

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben,

I want to thank you so much again for helping to fund my public interest internship this summer. Equal Justice America has funded my internships for the past two summers. Without your help, I would not have been able to work in a field I am so passionate about. My internship this summer has solidified my desire to work in public interest in some capacity.

I worked this summer as an intern for Community Legal Services (CLS), Inc. in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. CLS has multiple units that handle issues such as Medicaid and Medicare enrollment and service denial cases, social security cases, utility law, family and housing concerns, and variety of other consumer issues. As an intern at CLS I was able to see firsthand how difficult it is for low income Pennsylvania residents to access help in understanding and maintaining their welfare benefits. This summer I worked directly with clients on a daily basis. I often contacted the County Assistance Offices on behalf of my clients to communicate their needs and clear up any misunderstandings. Many of my clients were unemployed and sometimes homeless. They did not have the resources or the knowledge of how to apply for benefits, submit verification for their benefits, and basically what to do when they ran into any obstacles. CLS does a tremendous job in public advocacy to make Philadelphia residents aware of their rights.

I worked specifically on one major issue, Emergency Medical Assistance (EMA). EMA is available to immigrants who meet the criteria for medical assistance but who would be denied solely because of their immigration status. EMA is a temporary enrollment in the Medical Assistance program to treat a specific problem and after treatment, enrollment ends. My clients are typically very sick, but do not qualify for Medical Assistance because of their immigration status. I have been working on their cases to prove that they are eligible for EMA. I remember one specific case I had over the summer with a family with two very sick children. The family came here from Egypt and the children, age 20 and age 18, were suffering from serious medical conditions. One of the children had diabetes and no longer had access to insulin. Without insulin therapy, the child's life could have been in danger within a matter of hours. The other child suffered from juvenile idiopathic arthritis. This causes severe debilitating pain and swelling in all of the body's joints. My client, the parent of these two children, felt so hopeless because he could not afford the adequate treatment both of his children desperately needed. I assisted this family throughout the summer by participating in ALJ hearings, drafting letters to their physicians, researching their medical conditions, and other advocacy on their behalf. Through filing the proper appeals, the children have been able to keep their medical benefits, but this is only a temporary solution. As my internship concludes, it

will be the work of my supervising attorney and other future interns to ensure that these children will keep their benefits and receive necessary treatment.

I truly cannot thank Equal Justice America enough for funding both of my summer internships. The direct client work I was involved in this summer, definitely strengthened my skills to become a strong advocate for vulnerable communities in the future.

Sincerely,

Cana Noel

3L JD/MPH, Temple Law
Community Legal Services
Philadelphia, PA



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES
OF PHILADELPHIA

August 31, 2015

VIA EMAIL: KATIE@EQUALJUSTICEAMERICA.ORG

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

RE: Cana Noel

Dear Mr. Ruben,

Cana Noel worked with me this summer in the public benefits unit at CLS' neighborhood office in North Philadelphia. Many of the city's lowest income families live in North Philadelphia and often face a wide range of difficulties including violence, mental illness, poor housing and education. CLS' public benefits unit routinely serves individuals and families who need benefits to stave off hunger, afford very basic necessities like shelter and heating fuel, and access essential and often urgently needed medical care. The public benefits unit also serves a large number of immigrant clients who are very often limited English proficient and in need of medical care to treat serious medical conditions.

The clients Cana represented during her internship are some of CLS' most challenging. Cana was compassionate and attentive to client needs while acting expeditiously to obtain the benefits they urgently needed. She advised clients, filed client appeals of benefit denials and terminations, and helped to successfully negotiate settlements of appeals with the Department of Human Services. She accompanied two clients to challenging meetings with Department of Human Services staff and successfully advocated on behalf of these clients to get them the benefits they needed.

Cana thoroughly researched a tough legal problem involving the interplay of federal SNAP regulation, state regulation, state case law, and the due process clause. She drafted a portion of a brief submitted to an Administrative Law Judge that persuasively argued that the Office of Inspector General failed to meet its burden of proof in a SNAP intentional program violation case. She carefully prepared witness testimony and exhibits for several complex hearings before Administrative Law Judges.

Please feel free to contact me at 215-227-4738 or mpileggi@clsphila.org if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maripat Pileggi".

Maripat Pileggi
Staff Attorney

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