

Dear Mr. Dan Ruben,

My summer fellowship lasted just over 10 weeks, and was very rewarding. This summer I worked at Bet Tzedek Legal Services in the Kinship Care Unit. We mostly dealt with clients who were seeking guardianship of a minor(s). The majority of our clients were Spanish speakers and spoke only minimal to no English. My supervising attorney gave his clerks, including myself, wide latitude in dealing with our clients and working on legal memos. This summer was especially rewarding because my supervising attorney frequently gave me feedback on the work I was doing. He would give me suggestions as to what I should do to improve my client interaction skills as well as my legal research and writing skills.

As I mentioned above, many of our clients were Spanish speakers. This gave me an opportunity to further develop my Spanish speaking ability. I frequently talked with clients over the phone in Spanish about their cases. I also interviewed several potential clients in Spanish at the beginning stages of representation. I believe that my experience of growing up in a neighborhood that was predominately Latino especially helped me to relate to many of our clients and their relatives. At times it was difficult to translate and communicate some of the more complex legal issues that were involved in some of our clients' cases, however, I always managed to find a way to best explain the issues involved.

There were five attorneys who worked at the office. I found that all five attorneys were extremely helpful and were more than willing to answer any questions we had. Even though some of the attorneys were working in different legal units, i.e. employment, conservatorship - they made themselves available to answer any questions

that the summer law clerks had. My supervising attorney was very generous with giving his law clerks advise on various work assignments. He would encourage us to come into his office to ask questions or to give our personal suggestions on cases that we were working on. It seemed as though he made a special effort to make the environment a team-oriented endeavor.

I believe that my summer experience has contributed vastly to my continuing legal education. I gained valuable knowledge of how a public interest office operates, and how client cases are managed. However, I think the most valuable thing that I learned this summer is how to interact with clients, both over the phone and in person. Many of my fellow law students have said that they did not get the opportunity to talk with clients one-on-one. One of the critical skills that an attorney is required to have is to be an effective listener and communicator with their clients. I was fortunate enough, as a law student, to get experience in this critical area.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Equal Justice America organization for the financial assistance I received over the summer. The financial help that I received allowed me to work in an area that I am very passionate about.

Sincerely,

Seshah Wolde-Tsadik

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