

August 27, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am so grateful to you and Equal Justice America for helping to fund my summer clerkship at Southern Migrant Legal Services (SMLS) in Nashville, TN. Southern Migrant Legal Services is a project of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid that provides legal assistance and representation to farmworkers in Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, and Arkansas.

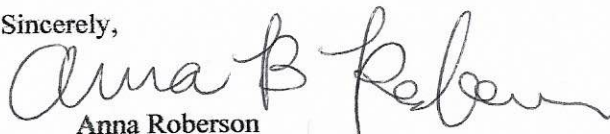
During my clerkship, I worked closely with staff attorneys to draft research memoranda, perform client intakes, and investigate new cases. Through this research and observation, I became familiar with the laws that can be used to protect and assert the rights of agricultural workers, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, state and federal antidiscrimination law, and the H-2A guest worker regulations. By participating in intakes and observing final settlement proceedings in an ongoing case, I was able to see how our attorneys work with the Department of Labor and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to hold growers and employers accountable for violations of the above-mentioned laws.

While assisting in the investigation of a newly pending case, I had the opportunity to interview several clients repeatedly in order to understand the context, background, and facts of their potential claims against their employer. As our internal investigations progressed, I researched and wrote memos to my supervising attorney regarding the contours of a claim for forced labor trafficking under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA), conducted analysis of state contract and torts claims based on the facts of the case, and drafted an assessment of potential damages and how to prove them under relevant state law. Through this research, I learned about employment law with depth and precision, and further cultivated the research and writing skills that were introduced to me during my first year of law school.

Perhaps the most unique part of my clerkship with SMLS was the opportunity to accompany the outreach paralegals on outreach trips within our six-state service area. On these trips, the paralegals meet with farmworkers to provide valuable information to this often-isolated population about their employment rights and available resources. Additionally, outreach trips are full of meetings with community members and local business owners who serve the migrant farmworker community. As I participated in outreach to fruit and vegetable workers in Mississippi and Alabama specifically, I was able to see a small glimpse of the hardships faced by guest workers and undocumented farmworkers in the Southern United States. I came to appreciate the importance of building long-term relationships with community members and building "confianza," or trust, little by little with groups whose working lives are often marked by exploitation and fear. Beyond that, I learned a huge amount about how our crops are cultivated and harvested—the different phases of a tomato or tobacco season, the ways that climate change has affected the flow of the peach season, and the sheer speed required of blueberry and watermelon workers who must harvest all of the fruit before it rots.

The work I've completed, the mentorship I've been provided, and the clients that I have served this summer have affirmed my intention to work in public interest law. Thank you again for your generosity and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Anna B Roberson". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial "A" and a stylized "B".

Anna Roberson

University of Texas School of Law, Class of 2020

# SOUTHERN MIGRANT LEGAL SERVICES

A PROJECT OF TEXAS RIOGRANDE LEGAL AID, INC.

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August 24, 2018

Via email [emma@equaljusticeamerica.org](mailto:emma@equaljusticeamerica.org)

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

## **Re: Evaluation of Anna Roberson's EJA supported fellowship**

Dear Emma and Equal Justice America:

We are grateful to Equal Justice America for supporting the summer internship of law student Anna Roberson in our office this summer. She was exceptional in her work and contributed significantly to our office and to justice for migrant farmworkers in the South.

Anna worked on a variety of projects at various stages of the legal process. Anna conducted new client intakes, interviewing farmworker applicants in Spanish and English, and conveying information to attorneys for legal analysis. She also conducted follow-up interviews with existing clients, both to convey legal advice as dictated by a staff attorney or to obtain additional facts or other information needed to advance the client's case. Anna also conducted educational know-your-rights outreach to farmworkers in several states.

In addition to her client interactions, Anna contributed greatly to our office's legal work. Anna authored several legal research memoranda, including a lengthy case analysis that applied facts she and others had gathered to various legal theories, including human trafficking and discrimination, in order to determine which claims for relief were viable for the clients. She also drafted a damages memo, analyzing the potential damages for the clients under each claim. Anna helped coordinate the filing of a new lawsuit, including communicating with the clients to finalize the federal complaint and discussing legal strategy with our attorneys before filing. Anna also coordinated with our clients to receive settlement documents, ensuring that the documents were received and returned without issue, in time for a court deadline. She participated fully in our weekly staff meetings and eagerly assisted with anything that was asked of her.

We absolutely loved working with Anna. She is a pleasure to be around. She had a wonderful attitude and was clearly interested and engaged in the work we do. The quality of Anna's work product was among the best I have seen from a law intern, especially considering she is only in her first year. I was especially impressed with Anna's ability to communicate clearly and compassionately with our clients, which she was able to do with very limited training and instruction. I've almost never seen that. We had the utmost confidence in Anna's ability to do the assignments we gave her and had no qualms about entrusting her with important responsibilities. She enthusiastically pitched in with whatever was asked of her, and performed her work with such ease that we often forgot she was only a 1L.

Thank you again for making it possible for Anna to intern in our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Caitlin Berberich", with a stylized, cursive script.

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Caitlin Berberich  
Managing Attorney