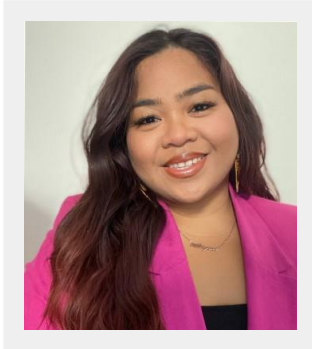




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## Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



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**Organization:** Legal Aid Chicago

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**Update 1:** This week marks my second week at Legal Aid Chicago and am very grateful to share my #ejafellowupdate. At Legal Aid Chicago, I work within the Children and Families Practice Group, particularly on the Family Law Team and Education Law Team. I am so grateful for the opportunity to continue my work and passion in education law as well as to be exposed as to how education and family law heavily intertwine. In just two weeks, my assignments have allowed me to better understand these two areas and the various legal issues that can come about. From general education law cases to domestic violence to general divorce – working on matters are truly strengthening not just my knowledge but skills in a variety of ways that will make me an even better legal intern and future attorney.

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**Update 2:** I am happy to share my second EJA Fellow update as I finish up my sixth week at Legal Aid Chicago. Since my last update, I have gained so much more experience and able to learn a plethora of new skills.

In the past few weeks, I have been able to accompany my supervising attorneys at a help desk and an order of protection hearing. Being able to see what the court looks like in person and its workings relating to domestic relations has allowed me to better understand the environment I will be working in after passing the bar. I was relieved to witness how straight-forward interacting with judges are and that it is not as nerve wracking as many of us law students convince ourselves it to be. I believe this has been one of my favorite valuable experiences so far.

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**Update 3:** I am happy to share my third JA Fellow update as I am coming up on my last few weeks at Legal Aid Chicago. My experience continues to be fulfilling and my supervisors continue to challenge me.



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Since my last update, I have been continuing various court observations and paperwork needed. The most intriguing part of these is learning the difference between structures of hearings, depositions, and prove-ups. Law school teaches you the basics, but knowing how certain questions are approached in these different settings was important. Although the foundation and goal for these actions are similar, the style and approach are somewhat different. For example, I learned that despite objections in depositions, they must still be answered and are recorded. On the other hand, there are barely any objections in prove-ups. Being able to distinguish each of these and how to approach them allows us to better understand their overall purpose. I am looking forward to learning more and being able to reflect on applying material I learned I law school within Legal Aid Chicago.

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**Update 4:** I am happy to share my fourth JA Fellow update as I am coming up on my last two weeks at Legal Aid Chicago. It is hard to believe that the summer is coming to a close but I continue to be challenged in many ways during my time at Legal Aid Chicago.

I have been continuing court observations and beginning to understand various attorneys' styles as well as judges'. I've been able to better understand how to gauge these styles and where I can access information to better prepare for these appearances. I have also continued to work on drafting documents I have never heard of before. Particularly, among many of the dissolution cases I have worked on alongside my supervisors, each one is different from the other. Knowing how to process these different situations and how to properly submit the correct documents has been very interesting. It's given me a couple ah-hah moments, which is what I was hoping to experience this summer as this has been my first experience concentrating completely on family law matters. Although I have only two weeks left, I have no doubt that I will continue to learn more and be challenged up until the very end.

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**Update 5:** I am excited but also saddened to share my final EJA Fellow update. I have concluded my internship with Legal Aid Chicago this summer and can honestly say that I am looking forward to my legal career more than ever.

While at Legal Aid Chicago, I served on both the Family Law and Education Law teams with a total of three amazing supervisors. Throughout my time in law school, much of my focus and experience has been on Education Law. However, I continued to learn more areas where education law exists that I haven't worked on before, particularly Title IX issues. Although I wasn't able to completely work on such a project, receiving updates and listening to the attorneys discuss these matters made me realize how prevalent the issue actually is. I was so intrigued that I researched articles and statistics that pertained to this issue, particularly among special needs children.

On the Family Law side, I was able to completely immerse myself in legal documentation, proceedings, client interaction, and even got to do my first prove-up in front of a judge. Having only observed one prove-up before



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doing mine, I was very surprised when the judge told me I had done a better job than most seasoned attorneys. I truly appreciate my supervisor for having prepared me well and provided me the necessary information to do well. Beyond this, being able to understand the proceedings of family court depending on various issues and the documentation needed was extremely helpful. I have not yet had a full family law experience and after this internship, I am absolutely interested in going into family law practice rather than just strictly education law. Additionally, seeing how family and education law coincide is so interesting and has allowed me to better understand the need for attorneys that recognize both areas of law.

From my experience at Legal Aid Chicago, I have come to understand that there is so much more to family law and education law than general divorce proceedings and expulsion hearings. People's lives are so intricate and as legal advocates, we are part of those intricacies and providing effective guidance. I am so thankful to have been able to understand these first-hand from the perspective of a 7/11 intern so that I could better be acquainted with what I will be doing once I graduate law school and pass the bar.

Overall, I truly felt that my experience at Legal Aid Chicago was fruitful and reminded me why I dedicated my career to serving my community – those that are underrepresented and underserved. It is difficult and emotional work, but it is one that is fulfilling. I am glad to have seen that through not just my experience, but through the lens of my supervisors. Thank you to Equal Justice America for helping to fund my experience.