

August 31, 2015

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben,

My fellowship this past summer was with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF). I worked as a legal intern on two projects: Immigrants' Rights and the Anti-Trafficking Initiative.

On the Immigrants' Rights project, I mainly worked on filing deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) renewals and following up on cases that still required resolution. I also monitored the news for important headlines regarding the *Texas v. United States* case on expanding DACA and creating a similar program of deferred action for parents of lawful americans and permanent residents (DAPA). I would disseminate any important news I saw and compiled notes on the recall for 3-year work permits issued after the injunction so that the notes could be shared with representative of other organizations, including the National Immigration Law Center. I also wrote legal memos related to our clients' cases.

Before working on the Immigrants' Rights project, I understood very little about immigration law and issues, but now I have a much better grasp on how it affects so many people in this nation. Though DACA filings do not need to be done by a legal representative, it is difficult for someone without the legal background to navigate all the different forms and requirements. Working in direct services showed me how our legal representation can create a large impact on individuals' and families' lives and reminded me how important it is for people to do groundwork while other organizations and activists are pressing for change at the higher level.

For the Anti-Trafficking Initiative, I conducted intakes alongside my supervisor. The clients whose cases I was assigned to were victims and survivors of labor trafficking who had been recruited with false promises. For our clients, I drafted and revised affidavits and cover letters for T-Visa applications. The cover letters I wrote were very similar to legal memos in their nature. Having been trafficked from overseas, our clients usually had very few resources and spoke English as a second language. Understandably, they had a hard time trusting people and the legal system after their experiences, but my supervisor and I would work patiently with them until they felt ready to open up to us. We couldn't make any promises for outcomes, but we still gave them hope. We worked hard to strive for the best outcomes for them and reassured them that we would listen attentively to their needs. I hope that after speaking with us, our clients not only felt hope for their situations, but also could regain faith in other people. Living in fear and mistrust of others is understandable but also exhausting; at times, it makes a person feel as though it is impossible to go forward. I wanted to play a part in helping them heal and rediscover their inner strength.

My summer position with AALDEF was my first experience working in the real world and my first experience really working with the law. Up until now, I have almost exclusively remained in the academic world, but this fellowship gave me a different

perspective. It solidified my resolve to work in the public sector in the future, and I feel that it has better equipped me to do so. For that, I am grateful.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Zheng

A handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke that tapers to the right.

Harvard Law School
Class of 2017