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November 29th, 2022

Dan Ruben
Executive Director, Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 201
13540 E. Boundary Rd.,
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Thank you

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My name is Isabella Eitner, and I was one of the students who had the privilege of participating as a student attorney in the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic with John Jay Legal Services at Elisabeth Haub School of Law. This experience was incredibly rewarding and so I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the opportunity.

As a law student with a disability, working in this clinic was a goal when I learned of it at Pace. The clinic truly challenged my own views of disability and enhanced my growth as a future attorney. I learned how to work with people with disabilities and their families in interviews, case planning strategies, client counseling, negotiations, and more. I realized that challenges that people with disabilities face every day are greater than what I originally thought them to be. I was able to build great relationships with my clients and fellow student attorneys this semester. The material I learned in our seminar allowed me to apply my knowledge and work hands on with the client rather than solely learning in the classroom.

I had the opportunity to research many New York laws pertaining to disability rights such as 17-A Guardianships, Supported-Decision Making, Child Support for an Adult Disabled Dependent, Health-Care Proxies, Powers of Attorney, wills, and more. I learned about government benefits such as SSI and SSDI and realized it can be difficult to receive these benefits while doing other meaningful life activities. I also came to learn that the government can take away these benefits just as they gave them, which is scary for clients. I was able to learn a lot about reasonable accommodations in housing as well. I believe society as a whole has a lot of work to do in moving toward inclusion for people with disabilities.

During the semester, I had approximately five clients and took on four cases. Two of them had to do with guardianships, one a health care proxy and/or power of attorney and another the creation of a pooled trust so the client could access her money without losing her government benefits. I even had the chance to go to the home of one of my clients to get court documents signed. It was rewarding to get to meet the client face-to-face considering the amount of contact I

had with that client on the phone and email. I could tell the client was grateful to the clinic and to meet us in person. This was extremely insightful as I saw where my client lived and her needs as a disabled person.

The clinic transformed my way of thinking and of the law. I want to contribute to making a change in the way those in the legal profession, and society as a whole, treat people with disabilities. I am so glad that I was able to participate in this clinic as a 2L. I will be forever thankful to Equal Justice America and will remember this experience throughout my career.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Isabella Eitner".

Isabella Eitner
Student Intern