

A Report from Alpheus Anayo Mbah, New York Women's Bar Association Foundation Fellow at inMotion Inc.

I was a recipient of the NYWBA Foundation grant for a fellowship at inMotion Inc. during the spring semester 2013. I learned about inMotion at the NYU Public Interest Law Center job fair conducted for the LL.M. students during the fall semester 2012. I am a native of Nigeria and I have always been interested in protecting the rights of women and children. During the job fair, I learned that inMotion does amazing work in the protection of women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Immediately, I became interested in getting experience with inMotion for the purpose of extending my little contributions to this class of really needy people.

inMotion provides pro bono legal services to low income women who are victims of domestic violence in the areas of family and matrimonial law and immigration law. Among the matters inMotion handles are the following: contested and uncontested divorce; child support; spousal support; order of protection; child custody and visitation; and immigration-based services such as filing U-Visa Petitions and VAWA Self-Petitions. inMotion conducts training sessions throughout the year for its staff attorneys as well as for pro bono attorneys, fellows and volunteers.

While I have previously handled domestic relations matters, my fellowship at inMotion afforded me the opportunity to obtain in depth experience in these types of cases. The scope of my responsibilities included conducting legal research in divorce cases; preparing memoranda of law; drafting divorce papers; drafting VAWA Self Petitions and U-Visa Petitions; conducting telephone intakes and client interviews; attending client meetings; providing preliminary legal information to clients during the telephone intake; and observing court proceedings with inMotion attorneys. I felt a great sense of satisfaction in conducting telephone intakes as they gave me the opportunity to assist clients in dire need of assistance.

Another significant aspect of my experience at inMotion was the nature of the legal research I conducted. My research focused on complex and novel areas of domestic relations law such as whether equitable estoppel will be invoked as a defense to denial of paternity in a child support proceeding and when it is appropriate to substitute the evidence of a child with that of his/her attorney. This work reawakened my interest and curiosity in family and matrimonial law. The experience I obtained in how to conduct complex research will assist me in my legal education and legal practice.

inMotion is a unique organization and deserves the support of and encouragement from individuals and organizations alike. My fellowship also gave me insight into the workings of non-profit organizations and deepened my understanding of public interest law practice. Above all, it revealed to me the value of volunteering among lawyers in New York State.

I will always value working with inMotion, and in particular I am grateful to my supervisors for their guidance and the intake specialist for assisting at all times. I would

like to express my profound gratitude to the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the rights of women and children and furthering my lifelong dream.

Alpheus Anayo Mbah is a May 2013 LL.M. candidate at New York University School of Law