

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

As my summer comes to an end, I write to express my overwhelming gratitude for the opportunity that my Fellowship has given me. I could not have imagined a better summer legal experience!

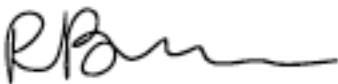
Working at the Empire Justice Center this summer has been an extremely helpful and exciting learning experience. Under the guidance of my supervisor, I learned the skills that will help me to succeed in law school and as an attorney. I was able to work on all parts of a case from start to finish, which improved my legal research and writing skills. I was given my own clients, which helped me to expand my communication skills. We had a huge caseload, so I was able to work on my time management and organizational skills as well.

I worked primarily in the Health Law Unit, providing direct legal services to low-income clients in the community with health related legal issues. Throughout the summer I was able to help people get out of nursing homes, access to health care and coverage for medically necessary procedures. These cases involved a variety of legal work including cease and desist letters, communication with doctors and providers, memorandum of law, briefs and appeals.

Some of my most interesting cases involved transgender clients who were diagnosed with gender dysphoria. This diagnosis requires sex reassignment surgery as medically necessary treatment. Unfortunately, these clients were denied coverage for the surgeries under their employee benefit plans. Our goal as representatives was to ensure that our clients received coverage for these surgeries that they truly need. The transgender community has faced tremendous hardship getting the health care that they need and I am thankful that I had the chance to help.

Working at the Empire Justice Center this summer has been an invaluable experience. I have learned so much more than I thought that I would. It has been exceedingly meaningful to be able to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most. I feel honored to have served my community. Working in the Health Law Unit has nurtured my passion for helping others and fostered my newfound interest in health law. After such a positive experience, I know that I want to continue working in this capacity in the future.

Sincerely,



Rachel Bernzweig
Albany Law School
Class of 2018