

August 31, 2012

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building II, Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 2311

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to thank you and your entire organization, Equal Justice America, for providing me with the financial support to complete my first summer internship at The Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Practice as a law student at New York University School of Law.

Ever since I began considering a career in law, I have known I was interested in working in the juvenile justice field. Working at the Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Practice in Manhattan this summer gave me an opportunity to deeply explore the opportunities and realities of working in juvenile defense. I performed legal research, interviewed young clients, performed investigative work, and drafted motions. In addition, I had the incredible opportunity to have informal lunches with actors from all sides of the family court process—judges, prosecutors, social workers, and even an FBI special agent who worked on cases involving inter-state human trafficking. As a Legal Aid intern, I was also able to tour numerous facilities involved in the juvenile justice world, including detention facilities and therapeutic foster boarding homes. Exposure to all of the different facets of the juvenile justice field, combined with dedicated research, motion drafting, and feedback from my supervising attorneys was an unspeakably valuable experience for me this summer, one which I could not have achieved without help from Equal Justice America.

Two highlights of the summer stand out for me. The first was a case involving a young lady accused of being a juvenile delinquent. I did extensive legal research for the case, and co-wrote an order to show cause dismissing the case entirely on the grounds that the evidence provided by the prosecution was facially insufficient. The Judge agreed with our argument and analysis on all counts, dismissing the petition. It was highly satisfying to use my legal training to truly help a young person gain a second chance to do the right thing.

The second highlight of my summer was much less legally oriented, but for me it really cemented the idea that public service work can be rewarding and meaningful. I was sitting in on an interview with another young lady who has been in and out of the foster care system for years, and was at that time being held in the detention center of the Manhattan family court awaiting trial. When asked how her new foster home was working out, the young lady replied that things were going okay, but her new foster parents didn't let her do anything but sit inside, and she had

read all of the books they had in the house in a matter of days. Remembering that our office has a library of donated books to give to clients on home visits, I asked my supervising attorney if it would be okay for me to grab some books for this young lady. He said it was a great idea, and I asked her after the interview if she would like some more books, and what sort of genres she enjoyed. Her face lit up, and she excitedly told me what she liked to read: Romances, mysteries, adventures, and most importantly, the second book in the Twilight vampire romance series. I told her we probably didn't have anything like that, but I would do my best.

It turned out the collection of books we had was more robust than I expected. I returned to the detention center with a huge bag of books, including *The Secret Garden*, *Sherlock Holmes*, as well as the second *and* third books in the Twilight series. The look on her face when I handed her the bag full of books was just incredible. It astonished me how a little effort could make such a difference in the life of a struggling young person.

Equal Justice America, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve these young men and women this summer. I don't think anyone pursues a career in public service for the pay, but at the end of the day law students still need to pay rent and buy dinner. Your fellowship made it possible for me to work and learn without needing to worry about making ends meet. This is one of the greatest gifts you can give to a public interest law student.

Until next summer,

William A. Price

New York University School of Law

JD Candidate 2014