

3721 W Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My ten weeks working with Legal Services of New York City-Bronx has left me with a stronger understanding of the theoretical and practical approach necessary to becoming an effective public interest lawyer who can help to genuinely improve the lives of clients. Because I was the first intern to arrive at my office in the Bronx, I was able to select the departments – general practice, elderly law, and family law – with which I would work, an opportunity that enabled me to contribute to the most wide-ranging array of cases possible. Having heard of other students' internship experiences, I believe that the variety of my responsibilities was quite significant: I led the process of meeting the opposition's discovery demands in a housing case; I drafted divorce paper and petitions for custody; I drafted letters demanding employers' compliance with 9/11 disability claim procedures; I drafted a motion to reverse a denial from violating the *Fair Debt Collection Act*; I researched property records to establish the exact context of the transfer of a quarter-million dollar mortgage to an unwitting couple; I researched countless issues important to ongoing cases; I assisted in court proceedings and fair hearings; and I often assisted on client intakes.

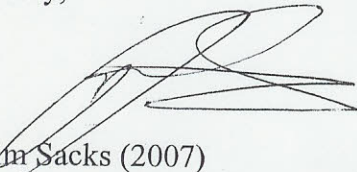
In conducting these assignments and working in a hectic legal services office, I learned important lesson I will take with me into the future. From a practical perspective, I learned the vital importance of effective filing and organization. With the overwhelming caseloads carried by the lawyers with whom I worked, the instinctive faith that I would simply remember all important details of the immediate case proved false. By the second week of the internship, I was taking notes on all communications and immediately filing them – a skill I will take with me back to law school and beyond. Additionally, my presence at multiple courtroom and fair-hearing proceedings taught me that the unfolding of a day at court is largely unpredictable, filled with much waiting and anti-climax, as well as unexpected drama and confrontation. A day in court is as unpredictable as the judge's mood, and only preparedness and confidence in that preparedness can effectively confront this reality.

More important, my time with LSNY-Bronx showed me that a devoted public interest lawyer can effectively assist a client to combat the myriad challenges posed by poverty in America. Accomplishing this, however, is not an inevitable outgrowth of working in a legal services organization, but rather requires a lawyer to see himself as a means to the empowerment of the poor and to understand that this role necessitates a

complete dedication to working as hard and long as necessary to fight for clients. On an interpersonal level, success in the struggle for empowerment of clients requires that a lawyer show the highest level of professionalism and commitment to all clients so that they understand that you are not merely another cog in the wheel of an antagonistic system, but rather a true advocate who will view their problems holistically and in connection with the systemic deficiencies that contribute to them. Having worked this summer both with lawyers who view their position as a charitable 9-5 position and with those who view themselves as tireless advocates of human rights and empowerment, I understand that a lawyer's personal and theoretical approach to public interest lawyering is the most important factor that determines if an individual lawyer will be an engine for social change or an entrencher of the status quo. My work this summer in New York – a city in which approximately 600 public interest lawyers serve a poor population in excess of 2 million – has more than anything else strengthened my conviction that a genuinely committed public interest lawyer can help to improve the lives of many people struggling daily against poverty's countless manifestations. I am fully committed to becoming such a lawyer.

Thank you for enabling me to work at LSNY-Bronx this summer and learn these valuable lessons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chaim Sacks', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Chaim Sacks (2007)
The George Washington University Law School