

August 31, 2015

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben:

I am writing this letter to thank you for awarding me the Equal Justice America Fellowship. The EJA Fellowship allowed me to spend the summer working for Greater Boston Legal Services in the Immigration Unit. The internship was exactly the kind of work that I wanted to be doing this summer, because I already had a prior interest in helping immigrants from my work as an ESL teacher before law school.

During my summer at GBLS, I worked with clients from a variety of countries, such as Ghana, India, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Many of the cases I worked on were asylum cases. The clients had fled from terrible situations, including religious persecution, female genital mutilation, gang violence, ethnic strife, etc. However, they maintained a strong faith in humanity, even though they had seen some very negative actions perpetrated by other human beings. They remained hopeful about new opportunities in the United States, and many even had dreams of helping others who had gone through similar struggles. The clients' determination was truly inspiring. As the clients described how safe and happy they felt to be in the United States, I felt glad that I was doing work to help them be able to remain here.

Because my internship was only eleven weeks, I was not able to see a case the whole way through. However, I did see asylum cases at all different stages, and I do feel that I got a good sense of the typical procedures involved in an asylum case. I interviewed clients, compiled document supplements with annotated indices, researched country conditions, and attended an asylum interview. Unfortunately, I did not see a case go to immigration court, which I think would have been very interesting, but I am hoping to see the immigration court process in the fall when I will work in BU's Immigration Clinic.

In addition to asylum cases, I worked with one client who applied for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. For other clients, I assisted in the preparation of applications for extension of status, extension of employment authorization, and other applications. I also saw the intersection between family law and immigration law when I went to the Family Law Court with my supervising attorney to help a mother get temporary legal custody for her child who was also an immigrant.

I am grateful that I had the opportunity to work at Greater Boston Legal Services. My work there was very fulfilling, and I enjoyed working with the clients. I learned a lot during the summer that will help me in my immigration law classes and clinic this fall, as well as in my career in the future.

Sincerely,
Valerie Russell
Boston University School of Law
Class of 2017

Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic
of
Greater Boston Legal Services, Inc.
and
Harvard Law School

Deborah Anker
Faculty Director
Nancy Kelly
Clinical Supervisor/Senior Attorney
Jane Rocamora
Clinical Supervisor/Senior Attorney

John Willshire Carrera
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August 31, 2015

Mr. Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
Building II - Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Valerie Russell, Equal Justice Fellowship at Greater Boston Legal Services, Summer, 2015

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am a Clinic Supervisor for the Harvard Clinic and a senior staff attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services. I had the great pleasure of supervising Valerie Russell, a rising second year law student, this summer during her internship at the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic. Our office represents immigrants seeking status in the U.S. who are unable to pay for legal representation. Our priorities include representing those seeking asylum, defensively or affirmatively; unaccompanied immigrant minors; immigrants fleeing domestic violence, inflicted when in the U.S. or abroad; and immigrants who are victims of certain crimes committed in the U.S.

During her time here, Valerie worked on several affirmative asylum cases. She scheduled appointments with the clients and compiled memos containing the information learned from interviewing the applicants. She was able to use her Spanish language skills to interview in Spanish, and her language skills were a wonderful help during the entire summer. In one of our newer cases, she began drafting a declaration for an affirmative asylum application.

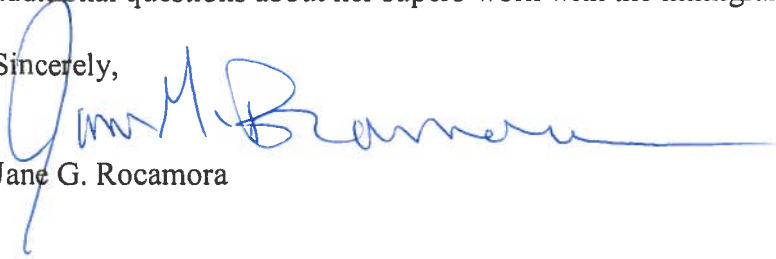
Valerie also compiled draft document supplements for two, affirmative asylum cases, including an annotated index for each. Her research included a focus on the relevant human rights conditions in El Salvador and in Guinea, the countries from which the applicants were fleeing. After determining them relevant, Valerie also translated legal documents and newspaper articles for use in the case of a woman fleeing persecution from El Salvador. Finally, Valerie attended an asylum interview and wrote a memorandum with the questions asked and answered during the affirmative process.

In addition to her work on asylum cases, Valerie assisted clients in the preparation of applications for extension of status and extension of work authorization. She also assisted in a hearing in the Probate and Family court, where a mother sought sole custody of her daughter to protect her from the abuse and neglect of the father. During the course of the proceedings, we also sought an order relevant for a Special Immigrant Juvenile petition that would be filed on behalf of the daughter. Once orders issued from state court, Valerie

prepared and assisted in the filing of the immigration petition for the daughter.

Valerie has told me that she plans to continue studying immigration law in the fall semester at Boston University School of Law, and she plans to continue to help immigrants throughout her life. We are so lucky to have been able to work with her this summer because of your funding. Please let me know if you have additional questions about her superb work with the immigrants we are so lucky to represent in this office.

Sincerely,



Jane G. Rocamora