

September 7, 2012

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I'm writing to thank you and Equal Justice America for funding my summer fellowship at Connecticut Legal Services (CLS) in Bridgeport. I had a truly wonderful experience—one that confirmed my commitment to using my legal education to help those in need.

CLS is a truly powerful organization. CLS helps low-income families meet basic life needs by involving itself in various areas of law, including housing, consumer, public benefits, family, education, and health. I worked in the housing unit, under and alongside several outstanding housing attorneys. About half of the cases I worked on involved tenants in post-foreclosure eviction situations. The other half involved federally-subsidized housing program participants in disputes with the housing authority. My supervisors ensured that I had a hand in all stages of the process, from conducting intake to investigating facts to drafting pleadings to negotiating with landlords and the housing authority.

I helped clients solve all sorts of housing-related problems. Here are a few examples: I helped a tenant in a foreclosed property negotiate with her landlord a new lease at an affordable rent, so that she could stay in the neighborhood she'd grown to love; I helped a husband gain admission into public housing, after the housing authority had wrongfully denied him, so that he could be reunited with his wife and children; I helped an elderly, disabled veteran remain in his public housing unit and avoid an eviction that stemmed from a clerical error; I helped a Section 8 tenant assemble a case against a landlord who had been over-charging rent.

This work was both challenging and compelling. In this economic climate, how could it not be? While the recent economic crisis certainly placed enormous pressure on low-income families all across America, it hit residents in greater Bridgeport particularly hard. So many still need legal help but can't get it. As a result, I felt even more proud of the work that I was doing to ensure that families could keep roofs over their heads and avoid the disastrous consequences of homelessness.

I left Bridgeport feeling bittersweet. Bitter that my time serving the Bridgeport community was over. Sweet that I'd been inspired to continue my commitment to helping others. I can't express enough my gratitude to you for making this experience possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Wookie Kim
Harvard Law School
Class of 2014