

Faculty Supervisors

PATRICIA ANGLE
JONATHAN BROWN
ROBERT CISNEROS
DAVID N. DORFMAN
MARGARET M. FLINT
ROBIN FRANKEL
ERIN GLEASON ALVAREZ
JACK HORNICKEL
JANENE MARASCIULLO
TODD OMMEN
ANTON PRIBYSH
AMELIA WILSON

JOHN JAY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

ELISABETH HAUB SCHOOL OF LAW
80 NORTH BROADWAY
WHITE PLAINS, NY 10603
TEL 914-422-4333
FAX 914-422-4391
JJLS@LAW.PACE.EDU

Executive Director
TODD D. OMMEN

Clinic Administrator
ROBERT WALKER

Assistant

Clinic Administrator
JENNIFER RUHLE

Program Coordinator
KARINA PRIEGO

April 14, 2026

Mr. Dan Ruben, Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building 11, Suite 201
Midlothian, Virginia 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

We hope this letter finds you well. Our names are Crystal Torre, a 3L Flex part-time student, and Tiffany Burkett, a 3L full-time student at Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. This semester, we both had the privilege of participating in the Equal Justice America Disability Rights Clinic at John Jay Legal Services, Inc. and we are truly grateful for the experience.

We would both like to extend our heartfelt and sincere gratitude for your generous support of the Clinic. Your funding made it possible for us to participate in this transformative educational experience, which deepened our understanding of legal advocacy and client-centered representation. This experience will have a lasting impact on both of us not only as law students, but also as future advocates.

During our time in the Clinic, we worked closely with several clients that were facing complex disability-related issues. We had the opportunity to counsel clients, help them better understand their rights, and assist with important legal documents such as Wills, advice letters and informational memoranda. Beyond developing our legal skills, this work reminded us of the importance of empathy, patience and active listening, which are skills that we will carry with us throughout our careers. These skills are essential for effective lawyering but are not always cultivated in traditional classroom settings.

One client that made a lasting impact on us was a mother initially looking to explore a 17A Guardianship for her twenty-four-year-old son who was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Unfortunately, the son would stop taking his medicine and then become manic and a danger to himself and others. The mother wanted to know what she could do to ensure that her son was not only safe, but that he was medicated. The son was then admitted to an in-patient facility where the facility made application for an Assisted Outpatient Treatment ("AOT"), which was granted by the Court for one year. The mother then wanted us to help her understand what would happen after the one-year period. We researched and learned that the Assisted Outpatient Treatment ("AOT"), commonly referred to as "Kendra's Law", is a New York State program

under the Mental Hygiene Law §9.60. It provides community-based mental health services for individuals with severe mental illness who are unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision. It mandates community-based care, such as medication, therapy and case management, for those with histories of noncompliance, psychiatric hospitalization or violence towards themselves or others. From what we learned, near the end of the one year, the patient will be assessed again by the AOT Team. If it is determined to be necessary and beneficial, the AOT Order may be extended for another year. The annual assessments continue until the patient no longer needs the AOT Order. The mother was very grateful for our research and that we were able to provide a better understanding for her.

In the seminar portion of the Clinic, we participated in a variety of simulation exercises designed to refine our professional skills in a structured and supportive environment. These simulations included mock interviews, client counseling, negotiation simulations and Will drafting and execution simulations. With each simulation, we received valuable feedback from Professor Angley and our classmates, allowing us to reflect critically on our techniques and approaches and improve. This process has been instrumental in our development as future attorneys.

Most importantly, the clinic provided a rare and invaluable opportunity to serve members of the disability community in Westchester County while learning how to be more compassionate and effective advocates for individuals whose voices are often underrepresented. We are truly grateful for both this opportunity and your generosity, which made it possible for us and many other students. Your support has made a real difference in our education and in the communities that we hope to serve.

Thank you for investing and believing in the next generation of public interest and disability rights attorneys.

Sincerely,



Crystal Torre
Law Student Intern



Tiffany Burkett
Law Student Intern

cc: Patricia Angley, Supervising Attorney