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Advocate Legal Senior Center Legal Intern 2016

Summer Internship Write-Up

My mother once told me that “[w]hen a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace.” These were the words of the late Nelson Mandela. At an early age I realized that we, as human beings, have a duty to one another. That duty rests upon not only one’s talents, but also their dreams and aspirations. While teachers have a duty to educate and doctors to save lives, an attorney’s duty lies within the service and protection of the rights of others. Our duty as a civil servant is to ensure to the best of our ability, that we provide our clients with the necessary guidance to protect their rights and liberties. I believe that the Advocate Legal Senior Center embodies this concept wholeheartedly. This summer I had the privilege of interning at the Advocate Legal Senior Center under Ms. Norma Bradley and staff attorney, Alvis Rogers. It was during my time here that I learned invaluable lessons that will not only benefit me as a soon-to-be attorney, but also as young woman in today’s society.

During my time in law school I have had the privilege to work at a number of legal organizations including the Office of the Attorney General of Texas- Child Support Division, the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Innocence Project, and other private firms in both Texas and Missouri. Although each experience has been rewarding in their own right; I am able to say with confidence that I have learned more at the Advocate Legal Senior Center that will prepare me in my journey to becoming a successful licensed attorney than any other organization I have worked with thus far. It is through this internship that I have been able to gain valuable hands on

experience with cases in fields such as guardianship, probate, and real property. Furthermore, I was able to apply the writing and research skills gained in the classroom and implement them into my daily responsibilities. While interning at Advocate Legal Senior Center I was tasked with a number of different in-house duties including the drafting of legal documents, applications, and client letters; observing and participating in client interviews; conducting client correspondence; case investigations; case preparation and case management. Through these tasks I learned the importance of updating client files and case notes, keeping detailed case logs, and how to advocate on behalf of my clients in written form. The combination of these lessons have proven to be essential in instances of client conflicts, disputes with opposing counsel, or any discrepancies that may arise during the period of representation.

It has been my experience that often, organizations are hesitant in allowing their summer interns to play major roles in their current cases or open a case file themselves. As interns, we may be able to research a topic, draft a portion of a legal document, or a memo; however the rest of our involvement is spent merely observing the staff and attorneys. This was not the case at Advocate Legal Senior Center. Advocate Legal Senior Center not only valued the skills I was able to bring to the table, but this organization allowed me to grow as a student of law through hands on training. A perfect example is through my work with our guardianship cases in which I was able to witness and partake in the drafting and filing process from start to finish, through and through. First, I had the opportunity to not only participate in the client intake process, but also in setting up the client's file, and drafting the legal documents needed to complete the guardianship application. These legal documents included the Application for Appointment of Permanent Guardian of the Person, Motion for Appointment of Attorney Ad Litem, Order for Appointment of Attorney Ad Litem, Informa Pauperis Affidavit, and Waivers and Renunciation

of Right to Letters of Guardianship. Next, upon the completion of the application, I was able to sit down and met with the filing attorney to brief him on the details of the case and together we met with the client to explain the process that lied ahead in regards to their guardianship application. Finally, I used the e-filing system to file the application, and in certain cases I accompanied the attorney to court to dispute any challenges made. From start to finish I was able to participate in the cases I handled. This was a first out all of the internships I have had the opportunity to work with. At the Advocate Legal Senior Center I was able to do more than just observe and research, I was able to act and help create change.

My experience at Advocate Legal Senior Center did not stop at the front office door; it went beyond the office walls into court rooms and community centers as well. During my time, I was able to observe Attorney Alvis Rogers in action as he advocated for clients before the court in Informa Pauperis Affidavit hearings and the like. Through this exposure I was able to see the results of diligent advocacy and preparation as clients received their hoped for outcomes. Furthermore, I was able to learn about the community I live in. I attended the monthly meeting of the Third Ward Community Cloth Cooperative, an organization designed to preserve and promote the Third Ward community, as well as other neighborhood initiatives. Although I have gone to school in the Third Ward community at Thurgood Marshall School of Law, this is the first time I have been able to learn about the surrounding community and the individuals who call it home. This particular experience, along with being able to meet with the clients I had the opportunity to help, were the highlights of my time here at Advocate Legal Senior Center. It reminded me why I came to law school and why I continue to work to ensure that I will be a competent and caring attorney when I become licensed.

Although I have been able to enhance myself through schooling, I believe that the skills and knowledge that I have gained during my internship at the Advocate Legal Senior Center are unparalleled. I am very thankful that I was able to intern and work under such an experienced Director and staff. As I enter my final year in law school and begin my clinical studies, I will carry these lessons with me.

Litigation Section Intern Report:
Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Inc.
El Paso, Summer 2015

On my way to El Paso from Houston, I was beyond nervous about how my internship with Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Inc. (DMRS) would be. Spending almost three months away from my friends and family, to work in a field that I had no experience in was a bit overwhelming. As a 1L, all that I had knowledge of was basic criminal, contract, and tort law. However, I was excited and eager to learn more about immigration law, considering that I, and numerous members of my family, have gone through this system to become US Citizens.

My first week at DMRS reminded me of law school orientation. It was a breakdown of the do's and don'ts of immigration law; which color folder to use for certain types of clients, what each colored form meant, all the various forms of relief available, etc. To me each case seemed to be similar to a math problem. Fear of going back to your country + being in a category + being persecuted for being in that category = asylum. I quickly learned that it's never that easy in immigration law. This area of practice is filled with many loopholes and exceptions, which could be a negative or positive given the facts of the case.

The first thing I ended up doing was drafting motions and enclosure letters for different clients, and filing them at the court house. I typed up a few memos on topics such as Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude, Waivers for Smuggling, Unlawful Presence, Suspension of Deportation, and Withholding of Removal. The memos were helpful for me, because I was able research topics I had no knowledge about, and see how the outcomes of cases vary depending on things like the district. I was also able to watch the Unaccompanied Minors Program (UMP) give a presentation to juvenile detainees regarding court proceedings. I sat in numerous staffing meetings with the Legal Orientation Program (LOP) and watched them give a 'Know Your Rights' presentation to detainees.

Thomas, Adetunke
July 29, 2015

One interesting project I worked on during my time at DMRS was the drafting of a brief for a Withholding of Removal case. After looking at the example my supervisor showed me I wasn't sure if I knew enough to actually draft up the brief, but she assured me I would have no trouble. I began by going to visit the client with one of DMRS's Accredited Representatives, at the detention center, and even though I do not understand Spanish, she was kind enough to translate majority of the conversation. After the interview, and looking over the facts, I was able to determine which social group the client belonged to and how she was being abused as a result of it. At the end of my research, the draft came out well and my supervisor was pleased with it, which was a great feeling, considering how nervous I felt at the beginning of the project.

After the drafting the brief, I returned to the detention center to interview another potential client. This situation, however, was more difficult than I imagined because the client was skilled at evading questions. During the LOP staffing meeting, the facts of the client's criminal history were discussed and were determined to be inconsistent. I was given the task of returning to the detention center to clear up the inconsistencies in his file. This was an awkward situation for me because, I was uncomfortable with prying into another person's private business. After two interviews, I was unable to obtain the necessary information. My supervisor had a talk with me about how things have to get done regardless of how we feel, and, with that in the back of my mind, I went back again. This time I sat down with the detainee, and despite my discomforts I was able to clear up all the inconsistencies in his file. DMRS did not take the case in the end, however I felt I had learned a valuable lesson and completed a task that I was initially uncomfortable with.

One of my final tasks during my time at DMRS was creating handout detailing the forms of inadmissibility and deportation waivers, which ended up much more complicated than I anticipated. I learned a lot through this process and feel that my knowledge of the subject has significantly increases as a result . I also created a slide show on Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude (CIMT), specifically detailing how

Thomas, Adetunke
July 29, 2015

to identify whether or not a client's crime is considered to be a CIMT using the Categorical and Modified Categorical approach.

During my last week, I went on a tour hosted by the Border Patrol Agency. The tour was interesting and also a great learning experience, because I was able to see how the other side of the immigration process works. The group toured of the Border of the America's port of entry, Monument Two of the border, and the camera room in the processing center. It painted a clearer and bigger picture of the practice of Immigration Law for me, by showing me the journey some of our clients take before actually ending up in our offices.

Overall, one thing I've learned from watching intakes, interviews, court proceedings, and the like, is the importance of organization's like DMRS and immigration attorneys. While there are some people that take advantage of the system, a greater majority of people truly do need some type of help so they can create a better life for themselves and their families. Knowing that you're in a position to make that dream a reality for someone is a rewarding feeling, and, I am glad, and forever grateful, to have been an intern at this organization.

Interning with DMRS has been a great experience. My supervisors have been more than helpful and patient with me. The staff has been so welcoming, which helped me feel a little more comfortable being so far from home. My fellow interns were also a great support and were always there to help me when I needed it. I am so thankful to DMRS for treating me like family during my brief time here.

Litigation Fellowship Summary

This summer I had the honor of serving as the litigation fellow for Disability Rights Texas. I worked closely with the healthcare team's senior litigation attorney, Peter Hofer, to develop my knowledge and skills relating not only to litigation generally, but to disability rights and healthcare related litigation as well. I benefitted greatly from this experience as both a professional and a disability rights advocate.

My main project this summer was learning about healthcare litigation and reading cases relating to access to healthcare for children on Medicaid. I discussed litigation strategies with Mr. Hofer and worked on a complaint that will eventually be filed in Federal court against the state of Texas involving the denial of access to healthcare for children. This was extremely valuable as a future litigator because I had never written a complaint before and it was useful to learn how to write one by writing one. Practical knowledge and skills are extremely valuable to me as I move from law school to the legal profession and I feel as though I gained some important skills this summer. I also researched litigation strategies for other areas, including ADA issues and family law. I also analyzed statistics for five years of appeals of Medicaid administrative hearings, to determine if such appeals appear fair.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to receive this fellowship this summer. Disability rights and litigation are both legal areas that are close to my heart, and to be able to spend the summer learning how to combine the two was not only worthwhile professionally but personally. I am now moving into the legal profession better equipped to do the work that I feel so passionately about.

Thank you.

Student Summer Internship Experience

This summer I was offered an internship in the legal department for Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS). Over ten weeks, I had the opportunity to assist battered women with various family law issues. The experience was a unique and eye-opening. I found it important to have a hands-on look into Family law as the impact it carries in our communities is far reaching. I was challenged from the beginning and the experienced attorneys I had the opportunity work with guided me through the process.

Working alongside all three litigation attorneys, I was presented with an array of different cases. All involved domestic violence, all different in scope and breadth. I worked on cases from beginning to end. I did client interviews, drafted pleadings, discovery, and legal memos. I participated in client meetings. Although I was not able to litigate the case in court, I was fine with observing, absorbed and learned.

During the countless number of hearings I watched and worked over the past summer, I was fortunate to help the attorney make a stronger and more cohesive argument. Going to court almost every day exposed me to the skills an attorney must have as an advocate. I was able to observe how these lawyering skills come into play when opposing party brings out the worst from our client and we just have to make a better argument. I learned from FVPS attorneys and from opposing counsel; much like watching an intricate game of chess.

In the office, staff attorneys provided me with substantive and meaningful work. I wrote several divorce decrees, and final and temporary orders. I also drafted legal memos that answered the crucial issue of our client's case. The supervising attorney was very accessible and gave me in-depth and helpful feedback on all my assignments. One of my favorite parts of my internship was working in a case where we helped out client reunite with her 2-year old girl. She

had been separated from the baby for a little over two weeks and her attempts to get her back through the police were unsuccessful. She applied with FVPS and we saw the urgency of the matter so we took the case the same day. The following day the judge granted our order to make the father produce the child in court. And when we came back to court, the judge ordered the child to return with our client. The moment the both reunited was very special for me because I had worked very hard alongside the attorney to make this possible. I remember we were in court all day, not only working on this case but also another one. The attorney and I did not even have a chance to eat lunch because we didn't want to leave without getting the order granted.

Seeing the child running to her mother's arms brought tears to my eyes. It was the most rewarding feeling I have ever had. At the end of the day, I learned that sometimes things might not go as planned and as an attorney I will need to make sacrifices for the best of my client. I also learned that all my hard work is worth when I am helping a mother get her children back, or help her get a protective order so she be safe and sleep at night.

I am grateful for given this opportunity and for working on these cases. FVPS really makes a difference for battered women, not only helping them with their legal issues but also in regaining control of their lives. I was inspired by the devotion and hard work exemplified by the attorneys at FVPS. They genuinely care about their clients. These past ten weeks with FVPS taught me hard work, along with presenting me with real life, hands-on experiences, and constant interactions at levels of the legal process. Towards the end of my internship I was able to analyze a case and know what type of legal process needed to be taken. I have become a better and more educated person because of this opportunity. I cannot wait to become a licensed attorney and make a difference in someone's life.

August 14, 2015

J. Paul Manning
Field, Manning, Stone, Hawthorne & Aycock, P.C.
2112 Indiana Avenue
Lubbock, Texas 79410

Dear Mr. Manning,

I would like to thank you for the Litigation Section Internship Program grant that your firm awarded me for my summer work at Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center. The generous \$4,000 grant made it possible for me to work with the most vulnerable members of the community that I call home, and help provide them with access to affordable legal services. Without your contribution, I would not have been able to engage in this meaningful work with the same level of commitment and focus.

Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center is a grassroots immigrant rights organization that provides affordable legal services to victims of violent crimes, indigent families, abused women and children, and asylum seekers in removal proceedings. I worked on the asylum litigation team under the supervision of Linda Rivas, the managing director and sole attorney at Las Americas.

As Ms. Rivas's law clerk, I took an active role in researching and brainstorming legal strategies for our clients' options for relief from removal. Our clients came from all over the world, which means that I gained experience researching a wide array of human rights issues and learned about how U.S. immigration law applied to each of the diverse cases. I spent a lot of time in court with Ms. Rivas, watching how to effectively advocate for clients during trial. I was very fortunate to be able to observe two asylum cases go to trial. I was even able to co-counsel, as a law student, with Ms. Rivas on two asylum cases-- one for an Afghan asylum seeker fleeing persecution from the Taliban for transporting goods to U.S. troops, and another for a Guatemalan asylum seeker who was a victim of domestic violence and persecuted due to being a single mother without familial protection.

Throughout the summer, I was tasked with visiting the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention Center in El Paso, Texas on a regular basis. There, I worked with many of our clients on their declarations in support of their asylum applications, as well as on other important processes such as petitions for humanitarian parole and motions for release on bond.

The services provided by Las Americas are crucial to curbing the widespread need for affordable and competent legal representation. In fact, many of our clients in the ICE detention center knew each other, and they all knew they were our clients. To me, this is a prime example of the extent to which the services that Las Americas provides are needed, considering it is one of only three organizations of its kind in the region to provide such services. Coupled with the notion that Las Americas houses only one attorney representing clients in asylum claims, it goes without saying that the funding your office awarded went a long way not only in terms of making our services

available to more individuals, but also ensuring that each case received our utmost attention and care.

The first case I worked on while working at Las Americas was that of an asylum seeking woman from Mexico, who immigration officials decided did not have a credible fear of returning to Mexico, and who had been ordered deported back to her home where she felt her and her children's lives were in danger. In addition to fearing for her life in Mexico, her minor daughter was also suffering from a malignant tumor. I worked with the client to file a request for a Stay of Removal, which, upon approval, gave the client permission to remain in the United States for one year while her minor daughter received the treatment she needed. While the client's original intent to seek asylum was short lived, the relief she obtained will surely be of tremendous humanitarian benefit.

Perhaps the most memorable case for me this summer involved a young indigenous woman from Guatemala who had been threatened by gangs in her country. She had been detained for approximately four months at multiple ICE detention facilities and had been unsuccessful once in her request for release on parole. After conducting in-depth research concerning parole release law and how it applied to this client, and later revamping the client's parole packet with new detailed affidavits and other useful documents, our client was released on parole. The next day, she was on a plane to stay with her godmother in the East Coast, where she will continue to seek asylum without being in detention.

The impact my work was able to achieve on our clients' lives is certainly important, but what being able to do this work means for me as a future attorney is also worth mentioning. This paid internship made it possible for me to realize that I was capable of becoming a great litigator. Before this experience, the thought of litigation was a daunting one. This internship provided the opportunity to immerse myself in humanitarian immigration litigation enough to feel encouraged and motivated to pursue a career in this field. Especially considering the dire need for advocates in humanitarian immigration law, I am confident that I want to pursue a career in litigation for this cause.

These are all but a few examples of the marvelous work your firm's contribution made possible, but I believe they are powerful anecdotes that show just how enriching my experience as a litigation intern at Las Americas was. None of this would have been possible without the Litigation Section Internship Program grant. Thank you very much for your support.

Sincerely,

Héctor Ruiz
UC Hastings, Class of 2017

Internship – Summer 2015

Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas – Amarillo

Introduction

My name is Mary Whittington. I completed my first year of law school in May. I began my internship on May 18, 2015 and will end on July 31, 2015. Here is an account of what I have done this summer and my thoughts on the experience.

Working at LANWT this summer as a legal intern has given me the opportunity to meet leaders in the community to participate in the legal services that the Amarillo office provides to our local communities. LANWT not only works with those in serious need of legal assistance, but also coordinates with organizations in the community by working together to help the total person, not just the legal issue at hand.

My internship has focused on the following: client intakes, staffing, drafting pleadings, drafting letters to clients and opposing parties, filing of the suit, discovery, hearings, and legal research. I also worked with the EJVP coordinator and organized a community education event.

Client Intake/Legal Server

I participated in client intakes at the following centers:

- Wesley Community Center
- Guyon Suanders Resource Center
- Hereford Domestic Violence Shelter

This is a great service that LANWT provides to the community. A lawyer is sent out to community centers to meet people in need of legal services. I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet the clients in an environment they are familiar with and comfortable.

The overall process of intake is very efficient. Checking citizenship upfront saves a lot of time as does checking conflict of interest. I made a mistake during my first clinic by having a lady fill out all of the paperwork plus two additional questionnaires before checking on the conflict of interest. Unfortunately, we had represented the opposing party on a related case. When I found out we could not help her, we were both very disappointed. It was a hard way for me to learn to check that information upfront.

I was trained to use Legal Server. I learned how to input the information obtained during intake. I learned to scan client documents and upload them into the system. I was shown how to insert notes and track client time. I was also shown how to print the client documents needed for staffing.

Drafting of pleadings

I learned how to draft pleadings using Pro Doc. I was able to help draft a divorce pleading and protective order. It's helpful to have a shared network. I was able to open other client files to see what was included in the pleadings for the case.

Filing of Suit

I learned how to file the pleadings and court orders using the e-filing system through the courts' websites. Each court uses slightly different methods of e-filing. As part of my support work, I called to all 20 county courthouses that Amarillo LANWT serves and documented their preferred methods of attaching documents when e-filing. Some counties are still not using the system, but I made note of those and the expected start dates.

Discovery

I was able to use Pro Doc to draft discovery documents for a couple of cases this summer. Again, the network is beneficial for using similar cases to determine what should be included in the discovery requests. I drafted the following types of discovery documents:

- Interrogatories – Family Law (not SBOT)
- Request for Production
- Rule 194 Requests for Disclosure.

Drafting Letters

I was able to draft the following letters:

- Advice Letters
- Demand Letter

I was able to conduct legal research on client cases and draft advice letters for our clients. One of the LANWT staff attorneys would review the letters and make recommendations for changes. I would make the changes, obtain the attorney's signature, process the letter through Legal Server, and mail the letter to the client. The letters that I wrote were mainly advice letters concerning landlord/tenant issues and the tenant was a participant in Section 8, HUD housing.

I was also able to draft a demand letter concerning a breach of contract. Our client entered into a contract to purchase real property. The owners had not released the title to the client. The demand letter was written to provide notice that the title should be handed over or suit would be filed. The staff attorney working the case reviewed the letter and made recommendations for additional information. I inserted the additional language, obtained his signature, and processed the letter through Legal Server. The letter was sent via USPS, certified mail.

Final Hearings

I attended hearings in the following courts:

- JP,
- District Court,
- Child Support Court, and
- CPS Court

This summer I was educated on some issues concerning the jurisdiction of the court. We represented two clients who were being sued in a JP court. The cases should have been filed in the district court. The cases were dismissed for lack of jurisdiction. Prior to this internship, I had only studied Federal Civil Procedure. One of the staff attorneys at LANWT took the time to explain the jurisdiction of the state court system and point me to the right material for further study.

Most of the hearings I observed took place in District Court. I did attend a hearing in child support court. It was interesting because the child in question was a 19 year old father. Our client had only recently discovered through a paternity test that he was the father. Prior to the actual hearing there was a pre-trial meeting. No agreement was reached, so the case went before the judge. He ultimately ordered child support payments to be paid to the opposing party in the amount of \$75 per month for 12 months. What I enjoyed was observing the strategy employed by our attorney: what type of questions was asked, and what evidence was presented that ultimately resulted in a favorable outcome for our client.

Staffing

I attended case staffing every week. I learned the requirements for determining whether a case was a priority. I also began to understand the types of funding received by LANWT in order to present certain clients/cases.

What I learned the most from staffing is the limited resources of LANWT attorneys verses the seemingly unlimited demand for free legal services. I am not sure that I want to become a LANWT attorney, but I know for sure that I will work with LANWT in the future in some capacity. I want to be part of the work that LANWT is doing to help the low income people in our community.

Research

I was able to conduct research for client cases. The majority of my research involved HUD regulations for section 8 recipients. HUD has a grievance procedure that tenants should use to address issues with the owner/landlord. Although our clients received information concerning the grievance procedures, none that came to LANWT utilized the HUD system to resolve their issues. The issues included wrongful eviction, unlawful entry, failure to fix appliances, failure to recertify rent payments for a decrease in income, and landlord retaliation.

I also researched a variety of other topics: social security benefits, quantum meruit, family law, property law, probates, breach of contract remedies, etc. I've done quite a bit of research during my first year of law school, but I really enjoyed researching specific topics knowing the information I gather would be used for actual cases.

I worked on cases for the following clients (not in any particular order):

[REDACTED] – divorce – drafted discovery
[REDACTED] – drafted discovery
[REDACTED] – contract enforcement,
[REDACTED] – HUD, section 8 recipient, wrongful eviction, retaliation
[REDACTED] – HUD, section 8 recipient, wrongful eviction with damages
[REDACTED] – HUD, section 8 recipient, monthly rental calculation
[REDACTED] – HUD, section 8 recipient, monthly rental calculation
[REDACTED] – sealing juvenile records
[REDACTED] – Dismiss for lack of jurisdiction. Eviction dispute – contract for deed
[REDACTED] – Dismiss for lack of jurisdiction. Eviction dispute – contract for deed – oral modification to an existing contract for the purchase of real property, quantum meritis
[REDACTED] – probate court - executorship
[REDACTED] – Deceased Debtor, Intestate
[REDACTED] – deceptive trade practices, fraud – D represented himself – Buyer Beware
[REDACTED] – Immigration research
[REDACTED] – Social Security – Disability Review
[REDACTED] – researched service of process, OK service providers

Community Involvement & Outreaches

- Homeless Coalition
- Continuum of Care
- Community Education Event – Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

I was able to attend a couple of meetings that involved a variety of community support organizations. It was very refreshing to see LANWT involved in improving the lives of low income families and providing options for victims of domestic violence.

I also helped one of the staff attorneys plan a community education event concerning the legal rights of tenants and responsibilities of landlords. I designed a save the date notification and event flyer. I secured a venue and was able to get the fee waived. I sent emails to community leaders and hand delivered flyers within the community. I gathered all of the legal materials to be distributed to the attendees and made signs for the event. The event was also advertised in the local newspaper free of charge.

This was helpful for me to see that a LANWT attorney does a lot more than just represent a client. A LANWT attorney is concerned about making improvements in the community and providing education in order to *prevent* litigation.

Final Thoughts

Overall, I enjoyed my internship at Legal Aid. I learned some procedures that I had not been exposed to at law school during my first year. I appreciate the experience that I have been given. I know there is a lot more to learn.

The experience has also been very eye-opening concerning the demand for free legal services for low income families. I understand LANWT resources are limited and attorney caseloads are large. I'm left with the question of what needs to be done to resolve the problem. It is good that LANWT invests in a coordinator to find attorneys to volunteer to take cases pro bono. I also think it's good that LANWT works with other non-profit agencies in the community to find solutions for helping the poor. Thank you so much for this opportunity to be a part of something so positive for the people in Amarillo and surrounding counties.



Lubbock Area United Way

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF LUBBOCK, INC.



August 11, 2015

J. Paul Manning
Field, Manning, Stone, Hawthorne & Aycock, P.C.
2112 Indiana Ave.
Lubbock, Texas 79410

RE: Litigation Section Internship Program- Legal Aid Society of Lubbock, Inc.

Dear Mr. Manning:

Legal Aid Society of Lubbock would like to express its gratitude to the State Bar of Texas Litigation Section for selecting us for one of the 2015 litigation summer intern stipends. Our litigation intern was a tremendous help in the office this summer, and had the opportunity to learn about family law litigation from beginning to end.

Our intern this summer was Ryan Teel, a law student at Texas Tech University School of Law who is about to begin his 3rd year. I have attached his report of his activities this summer. Again, he was an invaluable asset to the agency this summer and his presence was due entirely to the Litigation Section's internship program.

Thank you again for your assistance. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

C. Kay Caballero
Executive Director

Legal Aid Society of Lubbock

Ryan Teel

In my regrettably short time working with Legal Aid Society of Lubbock, I fostered many great relationships that will undoubtedly last beyond my time here.

I hasten to stress that I worked “with” Legal Aid, not simply “at” Legal Aid. I immediately felt as if I was working among peers, rather than superiors, towards a common goal of zealously helping those in need. This feeling of equality wasn’t born of pride or presumption, but of the eager aid, respect, and empowerment provided by the attorneys and staff.

In my primary capacity as an intern who dealt with protective orders, I was trained and taught how to conduct interviews with applicants, how to fill out the necessary paperwork to streamline the office’s processes, how to prepare and file the necessary documents to apply for a protective order, how to conduct myself in a courtroom, and how to effectively advocate for a client in a hearing.

I had the opportunity to attend and observe hearings on protective orders. On a personal level, I was able to sit in on informal, pre-hearing negotiations between my supervising attorney and the opposing party. On a formal level, I was also able to sit in on hearings before a judge and learn the procedural and substantive requirements for obtaining a protective order.

In my secondary capacity as an intern who dealt with whatever the attorneys were willing to let me help with in my “downtime,” I learned how to organize our filing system,

properly advocate for a client during mediation, patiently speak with clients and court personnel, draft divorce and custody documents, fundraise, succinctly and clearly explain relevant law to those who requested it, and make a great pot of coffee.

I truly valued my time at Legal Aid Society of Lubbock, both on a personal and professional level. I hope to continue helping in whatever way I can throughout my next school year, and consequently continue growing as a lawyer and as a person.

To whom it may concern:

I began my summer at the Texas Fair Defense Project still a bit uncertain whether or not I wanted to focus on criminal defense in my career as an attorney. The criminal law classes I've taken have not provided much knowledge about the consequences of more minor offenses such as traffic tickets and unpaid fines. Given that the average citizen's greatest contact with the criminal justice system is through these minor infractions, working on TFDP's "debtor's prison" project was eye-opening for me. I had not realized how frequently people spend time in jail to pay off triple-digit fines, often losing their jobs as a result. I am glad that I have gained a more accurate understanding of how the collateral consequences of the criminal justice system affect everyday people, and I know now that this is the work I want to do.

My tasks included completion of several substantial legal memoranda about topics such as appealing the costs portion of criminal judgments, the constitutionality of *capias pro fine* warrants, and attorneys' fee laws in Texas. I contacted the municipal courts and jails of many Texas cities at least once a week to obtain publicly available records, amassing quite a large sheaf of data by the end of my ten-week internship. I also observed and recorded municipal court practices at the San Antonio and Austin Municipal Courts and completed a number of as-needed tasks, such as researching the feasibility of our nonprofit providing community service hours for local defendants. Our organization filed or prepared to file several habeas corpus petitions while I was interning. Having taken several classes about habeas corpus relief, it was informative and interesting to see how they work in a local context. I was also able to connect with attorneys at other nonprofits in Austin, including the Equal Justice Center, Texas Defender Services, and SafePlace, through events our office organized or attended.

Not everything I learned this summer was strictly related to law, either. Just from spending time with the four attorneys in our office, I learned a great deal about many things: the legal climate in Austin, staying mentally healthy as a nonprofit attorney working with underprivileged communities, and advice about keeping a work-life balance, to name a few. I learned a lot about myself, too; my supervising attorney provided me with clear expectations and deadlines for assignments, and I learned that this kind of management style works really well with my own researching style and kept me productive.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to spend my summer not only acquiring and strengthening

critical legal skills, but working for an organization whose mission and practices I support. To be proud of one's work is an enormous privilege, and your grant made that possible for me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lauren Johnson

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