

August 31, 2010

Dan Ruben, Executive Director  
Building II - Suite 204  
13540 East Boundary Road  
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to thank Equal Justice America for providing generous funding for my co-op internship with Greater Boston Legal Services this past summer, where I had the opportunity to work in the Health and Disability Unit. I entered law school with the intention of pursuing public interest law, specifically in the area of health law, and this internship experience provided me with great insight into the important services offered by legal aid organizations.

While working under the supervision of attorney Nancy Lorenz, my time at GBLS focused primarily on Social Security disability cases as well as Medicare and Medicaid access issues. Because GBLS primarily serves the underprivileged, I quickly came to better understand how poverty brings upon a myriad of obstacles for disabled individuals who are contending with health problems as well as difficulty making ends meet. Many of our clients who had been denied social security benefits faced homelessness and hunger, yet were too debilitated to hold jobs. Similarly, those clients who had difficulty accessing Medicare and Medicaid were unable to obtain necessary medications and medical services. I found that while an outstanding medical bill of a few hundred dollars may not keep some people up at night, or that a few hundred dollars in cash assistance may not make a huge difference to someone with a steady job and income; for those living in poverty, a few hundred dollars may be the difference between being able pay rent and take care of one's family or not.

My work at GBLS allowed me the opportunity to communicate one-on-one with clients to better understand their problems and determine the best ways to help them access the benefits to which they were entitled. I especially appreciated having the opportunity to become more comfortable with direct client contact and found it immensely rewarding to be able to offer solutions to the problems our clients faced. In some cases I worked to help clients initiate their applications for benefits, while in others I was involved in working through appeals processes. Because Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid primarily involve issues of statutory law, I believe that I gained valuable research skills and have a better understanding of how to apply regulations and guidelines in these areas of law.

My experience at GBLS has given me a clearer understanding of the obstacles posed by poverty and the difficulty experienced by the poor in accessing health care, social services and the legal system. Poverty serves to make complicated problems even more complex, and my internship experience has made clear the important role legal services organizations serve in our communities.

Again, I appreciate Equal Justice America's help in making this experience possible for me. My

work with Greater Boston Legal Services has definitely reinforced my intention to pursue a public interest law career and I feel fortunate to have had the valuable exposure to this area of law this past summer.

Sincerely,

Ashley Jones-Pierce  
Northeastern University School of Law '12

  
GREATER BOSTON  
LEGAL SERVICES  
*...and justice for all*

September 17, 2010

Dan Ruben  
Executive Director  
Equal Justice America

Re: Ashley Jones-Pierce

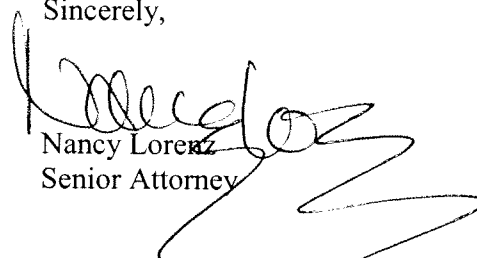
Dear Mr. Ruben,

Ashley Jones-Pierce interned in the Health Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services from June 1, 2010 through August 13, 2010. She assisted in the representation of clients in administrative proceedings before the Social Security Administration concerning disability benefits. Her work in this area included interviewing clients, factual investigation, evidence gathering, research, legal analysis, and assisting in hearing preparation. She also worked on a number of health care access issues including MassHealth eligibility, Medicare coverage of CPAP machines and parenteral feeding, sources of coverage for outstanding medical bills, and an appeal to the Office of Patient Protection concerning a managed care plan's denial of out-of-state treatment. She researched and drafted a demand letter concerning a defective COBRA notice which was successful in obtaining COBRA coverage for the client.

Ms. Jones-Pierce's work was thorough, complete and professionally competent. She worked well on her own, knew when to ask for guidance, followed directions and exhibited good judgment. A number of the case she worked on required obtaining information and documentation from reluctant or uncooperative sources. She was remarkably persistent in pursuing this information.

It was a pleasure to supervise Ashley. She showed responsibility from the moment that she was assigned cases. She was punctual, she worked hard on her cases and she was resourceful in dealing with clients who were difficult to find and interview. Her work at GBLs this past summer was invaluable to the Health Unit and to our clients. Her presence enabled us to serve clients who would have otherwise gone unrepresented, increasing access to health care and subsistence benefits for these individuals. We truly appreciate the funding from Equal Justice America that made her internship possible.

Sincerely,

  
Nancy Lorenz  
Senior Attorney