

Gabriel U. Labbé

August 10, 2015

Dan Ruben
Founder/Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Dan Ruben:

I am writing to express my appreciation for the funding provided by Equal Justice America, which enabled me to intern at Greater Boston Legal Services in the Elder, Health, and Disability Unit. Given that GBLS is both underfunded and understaffed, the attorneys at GBLS greatly appreciated the range of services I was able to provide. My work at GBLS focused on appellate level healthcare coverage and access claims to the Social Security Appeals Board and the U.S. District Court. For example, I conducted legal research and even drafted part of a complaint we served in District Court on behalf of a diabetic client for whom MassHealth refused to cover the use and purchase of a Blood Glucose Monitor.

The most memorable client was severely disabled and had a very complex legal case, requiring substantial work for my entire time at GBLS. The client had lost disability benefits due to age and had no way to pay for basic necessities. I met with, interviewed, and assisted in scheduling medical services and transportation needs for the client. After reviewing over six hundred pages of medical records and again meeting with the client, and even some of his family members, I conducted legal research and filed the appeal. Hopefully, because of the range of services I was able to provide, which addressed both his medical and legal needs, the client will again be able to experience a much-improved quality of life.

In addition to appellate level work, I was able to assist the Elder, Health, and Disability Unit with client-intakes and calls; legal research and writing for client legal questions and court filing; closing cases and remedying ongoing cases; interviewing and filing forms and filings on behalf of clients; and administrative tasks. I was even able to organize a folder of legal templates, checklists, and training information for common healthcare legal issues and questions for future interns and attorneys seeking to quickly remedy issues or file motion or complaint in court.

My experience and trainings at GBLS has provided the resources to continue assisting clients who have been unfairly denied healthcare coverage for necessary medical products and services at the administrative level. Drawing from my experience, I have applied to fellowships and other volunteer programs in order to continue working in public health. Based on my experience at GBLS, I would strongly encourage other students to take advantage of this Fellowship offered by Equal Justice America to perform public interest work.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Labbe
Northeastern University School of Law, Fall 2016
Tufts University School of Medicine, Fall 2016