

Mr. Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer I was given the opportunity to work at East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), a community-based clinic that provides legal services to low-income clients. As an intern in the Immigration Clinic, I worked with individuals from vulnerable populations, such as people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, members of the LGBTQ community and youth. Working with these groups provided me with the ability to not only better understand the wide range of immigration issues that are common among the community, but to also use the skills I learned in law school and apply them to the real-life practice of law. While at EBCLC, I prepared affirmative and defensive applications for political asylum, U-Visas, naturalization and special immigrant juvenile status applications.

One of the main highlights of working at EBCLC was the face-to-face interaction I was able to have with clients. It was an amazing and humbling experience to be able to conduct interviews with individuals seeking legal representation, who entrusted me with their heartbreaking stories, in the hopes that I would be able to make a change in their lives.

During the first week of my summer fellowship, I was assigned a client who was similar in age to me. At the age of twelve, months after she entered the United States, she was a victim of sexual abuse by someone who lived in her household. The abuse lasted for two years and ended when she became pregnant with her perpetrator's child. A decade after, she was motivated to seek representation to obtain legal status in order to stay with her family and to provide her daughters with the safety, security and opportunity she was not given as a child. Helping her obtain legal status, I prepared her documents, drafted her declaration, wrote letters to police departments, contacted her therapist and performed legal research. A decision is expected within one year and I hope she receives a positive outcome.

Being able to work with these inspiring individuals was an extraordinary opportunity. Raised by immigrant parents, I understood some of the reasons people uproot their lives, but never fully grasped the challenges immigrants faced. Through my work at EBCLC, I got a glimpse into the hardships of the legal process and hope to continue my efforts at helping these resilient people through the avenue of law.

Sincerely,



Joys Choi
J.D. Candidate, Class of 2017
University of California, Berkeley, School of Law