

August 10, 2016

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Thank you so much for the opportunity to receive this fellowship. During my internship with Legal Aid Society of D.C. in the Family Law and Domestic Violence Unit, I was able to get a variety of experience and help the attorneys with over twenty clients. I drafted direct examinations, assisted on intake, wrote multiple motions and memoranda, and most importantly was able to assist my supervisors in obtaining civil protection orders (CPO).

I had a few clients who were young mothers and were trying to get out of abusive relationships. After meeting one woman at the Domestic Violence Intake Center in Southeast D.C., I drafted her hearing notes that my supervisor would use to question her and establish the necessary requirements to obtain a CPO. Often, the respondent does not show up and our clients are able to present testimony allowing them to get a default order. Other times, the respondent will consent to the CPO without admitting to the allegations in the petition, which was the case for this particular woman. In CPO hearings not only do the elements of the offense need to be met, but the petitioner must also be sufficiently credible so the judge believes her. This particular young woman was honest and open in her answers during the hearing, and considering that these hearings are open to the public, was incredibly brave. When she was granted the order I could see the relief in her face, knowing that she would be safe. It was such a rewarding experience to see the peace of mind she received, knowing that he couldn't hurt her anymore.

Though much of my time was spent following up with clients, and assisting in court, I was able to write motions and memoranda on topics including partitioning marital property,

jurisdiction over a custody and civil protection order case, and researching a newer area of law called nonconsensual pornography, more commonly known as “revenge porn.” This kind of behavior frequently overlaps with domestic violence law, but as its newly emerging, and D.C. has only recently passed a law making this an offense, its important to know how to handle this situation in court.

The skills I was able to learn and sharpen during my internship I know will prove very useful in my career. I had such a rewarding experience while at Legal Aid, and am grateful for the funding that allowed me to work at a nonprofit. Thank you again for this opportunity and for supporting law students in giving back to the community and serving those most in need.

Sincerely,

Laura Murchie
The George Washington University Law School
2017

August 31, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO katie@equaljusticeamerica.org

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My name is Oluwemimo Peters, I am a staff attorney in the Domestic Violence and Family Law Unit at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia. The attorneys in the Domestic Violence and Family Law Unit represent low income clients in child support, child custody, divorce and domestic violence cases. This summer, I supervised Laura Murchie during her Equal Justice America fellowship at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia.

During her fellowship, Laura worked on a variety of domestic violence and family law and matters. She conducted initial interviews with applicants, followed up with applicants and clients about their cases, drafted direct examination questions for clients and witnesses and conducted legal research and writing. She tackled a large research project involving an emerging area of the law and also drafted a complex legal motion. She also acted as a Spanish interpreter when needed. Laura went above and beyond her role as an EJA fellow by volunteering to assist with administrative tasks even as she juggled a full schedule. She did all this while conducting herself in a professional and client centered manner.

Laura was a great asset to our team this summer. She volunteered to help when asked and articulated clear goals for her professional development. She took on every assignment with enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. Laura was very skilled at handling varied assignments from multiple attorneys simultaneously. She was diligent and conscientious about all her assignments.

It was my pleasure to supervise her this summer. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 661-5963 or wpeters@legalaiddc.org if you require additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,

Oluwemimo "Wemi" Peters