



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2022 EJA Fellow:



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**Law School:** University of Texas at Austin

**Organization:** Texas RioGrande Legal Aid

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### Update 1:

Last week, I started clerking with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. Equal Justice America selected me to be one of their summer fellows, and EJA is helping to sponsor my summer employment. This is my EJA Fellow Update and, technically, my first sponsored post. Now that I'm officially a social media influencer, I'd like to tell you a bit about the work I've been doing.

TRLA provides legal aid services to the Rio Grande Valley to help improve community access to legal resources. My task over the past week has been to create resources that empower the people of the RGV to address their own legal needs. With the help of practicing attorneys, I worked to provide information on key legal processes and standardize certain documents to help those without legal experience protect their rights without incurring the expenses involved in hiring counsel. I also assisted with research on a case involving eminent domain and the border wall. I'm excited to see what the coming weeks will hold!

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### Update 2:

Time for my second EJA Fellow Update! (#SponsoredPost, #Influencer, etc.). Lately I've been working on lots of projects in a few different areas. I did some research on a process for improving environmental law governance in Texas. As I'm sure I don't have to mention (but will anyway), the well-being of the environment is extremely important for the health and safety of everyone that lives in it. I'm glad I got the chance to research this topic, and I'm hoping my work pays off in the form of positive change for Texas.

I also got to learn some more landlord-tenant law in a few projects concerning the just treatment of tenants, who can easily find themselves in a powerless position when resources are running short. Texas RioGrande Legal Aid provides tools for tenants to ensure that they are being treated fairly in every case. Getting to work with this organization has been a great experience. As my summer is heading toward its close, I'm glad that I got the chance to serve my community and, generally, just glad that TRLA exists.



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## Update 3:

Time for my last #sponsored EJA Fellow Update! I'm done working for the summer at this point, and I feel like I learned a lot about the law and what it's like to work in law. Going into my third and last year of law school, the prospect of having to get a real full-time job that lasts an indefinite amount of time is looming pretty large, but I feel like the time I spent working this summer has helped me to get a better idea of what I want out of a job and the kind of work I want to do.

I spent a total of 5 weeks with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid in their Brownsville office. In that time, I got to work on projects like tenant assistance, eminent domain issues, and drafting motions. During my internship, I also got the chance to visit the office in San Antonio to get a better sense for what it's like to work for TRLA in a bigger city. I found myself surprised by the differences between the two offices I got the chance to work in. This experience helped me learn a lot about legal practice and the specific issues I worked on, but it also gave me more insight about the things no one teaches you in law school like the differences in office cultures and the ins and outs of working full time in a law office. These kinds of factors are incredibly important for day-to-day operations, and they can make or break a work experience. I think that going forward with looking for jobs as a full-time lawyer, I will place a lot more emphasis on whether each employment is a good fit for me both in terms of work and culture. I see these two aspects as imperative parts of a successful career.

I also got the chance to learn some more about public service in the legal sphere. TRLA is an organization founded on this principle, and it truly shows in all their employees and the work they produce. This mission was at the core of the work I was doing this summer, and I really did enjoy that. I felt that I could be much prouder of work I produced that would be used to genuinely help people. Being conscious of an end goal that I believed in caused me to be much more motivated and try that extra bit harder on all of my work. This is the kind of motivation that I want to seek out in my future career.

So as my summer wraps up, I'd just like to thank Equal Justice America once again for helping to make this possible. Thanks also to Texas RioGrande Legal Aid for having me for the summer. Keep up the good work! As for me, I'm off to one last year of school, and eventually, the bar (yikes).