

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

July 27, 2012

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My internship at ProBAR has been inspirational. With the help of my colleagues and a child named Natan,¹ I gained tools and experience that will help me empower my child clients.

At ProBAR, I addressed the legal needs of children in immigration detention. I explained legal rights, removal proceedings, and legal relief. I also screened children to see if ProBAR could represent them or refer them to an attorney.

Natan was a 17 year-old victim of gang violence who barely escaped death when he tried to resist local gangs. Natan had a promising asylum case, but ProBAR did not have the resources to serve him because the number of unaccompanied immigrant children doubled in South Texas while he was detained. Meanwhile, ProBAR was not financed to serve the extra kids. The best option ProBAR could offer Natan was help to pursue his asylum case on his own.

Because the asylum process is complicated, Natan could successfully pursue asylum *pro se*. But my colleagues assured me that with the learning materials, methods, and outlook, a child could win asylum alone.

After my first meeting with Natan, I knew my ProBAR colleagues were right. Natan breezed through the basics of asylum with a fully-translated asylum application created by my colleague Violeta. Then we reviewed “asylum thinking questions”, which Natan completed for homework: “Why did I leave my country?”, “Who am I afraid of?”, “Are other people also being hurt by the same people?”. We use these resources to help people pursue asylum *pro se*.

For the next few weeks, I continued to teach Natan about asylum and help him finish his application. When Natan was done, he told me that writing his story made him feel better. He said, “Thank you for taking the time to explain everything to me. It made my detention go by faster and now I know I can fight my case on my own if I need to.” Natan’s gratitude for giving him a sense of control reminded me that I should challenge my clients to engage in their immigration applications.

This internship has taught me how much more powerful our clients become when we equip them with the knowledge they need to take ownership of their cases.

Thank you for helping to make this experience possible.

Sincerely,

Catherine Feeley
Northwestern

¹ name changed to protect child’s identity

PROBAR

South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project Immigrant Children's Assistance Project

A Project of the
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Meredith Linsky
Director

August 8, 2012

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

RE: Catherine Feeley, summer intern

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I wish to thank Equal Justice America for providing funding which made it possible for Catherine Feeley to complete an internship with ProBAR this summer. Ms. Feeley's internship came at a time when ProBAR's Children's Project was under-funded and under-staffed, and therefore facing great challenges in serving the influx of children who are detained in the southern tip of Texas. During recent months, the number of children detained in our area has risen from about 370 to more than 700, and ProBAR is working hard to meet this increased demand.

Ms. Feeley is an enthusiastic and committed advocate. She eagerly volunteered to work on anything that was needed. During the summer she assisted a number of children with their immigration cases. In addition, she provided assistance in preparing for and tracking children's dockets. She performed intake screenings, answered telephone calls, and stepped in as an active member of ProBAR's team.

Ms. Feeley is competent in the Spanish language, and had a good rapport with the children whom she assisted while at ProBAR. ProBAR would like to express its gratitude to Ms. Feeley for assisting our office during a time when we were in great need of help, and for being willing to perform any work that was needed. ProBAR would also like to thank Equal Justice America for providing the funding which made Ms. Feeley's internship possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimi Jackson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kimi Jackson
Children's Project Supervisor

Cc: Meredith Linsky, ProBAR Director
Catherine Feeley