

August 30, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to formally thank you for supporting my summer clerkship at the Children's Law Center (CLC). I would have not been able to enjoy this summer experience without Equal Justice America. It was an incredible summer.

I was assigned to CLC's medical/legal partnership, Healthy Together. I could have not asked for a better fit. It was the first time since I started my graduate studies that I felt my pursuit of a master in public health and a law degree intertwined in the manner I had envisioned. Healthy Together places attorneys in health clinics throughout D.C.. Their work focuses on special education, housing and access to health care issues.

The assignment to the Healthy Together project allowed me to experience a broad range of issues and skill areas. I conducted legal research and drafted memoranda on special education issues such as what constitutes "meaningful progress." I also conducted an analysis of which aspects of student records fall under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

CLC is part of a "mold workgroup" for which I drafted memoranda on the current status of the health effects of mold to inform the workgroup for their advocacy purposes. Currently, mold is not listed as a housing code violation in D.C. despite the fact that there are known negative health effects from being exposed to it, particularly for individuals who are most vulnerable. As part of this assignment, I worked with a team of interns from other legal services organizations to create a chart of relevant laws or guidelines specific to mold for each state including the District of Columbia. From that chart, we advised the workgroup on which states have the "best" laws or provisions addressing mold. I was also given an opportunity to draft a Due Process Complaint for a special education issue and a Freedom of Information Act request.

It was the opportunity to interact with clients that made this experience unique. Outside of research and writing, I was trained to conduct intakes, which gave me the skills to work directly with potential clients. I loved this part of my clerkship. I went to law school with the hope of serving families just like the ones I had the good fortune of meeting this summer.

A few of my interactions with clients were memorable. One mother of a young girl was zealously advocating for her daughter to receive independent evaluations from the District of Columbia Public Schools to determine if she was eligible for an individualized education plan. It did not matter which or how many roadblocks the school or the school district created. This mother was going to fight for what she knew was right for her daughter. I was able to draft a Due Process Complaint on her behalf. I also was able to assist another mother in drafting her daughter's Social Security Interest benefits application. I also spent some time collecting records and information from a mother who had significant housing issues that were affecting her daughter's health. I was deeply touched by her situation and only wished I could assist her further. In all of these instances, I was amazed by the persistence and dedication of these parents. It was a true privilege to assist them.

This experience solidified my interest in pursuing a career in public interest law. It also reinforced my decision to serve low-income families and their children.

I will be forever grateful to Equal Justice America.

Sincerely,

Jessica Kleinman, MPH
The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law
Candidate for J.D., Certificate in Public Policy and Law, May 2014

September 12, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Jessica Kleinman. Ms. Kleinman was a summer law clerk at Children's Law Center from May 2013 to August 2013, in the Healthy Together medical-legal partnership. I served as one of her supervising attorneys. I understand that Equal Justice America supported her law clerkship this summer. Thank you for your support of her invaluable work on behalf of low income children in the District of Columbia. As a former Equal Justice America Fellowship recipient, I know how important such support is to public interest work by law students aspiring to careers helping those in most need.

Ms. Kleinman is an outstanding young woman. Children's Law Center was very fortunate to have her as one of our law clerks this summer. Over the weeks of Ms. Kleinman's work, we were all very impressed with her diligence, intelligence, and dedication to our clients. She was extremely efficient and enthusiastic about every assignment, no matter how big or how small. Throughout her clerkship, Ms. Kleinman excelled at the variety of tasks she was given, and even volunteered for additional projects. Ms. Kleinman managed to accomplish far more than expected due to her organization, maturity, and hard work.

Ms. Kleinman worked well with our clients, honing interviewing skills performing intakes as well as attending and providing support at legal events. Her natural caring always shown through, and helped our clients feel supported and comfortable. She was also invaluable in meetings and witness preparation, where her keen attention to detail and power of observation provided insights and spotting of issues for her supervising attorneys.

Ms. Kleinman also tackled multiple legal research and writing assignments with facility. Her legal research memos will continue to be used by our attorneys in future years. She was particularly an asset on a research project for an issue that several legal services organizations are collaborating on, which utilized her public health as well as legal background. Ms. Kleinman took on a strong leadership role with law clerks from other legal services organizations on this project, creating a unified and useful work product. Ms. Kleinman showed great promise as a future attorney based on all of her work.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information. You may reach me at (202) 467-4900 ext. 580 or rmurphy@childrenslawcenter.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Renee Murphy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Renee Murphy
Staff Attorney