

July 25, 2016

Dan Ruben, Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Dan Ruben:

For the past seven months I have been a law clerk on the Children's Disability Project through Greater Boston Legal Services.

This experience has shaped not only who I am as a law student, but also as a future attorney in just a few short years. With the help of my two impactful supervisors, I was given "real" work from the very first few days including assessment memos, interviewing clients, handling aspects of case management such as letters to the court, closing phone calls, and more. I was always able to get all my questions answered and I was able to put together a timeline of how cases are handled and the appropriate times to do each task.

The clients who I was able to serve also made a large impact on the attorney I wish to become in the near future. Many single moms fighting for their legal right for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) called into our office, requesting help on their pending SSI cases for their children.

From working with these clients, I was exposed to the world of mental health issues in our justice system and the true impact on what that means when the client gets their rightful day in court for their hearing. The steps that go into preparing a case to go in front of the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR Court) are tremendous. There are record requests to be sent out, doctors to request information from, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to review, clients to interview, and legal memorandum to be prepared, as just a few examples.

Working with overwhelmingly single moms to help get their earned money for their most prized possession in their life- their children is no easy task. Thankfully, some clients specifically really made an impact. One client, in particular would call the office regularly to check for an updates that came in that

day in regard to her daughters case. Other parents arrived so early to their hearing date and fully prepared, only for the Social Security Administration (SSA) to send them away, to postpone their hearing. These acts not only pull on your heart strings in an emotional capacity, but also in a legal capacity. These clients force public interest attorneys to really think about the welfare of the families that they work with, and the impact of being a public interest attorney.

This experience has exposed me to a very different area of law that not all law students or even attorneys get to experience throughout their law careers, and I am very thankful that I was able to experience this impact early on in my career, to shape the attorney that I want to become.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity that I was able to afford to do, thanks to Equal Justice America.

Sincerely,

Brittany Peck

Suffolk University Law School

J.D. Candidate of 2018