

ARIEL COX

August 27, 2018

Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Ms. Ruben:

As an Equal Justice America Fellow, I have had incredible experiences working with legal professionals this summer at the New York Legal Assistance Group. The primary mission of this organization is geared towards assisting low-income residents who are suffering from medical ailments that place an additional strain on solving their legal issues. I knew I wanted to intern at NYLAG after listening to my mother, a registered nurse, speak about the legal plights some of her patients face. Particularly, she would speak about how hospitals would oftentimes discharge undocumented immigrants who are unable to afford healthcare, with knowledge that they are still severely ill. This struck a chord within me to learn more about medical-legal partnerships that help alleviate these societal stressors.

Interning at NYLAG's LegalHealth Unit has given me a first-hand look at the significance of legal advocacy within the public interest realm. For example, I helped manage the Veteran's Intake Line, where I would contact low-income veterans dealing with legal issues and schedule them for an appointment to meet with an attorney at either the Bronx VA or Manhattan VA clinic. I attended and participated in clinic appointments with my supervising attorneys at medical centers such as Bellevue Hospital, CancerCare, and NYU Langone. Additionally, I have drafted memoranda on Article 81 guardianship proceedings and researched the complexities of Section 8 housing. I contacted several charities to help accumulate funding for clients' medical and housing debts. I was a witness to several healthcare proxies, living wills, and emergency

wills. I attended trainings concerning Social Security disability, divorce mediation, and employment law. I have drafted Orders to Show Cause and Affidavits of Service for housing matters and traveled to medical facilities to obtain medical records as evidence in support of a Social Security disability application. Also, I was given the chance to attend a Social Security hearing in downtown Manhattan.

My supervising attorneys have been such positive catalysts behind my experiences and I truly have gained so much wisdom from observing their lawyering practices. Although I have learned so many things over the course of the summer, one of the greatest lessons I have learned is the meaning behind genuine empathy. When people tell you that they had a stroke, have a disability, or have a frightening diagnosis, it's extremely easy to offer sympathy without really being able to relate to them. After being exposed to various kinds of legal hardships on people who really should only be worrying about the severity of their diagnoses, I gained a greater understanding about what it means to be empathetic to someone in need. Working with NYLAG this summer has helped confirm my passion in law and commitment to helping other people.

Sincerely,

Ariel Cox
Cardozo School of Law