

May 12, 2011

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

RE: Spring 2011 Internship with Boulder County Legal Services

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I write to you today to share about my experiences working with Boulder County Legal Services (BCLS) during the Spring 2011 semester. I was very fortunate to receive funding from Equal Justice America for the 120 hours I spent at BCLS this semester, and I feel that my work at BCLS helped to ensure access to justice for many low-income individuals who do not speak English.

BCLS provides free or low-cost legal services to low-income individuals, and because BCLS only has one staff attorney, the work of its interns and volunteers is crucial to help BCLS better serve the people of Boulder County. I thrive in a nonprofit environment because I enjoy being able to assist people with their legal problems when they otherwise would not be able to afford an attorney. I find public interest work to be very rewarding, and I would like to make a career out of it. I greatly enjoyed my experience with BCLS this semester, and I will actually be continuing my work with BCLS into the summer.

One of my main duties at BCLS this spring was to respond to Spanish-speaking client phone calls regarding inquiries into our services. None of the regular employees at our office speak Spanish, so the Spanish-speaking interns played a critical role in expanding BCLS's services to those individuals who did not understand the legal system due to language barriers. On a typical case, after the initial telephone interview, I would invite the client into our office for an in-person discussion of his or her legal problem. For me, the most rewarding part of the job was to see the look of gratitude of the faces of these clients because there was someone in our office with whom they could actually communicate when they walked into our office.

Apart from my responsibilities with new client intakes, I also helped our managing attorney with various research projects in housing, public benefits, and consumer law. I also did some work to help him prepare for permanent protection order hearings. I enjoyed the balance

that this internship has between legal reseach and client interaction. I feel that I am now more prepared to be an attorney because I have learned how to communicate the law to a client who might not understand legal jargon, especially in another language. I also feel more proficient in my knowledge of various issues relating to poverty law, which will greatly help me in my pursuit of a career in poverty law in the future.

In short, I believe that my internship with BCLS has helped me in my pursuit of a career in public interest law. With this internship, I have had opportunities to further network with attorneys in various areas of law, and I have also gained valuable experience working with a nonprofit. As a result of this experience, I hope to continue working for nonprofit organizations and serving the poor and marginalized for many years to come.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ashley Shannon  
Intern, Boulder County Legal Services  
J.D. Candidate 2012  
University of Colorado Law School