

August 4, 2009

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director at Equal Justice America
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

First allow me to begin by thanking you for the wonderful opportunity to work for the Family Law Project at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. I owe so much to Equal Justice America. Last summer you graciously sponsored my employment with Cabrini Green Legal Aid and again, this summer, its compensation allowed me to work in the legal aid world.

My supervisors were excellent in giving me the opportunity to observe court. Within the first three days I had seen a divorce prove-up, a status call, and the issuances of orders of protection. By the end of the summer I had observed deposition in a parentage matter, sat in while my attorney and the opposing attorney discussed sensitive matters with the Judge in Judge's Chambers, and obtained my 7-11 license, appearing in court on behalf of two clients on a divorce prove-up. The time spent in the courtroom observing and then participating made this experience extremely worthwhile.

Additionally, I was asked to research many difficult and interesting topics. After surviving two years of my school's strenuous legal writing program I balked at the idea of researching. Nevertheless, I found its practicality inspiring. Unlike the professor created issues, I had a real client, with a real legal issue to research. There wasn't anyone to guide me. It was just me and Westlaw. The reward of finding the perfect case and laying out a detailed argument was priceless.

The final component of my summer work experience was drafting petitions, summons, judgments, and agreements. It was a very good exercise on taking a vast amount of information and comprising it in a legal document that serves our client's needs. Once again, allow me to thank you Mr. Ruben and Equal Justice America for making my summer experience possible.

Sincerely,

Alison Downs
Chicago-Kent College of Law
Class of 2010