

August 29, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am a rising 2L at Harvard Law School and spent my summer interning in the Consumer Practice Group of LAF (formerly known as the Legal Assistance Foundation) in Chicago. Thanks in part to the generous funding from Equal Justice America I was able to spend my summer helping to advocate for those in poverty by helping to stop foreclosures, wage garnishments, and unfair business practices.

I helped one family, for example, who had attempted to remodel their home to make it handicap accessible for an elderly relative. The contractor's shoddy workmanship left the home open to the elements throughout an entire winter, structurally unsound, susceptible to water leaks and water damage, and filled with toxic mold. When the family stopped paying the contractor, he sued the family and placed a lien on the house. Luckily, this family was able to retain the legal services of LAF, who was able to defend this lawsuit and to raise counterclaims against the contractor. During my internship, I helped prepare expert affidavits from five construction company employees who were later hired to fix the damage on the home. I also met directly with the clients, helped prepare them for their depositions, and assisted with LAF's depositions of the contractor and his employees. While this litigation is still ongoing, I am confident that the family's legal needs are being addressed, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to help in this process.

I worked with another client who called LAF in a panic because her wages were being garnished due to old credit card debt. I conducted a complete intake interview with this client and learned that she had fallen behind on credit card bills when her husband got sick and her oldest son lost his job. I presented the case to the consumer practice group at our weekly case acceptance meeting and convinced the group to accept the case for representation. I worked with this client to file for Chapter 7 bankruptcy, which stopped the wage garnishment and allowed the client to regain control of her finances.

Throughout my internship, I assisted a number of other clients with filing for bankruptcy, foreclosure defense, and other forms of asset protection. I was frequently able to conduct phone intake interviews and was occasionally able to meet with clients in person. I also helped to staff a number of help desks, including a bankruptcy help desk, a Pro Se help desk, and a juvenile expungement help desk. I also assisted on a number of other cases by conducting legal research, writing memoranda, and drafting motions and responses.

I came to law school to become a better advocate for those in need and because I believe that all people should have access to our justice system. The unmet civil legal need in this country is staggering and I am grateful for organizations like LAF that are attempting to address this need. I am very appreciative of EJA's generosity which allowed me to contribute to this fight for equal justice this summer.

Thank you,

Willy Chotzen-Freund
Harvard Law School
Class of 2019



Equal justice starts here.

August 2, 2017

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
Via email to Katie@EqualJusticeAmerica.org

Re: Summer Fellowship of Willy Chotzen-Freund

Mr. Ruben:

This summer I supervised Willy Chotzen-Freund, who completed a fellowship with LAF's Consumer Practice Group from May 30, 2017 – August 2, 2017. Willy contributed to our Group's work this summer by conducting client intakes, attending and summarizing depositions, providing legal research memoranda, and drafting Motions and Briefs. He also showed initiative to serve at LAF's clinics, outreach events, and help desks.

Willy demonstrated empathy and professionalism while interacting with clients. He displayed sound judgment in analyzing cases and assessing clients' needs. Willy's legal research and writing abilities were strong. He drafted a Motion and Brief that were able to be filed with the Court after only minor editing.

Willy's fellowship this summer was a positive experience for LAF and we appreciate his contributions. Please feel free to reach out to me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Liss
Senior Attorney
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