

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

August 25, 2014

Dear Mr. Ruben,

This summer I had the privilege of interning with the National Senior Citizens Law Center (NSCLC) to advocate on behalf of our nations' low-income seniors. I chose NSCLC because I am working toward becoming a public interest elder law attorney. NSCLC is a nationwide non-profit organization that specializes in bringing about protective and progressive policy through administrative advocacy, impact litigation, and education. Their mission is to preserve the independence and rights of low-income seniors, particularly in the areas of health care and economic security. Over the course of my time at NSCLC, I came to appreciate the need to concentrate efforts in these two areas, as physical and economic health are essential to maintaining the independence seniors deserve. The need to foster this continued independence is increasingly important, as our sizable baby boomers population ages.

While at NSCLC I simultaneously worked with both the Health and Income teams. The majority of my Health team projects focused on California's new health care demonstration program, the Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI). The goal of this fledgling program is for California's Department of Health Services (DHCS) to streamline health care services for "dual eligibles," meaning California residents that receive both Medicare and Medi-Cal. Accordingly, the CCI has a significant impact on low-income seniors living in the counties participating in the demonstration. As with all well intended programs, there is great potential for harm. NSCLC heard about various problems in instituting the CCI, which, despite the alleged safety mechanisms, resulted in some dual eligibles being denied necessary medical services. So I spent much of my summer researching unique questions of law presented by the CCI in case NSCLC found the only way to alleviate these injuries was through litigation.

My main project for the Income team was investigating systemic problems with the Social Security Administration's Supplemental Security Incomes (SSI) appeals process. I focused on cases where a beneficiary's SSI had been reduced or terminated due to an issue other than disability status (i.e. over-asset). I interviewed attorneys at various local legal aid offices to determine the patterns of reasons local SSA field offices used to justify improper reductions and terminations, as well as when offices failed to follow their own internal guidelines by refusing to continue benefits to those who filed timely appeals.

I have treasured my experience at NSCLC, and am ever grateful to Equal Justice America and its donors for making my work there possible. The attorneys and support staff are dedicated and passionate about serving the nationwide community of low-income

seniors, and were a pleasure to work with as individuals. Additionally, along with deepening my knowledge of public benefits and health law, I have learned more about the inner workings of policy-focused non-profits, including how to use litigation to bring about nationwide change. Thus, my summer has brought me closer to my goal of becoming a well-rounded advocate for impoverished seniors.

Thank you again,

Krista Granen
University of California, Hastings College of the Law
J.D. Candidate, May 2015

August 29, 2014

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

VIA EMAIL TO: dan@equaljusticeamerica.org

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am happy to report that the National Senior Citizens Law Center had an excellent experience working with Krista Granen, an Equal Justice America fellow this summer in our Oakland, California office.

In her summer fellowship, Krista covered the waterfront of issues that our organization works on relating to health care and income security for low-income seniors. Her major projects included investigation of Social Security Administration practices regarding non-disability appeals for Supplemental Security Income recipients, and research into various cutting-edge legal questions relating to California's new program to shift dual eligibles—seniors and people with disabilities who have both Medicaid and Medicare—into managed care. She took on every project with enthusiasm and keen interest.

Krista is intelligent, focused and dedicated to the needs of her clients. She quickly grasps even very complex legal topics, as when she wrote a substantial memo analyzing the enforceability of a novel statutory no-review clause. She is adept at breaking down the real impact of particular policy or issue, and her interest and previous work experience have given her a solid grasp of how legal decisions and policy impact real people.

As a colleague, Krista demonstrated unusual maturity and responsibility. She accomplished a tremendous amount of work during her time with us, and did a good job discerning when to check in and ask for direction, and when to take independent initiative. She was responsive and a good communicator, and often went above and beyond in responding to our attorneys' requests for information, explanation, and research. She requested and welcomed feedback, and effectively incorporated it into her work.

Overall, Krista's level of professionalism throughout the summer was remarkable. We strongly hope that she continues on her current career path, and look forward to serving as a reference for her in the future.

Sincerely,



Anna Rich
Litigation Director