

Dear Dan Ruben:

In the summer of 2016, I had the privilege of working with Public Counsel's CARES (Connecting Angelenos to Resources and Essential Services) Program as a rising 2L UCLA Law student. After spending a year filled with extensive classroom learning at school, it was refreshing to be given the responsibility to positively affect the lives of those who need help. Public Counsel CARES has trained and developed volunteers in order to assist people in need for over twenty years.

The CARES team consisted of six interns from various California law schools, in addition to our supervisor. As a part of the process, the interns were tasked with advocating for indigent and homeless clients who had been denied or had trouble receiving their government benefits. Generally, CARES reaches DPSS (Department of Public Social Services) offices from all over Los Angeles County and fosters productive relationships between Public Counsel's and DPSS's employees in order to facilitate assistance to the low-income clients.

Personally, I found the work with Public Counsel to be very fulfilling. I chose to enroll in law school because I wanted the opportunity to help others, especially those in need, and the internship allowed me to do that. Interns were not limited to assisting in obtaining benefits. They were also encouraged to connect and bond with their clients. To many clients, the

opportunity to socialize with people who genuinely cared for them and wanted to help them was met with as much gratitude as receiving their monthly benefits. This experience also helped me grow as a person because there was so much about homelessness and its causation that I was unaware of until I worked with Public Counsel.

Additionally, the opportunity to apply my experience and knowledge in order to train other summer law firm associates to advocate with low-income clients was invaluable. By the end of the summer, I grew more confident in American society and humanity. This experience strengthened the reality that despite perceived social, racial, and class differences, we as humans will always be the same and everyone will always deserve proper respect and dignity.

Sincerely,

Chidozie Uche

UCLA Law Class of 2018