

Mr. Dan Ruben
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112
(804) 744-4200

August 17, 2009

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My name is Laura Whipple and I spent this summer working as a legal intern at SeniorLAW Center in Philadelphia, PA. I am a rising 2L at Temple University Beasley School of Law. I am writing to express my gratitude to Equal Justice America for the generous grant that helped make it possible for me to work at SeniorLAW Center for a twelve-week tenure as a summer intern.

Reflecting back on this summer already creates stirrings of nostalgia for me, and I am surprised by how much I've developed professionally and personally. The training period of my internship, while informative, was certainly overwhelming. I am awestruck when I think about how comfortable I have become within my position, in addition to the extent of my exposure to several legal practice areas. The knowledge and insight into the legal world that I have gained this summer has been unprecedented for me, and will serve to benefit me greatly as I enter my second year of law school. I feel that the experience I've acquired from the practical application of legal information throughout this twelve-week internship has paralleled—perhaps even surpassed—what I learned in my first year of law school.

In twelve weeks, I handled a wide variety of legal matters through intake and an individual caseload, from mortgage foreclosures, to drafting personal planning documents, to contractor fraud cases. In addition, I attended several of the neighborhood clinics, which are part of the outreach network of SeniorLAW Center. I appreciated the balance that the attorneys who mentored me struck; between giving me firm guidance and allowing to me develop how to approach our clients independently.

My interaction with clients jumps out as the most significant aspect of my internship. The clients of SeniorLAW Center run the full gamut of personalities. Some of the seniors we see are sweet, caring, and excited to get to know who you, the legal intern; others assertively demand help, knowing that they are entitled to more and frustrated that the bureaucratic system has failed them in one way or another. Working with seniors this summer has confirmed to me that their population is the demographic I wish to serve throughout my legal career.

I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to help one of our seniors to rest a little easier at night because there are now legal provisions for her adopted daughters should something happen to her. It was also heartwarming to help another one of our clients in entering a payment plan so that his house would not be foreclosed on. During intake, I feel that I provided seniors access to legal and social assistance, even if our agency

directed them to other agencies that could assist them. SeniorLAW Center has the important task of handling legal emergencies, and doing everything within its capacity to provide resources to seniors that cannot be found anywhere else within Philadelphia.

I am joining the legal profession to serve in public interest. I chose to become a lawyer because I wanted to help people who may not otherwise have the resources to receive equal access to the legal system. I am particularly interested in helping senior citizens, because I feel that they are often an overlooked and ignored demographic within our society. It is too easy for seniors to fall through the cracks of the justice system. The need for public interest service in elder law will remain strong as our ever-expanding population continues to grow, and I intend to spend my career assisting this important and underrepresented population. My internship at SeniorLAW Center has confirmed my desire to guide my career in this direction. Thank you for helping me to realize my professional goals and shape my legal career towards assisting senior citizens.

Warmest Regards,

Laura J. Whipple
SeniorLAW Summer Intern '09