

August 31, 2018

Dan Ruben  
Executive Director  
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben,

This past summer I worked at East Bay Community Law Center (“EBCLC”) in Berkeley, California. There I participated in community outreach and one-on-one client meetings. I worked with two clients in their affirmative asylum applications. After interviewing the clients, I was able to draft a declaration from scratch and was able to edit another declaration keeping in mind the changes after Matter of A-B was decided. I represented one of the clients in her master calendar hearing at Immigration Court. Finally, I researched and drafted country conditions reports to prove the clients’ inability to relocate within their home countries in respect to their past/future persecution.

EBCLC allowed me to work in an area of law that I had little to no experience in and assigned me two clients that made my time at EBCLC such a rewarding experience. I gained knowledge in asylum law with the help of the attorneys’ training sessions. This enabled me to be a better advocate to my assigned clients. The beauty of working with these two clients was that I was able to develop a relationship with them. At first, it was a question of how was I going to get these teenagers to open up to someone who they did not know. The answer was to build a trustworthy relationship with each one. The connections I developed with each one allowed me to dive into their story, which helped me better serve them.

One of my clients was a high school student seeking asylum based on the fear of persecution in his home country because of his sexual orientation. When I first met him, I thought to myself how am I going to get this teenager to open up to me when his whole demeanor screams that he was quiet and shy. I knew I had to show him that I was here to genuinely help him and be his advocate. I established that I was going to be transparent with him in what I need from him and what every appointment will consist of. This helped tremendously in him opening up to me, which enabled me to draft his declaration, country conditions report, and prepare his asylum application.

One particular event I will never forget, and that I am so grateful to have been given such an opportunity, was representing someone at Immigration Court. I prepped my unaccompanied minor for her master calendar hearing and told her the importance of not missing her hearing. When the day of her hearing arrived, I was a ball of nerves, but thankfully I had my supervisor, Mindy, supporting me every step of the way. I entered the courtroom and next thing you know it was over. My client could not believe it went by so fast. She was extremely happy everything went well. The process of being inside the courtroom and sitting in the counsel’s chair made me awestruck. It was such an incredible experience and it reaffirmed that immigration law is the area of law I want to practice in in the future.

None of the work I did could have been accomplished if it was not for my clients having the courage to open up to someone who they did not know. I am so extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to help in any way I could. Thank you to EJA for supporting my internship at EBCLC.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Parada  
University of La Verne College of Law  
J.D. Candidate, Class of 2020



August 30, 2018

Equal Justice America

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Mindy Phillips and I am a staff attorney at the East Bay Community Law Center ("EBCLC") in Berkeley, CA. EBCLC provides free legal services to low-income residents in Alameda County. I was Priscilla Parada's supervising attorney for summer 2018.

Priscilla represented a high school student seeking asylum based on the fear of persecution in El Salvador because of his sexual orientation. She drafted his declaration, gathered supporting documentation, researched asylum eligibility and country conditions for El Salvador, and prepared his asylum application for filing. If successful, Priscilla's client will receive permanent legal status in the United States, enabling him to pursue his professional and educational goals as a young adult. In addition, Priscilla worked with an unaccompanied minor from Guatemala to assist her with her asylum application and access sexual assault support services. Finally, Priscilla conducted outreach to connect clients to much-needed post-conviction relief services to mitigate the immigration consequences of prior criminal convictions and to provide Know Your Rights information and consultations for legal relief.

Priscilla exhibited excellent interpersonal skills, building strong and effective relationships with clients in a short amount of time. She demonstrated sound judgment and instincts in identifying legal issues and evaluating options. Priscilla persuasively presented her clients' stories in her written work and consistently exhibited empathy and understanding of her clients' challenges, both legal and non-legal.

Priscilla will make an excellent attorney, zealous advocate, and invaluable colleague. It was a pleasure to supervise Priscilla, and I look forward to her bright future as an attorney. Please contact me if you have any questions at 510-548-4040 or [mphillips@ebclc.org](mailto:mphillips@ebclc.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mindy Phillips", written in a cursive style.

Mindy Phillips  
Staff Attorney