



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:

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**Update 1:** Over the past couple weeks, I have had the opportunity to begin my internship at Legal Clinic for the Disabled (LCD) in the General Intake rotation. As an intern, my main focus is catching up on the back log of general intake contacts we have to help benefit as many clients as possible. The first week of my internship was focused on comprehensive training sessions, during which I was equipped with essential knowledge and skills required to navigate the complex realm of law LCD does.

I have been conducting intakes for our general practice area, which involves gathering essential information from clients and assessing their personal issues. I then refer, assign to an attorney, or research a solution. This process has allowed me to develop my communication skills and gain insight into the diverse challenges individuals face throughout Philadelphia.

Looking ahead, I am excited to continue working with general intake and switch to the MLP rotation next week. I hope to use my training and experience to make a positive impact on the lives of those who are facing challenges. Having the chance to contribute to the mission of LCD is amazing.

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**Update 2:** In the past few weeks, my internship at Legal Clinic for the Disabled (LCD) has continued to be an fulfilling and exciting experience. I have changed rotations and now am conducting intakes for our Medical License Practice offices where I engage with clients over the phone and in-person. As I gather crucial information about their situation regarding power of attorney, will, family law, housing, and other areas.

In addition to client work, I have also started working on a policy project with other coworkers. Creating a filing system and law index regarding housing issues in Delaware County. This project has allowed me to focus on the details of these townships ordinances and find which zip codes our clients can have better protection in. I really have enjoyed contributing on this project thus far.

Last week, I was able to do my first home visit. A service that only LCD provides for those who can not leave their homes but need a Power of Attorney document signed. Assisting my supervising attorney with this task was really fulfilling as these documents will help their family in times that are stressful. I look forward to finishing up my current rotation and focusing on housing and tenant landlord disputes next.



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**Update 3:** As I have continued my internship journey at Legal Clinic for the Disabled (LCD) in the Housing Unit rotation, I am excited to share my recent experiences going to the Municipal Court and Family Court.

The past week I have had the privilege of helping a case get withdrawn, a case continued and watch a negotiation of a judgment by agreement on behalf of a client who was facing eviction. Going to court everyday has shown me the entire process involved with working with the client, being timely, and negotiating with the landlord and landlord attorney to create a resolution that is best.

I also got to spend an entire day with a Judge in Family Court. Watching an extended hearing on a custody hearing of a child location for school. The Judge took the time to talk to us before the hearing happened, afterwards she came and discussed why she made the decisions she made. During the trial sometimes the attorneys were a bit argumentative, I haven't seen that type of advocacy before, so it was interesting to see.

As I finish up my internship in the next couple weeks, I am excited for all the new experiences I will have.

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**Update 4:** One part of the Legal Clinic for the Disabled's mission is to meet its clients where they are. One of the attorney's works with Hub of Hope. Hub of Hope is a non-profit that focuses on those who are suffering from homelessness. This attorney goes to two different sites a week to provide legal advice and help.

A lot of our homeless clients do not have the specific paperwork they need to get resources. One of those documents is a birth certificate. In the State of Pennsylvania if you have an attorney help represent you, you as a person who is homeless can get a birth certificate for free.

My fellow interns and I and this attorney set up a Birth Certificate Clinic where we were able to help 17 people get the birth certificate document filled out. The week after that we went to the Vital Records Office in Philly and started to submit these client's paperwork. It was amazing to see how doing this one thing, will greatly impact these clients.

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**Update 5:** As I have finished up my time at the Legal Clinic for the Disabled I wanted to reflect on each of the different rotations I participated in and their impact. I came to LCD because I wanted to participate in client-based work, working at the DOJ my first summer, I loved the public service aspect but wanted to see the direct impact.

My first three weeks I was able to talk with clients all day every day. Hearing client's stories and being able to either give them a solution or resource on the phone, or schedule a time to meet was awesome. It was directly



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related to my goal for the summer. There was a backlog of six weeks and in my tenure we were entirely caught up.

My next rotation was with the Medical Legal Practices. At the MLP sites I got to see the real beauty of LCD. The fact we are in person and present at medical clinics to help mitigate the burden of getting legal help, by going to the client. I was able to help with name changes, power of attorney, custody issues and more. It was a unique experience to be one-on-one with different attorneys and to see their perspective and style.

Lastly with the housing unit. Being able to go to municipal court and represent clients was the core of being a public interest lawyer. Negotiating, working with clients, and other attorneys was great to see first-hand. I am glad I was able to finish with this rotation as it was most applicable to an ever-growing problem and mitigation effort that the city of Philadelphia is focusing. Seeing the imbalance between landlord and tenants slowly shift to more of an equilibrium was cool to see, especially with participating with Lawyer of the Day.

I had a wonderful experience working at the Legal Clinic for the Disabled this summer. I made great friendships with my other interns, and lifelong professional relationships with many of the attorneys. The 10 week experience was exactly what I wanted for my 2L summer and I am grateful to be a part of the work.