



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

Via email: katie@equaljusticeamerica.org

September 10, 2014

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I had the pleasure of supervising Michelle Ghafar this past summer at the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC). Thanks to your organization's funding, Michelle made an invaluable contribution to our organization.

I am the director of the Clean Slate Practice at the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), a legal clinic of Berkeley Law School (Boalt Hall). The Clean Slate Reentry Legal Services Practice provides reentry legal services to low-income people with criminal records who are attempting to reenter society as full members.

This past summer, Michelle's work included client interviewing and counseling, legal research and writing, and document drafting. Michelle did in-depth legal work on individual cases and also worked with walk-in clients each week at our community-based reentry legal services clinics.

Michelle is a contentious and meticulous advocate. She approached her work with careful attention and compassion for her clients. Michelle worked with one client who had been wrongfully convicted and incarcerated for the accidental death of his child. Michelle's work required navigating some challenging conversations, which she handled effectively and with patience and grace. She mastered the various complicated legal issues involved in the case, and help the client come to understand them as well. For another client seeking a Certificate of Rehabilitation and pardon, Michelle carefully parsed one of the longest and most complicated series of criminal history reports I have come across, which took significant perseverance.

It was after Michelle left that we fully appreciated her exceptional attention to detail: Michelle's transfer memos and case notes are the best of any recent student I have supervised, which has been a great help to our staff and the students who took over her client matters.

Michelle developed strong client interviewing and counseling skills. After she attended some trainings and observed attorneys conduct intake and interviewing, Michelle conducted client intake interviews on her own. Michelle was able to strike a good balance of knowing the limits of her legal expertise but conveying appropriate confidence and competence to her clients.

I am deeply grateful to Equal Justice America for its support that allows wonderful interns like Michelle to work at the East Bay Community Law Center. It was an important educational experience for Michelle and a tremendous benefit to our clients whose lives were improved by Michelle's work on their cases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eliza Hersh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eliza Hersh
Director & Supervising Attorney
Clean Slate Practice