

Jake Crammer
Notre Dame Law School Class of 2019

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben:

I write to express my gratitude for being named an Equal Justice America Fellow this past summer in Montgomery. It enabled me to work at the Southern Poverty Law Center's Economic Justice Project, a non-profit that defends the civil rights of those facing economic injustice in the Deep South.

I learned a lot about community lawyering and impact litigation. The attorneys at SPLC allowed student interns to participate in almost all stages in case development. As an intern, my work ranged from investigating unjust practices, to interviewing potential plaintiffs, to providing legal research support in ongoing litigation matters, to observing courtrooms to ensure they complied with SPLC's prior settlements. This gave a unique window into the how a lawsuit begins with investigating the impact of a practice on the people and can end with a favorable judgment that addresses that practice.

Two projects in particular stand out to me. The first concerns a matter that SPLC is in the beginning stages of investigating (since the matter is still being investigated, I will not be able to provide much detail here). For this matter, I travelled to the region in which SPLC plans to bring the lawsuit. I met a variety of people involved with the unjust practice in question, interviewing them both at various courtrooms and on the doorsteps of their homes. After returning from the trip, I worked on a couple memos concerning potential claims that SPLC could bring in order to end the unjust practice that was stealing financial security from these folks. It was an eye-opening experience to watch a set of stories be translated into a set of legal claims, which ultimately will hopefully be translated into a settlement or favorable judgment. Through this experience, I saw the way in which the law begins with a person's story and then provides that person with the tools to use that story to bring justice.

Another project that stands out to me was my work on ensuring that a municipal court complied with SPLC's settlement ending private probation in that municipality. In order to ensure that the court was complying with this settlement, I visited the court during one of its hearings to see whether it was still using private probation, whether it was adequately informing defendants of their rights, and whether it was allowing a conflict of interest between private companies and the fair administration of justice. In the course of working with this project, I also investigated the fees that had been assessed a certain person in this courthouse to see whether they complied with that municipality's law. In the course of this project, I realized that many municipal and county ordinances concerning fines and court costs are extremely difficult to find. It helped me realize how easy it could be for someone to use this ambiguity to their advantage, imposing unjustified fines and court costs on folks with the hope that they will not investigate whether they are justified.

I am confident that because of my internship at SPLC, I will be a better public interest lawyer upon graduating from law school. I am thankful for the role your organization played in making this internship possible.



Fighting Hate
Teaching Tolerance
Seeking Justice

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August 8, 2018

Dan Ruben
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Rd.
Midlothian, VA 23112

Re: Evaluation of Jake Crammer's EJA-Supported Summer Fellowship

My name is Alexandra Jordan, and I am a Law Fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama. I served as Jake Crammer's supervisor during his summer 2018 internship with the Southern Poverty Law Center's Economic Justice Project in Montgomery.

SPLC is a non-profit law firm that is dedicated to fighting hatred and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. As a legal intern, Jake participated in SPLC's litigation efforts to make the ideals of equal justice and equal opportunity a reality. Jake has produced helpful legal research projects in support of several of our ongoing cases in the South. He has also participated in several outreach trips through which SPLC ensures compliance with past settlements and gathers information for potential lawsuits. Through these projects, Jake has helped advance SPLC's mission of promoting social justice and equal access to the law throughout the South.

Throughout this summer, Jake has demonstrated a commitment to using his legal training in order to advance economic justice. He has demonstrated initiative by volunteering for various assignments throughout the summer, as well as providing necessary support to our team of outreach paralegals during his outreach trips. If asked, I would be happy to recommend Jake to future employers.

It was a pleasure working with Jake this summer. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at alexandra.jordan@splcenter.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alexandra Jordan".

Alexandra Jordan
Law Fellow