

August 25, 2018

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for Equal Justice America's funding and support of my internship this summer with the Texas Civil Rights Project in Austin.

During my time working at TCRP, I was able to work on voting rights and criminal justice reform issues. I was initially interested in working with TCRP primarily because of my interest in voting rights, which I greatly enjoyed working on, but was also surprised by how much I enjoyed also working on criminal justice issues. I especially appreciated having the chance to learn about how the two issues often overlap in Texas with the increasing instances of criminal prosecutions related to voting or elections, an issue which I hope to work on more in the future. Overall, I enjoyed working on these civil rights issues even more than I expected and learned a tremendous amount.

I spent much of my summer researching and writing about strategic ways to improve elections and the criminal justice system. I was also able to assist attorneys in preparing for, and later attending, a temporary injunction hearing about Austin's paid sick leave policy. I found attending the hearing especially valuable because I was able to see, for the first time, attorneys question witnesses and make oral arguments within a courtroom. I also attended an NAACP conference focused on voting rights with staff and other summer interns from my office. Over two days, I attended panels of leading attorneys in the voting rights field from across the country speaking on a wide variety of election topics. I especially enjoyed learning more about voting issues that I previously knew less about, such as redistricting and election day litigation. The conference was also great exposure to the different types of organizations that work on voting rights, especially national ones which I was less familiar with.

Observing attorneys and staff working tirelessly on meaningful and important work helped confirm that I want to pursue civil rights work. Being able to observe the creative ways that the law can be used to challenged injustices was invaluable.

Everything that I learned this summer and the contributions that I made would not have been possible without your generous support and funding. Thank you so much for the opportunity to work at TCRP this summer.

Sincerely,

Ashley Alcantara
J.D. Candidate, Class of 2020
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