

August 31, 2013

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

RE: Carol Liu, Equal Justice America Fellowship

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am writing this letter to thank you for the Equal Justice America fellowship I was awarded this summer for my internship at Greater Boston Legal Services (“GBLS”). This summer, I worked as a legal intern at the Immigration Unit of GBLS, where I mainly served clients who sought asylum protections in the US. Without your support I could not have had the chance to get my hands-on experience in practicing asylum law. As a legal intern, I interviewed clients to develop their asylum claims, drafted affidavits, prepared asylum applicants for court examinations, drafted motions and appellate briefs in front of the Board of Immigration Appeals. The experience was both challenging and rewarding, and it could not have been possible without the support from Equal Justice America.

This summer, I mainly worked with clients from Latin America who fled to the US in fear of political or racial persecutions in their home countries. In a typical day at work, I interviewed with my clients, usually with a translator, to understand their stories in their home countries that led them to flee. Depending on different situations, my clients may qualify for different legal reliefs under immigration law, which I would explain to them and evaluate their options. Then I would draft their affidavits based on our interviews, and request supporting evidence such as relevant documentations, witness testimonies, photographs, etc. I would also research reports and new articles on their home countries’ historical and political conditions that were relevant to my clients’ asylum claim. After relevant evidence was ready, we would file it with the asylum office, and then prepare our clients for their asylum interviews.

I also spent a fair amount of time researching asylum law and drafting appellate briefs. My most memorable experience was drafting a brief for a client in deportation proceeding. The client was denied asylum relief because of credibility issues. Strong evidence indicated that his fear of return was both genuine and reasonable, but due to exceptional circumstances he failed to fully testify his circumstances in his earlier proceedings, which resulted in discrepancies in his later testimonies that led the judge to deny his case. The hard issue on appeal was that the law gave much deference to a judge’s credibility determination, and that the law was ambiguous on whether an asylum applicant must be given an opportunity to explain for the discrepancies, when a judge had already found him/her not credible. Together with another intern, we went through piles after piles of his testimonies to spot the discrepancies, understand the context in which he gave the testimonies, and argued that the discrepancies was not dispositive to his credibility in

light of the exceptional circumstance. We also researched the case law extensively to push the court to offer our client an opportunity to explain his discrepancies, which arise out of his due process rights. I enjoyed working with my colleagues and supervisors for this team project, and I learned a lot through getting together with them on a daily basis to discuss our case strategies. Most importantly, we were all devoted and motivated because we knew that it was possibly our client's life and safety on the line. It was a very rewarding experience working on a case with hard issues and knowing that our work could make a positive impact on our client.

I am very grateful for the generosity of EJA, which made my summer experience possible. Working at GBLIS helped me understand what it was like to work in public interest, and it was the most rewarding summer internship because of the people, the work, and the clients.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Xianxiao Liu".

Carol Liu

August 31, 2013

Harvard Law School, Class of 2015