



Summer 2018 EJA Fellow



Name: Arianna Vasquez

Law School: Boston University School of Law

EJA Fellowship: Massachusetts Advocates for Children

Entry 1: Week of 6/11/2018

#EJAFellowUpdate

Over the past few weeks I have worked with [Massachusetts Advocates for Children](#) (“MAC”) to support Spanish-speaking parents of children with disabilities seeking access to special education services. Last week, the office attended the B-SET conference on the Intersection of Disability, Race, and the School to Prison Pipeline to learn about how our work can remove barriers for students.

Entry 2: Week of 6/25/2018

#EJAFellowUpdate

As a [Massachusetts Advocates for Children](#) intern, I have had the opportunity to draft state complaints on behalf of Spanish-speaking parents who believe that their child’s school district has violated a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and accompanying state and federal regulations. This week, I also attended a Massachusetts Board of Education Meeting to hear about the adoption of the new LOOK Act (Language Opportunity for Our Kids) regulations.

Entry 3: Week of 7/9/2018

#EJAFellowUpdate

Over the last few weeks I have helped [Massachusetts Advocates for Children](#) develop scripts for videos about the special education process that will be used to educate parents about their rights. These videos will focus on language access issues as well as issues that may arise when requesting evaluations or responding to IEPs. The videos will be posted on the MAC website as a resource to provide parents of children with disabilities with more information on how they can advocate for their child.



Entry 4: Week of 7/23/2018

[#EJAFellowUpdate](#)

Over the last few weeks I have helped [Massachusetts Advocates for Children](#) submit hearing requests to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (“BSEA”) which conducts due process hearings and renders Rulings and Decisions concerning eligibility, evaluation, placement, individualized education programs (IEPs), provision of special education and procedural protections for students with disabilities. Hearings are one dispute resolution option that can provide parents with an opportunity to be heard when they believe that their school district has violated their or their child’s rights.

MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCATES *for* CHILDREN



August 30, 2018

Emma Ruben
Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112
emma@equaljusticeamerica.org

RE: Arianna Vasquez, EJA Fellowship Recipient

Dear Ms. Ruben:


I am pleased to write this letter regarding Arianna Vasquez, Mass Advocates for Children (MAC)'s summer legal intern funded by Equal Justice America. I was Arianna's primary supervisor during her time at MAC.

It was a pleasure to having Arianna at MAC. She immediately adapted to the work and office culture. She performed a wide range of tasks over the summer. Among these were legal research on how courts address the impact of procedural violations on student's right to a Free and Appropriate Education under IDEA; drafting scripts for educational videos MAC is creating to inform parents about the special education process and immigrant rights in education; and drafting a complaint on behalf of a parent whose son's school district was not translating documents related to her son's education and disciplinary proceedings. In addition to these tasks, Arianna responded to parents that contacted MAC's helpline for questions related to their children's special education services, and conducted research related to Supported Decision Making laws throughout the United States.

Arianna is a bright, pleasant, and compassionate person. She has a strong work ethic and contributed extensively to MAC's work and mission throughout her time with us. She was always eager to contribute in any way necessary and always communicative when she required feedback.

We are extremely grateful to EJA for funding Arianna's summer internship at MAC. Please feel free to contact me at dsantiago@massadvocates.org or 617-357-8431 ext 3238 for additional information about Arianna's time at MAC.

Sincerely,


Diana Santiago
Senior Attorney

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