

Dan Ruben  
Executive Director, Equal Justice America

August 25, 2018

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I spent my summer working at LAF (formerly Legal Assistance Foundation). LAF provides services in a multitude of areas including housing, immigration, consumer benefits, public benefits, and children and families. I worked for the children and families practice group which provides support for family law and education law cases. I worked with the family law division which provides services for divorce, parental decision making (formerly custody), and orders of protection for survivors of domestic violence.

I spent ten weeks at LAF assisting people with their divorces. I spent most of my summer writing pleadings for divorce cases including marital settlement agreements and allocation of parental responsibility agreements. One of the best parts of my summer was the ability to stand up in court. I had my 711 license which provided me the opportunity to go to court alone for statuses and simple motions. My favorite part standing up in court was being able to do prove-ups. A prove-up is the final step in a divorce where the parties prove to the judge verbally that they have resolved all issues within the divorce including issues of spousal support, dividing marital property and debts, and figuring out allocation of parental responsibilities.

One case that was particularly impactful for me this summer was a case concerning a Hague Petition. This type of case typically happens when one parent retains or removes a child across international borders. I did the initial intake for this petition and we accepted the case, conducted two depositions, wrote our answer and motions, and put together all the materials for trial in under a week. This was a whirl-wind of a case and fortunately the judge found in our favor. It gave me great experience to see a case from beginning to end as well as what a bench trial at the federal level looks like. I also learned about a new area of law in under a week. My supervisor allowed me a great amount of responsibility in the case and I truly felt like a member of the team.

I enjoyed working at LAF over the summer. I have always had an interest working to help children and families and this internship just reaffirmed my desire to work in the public interest sector. I was able to learn more about family law, improve my legal skills, and network with a group of fantastic attorneys. I am grateful for the financial support that Equal Justice America provides so that law students like myself are able to pursue a career in public interest.

Sincerely,  
Jaclyn Ellwein  
Loyola University Chicago School of Law  
J.D. Candidate of 2019



Equal justice starts here.

August 10, 2018

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

Re: Jaclyn Ellwein Summer Internship Evaluation

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am pleased to write to you to evaluate Jaclyn Ellwein's fellowship with LAF in Summer 2018. It was a pleasure to have her with us. This summer, Jaclyn worked with me in the Children and Families Practice Group of LAF. The majority of my cases are divorces in which there is real property involved. Jaclyn assisted me in court appearances, drafting pleadings and motions, drafting discovery, and doing client outreach and interviews, among other tasks. Jaclyn tackled each project with thoughtfulness and care, and her work product was always excellent. She worked independently, but she also always knew when to ask the questions necessary to complete her projects successfully. Jaclyn is particularly excellent at client and witness interviewing, possessing the inquiry skills, patience and empathy necessary to build rapport and obtain the critical information we need to best serve our clients.

In one particular case, Jaclyn was truly a co-equal and indispensable member of our team. We took on a Hague Convention custody petition case – our client's husband was attempting to have the parties' children sent to his home country despite having spent their entire lives here in the United States. We agreed to represent the client only five days before the hearing date. We got the hearing extended one week, and in that time, Jaclyn interviewed our client and all of our potential witnesses, helped me prepare for our client's deposition and her husband's deposition, helped us draft the answer to the petition, prepared witness outlines and prepared all of our exhibits. She participated fully in the hearing – counseling our client, shepherding witnesses, and anticipating our needs.

Please contact me if you have any questions about Jaclyn's excellent work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TASullivan", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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