

June 9, 2018

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

Re: EJA Fellowship 2017-2018

Dear Mr. Ruben:

My deepest thanks to you and Equal Justice America for your generous support this past year for my work as a Student Director of the Temporary Restraining Order Project at Yale Law School.

The TRO Project has made an incredible difference in assisting domestic violence victims with obtaining protection from their abusers. Over the last year, we met with countless TRO applicants, interviewed them, and helped craft an effective affidavit. We also continued to check on them periodically to ensure that they were prepared for their hearings and had a full understanding of the process.

Applicants in the New Haven area depend on the TRO Project. In the Fall, we met with Judge Tindill of the New Haven Superior Court. She has spent her entire career working on domestic violence issues, and expressed to us that the Court was very appreciative of the help that the TRO Volunteers provide, and that there was an appreciable difference in the quality and grant rates of applications.

As both a Director and my role as a volunteer, I can attest to that impact firsthand. One applicant I assisted was a man who was filing a restraining order against his sister, who had been sending him threatening text messages and had attacked him in the past. In the interview, he provided me with a lot of detail that illustrated why he was in real fear for his safety. However, when it came to write the affidavit, the draft that he initially wrote was a nonspecific bulletpoint list of reasons that he was seeking a TRO. Once I explained to him how important it was for him to provide detail and write an affidavit in narrative form, he was able to write a much better affidavit – and ultimately received a TRO.

Another important part of being a volunteer is helping our applicants navigate the court system. One applicant I had was a woman who had fled from Florida to Connecticut to escape her child's father. She told me that she had left in the middle of the night and narrowly escaped with her life. However, he was also from Connecticut and knew where her family lived. She needed to make sure he was served in Florida, so I figured out who would be responsible for service in their area, and wrote her up a cheat sheet so she wouldn't forget what she had to do to make sure it was served, and the TRO was effective. She received her TRO, and one of our other volunteers confirmed service.

I am a child of domestic violence myself. My mother went through the TRO process. It is deeply rewarding for me to help others navigate that process as well. Without the support from EJA, all the help that we provide our applicants would not be possible. Thank you so much again for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Danielle Marryshow
Yale Law School '19