

August 24, 2007

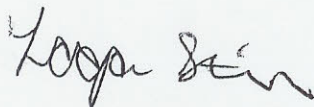
Dear Mr. Ruben,

Throughout my first year of law school, I found it difficult to achieve perspective in the midst of the chaos surrounding finals, the plethora of potential activities to join and people to meet, and the temptation of a \$30,000 summer paycheck. I kept reminding myself that I am in law school for different reasons—that I want to work for an organization doing legal work that will ground my creative writing in real and rewarding experiences, and that will allow me to work with those who, like my brother, are disabled and often feel that their voices are not heard. To that end, I got involved with the Office of Public Interest Advising last year, and joined an Americans with Disabilities Law reading group. I also applied for and was admitted to the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, a student-run organization providing legal services in housing, benefits, and family law to the greater Boston community.

However, it was not until this summer that my interest in the law was re-cemented. I worked for the Adult Home Project of MFY Legal Services in Manhattan, which is an incredible group of four lawyers who have spent the last fifteen years trying to reform the adult home industry in New York. (Adult Homes are privately owned facilities housing 60-200 residents, most of whom are mentally disabled. They are generally very poorly run, institutional, and segregate their residents from the community). The project does both individual client work, going out to homes weekly to visit residents (it is very difficult for them to hear about or contact us, as none have individual phone lines, and they are fairly confined to the far-boroughs of New York),

and impact litigation. The lawyers in the project really involved me in their work, allowing me to interview clients both in the homes each week and in our office, participate in resident rights trainings at the homes, strategize for cases, and attend meetings and settlement negotiations with our partnering law firm for a class-action case. This was all in addition to writing answers and motions to dismiss submitted to court and writing longer research memos, including a memo circulated internally addressing the potential ethical implications of hiring a social worker at MFY. I was very happy that I was able to contrast individual client contact with class action litigation in federal court. It is one thing to read about a racketeering case or a Medicaid fraud scam in a complaint, and think "oh, this is great, we're going after these people." But it is another thing entirely to meet with the clients, see where they live, hear their stories, and realize that at the end of the day they will still be living in these homes. What they really need, and what my experience working with these lawyers helped me to see, is for the structure of housing for the mentally ill to change. This summer has been everything that I could have hoped for, and has rejuvenated my passion for the law and my commitment to disability impact litigation. Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Logan Steiner". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Logan Steiner  
Harvard Law School '09