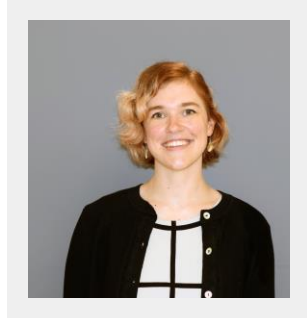




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Summer 2022 EJA Fellow:



Name: Amanda March

Law School: University of Pittsburgh

Organization: Community Justice Project

Update 1: This week is my third week as a Legal Intern at Community Justice Project. I am really learning a lot and enjoying using what I learned during my first year University of Pittsburgh School of Law, especially from my Legal Writing class. I am so grateful to be able to help with the important work that Community Justice Project is doing, and to have support to do it from both the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Equal Justice America's Fellowship.

Community Justice Project (<https://www.communityjusticeproject.org/>) is a non-profit, public interest law firm which represents low-income Pennsylvanians and helps create positive changes in the law for other low-income residents across Pennsylvania. Whether in civil or criminal cases, many Americans cannot afford a lawyer to help them navigate the legal system. Community Justice Project, through grants and federal funding, represents clients who cannot afford private counsel. I will be posting a few more updates throughout the summer about my work with Community Justice Project, but if you would like to support their work, please visit: <https://www.communityjusticeproject.org/donate>

Additionally, if you would like to support Equal Justice America to help fund public interest internships like mine, I hope you will consider donating.

Update 2: From sitting in on attorney strategy meetings to reading court transcripts, these past two weeks as a Legal Intern at Community Justice Project have given me a glimpse of what the work of a public interest attorney is like. In our weekly meeting, I learned about the work Community Justice Project is doing around eviction prevention to get information to Pennsylvanians facing eviction that can help them in the process, and the consequences Pennsylvanians face from having an eviction filing on their record.



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I am grateful this week more than any other week that I have good legal work to distract me from some of the problems facing our country that I am sure are on many people's minds. I continue to plug away at my assignments and I cannot believe how fast the summer is going.

Update 3: I cannot believe I am already more than halfway through my internship with Community Justice Project. The fall semester at University of Pittsburgh School of Law is drawing closer. But first, another EJA Fellow Update!

This week I got to look through exhibits from a bench trial and I will be helping draft part of the final memoranda to the Judge. I have also been learning a lot about zoning laws and where the authority for cities and municipalities to pass them comes from. Next week, our office will be doing a bike ride and lunch, and I am really looking forward to spending some quality time with my fellow interns and the Community Justice Project staff.

As I draw closer to the end of my internship, I feel really privileged to do work that I am both passionate about and interested in, regardless of where my career takes me.

Update 4: I cannot believe I only have 6 more days of my summer internship left with Community Justice Project! After this post, I will post one more update reflecting on my experience working at a public interest law firm this summer.

Last week, the Community Justice Project staff and interns had lunch in the South Side after a few of us biked there from Community Justice Project's Downtown office. Since most of the office works remotely most of the time, it was really nice to have a time dedicated to getting to talk and share food with the team.

Last week I also helped my supervising attorney complete a Brief for a bench trial. As my internship wraps up, I am looking forward to going over the opposing side's Brief and helping craft the Reply Brief. I am feeling really proud of the work I have done, the experience I have gained, and grateful for the lessons I have learned.

Update 5: As I get ready to enter my second year of law school, I am grateful to have had time this summer to rest and to reflect upon my first year and my internship this summer with Community Justice Project. This will be my last #ejafellowupdate.

I want to start by again saying how thankful I am to have had the financial support from both the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Equal Justice America's Fellowship to be able to take a Public Interest legal internship with Community Justice Project. During my internship, I had the opportunity to be included on a



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call where one of my supervising attorneys told a client they would be able to represent them at no cost. The relief and appreciation in the client's voice is something I will not forget.

Nor will I forget the learning opportunities I was able to have this summer at Community Justice Project. From inclusionary zoning laws, contract law, fee-shifting for intervenors on the federal level, and the implied warranty of habitability, my legal research for Community Justice Project allowed me to learn many new nuances and areas of the law on a practical level. In addition to the substantive law that I have become more familiar with, I have also learned a lot about legal research and writing, and what works and does not work as well.

Because I am interested in litigation, I think I am the most thankful for the opportunity to help my supervising attorney at Community Justice Project write the closing arguments for a bench trial. I also got to see the closing arguments of the opposing party, and to help strategize on the reply brief and sur-reply brief in actual, ongoing litigation. To see my own research and legal writing within documents actually filed with a court was exciting and very meaningful to me. I also enjoyed reading the transcripts of the trials and organizing them for reference in the closing arguments and reply briefs.

Additionally, I was also very grateful to have the opportunity to see the strategizing at the beginning of a lawsuit, to hear the attorneys and their co-counsel discuss issues that weighed in favor and against getting involved in a lawsuit, and to strategize about when was the best time and manner to do so.

As a person who tends to lean toward cynicism from time to time, it was eye-opening to see how many people are working hard every day to make and defend policies to help other people, and to have the opportunity to listen and learn from them. Being a law student can be challenging and stressful. It is easy to doubt whether you made the right decision to start this journey. However, seeing people roll up their sleeves to make positive changes eviscerates those doubts for me. This is why I came here. I know this work is hard, but I know I don't have to do it alone.

If you would like to support Equal Justice America's mission to help fund public interest internships like mine, please donate.