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August 13, 2007

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

During the summer, I had the pleasure of working as a summer intern at the Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic (CGLA). CGLA provides free legal services to the poor in the areas of housing law, family law, criminal law, and criminal records. Primarily, I worked on family law cases under the supervision of a staff family law attorney. The work was both challenging and fulfilling, and it solidified my goal of working as a lawyer in the public interest.

As a summer intern, my work never became dull, as I was given a variety of assignments. For example, on a weekly basis, I interviewed potential clients and then presented the facts and legal issues of these potential clients at CGLA's weekly case acceptance meeting. These interviews provided a valuable opportunity for me to develop my communication and issue-spotting skills. For the clients, the interviews provided a safe atmosphere for them to share their stories and to be treated with dignity and respect.

In addition to conducting intake interviews and presenting at acceptance meetings, I managed my own family law case load, which consisted of about ten to fifteen clients at any given time. The legal issues of my clients included divorces, orders of protection, child custody, child support, and visitation. In the office, I conducted research and prepared petitions, motions, and discovery materials. However, by no means did I spend the majority of my summer at my desk, staring at my computer. I also spent a great deal of time talking with clients, both over the phone and in person. Often, I spoke with my clients to gather information pertinent to their legal issues. I also explained the court process, prepared them to testify, and managed the clients' expectations.

Finally, I spent a great deal of time at court, representing my clients pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711. I represented my clients at status dates and hearings, and I also negotiated with opposing parties. Some of my most memorable and educational experiences occurred while I was at court. For example, I negotiated visitation orders for my clients with opposing parties. One of these clients had not seen his daughter in nearly a year, and I managed to negotiate a visitation order with an opposing counsel. It was very fulfilling to then find out that these types of clients were able to be reunited with their children, due to an agreed visitation order that I negotiated.

I was given a very unique experience as a summer legal intern at CGLA. My supervising attorney did a fantastic job of teaching me, and he gave me a great deal of responsibility. As a result, I was able to develop new skills and become more comfortable working with clients and speaking in court. Not only am I grateful for the opportunity to develop legal skills during the summer, but I am also thankful for the chance to work with clients who desperately needed help.

I hope to continue working in the public interest and assisting the poor and destitute members of our communities. Thank you for the generous financial support, which made my valuable summer experience possible.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mary C. Meixner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mary C. Meixner
DePaul University College of Law
J.D. Expected May 2008

Enclosure