

To: Dan Ruben
Executive Director,
Equal Justice America.

Mr. Ruben,

It is with mixed feelings that I write this letter to you, recapping my experience as the EJA Summer Fellow. The last few months since the beginning of the summer has been quite a legal experience, after I was offered the EJA fellowship position at the UDC Law Housing Clinic. Although I understand that ending the internship is inevitable and it is a bit sad to leave, it is also necessary to move forward in my legal career. Internships are usually viewed as a way for students to stand out of the crowd in a particular practice, to future employers. Often considered a sacrifice of social time for future gains, internships are expected to be something that students must do, but not necessarily want to do. Though it is good to be able to use past experiences to generate job offers, however, I wanted my internships to mean much more than just that. I felt that although I only had the position for a few months, I could still make a huge difference in someone's life, because sometimes a few months makes all the difference in the world. I also decided to make note of all the things that I would like to accomplish by the end of the summer, keeping in mind the areas that were my weakest. Working at improving in these areas would make me a more effective attorney, both during law school, and after graduating. For instance, I knew that I wanted to get better in researching since this was not one of my stronger areas in law school. Another area that I wanted to improve on was my legal writing. As an undergraduate student I believed that I could write a paper without problems. However, legal writing is completely different, and from the writing courses that I did as a 1L, I knew that this area needed consistent practice for improvement.

Accordingly, I made my plans for this internship with all my goals in mind. What I gained however, was much more than I expected. I was able to draft legal documents, like summary judgement motions, Notices of Appearance, Briefs, and more. I was also able to conduct client interviews,

preparations for trial, correspondences with opposing counsel, negotiations, etc. Moreover, I appeared in court as student counsel for individuals who otherwise did not have representation. This was very important for me since there is a huge disparity among represented individuals in Landlord/Tenant Court here in D.C. Usually 95% of landlords are represented by counsel, and a mere 5% of tenants are usually represented by counsel. Everything that I did as an EJA Fellow came with feedback for capable supervisors, which allows me to work on the areas where I did not prove to be strong. I think my most memorable experience thus far, is actually working along with clients, to ensure the best possible outcome of each case. I have always been told that as attorneys, it is always

One of the cases that I worked on during the summer, was forwarded to us by the legal aid society. This case involved a young woman who was given notice to vacate after complaints were made against her by neighbors. The notice simply stated that the tenant (our client) violated the rules of her lease agreement. I recently drafted a summary judgment motion to file on behalf of our client for several reasons. The complaint was vague and did not state specifics about the alleged violations, in addition, the complaining witnesses were all anonymous, thus our client could not verify who made the claims against her. Lastly, there were contradictions in the dates and times in which our client was accused of violating the lease agreement, since she was either at work, or out with friends at the particular time. We are confident that the court would grant the motion for summary judgment in favor of our client.

It was a pleasure serving members of the DC community. My hope is that regardless of what area of law I choose to practice in, my passion for helping underserved individuals will continue to be my motivation.

Regards,

Marsha Williams

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Class of 2017