

August 5, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My summer clerkship at Public Counsel has been a rewarding experience to say the least. I was privileged to have the opportunity to work with some very fine attorneys in the Consumer Law Project who are committed to public service and improving the community around them. This commitment is contagious and can be felt as soon as one walks in the door.

Working in the Consumer Law Project exposed me to a variety of clients and legal issues. I worked on cases involving everything from loan modification scams to a fraudulent marriage. One of my most memorable cases involved an elderly, indigent woman who was a monolingual Spanish speaker. She was befriended by a fraudster who ultimately took her to Las Vegas and married her, all without her knowledge. Soon after, this fraudster took a loan out on the home the client owned and never told her about it. The lender foreclosed on the home and proceeded to attempt to evict this woman, who still at this point was unaware of everything that was happening. Public Counsel's Consumer Law Project team stepped in and attempted to get an injunction to halt the eviction. Public Counsel attorneys are also currently working to get the loan dismissed and have the fraudsters involved brought to justice.

In addition to my extensive case work, I attended several community outreach events in which Public Counsel attorneys attempt to raise awareness of consumer scams plaguing the Los Angeles area. For example, I went to a senior center where my supervising attorney explained

how loan modification scams work and gave the senior citizens suggestions on how to ensure that the loan modification help they are receiving is legitimate. I was previously unaware of how widespread the victims of these loan scams are; the victims are all ages and ethnicities. The experience has inspired me to do more not only to raise awareness of scams, but to also help the victims in their attempts to recover.

My time at Public Counsel has shown me how vital the need for legal assistance is in low income communities. I learned invaluable skills while helping the community I grew up in. As a future lawyer, I hope to continue to spread the message of the importance of public service and experience the gratification that comes with helping clients obtain justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Latreille', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Bonnie Latreille
University of Virginia
J.D. Candidate, 2013