

July 20, 2016

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I want to take this opportunity to thank Equal Justice America for selecting me for the Summer 2016 Fellowship. This fellowship has enabled me to focus on the needs of my clients rather than my financial restraints. The experience I received at Greater Boston Legal Services, Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) & Re-entry Project was extremely rewarding. I represented clients that were denied employment and housing because they had a CORI. Many of my clients were low-income individuals who relied on public assistance. Sealing their criminal record gave them the chance to increase opportunities for economic or professional advancement, support their children and live productive lives.

My clients were looking for a second chance at life. I represented a client that lost everything she worked hard for because a lack in judgment and reacting poorly in a situation. She was fired from her job for having CORI and she risked being homeless. Many of us forget that these individuals are still people. A CORI harms a person in a way that keeps them at a disadvantage from being a productive citizen within their communities. The sealing of a CORI provides a great opportunity for someone to be gainfully employed, self-sufficient, and no longer rely on the Commonwealth for support.

This internship was an invaluable experience because I received a great “hands-on” work and knowledge about the process of sealing a CORI. I was able to improve on my trial advocacy skills by providing counsel to clients during court hearings with the assists of my supervising attorney. I enjoyed the community outreach that was conducted this summer to [inform] people that we are here to service them.

This internship has given me a new perspective on public interest law. The attorneys at Greater Boston Legal services, CORI & Re-Entry Project were always accessible and willing to assist me where needed. I appreciate the exposure that I have received this summer, and I am considering a career in public interest law. I have decided to extend my internship through the Fall semester and I am thrilled about the work ahead. Thank you again for selecting me for the Equal Justice America Summer 2016 Fellowship.

Thank you,

Tanesha Thompson
Suffolk University Law School
Class of 2017

EVALUATION OF TANESHA THOMPSON

Tanesha worked as a law student in the CORI & Re-entry Project at Greater Boston Legal Services from May 16, 2016 through July 25, 2016.

Intern placement description.

The mission of the CORI & Re-Entry Project is to assist individuals from communities of color, particularly in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, in overcoming barriers to employment and other opportunities caused by their Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) histories.

Supervisors: Attorney Pauline Quirion and Attorney Susan Malouin

Tasks.

Tanesha completed many intake questionnaires with clients on the phone or in person at our monthly intake tables at the Roxbury and Dorchester divisions of the Boston Municipal Court. She also worked on cases involving criminal record sealing and did legal research. She drafted affidavits, motions, petitions and related documents. She assisted us in court and helped us manage clients we were representing at the Roxbury criminal record sealing sessions in both June and July.

Tanesha also represented two clients in court as certified law student attorney under supervision. Her demeanor and oral presentation before the judge were excellent.

Professional, Performance and Related Issues.

Tanesha is intelligent and very mature, and highly professional. She has good interpersonal skills which translate well in a public interest setting. She was able to work well with all types of people and has empathy for others. We enjoyed working with her.

Tanesha wants to be an effective advocate and we have no doubt that she will develop into an excellent attorney.

If you have questions, please contact Pauline Quirion at pquirion@gbls.org or 617-603-1554.