

August 16, 2010

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I interned for 10 weeks this summer in the Elderly Law Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services. I researched and drafted legal memoranda regarding the effects of federal healthcare legislation on state agencies and laws, and drafted letters to agencies and advocacy groups regarding nursing home discharge procedures and other issues concerning the elderly. I also provided legal assistance to impoverished elders by appealing terminations of health insurance and other benefits, negotiating with opposing counsel in evictions cases, and representing clients in front of Social Security hearing officers.

To provide a more concrete example of the work I did, I will share with you the story of one of the clients I helped. He suffered from schizophrenia and had received an eviction notice from the housing authority because his apartment was extremely dirty. My supervisor and I visited the client's home and found that, while it was messy, it certainly did not seem to pose a fire hazard or a public health threat. I spoke with the client's caseworker at the Department of Mental Health, who said that the client told him he has a cleaning service from the local elder services agency, but the client turned them away. The caseworker said he could arrange to be present when cleaners come, to ensure that the client allows them access.

I called the elder services agency and arranged a caseworker for the client. He said that he would be happy to work with the Department of Mental Health caseworker to create a plan that will ensure that the client's apartment remains clean. With the two agencies now in communication with one another, I spoke with the housing authority attorney and let him know that we are working with these agencies to set up a plan to keep the apartment clean. He convinced his client not to continue with the eviction proceeding, and the client was able to remain in his home.

This case exemplifies much of the work I did in the Elderly Unit because, as is so often the case with elders, the help that clients need is more than just legal. We sometimes need to work with various agencies and put them in contact with one another. In this case, terminating the eviction proceedings would have no long-term benefits if we did not give the client a way to keep his apartment clean. Working with the attorney *and* with various social services agencies is vital to ensure that the legal problem is solved and that it doesn't recur in the future.

The fellowship from Equal Justice America helped me support myself this summer and helped make this opportunity possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jill Greenfield  
Harvard

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Greater Boston Legal Services  
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July 30, 2010

Dan Ruben  
Executive Director  
Equal Justice America  
13540 East Boundary Road  
Building II, Suite 204  
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Dear Mr. Ruben:

I supervised Jill Greenfield's work in the Elderly Law Unit this summer. She researched and drafted memos for me on a number of issues, including veterans' benefits and nursing home transfers and discharges. In particular, Jill researched and drafted a memo about the CLASS Act, which is an aspect of the new healthcare reform legislation that will establish a national insurance program to help adults who have or develop functional impairments remain independent and employed, and stay in their communities. She analyzed the effects that the Act will have on state agencies and presented her research to a coalition of agencies and attorneys that represent the interests of elders at the local and statewide level.

Jill also assisted elders facing housing and benefits issues. In one eviction case, she negotiated with the opposing attorney to help keep a mentally ill elder in his publicly subsidized housing. In a Social Security overpayment case, she represented the client in front of a Social Security claims representative at an informal contest to demonstrate that the client was without fault and request that the overpayment be waived. These two assignments in particular are not of the variety that we usually assign to law students, and Jill did exemplary work on each.

In addition, Jill assisted with client intake and, in that capacity, provided advice and counsel to clients whose cases we did not accept, on matters such as Medicaid applications and property deeds and records.

I was very pleased by the work that Jill performed this summer.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Bartley  
Senior Attorney, Elderly Law Unit