

August 27, 2018

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

**Re: Vasundhara Vedula, Intern at New York Legal Assistance Group, Domestic Violence Clinical Center, Matrimonial and Family Law Unit, Summer – 2018**

Dear Mr. Ruben:

I am writing with regards to Vasundhara Vedula, who interned in the Domestic Violence Clinical Center (DVCC) at NYLAG's Matrimonial and Family Law Unit this past summer. Our Unit represents clients in matrimonial, custody, visitation, support, family offense cases and domestic violence based immigration matters including U-visas, Battered Spouse Waivers, and Violence Against Women Act Self-Petitions (VAWA) throughout New York City. Our Unit also handles family and matrimonial appeals, one of the only civil legal services providers in the nation to do so. I am currently the Director of the Unit, but started as a DVCC student myself, returning to NYLAG as a Skadden Fellow.

Along with my colleagues, Tuozhi Lorna Zhen and Tiferet Unterman, I had the pleasure of supervising Vasundhara's work over the summer. Vasundhara was an asset to the Matrimonial and Family Law Unit, and we are thankful to Equal Justice America (EJA) for its support of Vasundhara as an EJA Fellow.

NYLAG's Matrimonial and Family Law Unit provides a broad range of services to low-income New-Yorkers faced with the challenge of accessing legal representation in a complex legal system that does not always guarantee representation in family law matters. Survivors of domestic violence are often immigrants who, in addition to legal counsel, require culturally competent and client-centered counsel. I found Vasundhara to be especially empathetic and skilled in such client interactions allowing her to work effectively and competently with her clients. Vasundhara worked with a client from whom NYLAG attorneys had had a particularly

hard time obtaining the information that we needed to articulate her story of abuse. Vasundhara was able to provide the client with the time, space, sensitivity, and cultural competence in order to obtain the information and detail that we needed in order to draft an affidavit. Vasundhara's assistance was invaluable in that case.

The Matrimonial and Family Law Unit's practice is varied, and we encourage our interns to understand the full breadth of our services (and even those that we do not directly handle but which often impacts the lives of our clients). DVCC students use this knowledge to help us intake clients, identify the relevant facts, and identify cases where our representation is most needed. Importantly, DVCC students also identify survivors of DV/IPV, conduct primary aggressor analyses, and safety plan with callers. Vasundhara's intake notes were succinct and thorough, which allowed our attorneys to more efficiently screen clients for representation and provide competent advice and referrals.

Vasundhara also worked on a number of her own matters. She drafted HIPAA requests for clients in court, conducted legal research for the DVCC classes, assisted with an uncontested divorce, and handled a U-Visa.

Vasundhara's writing assignments were always well researched and constructed and showed the thoughtfulness of her work. Vasundhara was an important part of our team this summer and we are grateful to EJA for supporting her internship experience.

Sincerely,



Amanda M. Beltz, Esq.  
Director, Matrimonial and Family Law Unit  
New York Legal Assistance Group