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September 10, 2010

Mark E. Grantham  
DLA Piper LLP  
1201 W. Peachtree St., Suite 2800  
Atlanta, GA 30309-3450

RE: Many Reasons to Say Thank You

Dear Mark:

I am writing because of Puja Vadodaria's recent departure from Georgia Appleseed to begin her career with DLA Piper, but I have so many reasons to write that predate that departure that I hope you will forgive my delay in corresponding and will accept this long letter of thanks.

First, starting with the most recent event, I am writing to thank you and your firm for allowing Puja to spend her "deferral time" with Georgia Appleseed. She was with us ten months and in that time she certainly made her mark. As I told her in her exit interview, Puja exceeded expectations in all areas of review. She was a terrific team player, innovative in her problem solving, and responsive to all requests for legal and project management assistance. I quickly grew to the point where I could rely on her to get the job done. In a small nonprofit, that kind of reliance is essential and, in this case, certainly well placed. You have a terrific new associate. I hope Puja's work with Georgia Appleseed will also inure to the benefit of DLA Piper. In her work with Georgia Appleseed, Puja has expanded her professional network to include more than 200 attorneys from many of the major firms in our city who volunteered on our Heir Property Tax Data Base Project. She also honed her project management skills may in bringing a number of different efforts to successful conclusion before her departure.


Second, I want to thank you for your firm's outstanding pro bono support of Georgia Appleseed's Heir Property Project. In your most recent Pro Bono report, I was glad to see Shawn Lanier, Paula Rothberger and Shunta Vincent McBride highlighted for their work with us. I hope you know, however, that many people from your office worked on Georgia Appleseed's *Heir Property in Georgia Attorney Training Manual*, including, in alphabetical order, James "JB" Allen, Gillian M. Deutch, Mariah F. DiGrino, Thomas M. Grace, Brian M. Gordon, Ben Keiser, Jeremy Adam Kruger, Shawn Lanier, Jarrod Matteson, Shunta Vincent McBride, Cara J. Nelson, Lawrence E. Uchill, and Sarah Whitmarsh.

I left out one name from that list for special recognition: Bert Ritvo. Bert's way of finding solutions to get things done was exactly what we needed when we were facing not only our big dream to help others (creating a stand alone heir property legal clinic), but also limited time and resources. Bert's interim solution gets us started on the road to the ultimate goal. We appreciate so much Bert's enthusiasm for pro bono and her "can do" attitude.

Finally, thank you very much for your own leadership style that promotes such a vibrant pro bono culture in the Atlanta office.

So you see, I was not kidding when I started this letter by saying that I had much to be grateful for and that my letter would be long as a result. I look forward to continued collaboration (the Heir Property project is not done yet!) and good outcomes through pro bono.

Sincerely yours,



Sharon N. Hill