

August 13, 2017

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

Whenever being asked about my summer internship at Cabrini Green Legal Aid, I always give the same answer, "I should have done this earlier." Interning at Cabrini Green Legal Aid ("CGLA") is a very rewarding experience, and I have gained so many invaluable skills during this summer. I truly appreciate everyone at CGLA for offering altogether this opportunity to learn and to help people facing negative consequences stemming from contact with the criminal justice system.

One of the abilities that I had expected to acquire at Cabrini Green Legal Aid, is client counseling. This goal was reached soon after I had begun my internship, for CGLA provides interns ample opportunities to communicate with clients or potential clients. Everyone in the Criminal Records team needs to take shift at our Help Desk at the Daley Center. At the Help Desk, we research and analyze walk-in clients' records, create sealing/expungement petitions, and explain to them the legal procedure. I enjoyed these moments to help people solve their problems. Beside the Help Desk, sometimes clients come to our office to sign the petitions. There was once when I was instructed to create and print out numerous petitions for a client coming in soon. The client ("L") has multiple cases in the Maywood district, which requires more copies of petitions. Just when my supervisor and I had finished laying out all the petitions on the table, client L arrived. My supervisor warned me that client L had not been very patient. Indeed she wasn't, but my supervisor remained professional and explained to her with patience as he always does. While he left temporarily to make copies, I chatted with client L and found out she had actually just earned her master's degree in psychology, and finished her internship at a rehabilitation center. I praised her for the career she has built, and was content to find a smile on her face. However, she expressed shame in her past, seeing that as a stain that would continue obstructing her future. I told her this is what

we are doing now—to help her remove her past on the record so that she can keep moving on with her life, and that all she needed to do was to file the petitions and complete the procedure. At the end of the day, my supervisor told me that client L was very satisfied with our service and donated \$20 to CGLA. This is one of the highlights of my summer, for I feel like I have contributed to CGLA's mission—for our clients to leave us stronger than they came.

I really appreciate Equal Justice America's support for lawyers and law students to gain invaluable experience in public interest, and CGLA is definitely one of the places that are enthusiastic about training public interest lawyers. CGLA removes legal barriers for a great number of people every day, and it is my pleasure and privilege to be able to contribute to this mission.

Sincerely,

Chantal Chiu

University of Illinois College of Law
J.D. Candidate 2018



August 11, 2017

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
113540 East Boundary Road, Building II – Suite 204
Midlothian, Virginia 23112

Re: Chantal Chiu's Fellowship at Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Dear Dan:

My name is Kyle Morrison and I am a Staff Attorney at Cabrini Green Legal Aid (CGLA). I was Chantal Chiu's supervisor at CGLA this summer. I am writing to let you know how Chantal's summer went, and how helpful she was to have at our agency.

Chantal worked in our Criminal Records department. Our agency is one of the largest in the state for servicing the needs of those in Illinois who have issues related to their criminal records. Chantal was instrumental this summer in helping meet that need. Chantal's duties included working at our Help Desk in the Daley Center, which involves researching client's records, preparing petitions to sealing and expunge, and counseling the clients on their next steps. In Illinois, petitions to expunge or seal are discretionary motions, and Chantal went every week to the court call in the chief judge's courtroom in Chicago to help at that court call. Chantal would help check-in clients, answer questions, and represent clients under a CGLA's attorney's guidance. The court calls are very fast-paced, and she was able to successfully advocate on petitioners' behalf on numerous occasions.

While our office is in Cook County, Chantal helped CGLA contact clients, manage case files, and create new petitions for participants in a summit that occurred in Peoria County. She also chose to travel to Peoria County with some of the department to help with the court call that would be happening there. Chantal at the end of the summer also went on a trip to Decatur to help do potential client intakes at the prison located there.

Chantal did a large amount of work in our office, which helped alleviate the workload of our staff. Chantal interviewed potential clients, researched criminal records of clients whose records were too long to be researched at our Help Desk, and did research to determine the eligibility of clients to work in healthcare for a partner agency. Chantal also had her own caseload, which involved drafting Certificates of Good Conduct, Permanent Employee Registration Cards, and Healthcare Waivers. Her caseload made her the main point of contact with those clients, and she worked closely with me to discuss issues and review those petitions.

Chantal left our organization with significant experience in client counseling. She showed empathy for all the clients she worked with, and cared deeply about the issues facing our target population. She also left with oral advocacy experience, and legal writing skills improved with working on petitions that would be submitted to courts and administrative agencies. Finally, she left with a greater knowledge of the laws that allow someone to prevent access to their criminal background – and the importance of that relief.



Chantal's time at CGLA significantly helped our organization manage our caseload. I enjoyed working with her. She was intelligent, empathic, and very willing to learn. I know working with her that she saw first-hand what it was like to be a lawyer. I hope that she found the experience valuable, and that she will continue to have a strong desire to be a nonprofit legal organization.

Thank you for her sponsorship. If you have any questions about her time at CGLA, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Morrison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Morrison
Staff Attorney, Criminal Records
Cabrini Green Legal Aid