

August 31, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for the support I received as an Equal Justice America Legal Services Fellow this summer. Your financial assistance allowed me the opportunity to work for the Inner City Law Center's (ICLC) Homeless Veterans Project.

While veterans are venerated by the press and our political leaders, the treatment that many received from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) is truly scandalous. Countless veterans are denied disability benefits due to bureaucratic inaction and red tape. The Homeless Veterans Project has helped many clients get the benefits they deserve.

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to meet and interview clients, review (often voluminous) case files, and formulate legal arguments supporting clients' claims for disability benefits.

My favorite part of the work was meeting the clients and getting to use my legal knowledge to advocate for them. One client sticks out in my mind: John, a young veteran of the war in Afghanistan, was denied a portion of his GI Bill education benefits because of a minor error he made on his application. The DVA claimed that its hands were tied and the law did not allow them to correct his error. After researching the controlling law, ICLC's staff attorneys and I came up with several reasons why the DVA *could* correct the error and grant John his full education benefits. John's appeal is still pending, but I am hopeful that it will succeed.

I have no illusions that a career in public interest law will be easy or free from frustrations. Nonetheless, my summer at the Homeless Veterans Project made it very clear to me that dedicated public interest attorneys can do a world of good for their clients. I look forward to using my legal education to contribute to that good.

Thank you again for your support this summer.

Sincerely,

Mathew Sollett
Loyola Law School, Class of 2012