



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Jose Ramon Asuncion

**Law School:** Santa Clara University

**Organization:** Legal Services of Northern California

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**Update 1:** I am honored and excited to share that I have been selected as a recipient of the Equal Justice America Summer Fellowship! I am thrilled to be interning at Legal Services of Northern California, where I am working at the Pension Project and involved in Disaster Law work.

As a rising 2L at Santa Clara University School of Law, I am committed to making a positive impact through my legal career. So far, at the Legal Services of Northern California, I have had the privilege of working on the Pension Project, where we strive to recover lost pensions and provide vital legal assistance to the elderly and individuals in need. It is deeply fulfilling to help individuals regain their financial security and navigate the complexities of pension recovery. In addition to the Pension Project, I am dedicated to work in Disaster Law, specifically providing legal aid to those affected by the recent storms and flooding that have caused havoc across our state. By offering support and guidance, I aim to help these communities rebuild their lives and access the legal resources they need during challenging times.

The Equal Justice America Fellowship has enabled me to pursue this meaningful work, and I am grateful for their support. Their commitment to equal justice aligns with my values, and I am proud to be part of their mission to ensure access to justice for all.

Throughout this summer fellowship, I will be sharing my experiences and insights as I work towards making a difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals and communities. Stay tuned for updates on the impactful work we are doing and the lives we are touching.

Thank you for your support and for being part of this important journey with me!

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**Update 2:** Halfway through my summer clerkship at Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC), I am excited to share an update on my meaningful work as an Equal Justice America (EJA) Fellow. It has been an



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incredible experience so far, filled with valuable opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others.

One highlight of my time at LSNC was the chance to present at the Elder Law Task Force, where I addressed the critical issue of how retirement benefits impact public benefit programs. It was an honor to contribute to the discussion and raise awareness about the challenges individuals face when navigating these systems. It is imperative that we strive to create accessible resources for our elderly populations, to make sure they receive the legal services they deserve. By shedding light on this issue, we can work towards creating more equitable solutions for vulnerable populations.

Additionally, I have been actively involved in Disaster Law work, focusing on the impact of climate change in certain regions of California. Climate change is increasing the risk of natural disasters in some of the most vulnerable communities across our state, and it is essential that we advocate for better preparedness and support for families and individuals affected by these events. Through my advocacy efforts, I hope to raise awareness and drive positive change in disaster response and resilience.

I am grateful for the support of Equal Justice America, whose fellowship has made this clerkship possible. Their commitment to equal justice and access to legal services is truly commendable. I am excited to continue my work at LSNC, empowering individuals and communities with the legal resources they need to thrive. Stay tuned for more updates on my journey as an EJA fellow and the impact we are making together.

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**Update 3:** As my summer clerkship at Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) continues, I am thrilled to share the latest developments in my journey as an Equal Justice America (EJA) fellow. Each day brings new opportunities to make a positive impact and fight for justice.

One of the highlights of my clerkship has been the opportunity to draft claim letters addressed to corporations, advocating for individuals who have been wronged or faced injustices in regard to their pension benefits. In addition to my work with claim letters, I have had the privilege of shadowing Unlawful Detainer Court proceedings. Witnessing the legal process firsthand has deepened my understanding of housing issues and the challenges faced by individuals navigating the eviction process.

Furthermore, I am currently working on a fascinating case at the intersection of pension work and labor unions. This complex matter explores the rights and benefits of workers in unionized industries and highlights the importance of fair compensation and retirement security. By delving into this area, I aim to protect the rights and well-being of individuals who have dedicated their lives to their specific trades.

I am immensely grateful to Equal Justice America for their support, as their fellowship has provided me with the opportunity to engage in this meaningful work and to contribute my time and summer to LSNC.

As my summer clerkship progresses, I look forward to sharing more updates on the impactful work we are doing to empower individuals and communities with the legal representation they deserve.

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**Update 4:** As my summer clerkship at Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) continues, I'm excited to share the latest progress as an Equal Justice America (EJA) Fellow. The opportunity to make a meaningful impact through my work has been truly rewarding.

One of the recent highlights of my clerkship has been delving into the intricacies of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and analyzing its recent updates under Secure 2.0. Writing a research memo on this critical topic has allowed me to explore the implications of these updates for individuals' retirement security and benefits. Not only is this project helping me hone my research and writing skills, but also allows me to better understand how to better serve our clients. Understanding the evolving legal landscape is essential to providing the best representation and support to those in need.

As I enter the final week of my internship, I cannot express how thankful I am for the opportunity LSNC and EJA have given me this summer. Thank you to all my mentors and supervisors who have helped me throughout the summer thus far.

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**Update 5:** Last week, I ended my summer clerkship at Legal Services of Northern California as an Equal Justice America Fellow, I'm truly grateful for the invaluable experiences and growth this opportunity has brought me. The past few months have been a transformative journey of learning and skill development.

Throughout my time at LSNC, I've had the privilege of delving into complex legal issues, honing my writing skills, and witnessing the real impact that legal advocacy can have on individuals and communities in need. The exposure to a diverse range of cases, from pension recovery to disaster law, has given me a well-rounded perspective on the vital role legal services play in ensuring justice for all.

I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my mentor and supervising attorney, Stephen Morris, whose guidance and support have been instrumental in my growth as a future attorney. Working alongside Stephen and the entire LSNC team has been a truly collaborative experience. Their dedication to the mission of providing legal assistance to those who need it most has been inspiring.

As my summer clerkship comes to an end, and I return to Santa Clara University School of Law, I carry forward the lessons learned and the passion ignited during this journey. I'm excited to continue my commitment to justice and equal access to legal services as I move forward in my legal career.

Thank you, LSNC, for this incredible opportunity. Also a special thank you to Madeleine Tabor, Esq., M.S.W., Cassie Hardacre, Jenni Gomez, Jenny Anders-Gable, and Masao Taylor who have provided both mentorship and help throughout the whole summer. I am proud to have been part of your mission and look forward to making a lasting impact in the legal field.