August 25, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing to thank you for funding my summer work in the Housing Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS). Because of Equal Justice America's generous funding, I was able to spend the summer developing my legal skills while helping those who are the most in need yet the most underserved – the poor. The importance of my work was clear, making it easy for me to stay motivated and confirming that a career in poverty law is what I am passionate about.

While at GBLS I spent the majority of my time working on two discrimination cases that were aimed at preserving low-income housing in the Greater Boston area. These lawsuits were filed against a local property manager who converted over 500 of his units from affordable housing units to market-rate rental properties, which can potentially displace current Section 8 tenants as well as future low-income tenants. Market-rate rents in the Greater Boston area are sky-rocketing, and the loss of so many affordable housing units would have a devastating affect on the low-income population.

Though I spent a significant amount of time conducting legal research and drafting portions of legal briefs, the most rewarding aspect of my summer work on this litigation was the contact I had with the cases' named plaintiffs. These plaintiffs included single mothers who were recently unemployed due to the economic downturn, disabled women with children, and families who were just getting by. While working with and interviewing the plaintiffs it was easy to see the necessity of the work I was doing as their ability to remain in the apartments they called home depended on our lawsuit. The best part of working with these women was seeing how, after they learned about their rights and legal options, they felt empowered to stand up for themselves, their families, and their neighbors. They organized meetings and created a tenant coalition to inform the members of their developments of their legal rights and remedies. They also began working to inform the low-income tenants of other developments, whose landlords were also attempting to covert the units from Section 8 to market-rate properties, about what can be done to preserve affordability. Speaking with the named plaintiffs made me realize that being a legal services lawyer is not only about showing up in court and helping clients preserve their basic rights, it is also about teaching and encouraging those that are most in need to stand up for themselves and make sure their voices is heard. I was also inspired by how adamant our clients were in conveying that they were less concerned about themselves and more concerned about the future low-income residents of Boston who will be kept out of the city if something is not done to preserve affordability in the area. These statements made me realize that while legal services lawyers do generally help one client or one group of tenants at a time, the caselaw produced can have a widespread impact and change the lives of many.

In addition to working on these two larger cases, I also had to the opportunity to work on several emergency shelter cases throughout the summer. These cases were particularly rewarding because I was able to see the positive impact my advocacy efforts had on our clients almost immediately. For instance, a

family of four came to us because they had recently left Puerto Rico where the husband was being denied access to shelter and was unable to live with his wife and two children. They thought that if they moved to the states they would be able to live together as a family and have an easier time finding work. However, once in Boston, the wife was denied shelter because of a misunderstanding about an outstanding bill from her previous residence. She was sleeping on the street while her husband and two children slept in a nearby shelter. After telling me her story, we spoke with the shelter workers and explained our client's situation to them. Not two days later, our client was living with her family in the shelter. She was so thankful for all our help, but the amazing thing was that we did not have to do much. By simply conveying our client's story and faxing over some proof about the misunderstanding regarding the outstanding bill, she was off the streets and living with her husband and children. It was wonderful to see how far a little advocacy can go, and what a huge impact having a lawyer can have on the lives of those in need.

My summer at Greater Boston Legal Services was incredibly rewarding, and it would not have been possible without the generous funding of Equal Justice America. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to explore the legal services field, as it confirmed that advocating on behalf of low-income families that are facing barriers to getting the most basic care is what I want to do upon graduating. There is nothing more extraordinary than knowing you spent the day saving someone's home or helping them get off the street, and I am truly thankful that I had the opportunity to experience this at Greater Boston Legal Services.

Sincerely,

Amanda Korber

Harvard Law School Class of 2013



September 6, 2011

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

RE: Equal Justice America Evaluation for Amanda Korber

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I had the pleasure of supervising Amanda Korber this summer during her internship with the Greater Boston Legal Services Housing Unit. Amanda worked with me and two other attorneys principally on two major fair housing cases, responding to the defendants' motion to dismiss in one case, and motion for summary judgment in the other. The cases challenge on federal and state fair housing grounds an owner's refusal to renew project-based rental subsidies in two large Boston housing developments.

Amanda's work with us was uniformly superb. She was highly skilled, diligent, thorough, and creative in everything she did. She researched and wrote legal memoranda on several complicated legal issues involving standing, cognizable harm, interpretation of federal contract language, and the interaction of federal and state law. She grasped the issues quickly, found new cases and authorities that were extremely helpful, and showed a notable sophistication in her analysis. Her writing was clear and persuasive. We used significant excerpts from Amanda's research memoranda in our opposition briefs.

Amanda also conducted extensive and invaluable research online, at the Massachusetts legislative archives, and at the Harvard law library on the legislative history and development of federal and state housing statutes, highlighting fair housing concerns motivating legislators. Her research was critical in the development of key arguments for our opposition briefs.

Amanda was also responsible for communicating with key plaintiffs and other tenants impacted by the owners' illegal actions. She developed a great rapport with our clients. She helped to draft a key affidavit used in opposition to the summary judgment motion.

Amanda's skill in using Excel also came in handy in the course of our work. She was able to organize and analyze data from spreadsheets we obtained in discovery that were very helpful in crafting our opposition.

September 6, 2011 Page 2

We were extremely grateful to have Amanda working with us this summer. Her efforts were invaluable and helped significantly to enhance the quality of the submissions we provided to the court. Amanda was also a pleasure to work with, always eager to help, taking on many assignments, turning them around quickly and always with excellent results. We very much appreciated having Amanda as an intern at Greater Boston Legal Services and would recommend her highly for any other position.

Very truly yours,

Margaret F. Turner Senior Attorney Housing Unit