

Michaela Ross
August 20, 2018
Equal Justice America

EJA Final Memo: East Bay Community Law Center

I had a phenomenal time working at the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC) this summer. I am very grateful to EJA for their support in doing this work.

This summer, I had the chance to represent tenants facing eviction in one of the most challenging rental markets in the world: the San Francisco Bay Area. I worked with attorneys in EBCLC's housing practice to develop defenses for tenants facing eviction in Alameda County. The work involved drawing on many different legal tools and skills. To begin a case, I met with the tenant to help them prepare an answer to their lawsuit. Depending on the case, I then helped prepare and respond to discovery requests, write motions, and otherwise prepare for trial. Under the supervision of an attorney, I argued a motion for summary judgment, motion to compel inspection, and motion for relief from forfeiture in front of Superior Court judges. I also led a deposition.

Beyond strict eviction defense, I got to take part in two weekly clinics/workshops that EBCLC offers. I staffed their weekly Tenants' Rights Workshop, in which I offered counseling and brief services, including letter writing and referrals, to tenants who were having issues with their housing. I met with several clients during each workshop and worked with staff attorneys to answer their questions and decide on a strategy to address the issues they were facing. I also represented tenants in our weekly Courthouse Clinic. I worked with staff attorneys to represent tenants in their mandatory settlement conferences, a part of the unlawful detainer proceeding in Alameda County. I worked with tenants to understand their goals and negotiated directly with

landlords and their attorneys to obtain the most advantageous agreements possible for the tenants.

My summer at EBCLC offered me the opportunity to learn so much. I got the chance to practice working directly with clients, improving my legal research and writing skills, and conducting oral arguments and negotiations. I also got to see what a truly excellent legal services nonprofit looks like. EBCLC is an inspiring place to work, and I was motivated by the supervising attorneys, staff, and my fellow students every day. I absolutely loved being in this fight, and hope to work in housing law in the future. Thanks for helping me do this work this summer, EJA!



August 21, 2018

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

Mr. Ruben:

I supervised Michaela Ross in the housing unit of East Bay Community Law Center this summer. During her time working with us, she supported tenants fighting eviction in the East Bay.

Michaela's main work involved developing defenses for tenants facing eviction in Alameda County. She met with the tenants to help them prepare an answer to their lawsuit. Depending on the case, she then helped prepare and respond to discovery requests, write motions, and otherwise prepare for trial. This summer, with my supervision, Michaela argued a motion for summary judgment, motion to compel inspection, and motion for relief from forfeiture in front of Superior Court judges. She also conducted a deposition.

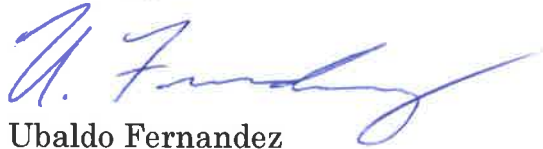
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In every aspect of her work, Michaela was thorough and diligent while zealously and tirelessly advocating for each of her clients. Her written work product was excellent and her oral advocacy natural and persuasive. Over the

summer, she prevented evictions and impending homelessness for several families. This emotionally tolling and demanding work never affected Michaela's interactions with her clients, colleagues, or opposing counsel. Her conduct was a model of professionalism and courtesy in the legal profession. I find comfort in knowing the next generation of public interest attorneys will include fearless advocates like Michaela, and that EJA's support will ensure they reach their goals.

Sincerely,



Ubaldo Fernandez
Staff Attorney and Clinical Supervisor