



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2022 EJA Fellow:



Name: Natalie Peek

Law School: Mercer University, Walter F. George School of Law

Organization: New Georgia Project

Update 1: From the May Primary Election to the upcoming primary run-off New Georgia Project has kept us busy. There is a lot happening in the news, in the courts, and in the state of Georgia! This means that we are getting to research current issues to see how Georgians might be affected by cases in the Supreme Court's docket, and also how Georgia laws like SB202 has and will affect voters in elections this summer. Aside from election protection work, the legal department has the honor of supporting the amazing work that the organizing department (the heart and soul of NGP!) does every day. And they do a lot! Environmental justice, reproductive justice, pushing for student debt erasure, and of course, making sure EVERY Georgian has access to the polls through Ride to the Polls and voter registration.

If you're interested in getting involved a little (OR a LOT!) feel free to connect with NGP and one of their campaigns here: <https://newgeorgiaproject.org/campaigns/> OR sign up to volunteer here: <https://newgeorgiaproject.org/get-involved/>

Incredibly grateful to be able to intern with New Georgia Project this summer, and grateful for Equal Justice America for their support as a Summer Fellow.

Update 2: The Supreme Court handed down some damaging opinions these past weeks. Here in Georgia, we have been preparing ourselves for Roe v. Wade being overturned based on the draft opinion. More fears came to fruition when, in the concurrence, three more cases protecting fundamental rights were named: Griswold, Lawrence, and Obergefell. I am extremely thankful to get to work in an organization that centers the fundamental rights of all historically excluded populations, New Georgia Project has been working and will continue to work in their agendas for reproductive justice, environmental justice, LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, and the fundamental right that helps people to choose officials who support those agendas: voting rights. Unfortunately, it seems that voting rights will again be in the Supreme Court next term. When I decided



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to go to law school because of my passion for voting rights, part of me hoped that the constitutionally protected fundamental right to vote would not be eviscerated further. I still hope that it will not be. However, based on what the court has done to other rights that we thought were constitutionally protected, my expectations are low.

Update 3: This post will be little different than other updates! To be honest, the week before last I hit a wall. Within my research, I felt extremely powerless, and scared about what might happen in the legal future – and in my future. I am lucky that when I brought it up to one of my supervisors, she validated my experience and gave me some great advice. Often, when people (like myself) enter the legal profession and go to law school, we do so because we want to make social change. It can be incredibly disheartening to realize upon our first summer really deeply researching constitutional issues to find out that there has been movement legally to limit fundamental rights and that it might seem absolutely impossible. However, as a lawyer, we are able to make incremental change. That is what lawyers do and have done.

It has given me hope working with New Georgia Project seeing the work that they are doing with national and state partners to ensure that everyone has access to their fundamental rights, especially voting rights. As we gear up for the 2022 election in November, NGP and partners are preparing to litigate as needed to ensure that everyone has equal access to the ballot box, and equal access to their representation no matter what county they are in. While there has been some national pushback lately about messaging to vote, that exists largely because it is not easy or equitable for everyone in the United States.

I have learned that reading claims and understanding litigation arguments is more exciting to me than legal research, and that I might be more interested in litigation than I initially thought. I am very glad to have the opportunity to learn about that process and that an organization like New Georgia Process gets to work in all of these areas.

Update 4: I got the opportunity this week to attend #LavenderLaw with the LGBTQ Bar. Thankful for the opportunity afforded to me by Stonewall Bar Association in Georgia for supporting a strong group of Georgia Law Students in representing out in LA! PROUD to be a Mercer Law representative. Absolutely amazing panels on everything from Artificial Intelligence and Discrimination to some of the Supreme Court opinions that I have written memoranda on this summer!

The summer really flies by! We are closing in on the last weeks. I have really valued the time that my supervisors at New Georgia Project have spent helping our intern group improve our legal writing, and in my case, encouraging to utilize my voice in my analysis of law. As a member of the inaugural group of interns, I am truly excited to see this program grow and continue to support students. I got to meet with my supervisors this week to prepare a writing sample based on the work that I have done this summer, which has been invaluable.



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Update 5: This summer has been an amazing opportunity to learn about what I want to do with my legal career and what inspires me. It truly inspires me to learn that I can be a movement lawyer from start to finish of my legal career and in law school. Many of my supervisors have only done work within the Civil Rights space throughout their career, and it is a viable option. The limited connection with legal professionals in my life before law school has made it seem like working in nonprofits or public interest is not sustainable nor is it smart but seeing it this summer and also getting the support of my supervisors going forward gives me a great deal of hope.

I am incredibly grateful to have the continued support of one of my supervisors throughout this fall and going forward. She has been gracious to help with a memo that I crafted this summer about a Supreme Court Case: *Shinn v. Martinez*. This was one of my most difficult assignment, not only intellectually but also emotionally and mentally. Working on the memo on this topic has helped me to learn that I have a calling to work in criminal law and likely in the appellate realm. Georgia is a tightknit legal community, so I am thankful to have the support of the New Georgia Project going forward in connecting me with what could be my dream job. When I started this summer, I thought that the legal department at the New Georgia Project would be my dream job. This summer was not everything I hoped for it to be, it was grueling at some points, but ultimately it helped me to focus on what I truly want to do and where I would like my legal career to go next.

I am extremely grateful to have support from Equal Justice America to make my summer legal internship possible. The need for civil legal aid is urgent.