

August 25, 2015

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I spent my summer working in the immigration unit at the Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) in Boston, MA. GBLS provides free legal assistance and representation of civil matters to hundreds of residents in the Boston and 31 surrounding cities and towns.

The immigration unit provides legal representation and advocates on behalf of low-income immigrants. The unit works with clients who are seeking permanent refuge from their countries. Many of these cases include clients who are escaping from domestic violence, political opposition and persecution, and gang violence. The goal of the unit is to work to enable clients to become documented and to ultimately gain permanent legal status in the United States. My internship involved research on the countries that our clients were leaving, as well as compiling information on these countries and their conditions. I also was involved extensively with interviewing the clients and preparing them for any administrative hearings they may have.

My experience with one of my clients exemplified what I felt that GLBS strived to accomplish for their clients. This particular individual was from a country that was very stifling and oppressive in their government. Their governing party ruled all facets of her country, and if you were not a member of the governing party, you were treated badly. This individual felt that her country was not going in the right direction with this party, so she joined an opposing party that she felt wanted to improve the country. Eventually the other party found out about her affiliation, and after a few warnings by the police, they arrested her and tortured her in prison. She eventually was able to seek refuge in America, because the police had beaten her so badly, that she had to leave her country for medical reasons to seek more advanced treatment.

I worked with this client by interviewing her and getting the full story. Her experiences had caused her severe PTSD, so it took many attempts at working with her to make her comfortable enough to speak about her story. I did extensive research on her country to show that her experiences were not rare, and that if she were to go back, she would be killed. A week before my internship finished, she had an interview with the immigration officer. I was able to sit in on the interview and see that way that these interviews are conducted. Luckily, I am coming back to GBLS for the fall quarter, so I will be able to see the decision that the immigration offices make on her case. Though citizens of the United States hear on the news

constantly about immigration, it was a different and eye-opening experience to see and be involved with the process of working with clients that are looking for status in the US. It is a long and emotional experience that I was lucky enough to be able to be apart of.

Sincerely,

Uchechi Durunna

Uchechi Durunna

Law School: Northeastern University School of Law
Anticipated Year of Graduation: 2016