nervousness, as can be very common with law students in their first internship. Rather, she willingly took on any challenge, asked appropriate questions to receive guidance as needed, and worked with great diligence and attention to detail to complete the task.

Dana also had a remarkable ability to develop rapport with clients, putting them at ease in discussing their cases with her at length. Her practicality, nonjudgmental attitude, and comfort with even traumatic subject matter were instrumental to her work with clients.

Over the course of her internship, Dana's largest project was an analysis of four years' worth of rent calculations for a client living in federally subsidized housing. Dana was assiduous in tracking down the necessary documentation, following up with the (very difficult to reach) client for clarification regarding details, and analyzing the many details of a very complicated financial picture. She grasped the complexities of the relevant federal program with amazing speed and was able to work quite independently on this project. She identified more than \$1,000 in overcharges over the course of the four preceding years and wrote a thorough memorandum to opposing counsel discussing the rent calculation errors.

Dana also engaged in legal research regarding the relationship between guardianship law and landlord-tenant law in Massachusetts, including participating in conversations about ethical issues raised by a guardianship. Her research was instrumental to my analysis of the risks and strategy in the case, but as a legal services attorney I was even more impressed by her accepting attitude towards a number of issues that complicated the case, including histories of psychiatric hospitalization, removal of children from the home, addiction, domestic violence, and other criminal charges.

I deeply appreciate Dana's contributions this summer and the EJA funding that made her work possible. I would be very happy to provide any additional information that might be helpful to you.

Yours,

Laura Massie