

August 20, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I would love to take this time to thank you for the opportunity to serve as a Summer 2018 Equal Justice America Fellow. I spent this past summer at the NYCLU in Manhattan, NY. These past 10 weeks at the NYCLU have further strengthened me as an advocate and have allowed me to expand my skill set based in direct representation to now including the skills I have learned doing impact litigation.

During my time at the NYCLU, I worked on a variety of issues including: profit agreements between ICE and county jails, police brutality and the use of unlawful chokeholds, the surrounding case law and best practices around jail intake processes, the impact of the NYPD's gang database, and the NYPD's bias-based policing practices. I also engaged in a range of advocacy-related opportunities such as: the bail-bond coalition meetings, the pretrial detention debate at Rikers Island, the Board of Corrections meeting, and a training for new attorneys at the Legal Aid Society discussing pretrial justice reform efforts (bail, discovery, speedy trial). Below, you will find descriptions of two of my primary assignments this summer.

One impactful memo includes my work around police brutality and the use of unlawful chokeholds which yielded a result that I don't believe myself or the attorneys on the case expected it to. My work was geared towards determining whether the NYCLU's promotional video violated ethics rules. One of my arguments stemmed from the need for public awareness around the Syracuse Police Department's outdated and unsafe use-of-force policies. My research revealed a previous CRB claim that eventually found against a police officer for using a chokehold-like tactic on a minor in 2012. Erin and Kevin explained that they had not come across this case and if they had, they would have definitely included it within their complaint. Following the finding, Erin explained to me again that finding that case was critical and it had a significant impact on their decisions and strategies moving forward.

Another impactful memo that I wrote aimed at detailing the case law around jail intake practices and determining the best jail intake practices entail. This memo was intended as a resource for Nicole

before she attended a meeting with those who are brainstorming on the structural development of the jails that are to replace Rikers Island. My memo detailed lawsuits and best practices around several critical issues: excessive use-of-force used in intake areas, the exploitation of intake areas that are not surveilled, failure to continue inmate medication upon entry into the system, failure to record vital signs during intake which results in a failure to detect alcohol or drug dependence, the failures to detect drug or alcohol dependence lead to a lack of treatment and/or follow-up evaluations, refusal to provide hormone treatment for trans inmates, inadequate HIV screening and treatment at intake, the way in which the lack of privacy during intake inhibits candid responses, and more. This memo serves as a resource in the development of best practices for these future jails. It is also useful in that it details the number of inmates that have died as a result of some of the critical issues listed above. Thus, relaying the urgency and significance of learning how to prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future. Several of the lawsuits occurred right here in New York City and should be relevant when discussing the best practices for the new jails to come. It is important that we do not replicate the same issues that have been litigated and instead learn from the settlement agreements and monitoring teams that have been put in place.

All in all, my experience here at the NYCLU has been worthwhile. I have enjoyed this summer so much that I have submitted a fellowship application to them with hopes to continue the criminal justice work I was doing this past summer. Thank you again for the wonderful opportunity.

Sincerely,

Christine Rivera

Rutgers Law School | J.D. Candidate '18



125 Broad St. 19 Floor
New York, NY 10004
P 212.607.3300
F 212.607.3318
www.nyclu.org

Scout Katovich
Legal Fellow
212.607.3366
skatovich@nyclu.org

August 9, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I am an attorney at the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU). I had the pleasure of supervising Christine Rivera during her summer internship with our organization.

Christine was a great asset to the NYCLU and a joy to have in the office. Over the course of her summer internship at the NYCLU, Christine conducted legal research and wrote memoranda on a variety of issues including: profit agreements between ICE and county jails, police brutality and the use of unlawful chokeholds, jail intake processes, gang databases, and other policing practices. Christine also attended and assisted with advocacy events and meetings related primarily to criminal justice reform.

Christine took her assignments seriously and produced great written work products for attorneys at the NYCLU. In one case that Christine worked on, related to the unlawful use of chokeholds, her thorough research led her to discover a piece of information that the attorneys working on the case had not previously come across but that ended up being critical to decisions and strategy moving forward. Another memorable assignment that Christine completed was a memorandum on the case law and best practices related to jail intake practices. Christine's detailed memo provided attorneys with an excellent resource for any future work in this area. Christine was an eager and enthusiastic summer intern and her work with the NYCLU demonstrated a deep commitment to civil liberties issues facing New Yorkers.

We are extremely grateful to Equal Justice America for providing fellowship funding to Christine this summer. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at 212-607-3300.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Katovich", is written over a horizontal line.

Scout Katovich
Legal Fellow