



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:

Name: Abigail Vogt

Law School: Boston University School of Law

Organization: MetroWest Legal Services

Update 1: I'm happy to share that on May 31st, I started my summer internship at MetroWest Legal Services. I'm splitting my time between their Civil Legal Aid for Victims of Crime and Medical-Legal Partnership units, and I have already seen the unique benefits of the interdisciplinary approach these programs apply to legal services. I'm excited to return to client-facing work this summer, and to explore multiple areas of practice including immigration, family, and domestic violence law.

I'm also fortunate to have received an Equal Justice America fellowship to help fund my summer of public service. This grant, along with my public interest summer funding from Boston University School of Law, made it possible for me to spend my summer doing work I am passionate about. I'll be sharing EJA Fellow updates throughout the summer reflecting on my work at MWLS.

Update 2: For my second EJA Fellow Update, I wanted to share more about the Civil Legal Aid for Victims of Crime ("CLAVC") project I am working on this summer. CLAVC is a state-wide Massachusetts initiative aimed at solving legal problems for victims of crime that may not be addressed by the criminal legal system. This might include family law matters, immigration, employment rights, housing, disability rights, child welfare, public benefits, and more. Because CLAVC is a generalist practice, we are able to build longer-term relationships with clients and address their needs with a multifaceted approach.

So far this summer, I have assisted domestic violence victims in filing for divorce, navigating child custody disputes, and pursuing immigration relief. I am also learning about the effects of identity theft on our elder population, and doing research on how folks can navigate the effects of digital abuse.

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Update 4: Throughout my summer with @MetroWest Legal Services, I have had the opportunity to learn about many areas of law from my colleagues who've been generous in sharing their time and expertise. I've been able to observe proceedings in housing court, immigration court, family court, and district court in just the past few weeks. I will be walking away from this summer with a new understanding of holistic representation, and huge admiration for the dedicated, zealous advocates at MWLS!

Update 5: I've wrapped up my summer with MetroWest Legal Services and am reflecting on my experience for my final EJA Fellow Update.

I learned so much this summer from my supervisors, colleagues, and fellow interns. It is rejuvenating to work with a team of people who are similarly committed to serving the public interest, and who have dedicated their careers to working with low-income clients. Not only did my colleagues at MetroWest provide excellent services to their clients, they took extra care to learn about the issues facing their community, partner with other social service agencies, and remain engaged in policy-level advocacy—bringing their expertise from firsthand interactions with clients to macro-level social justice movements.

I was also lucky enough to spend a great deal of my summer working directly with clients. Among other projects, I was able to assist in stabilizing a client's financial situation after identity theft, filing a number of petitions for immigration relief for noncitizens who had been victims of crimes, and helping a survivor of domestic violence file for divorce. I am going into my third and final year of law school feeling re-inspired and excited about the work I will get to do once I am a full-fledged attorney.

MetroWest Legal Services is a small but mighty legal aid office in Framingham, MA, serving low-income people, people with disabilities, and people over the age of 60 in their service area. To learn more about the great work being done at MetroWest or to support the organization, check out their website here: <https://mwlegal.org/>

Once again, I am grateful to Equal Justice America for their support of my work at MWLS this summer. EJA makes it possible for many law students like me to commit their summer internships to public interest work, and to provide civil legal assistance to people experiencing poverty.

Thank you for following along with me this summer!