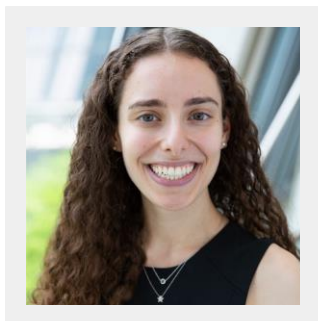




# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2022 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Emmy Maluf

**Law School:** University of Michigan Law School

**Organization:** New York Legal Assistance Group

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**Update 1:** After finishing up my 1L year at University of Michigan Law School, I now have the privilege of serving as an Equal Justice America Fellow while interning with the Special Litigation Unit (SLU) at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG). NYLAG provides free civil legal aid to low-income New Yorkers. The organization works to combat economic, racial, and social injustice by advocating for people experiencing poverty. SLU collaborates with attorneys across NYLAG's other practice areas to identify recurring issues ripe for impact litigation in an effort to effect systemic change.

As I conclude my third week in SLU, I am feeling grateful to be mentored by compassionate, talented attorneys. I am learning so much, both about impact litigation and also about the advocacy work of NYLAG's other units. I have gotten to contribute legal research to class actions that will hopefully change countless low-income New Yorkers' lives for the better. I am looking forward to the rest of the summer!

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**Update 2:** It's hard to believe I'm now halfway through my summer internship with the Special Litigation Unit at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG). I am grateful for the chance to work with and learn from exceptionally talented, deeply empathetic attorneys. I am also thankful that I get to contribute legal research to litigation that will hopefully meaningfully impact the lives of countless low-income New Yorkers. So far, much of my time has been dedicated to working on a special education class action. When a New York City student is denied necessary special education services, their family is entitled to file a due process complaint against the Department of Education. Legally, the complaint is required to be heard within a tight timeframe (usually 75 days), as each day a complaint goes unheard is another day a child lacks the special education services they desperately need. However, these families have had to wait an average of 259 days to have their complaints heard. As a result, several families of New York City schoolchildren sued the City and State Departments of Education on behalf of other families who have also been denied their rights to timely hearings regarding their children's special education services. NYLAG represents those families in this case. If you're interested, you can read more here: <https://nylag.org/jsm/>. I am eager to see what the next 5 weeks will bring!



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**Update 3:** It's hard to believe I'm concluding week 7 of my internship with the Special Litigation Unit (SLU) at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG). I have still been really enjoying my time at NYLAG working with SLU's compassionate, driven attorneys.

Lately, I've been doing research into a few different matters SLU is considering for future class actions. It has been so interesting to get to work on matters at all different stages — including discovery, settlement, and, now, cases in development.

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**Update 4:** Since my last update, I have continued to research a few different matters the Special Litigation Unit (SLU) at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) is considering for future class actions. I have also had the opportunity to research possible non-monetary remedies for class members in a special education case. Recently, I also got to conduct my first client intakes of the summer, with New Yorkers who may be eligible for federal student loan discharges. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to interact with and assist NYLAG's clients!

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**Update 5:** I concluded my ten-week internship at NYLAG on August 5. NYLAG provides free civil legal aid to low-income New Yorkers. The organization works to combat economic, racial, and social injustice by advocating for people experiencing poverty. SLU works together with attorneys across NYLAG's other practice areas to identify recurring issues ripe for impact litigation, in an effort to effect systemic change.

Since the conclusion of my internship in the Special Litigation Unit (SLU), I have been reflecting on everything that I have learned this summer. First, I am so grateful to have been mentored by the exceptional attorneys in SLU. They have guided me through researching tough legal questions, crafting clear legal memoranda, and so much more (including where to find the best ice cream near the office!). Second, I am also thankful to have gotten the opportunity to learn more about impact litigation more broadly. This summer, I have had the opportunity to conduct legal research for developing matters that SLU is considering for future class actions, as well as several class actions that are currently underway. For instance, during my time at SLU, I have been able to further develop my legal research and writing skills, looking into issues related to special education or consumer rights. It has also been fascinating to learn about the strategic considerations that go along with pursuing impact litigation.

As I look forward to starting my 2L year at University of Michigan Law School, I am excited to put my experiences at NYLAG to use in the classroom. I know my time in SLU and at NYLAG will help me be a better law student and, eventually, public interest lawyer. As always, I am grateful to Equal Justice America for financially supporting aspiring public interest attorneys like me.