

Ellen Camburn

August 21, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I want to thank you again for my granting me this fellowship. I have always wanted to work in the public interest field, and your fellowship gave me the opportunity to do so. As a summer fellow, I was scheduled around five intakes a week. During intakes I learned what information was and was not important in deciding whether Women Against Abuse would be able to represent a client. I would first sit down with the client and go over all personal information regarding their relationship with the abuser. I would further review their court documents, which would normally consist of a temporary Protection From Abuse order. I learned how to fill out subpoenas and the process for submitting subpoenas. I further learned how to file IFPs and forms for certified criminal records.

As an advocate, I worked outside a domestic violence courtroom. I would speak with petitioners about the court process and provide referrals. I often talked to petitioners on how to make service on the defendant if they have not already done so. I would supply them with a resource sheet on service rules and I always provided the number to my office in case they had any questions. I further discussed all the possible outcomes whether it be a trial, an agreement without admission, or a status.

Working at Women Against Abuse was incredibly rewarding. I have always been interested in working with victims of domestic violence and have been given the perfect opportunity to do so this summer. Doing intakes was a large part of my fellowship and through intakes I was able to get to know our clients on a one-on-one basis. While it was difficult to hear their stories, it was rewarding to get to work with clients and provide them with the support they need. After intakes, I would review the case with our managing attorney and then pass the client on to one of our attorneys to represent the individual. I liked that my work with the client did not instantly end after passing on their file. I would further help the attorneys by collecting police reports, submitting subpoenas, and doing legal research and writing.

Working as an advocate was also very rewarding. The Judge who I worked under was very open to advocate work which provided an interesting opportunity to see the inner workings of a courtroom. The judge allowed myself and my fellow advocate, freedom to move in and out of the courtroom at all times. I learned how the court staff interacts with the judge, attorneys, and parties and just how difficult it can be to get through all the cases for that day. Some pro-se petitioners would be very nervous and scared before going into the courtroom. Due to the freedom the judge provided, I would be able to sit in the back of the courtroom when these petitioners went in and afterwards I would answer any questions they may have about their order. For these petitioners, it was comforting to know that while they did not have representation, I

was able to silently support them by sitting in the back while they were before the judge.

There is one client in particular that I will never forget. I did an intake with a woman who was in a very violent relationship with her ex-boyfriend, and father of her young daughter. Serious allegations of abuse were reported including punching and strangulation. It was a difficult intake to get through, but fortunately we were able to represent her in her upcoming PFA case where she was granted a three year, no contact order. What stood out to me the most was when she said to me, "no one has ever been on my side, but you guys are, you are on my side." Her statement really struck me because not only was she looking for representation, but also she was looking for confirmation that what was happening to her was not ok. I am happy that Women Against Abuse and all non-profits are able to tell our clients that we care and we have always been on their side. Without the support of an organization like Equal Justice America, non-profits would not be able to receive the help they need, which is why I will always be grateful to Equal Justice America for granting me such an amazing opportunity.

Sincerely,

Ellen Camburn

Rutgers-Camden School of Law
Class of 2013



Dan Ruben
Executive Director Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I write to support Ms. Ellen Camburn. I had the pleasure of working with and supervising Ms. Camburn during her Summer 2011 internship here at the Women Against Abuse Legal Center. It is through our interactions over the course of this summer that I have come to know her as a highly motivated, caring, and personable individual.

I was responsible for training and supervising Ms. Camburn over the course of this summer. Ms. Camburn reported to me and five other attorneys. She was responsible for conducting client intake interviews, presenting client cases to the attorneys, conducting legal research, and drafting and filing various petitions and motions. Ms. Camburn was also stationed in court two days a week where she spoke with petitioners who had hearings before a judge that day. She would inform them of their rights, let them know their options, prepare them for what to expect inside the courtroom as well as make referrals back to our office for attorney representation and to other social services agencies. I have thus been able to evaluate Ms. Camburn's oral and written communication skills as well as her ability to critically analyze family law matters. She was always prepared, tactful, articulate. Ms. Camburn was an active participant in our office, contributing in positive ways and pitching in wherever and whenever she was needed. For example, without being prompted Ms. Camburn prepared a student intern guide for our next set of interns.

Finally, I should point out that Ms. Camburn is a highly personable and professional individual. She is genuinely a nice and caring person. She has a willingness to share her time, energies, and talents with others. She was a pleasure to work with over the summer.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for additional insights regarding Ms. Camburn by calling (215) 686-7082, or by e-mailing me at komalley@womenagainstabuse.org.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen O'Malley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathleen O'Malley, Esq.
Managing Attorney
Women Against Abuse Legal Center