

October 5, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you and Equal Justice America for funding my summer internship at the National Immigrant Justice Center. This summer, I invested great portion of my time and energy on a cancellation of removal case for an undocumented client. I prepared the entire case under an attorney's supervision—from preparing affidavits and a trial brief, to travelling to another state to gather documents and take sworn statements from the client's family, to trial preparation. I also had the privilege of representing the client in court at his merits hearing. The judge ruled in the client's favor, and soon after being released from custody, he boarded a train from Chicago to Indiana to reunite with his family. Today, after five challenging months in detention and over twenty years of living in the shadows of American society, he is a legal permanent resident. On behalf of this client and his family, I thank Equal Justice America for enabling me to advocate for him.

In addition to working on that particular case, I conducted intake to assess individual cases for potential relief. At one point in the summer, I went to Kankakee Detention Center to conduct intake in person. Additionally, I performed legal research on the immigration consequences of several criminal convictions, put together a brief report of the conditions at Kankakee Detention Center to be shared with Senator Duckworth's office, and helped clients find pro representation for their bond hearings.

The most meaningful moments during the course of my internship were the moments when I heard a judge rule in court. Whether the decision was favorable for the immigrant or not, the unadulterated flow of emotions from clients and their family members reminded me of the end goal of removal defense work—family re-unification and protection of vulnerable persons. Naturally, hearing the ruling on my client's case was an experience that I will never forget.

I look forward to building upon the skills that I learned at the National Immigrant Justice Center, and I thank Equal Justice America for funding my internship.

Sincerely,

Mariana Barba
DePaul University College of Law
Class of 2019