

August 8, 2012

Sent via e-mail

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

Re: Summer experience at Public Counsel

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This was the first opportunity I received to utilize the legal skills I have gained in the past two years to help others. Professionally, working as a law clerk at Public Counsel was challenging and rewarding at the same time. The challenging aspect was to see clients go through such terrible situations and sometimes not being able to find a solution for them (especially if the statute of limitations had run). I learned that there will be times when I will not be able to help. However, sometimes, I was able to provide other resources for the client to seek help from. Personally, this summer was rewarding, especially because working at Public Counsel in a more professional legal capacity has been a goal of mine. It was also a privilege to have the opportunity to work with great minds and passionate individuals.

Throughout the summer, my work focused on one of the heavily litigated cases handled directly by Public Counsel. The case involved a client who had contracted with a construction company to install a new modular home. Unfortunately, our client was scammed—after paying the initial deposit, the construction company abandoned the project and a third party repossessed the modular home from our client. The trial is set for December of this year so the case was at the peak of discovery. I not only organized incoming discovery, but also drafted demurrers and motions to compel additional discovery. I also conducted legal research on various issues that came up as we were drafting court documents, such as the types of damages a plaintiff can claim for trespass, conversion, and wrongful repossession. I also got a chance to sit in on the deposition of the third party that reposed the modular home from our client. At different points during the summer, I got a chance to meet the parties involved, including our client. The case continues to be litigated.

When I was not working on the case mentioned above, I conducted numerous intake calls, about three a week. After receiving basic information from clients to make sure they met Public Counsel's income threshold to receive our services, I listened to their story and tried to spot the legal issues that could be further investigated. Then, I received authorization to contact certain third parties to get a better idea of the problem and took action to help my client get to some sort of resolution.

One of the intake clients that I was able to assist was a retired elderly woman. She came to Public Counsel with multiple issues, one being that she owed over \$4,000 to the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS"). I contacted the IRS and was able to help my client enter

into a monthly payment plan so that she would stop receiving collection notices and pay off the money she owed.

In addition, Public Counsel was generous in allowing the summer clerks to attend the MCLE sessions that it hosted for its staff attorneys. I attend sessions discussing deposition tactics, upcoming United States Supreme Court cases, among others. I also attended Public Counsel's CARES Day (Connecting Angelenos to Resources and Essential Services). This was a rewarding experience—volunteers were trained in the morning and dispatched out to local Departments of Public Social Services to offer help to Angelenos trying to get food and shelter for the day.

Overall, I was exposed a very wide range of practice areas and fields of law. Thank you again for supporting my summer experience at Public Counsel. It truly was an unforgettable experience.

Sincerely,

Lisa Choi

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SENT VIA EMAIL

August 15, 2012

Dan Ruben
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 DanR@EqualJusticeAmerica.org

Re: Evaluation of Lisa Choi's summer fellowship at Public Counsel

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Lisa participated in Public Counsel's summer clerkship program for ten weeks. During this period, she had numerous assignments, ranging from interviewing clients to drafting legal memoranda, and all the work she did for us was very high in quality.

Lisa's primary assignment involved one of Public Counsel's most actively litigated cases. In the case to which I am referring, our client had contracted with a construction company to install a new modular home. Unfortunately, the company scammed our client—after receiving an \$85,000 deposit, the construction company abandoned the project, and the company financing the purchase of the modular home repossessed it from our client, leaving him homeless. The case is set to go to trial in December, and discovery and motion work on the case was very active over the summer.

Lisa drafted a demurrer to a cross-defendant's answer to the third amended cross-complaint, two motions to compel discovery responses, and an ex parte application to change the case caption. She began drafting a prove-up packet that we will use to obtain a default judgment against one of the cross-defendants. In addition, she reviewed and created a spreadsheet to organize discovery documents that we received from another of the cross-defendants. She also researched matters such as the applicability of equitable estoppel to claims for conversion or trespass and the type of damages recoverable under trespass, conversion, and wrongful repossession causes of action.

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In addition to the extensive work she did on the contractor fraud case, Lisa handled calls on the Consumer Law Project's intake line. Her work in interviewing clients and working up their cases for placement with pro bono attorneys was superlative. After interviewing intake callers, Lisa presented her cases during our weekly case discussion meetings and solicited advice from staff attorneys on how to proceed with each case; e.g., some cases needed more fact investigation, some required contact with third parties, and others required a detailed memorandum in order to place the case with pro bono counsel.

In one of the intake cases she handled, Lisa was able to assist an elderly woman who owed the IRS over \$4,000 in unpaid taxes. Lisa contacted the IRS on the woman's behalf and was able to negotiate a reasonable payment plan of \$75 a month. In another case, Lisa was able to persuade the California Department of Health to reduce a client's debt of \$500,000+ down to \$100,000+. Lisa argued successfully that the Department's interest charges were excessive.

Lisa did research and prepared a memorandum on the options for recovering attorney's fees in a case against a bank for allowing its foreclosed homes to deteriorate into an uninhabitable condition.

Lastly, Lisa took advantage of the various events at Public Counsel, such as MCLE programs. She attended programs on deposition tactics, and upcoming United States Supreme Court cases, among others. She also attended the Mortgage Fraud Summit, which was hosted by the U.S. Attorney's office, and participated in Public Counsel's CARES Day (Connecting Angelenos to Resources and Essential Services). On CARES Day, volunteers go to local Department of Public Social Services offices to assist people applying for food, housing and other types of assistance.

Those of us who work in the Consumer Law Project very much enjoyed having Lisa with us for the summer. She was a pleasure to work with; she had a very positive, can-do attitude toward all the assignments we gave her; and her contributions to the work of the Consumer Law Project were exemplary.

Sincerely,



Patrick Dunlevy
Directing Attorney
Consumer Law Project
Public Counsel