

Hello Equal Justice America staff:

I am sending this email, per your request, as an evaluation of Hilary Deignan's EJA-funded summer internship under my supervision. Hilary worked full time in our office from May 18 – July 31, 2015. Hilary's work included being a primary case handler, as well as assisting with legal work on some of my cases, in the poverty law areas of Elder Law, Housing Law, and Mental Health & Disability Rights Law for adults and children with psychiatric disabilities.

Hilary did exemplary quality legal work throughout her internship. She is extremely well organized, demonstrates great attention to detail, and is adept at juggling multiple tasks/responsibilities simultaneously (she is a terrific multi-tasker!). Hilary did excellent legal research and research about resources and services for our clients.

Hilary was especially impressive in working compassionately and patiently with multiple clients who had very challenging psychiatric and behavioral disabilities, while setting appropriate limits (which is often required in our work). Hilary was always respectful with all of our clients, and easily developed good rapport with all of the clients she worked with. Hilary's previous clinical experience in working with adults with cognitive disabilities was particularly useful in some of our cases this summer.

Additionally, in multiple cases, Hilary was working with clients who speak little or no English, and she demonstrated great skill and empathy in arranging suitable translation services to facilitate appropriate communications with her clients.

Hilary was undaunted about taking on case handling and research responsibilities in substantive areas which were new to her, and sometimes even new to me as her supervisor! For example, Hilary expertly represented a young boy in an Ethiopian family who was facing expulsion from his charter school for a behavioral infraction; Hilary plunged in and immediately learned the substantive area of school discipline law that applied to this legal circumstance, and expertly advocated to optimally protect this boy's educational rights. Similarly, while we were trying to assist an elderly veteran who was facing eviction from his subsidized housing for alcoholism-related behavioral lease violations, Hilary efficiently became knowledgeable about veterans' health care, substance abuse and housing resources which we could try to collaborate with in offering this elder as many helpful resources as possible. In another case, Hilary adeptly assisted in representing an elder who had been financially exploited by an adult daughter, and developed a small claims court complaint in which we are seeking reimbursement from that adult daughter for the funds that she misappropriated from her elderly mother while she was operating under the authority of a power of attorney document. In all of these cases, as well as a varied selection of other poverty law cases that Hilary handled, the quality of her legal work was uniformly excellent.

Hilary was a pleasure to work with and to supervise. She knows when to appropriately seek supervision or guidance, and receives suggestions and constructive feedback with ease. She was a lovely presence in the office, establishing nice camaraderie with all of our co-workers. Hilary also has a terrific sense of humor, which is always a great addition especially when we are dealing with challenging and stressful legal cases. We miss Hilary's presence in our office

already, and especially the excellent contributions she made to our legal work and our clients' circumstances.

As always, we deeply appreciate the financial support that Equal Justice America provides for countless interns who contribute indispensable resources to expand our office's poverty law work, and to the clients we serve.

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