

October 8, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

This past summer, I had the opportunity to intern at the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless (WLCH) in Washington D.C. WLCH is an organization that focuses on combatting homelessness and poverty by providing low barrier, comprehensive legal services at intake sites throughout DC to help clients access housing, shelter, and public benefits. The office is small and only has about 15 attorneys, so it was nice to be able to work with almost all of the attorneys during my time there. Every day, an attorney from the clinic would go to a different intake site around the city. Clients would be referred to us from different legal aid societies or non-profits, and they would come with questions about housing benefits, public benefits, or seeking help to get into shelters. I attended one to two intakes a week and was often able to handle a few cases on my own under the supervision of the attending attorney, which I found to be a great experience. This gave me an opportunity to take on a few cases from start to finish.

I also did some outreach at different organizations to keep members of the community abreast of different regulations and how their rights would be impacted. I appreciated that the organization made sure to really connect with members of the community directly in order to better support their goals. One of the attorneys ran a group that met once a month called People Power Action which was comprised of community members and focused on giving

community members a chance to have their voices heard. I found this particularly beneficial because it was a good way to bolster the organization's public policy advocacy and community engagement work, which I was able to partake in along with different coalition groups.

I also completed some research during my time there to stay informed of policy changes regarding housing initiatives. One of the bigger research projects I took on was looking at statutes and case law to determine how settlements or lump sum payments affected the collection of public benefits, which was an issue that was impacting one of our clients.

Overall, I really enjoyed my experience at the Legal Clinic and feel that I gained valuable skills in direct client representation and advocacy. I am grateful for the support that Equal Justice America provided in allowing me to intern at this important organization.

Sincerely,

Maryam Gueye