

August 25, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I would like to begin by extending my deep gratitude to Equal Justice America for granting me a Summer 2018 Fellowship. As a student who is financing law school entirely through student loans, this Fellowship truly made the difference in allowing me to live and work in New York City this summer. Thank you so much for supporting my unforgettable internship with the Legal Aid Society and offering me the opportunity to gain an experience that will shape the rest of my legal career.

I spent this summer working with the Legal Aid Society's Domestic Violence/Immigration Unit in their Bronx Neighborhood Office. My work largely involved securing affirmative immigration benefits for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. In addition to confronting the inherent complexities of immigration work, my experience with the Legal Aid Society allowed me to work with clients from a wide range of backgrounds, education levels, and cultures. I also completed several research memos and larger-scale writing assignments, such as visa applications for survivors of human trafficking.

The law is an inherently fluid discipline, and lawyers ought to expect variability on a day-to-day level. My summer position offered me an extremely useful introduction to this reality. In any one day, I would take part in prospective client interviews, seek information from various city agencies, check up on current clients, and make progress on longstanding research and writing assignments. Beyond honing my time management skills, my internship demonstrated the variety of resources and level of dedication required to make even a minor difference in the life of someone who has suffered an injustice. While some might find this reality frustrating, I found myself motivated by the fact that I could create a small change in a client's life by remaining diligent and seeking creative solutions. These skills will remain with me throughout my legal career and will inform how I confront new interpersonal and professional challenges. I am extremely grateful to my supervisor Sabrina Talukder and the Legal Aid Society for entrusting me with the responsibility necessary to develop these skills.

Although I thoroughly enjoyed each matter on which I worked, I was most impacted by my work on a visa application for a survivor of human trafficking. Despite my relative unfamiliarity with immigration law, my supervisor was willing to put me in charge of the client's entire trafficking visa package. Getting a firsthand look at the breadth of documentation (including affidavits, exhibits, forms, and written advocacy) necessary to give a client the prospect of receiving a modest immigration benefit left me both fascinated and deeply troubled. After all, this client was only one of many undocumented immigrants who has suffered horrible pain and desperately

needs immigration assistance. With each document I prepared, I developed an increasingly deeper connection with the client, who fled her native country only to fall into the hands of several sex traffickers in the United States. By the end of the process, I was left with an unforgettable sense of the ways in which I could use my law degree for the purpose of serving others.

I am surely a better advocate, communicator, and writer after my summer with the Legal Aid Society. However, the benefits of my internship do not end with me, as I hope to apply these experiences to projects with future colleagues and share them with my peers in student organizations. Thank you so much again for supporting my development as an individual and future attorney through your generous award.

Sincerely,

Noah Lingwall
University of Virginia School of Law
J.D. expected, May 2020



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August 31, 2018

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

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My name is Sabrina Talukder and I am an attorney in The Legal Aid Society's Immigration/DV Unit. I was Noah Lingwall's supervising attorney this past summer during Noah's internship.

My Unit represents survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence in their efforts to receive immigration benefits. Interns at The Legal Aid Society are exposed to and take part in providing the range of services that full-time staff attorneys supply for their clients. This involves completing substantive research and writing tasks as well as working one-on-one with our clients. Before the internship began, I asked Noah what skills he hoped to gain by the end of the summer. He told me that he hoped to improve his research and writing abilities as well as gain a better sense of how to conduct an intake and manage the complexities inherent in interacting with survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. I am happy to report that this internship provided Noah with the opportunity to grow in each of these areas.

Noah improved his research and writing skills by working on several large-scale writing assignments and a number of other discrete research questions. For one client, he completed an entire trafficking visa package that included a cover letter, affidavits, and multiple exhibits. Noah also sorted through a substantial volume of cases in order to determine when immigration courts tended to grant discretionary inadmissibility waivers (known as *Hranka* waivers). Since many of these assignments occurred within a tight timeframe, he learned how to prioritize, organize, and complete work under pressure.

Noah's internship also offered him the opportunity to learn how to interface with clients from a range of backgrounds, many of whom suffered from trauma resulting from their trafficking experiences. In these situations, he gained a strong sense of how to speak confidently and compassionately to clients in great need of advocacy.

Quite simply, Noah is the best intern I have ever had. His professionalism, empathy for clients, and eagerness to excel in everything he did was truly exemplary. We are very grateful to have hosted him this summer.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Talukder
The Legal Aid Society
260 E. 161st ATTN CIVIL- 8th Floor
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