

1232 W. Carmen Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60640

August 2, 2005

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

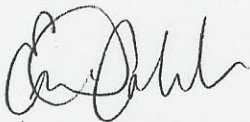
My summer as an intern at the Northwest neighborhood office of Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago has taught me lessons I never expected to learn. I began my law school experience focused on just one area of law, thinking nothing else would fulfill me or suit me, because no other group needed a voice like that one. I learned there that is a common thread running through all kinds of public interest law, whether it be housing, family, immigration, bankruptcy, or consumer law – people, forgotten by many others in our culture, need an advocate.

One of my first assignments, also one of my most rewarding, may serve as an example. Our client, whom I'll call Adriana, is a survivor of domestic violence, and has two small girls. She is an immigrant who spoke only Portuguese when she came to the U.S., but who taught herself Spanish and is currently teaching English and pursuing her GED. She works two jobs to support herself and her little girls. Unfortunately, the work was never enough. She has had to move a number of times since she separated from her husband two years ago, always searching for a cheaper place for her and her girls to live.

Recently, the child representation in Adriana's marital dissolution proceeding expressed concern over the number of moves, alluding to the children's need for a stable environment. Since the husband hadn't move in a while, he could provide that stable environment; apparently the abuse he inflicted on Adriana and his prison time for drug-related offenses were irrelevant. Our client was struggling once again to meet rent, and at risk of homelessness and losing her children. An attorney here learned of an agency that provides housing subsidies and supportive services for women and their children, and does so with the end goal of self-sufficiency. After days of trying, we got through, completed an extensive application, and got our client an interview. We weren't allowed to accompany Adriana to the interview, but she must have wowed them. The agency called us the very next day and told us she was accepted. This week, she learns the address of her new apartment and meets her caseworker. She should be in the new apartment within the month. And she and her girls will be able to live there for years.

Thank you for giving me the chance to help this client and others, and for allowing me the opportunity to develop interest in a vast array of public interest areas.

Sincerely,



Erin Cobb
3L, DePaul University College of Law
Graduation date: May, 2006