



September 25, 2019

National Pro Se Day  
LawYou America and Pursuing Justice Foundation  
Ms. Sherri Renner

RE: Rohini Hughes, Pro Se

Dear LawYou America and Pursuing Justice Foundation:

WOW! What a privilege it is to write for you! What a privilege it has been to have been working with Ms. Sherri Renner.

I was born and raised in New Delhi, India, currently, a proud and patriotic U.S citizen and a Military former spouse while being a survivor and an advocate for domestic violence and abuse. My Pro Se journey began after our abuse, abandonment, and desertion from my former husband, Maj Matthew E. Hughes, Air Force JAG, formerly a Chief of Military Justice at Joint Base Andrews who was reported by Walter Reed National Military Medical Clinic, MD and Meier Clinic, VA in 2014-2015. After the fifth day of homeless-ness due to Maj Hughes' deliberate action of terminating our rental lease prematurely under the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA), a federal law designed to protect and serve the military families with the assistance of neighbors I had met five days prior to my initial court appearance in Juvenile and District Relations Court, Fairfax, VA, I began my journey as a Pro se litigant without a college or a law degree or legal training.

One of my neighbors turned out to be a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) and the other was just starting a Divorce coaching business (Divorcewecare.com) and they both graciously offered to assist, guide and train me. I still recall writing my first motion and thinking how I did not have it in me to write such legal language, but for some reason, I absorbed it like a sponge and legal language began to make sense. Mr. Steve and Mrs. Eileen Garner lovingly trained me and guided me on how to litigate as a Pro se while even feeding me meals. I eventually met Ms. Sherri Renner through one of her broadcasts regarding sociopaths and narcissists which immediately led me to contact her after discovering that an attorney finally understood these personality disorders and I would not have to explain them to her, instead she was explaining these terms in her podcast.

My journey began in Fairfax County J & DR and landed me in Fairfax County Circuit Court for more intense litigation from 2015 till present. Growing up I had always loved watching TV shows such as Matlock and Law and Order. I, somehow, used what I had learned from these shows in the court room, to be later recognized and praised in 2018 and 2019 for being the best Pro se litigator that my Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge had ever had in his courtroom. He told me that I was even better than some attorneys. Hon. Judge Robert J. Smith, a former JAG, then ensured that I was completely destroyed financially while he dismissed all evidence of abuse, abandonment; my 15-year old son's mental health, his suicidal and homicidal ideations; ordering me to pay for my husband's attorney's fees; alleging that I deliberately dragged out the custody trial over 7 days and even though, on record, he admitted to my former JAG husband's actions and behaviors as cruelty.

Hon Judge Smith chose to deliberately ignore and dismiss relevant and pertinent evidence and testimonies, blindly favoring my abusive Air Force JAG husband and falsely accusing me of parental alienation while my 15-year old son clearly stated in his day and half of testimony on the witness stand, the he was the one that would refuse to have a relationship with his abusive father as he protected me and warned me from trusting him or reconciling with him.

I also discovered most of the gaps and impediments in military divorces and custody cases, such as federal employees that are medical professionals or other military personnel cannot be called to testify and the medical records from military installations have to be certified in order to be considered into admittance as evidence instead of hearsay. This limits the Pro se litigants from submitting subpoenas for Commanders, FAP personnel and medical professionals that would substantiate abuse and neglect for military families. These poor victims also face the challenges of affording a court reporter and court transcripts due to the high fees for such services, leaving them little to no chance for an appeal in appellate courts. Domestic Violence Leap in Washington, DC is a fantastic organization founded by Ms. Joan Meier who specializes in pro bono appeals but requires transcripts to be even considered for appeals which can costs thousands of dollars for the penniless victims of abuse, while the pro se victims face the risks of completely damaging any possibility of an appeal by failing or forgetting to pursue the appropriate legal argument or evidence or rule.

Additionally, many do not qualify for the state pro bono legal services while receiving court ordered financial support and loans in order to even afford a dwelling. Victims are further destroyed and crippled forcing them into filing for bankruptcy and making it difficult for them to obtain employment and housing, while they lose their medical, dental and mental health benefits after a divorce while they struggle from all types of mental and physical traumas of abuse. Coercive control is difficult to prove but more dangerous and damaging for victims in a court of law and in our military.

Justice seems to be by the attorneys and judges, for the attorneys and judges and to benefit the attorney and judges with the exception of a few passionate attorneys and judges that actually serve our community though their character, integrity, and passion for justice. How many victims can afford the \$5-\$35K in retainers, then \$100-\$200K in legal fees for cases and then additional legal fees for all the motions enforcing the court orders after the cases have been adjudicated? Maj Hughes, as a JAG boldly, without any fear of the law, would exploit the SCRA and use it to his advantage to dodge, stonewall discoveries and challenge his court appearances while personally appearing and failing to submit letters from his Command pardoning him from court appearances. Even JAGs believe that they are above the law!

My son has had 2 GALs in J & DR court and 1 in Circuit Court and the experience with them has varied. My children and I witnessed and endured the corruption, bias and collusion from military personnel at Joint Base Andrews, MD such as the Family Advocacy Program (FAP), Commanders, Inspector Generals, etc. which led me to form a nonprofit advocacy in 2015 for the abused, abandoned, deserted and often homeless military families, called the National Military Spouse Advocacy Organization (NMSAO) which has recently transitioned another nonprofit that is family focused incorporating the military children, called National Military Family Advocacy Organization (NMFAO) as we work closely with the members of Congress and Senate through proposed legislation. I quickly became acquainted with some passionate advocates such as Mr. Lundy Bancroft, Ms. Kathy Jones, Mr. Michael Volpe, Mr. Mark Sullivan, Esq., Ms. Leslie Vernick, Ms. Julie Owens, Dr. David Hawkins and many more.

A journey of a pro se litigator is one of the most challenging journeys; full of trials, defeats, victories, mental anguish, physical illnesses, emotional torture, and isolation, yet somehow we march on for justice in hopes of being blessed with an unbiased judge who will see the truth and protect the innocent victims through fairness, ethical actions and behaviors. Unfortunately, the biased and destructive civil judicial system has become a dangerous and silent epidemic not only in our country but others as well. Parental alienation has become the newest weapon to destroy innocent children only to taken away from the protective and loving parent who is tirelessly fighting and advocating for their protection and rights. Child Protective Services (CPS) and Foster homes have become a joke and another platform for selling children into sex trafficking, while the corrupt judges collect their cut from attorneys and CPS.

My son and I are not sure what type of a world that we live in anymore that openly and boldly promotes and permits such evil actions that destroy the countless innocent and helpless lives on a daily basis. The long road to my court building in Fairfax, VA serves as an ironic example of trying to reach the justice system only to be destroyed and silenced through gag orders and incarcerations, further prohibiting us from contacting our State Representatives, Legislators, Congressional leaders, and Attorney General's offices for dire assistance.

Will there ever be a change? Will there ever be justice? Will our children ever be protected from abusers? Will our Judges ever stop empowering and enabling the abusers?

I among many other loving parents/pro se litigators and children pray so.....

Gratefully,

*Rohini Hughes*

Rohini Hughes

Pro Se

Co-Founder | Vice President | Survivor | Advocate

NMFAO