

August 27, 2015

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

RE: EJA Summer Fellowship

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to thank you and your organization for supporting me in my summer internship at AIDS Action Committee. The Equal Justice America Summer Fellowship allowed me to pursue an amazing opportunity in direct legal services. This fellowship brought me one step closer to my goal of working in public interest law and assisting low-income individuals with their legal issues.

AIDS Action Committee provides a variety of services for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. As an intern in the legal department at AIDS Action Committee, I had the opportunity to dabble in a variety of areas of civil law including housing, discrimination, estate planning, social security, family law, unemployment benefits, and privacy. My experience working in the legal department at AIDS Action Committee reconfirmed my desire to pursue a career in public interest law. This internship also provided me with experiences in areas of law that I had not previously considered that I was interested in such as family law and social security law. Gaining experience in these areas really expanded the notions of what kind of public interest lawyer I want to be and really demonstrated that the field of public interest law is incredibly large and varied.

I loved working at a job where I felt an incredible sense of purpose every day and had the ability to help others through serious legal setbacks. Through securing social security and housing, clients are able to manage their physical and mental health, maintain their livelihoods, and live significantly longer lives.

One of the best experiences I had this summer was working on a case to secure unemployment benefits for a client who received a denial of benefits. The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) denied his claim for unemployment benefits because he had not requested a leave of absence from his employer. After meeting with the client and discussing his case, it was apparent that he did not wish to disclose his HIV positive status to his employer but was suffering health complications due to his illness and could no longer keep up with the requirements of his job. He had met with his employer several times to discuss that he was having chronic health issues but his employer decided to terminate his job rather than work with the client to try and find a solution or accommodation. After appealing the denial of

benefits, the DUA agreed with our argument and gave our client unemployment benefits. Through this, our client was able to maintain his livelihood until he recovered from his HIV related health complications. This successful appeal significantly helped our client maintain his health and housing.

This summer provided me with an incredible and invaluable work experience in the public sector. EJA funding was incredibly helpful in providing funding while working in public interest law. I know that my experience working at AIDS Action Committee this summer will be beneficial as I move forward in the field of public interest law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katherine Horigan', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katherine Horigan  
Boston College Law School  
Class of 2017