



Community Health Center Network

Setting the Standard for Community Health Care

September 24, 2003

I am writing this recommendation for Thomas Chow, who is applying for a clerkship in your chambers. In the period I worked with him, he displayed strong competency in his professional duties and helped strengthen our organization's non-profit vision and advocacy work. He is driven by a compassion for others and cares deeply for public interest matters.

In my role as the Chief Information Officer of the Community Health Center Network (CHCN), I supervised Thomas from January to August 2001. CHCN is a network of non-profit community health centers funded by government sources to provide health care for the indigent and under-served in Alameda County. Of the approximately 100,000 patients who receive primary care at our health centers, the bulk of our patients are low-income and the vast majority are non-English speaking. CHCN conducts Medi-Cal and government program managed care financial services for our health centers, as well as supporting the centers' advocacy work.

When CHCN hired Thomas, he had many other options for high-tech employment. It was clear that the non-profit nature of our organization was the major reason Thomas sought to work for us. Furthermore, while the technical duties of Thomas' work as the network administrator did not directly involve the issues of health care access by the poor, Thomas understood the broader context of his work. He could easily understand the political complexities of our work, and saw his work at CHCN as a part of his own personal advocacy efforts. Thomas' father is an acupuncturist in Southern California, providing health care to immigrant families. Through his father's work, Thomas had experienced, many of the issues of insufficient access and poor quality of care in our state's health care system first-hand. To have a technical person also grasp the advocacy and service issues of our organization was a major asset to CHCN.

While we were disappointed that Thomas left for law school, we are confident that this change was for the best. We look forward to Thomas developing his legal knowledge and bringing back those much-needed advocacy skills to our underserved communities.

Sincerely,



Raymond N. Otake, J.D.
Chief Information Officer/ Information Technology Director