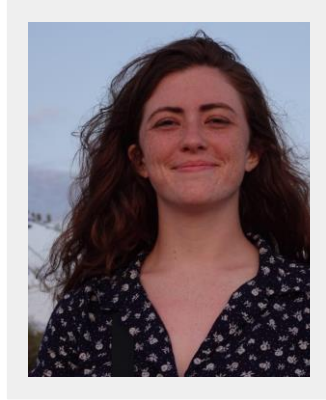




# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Cheyenne Petrich

**Law School:** University of Minnesota

**Organization:** Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid

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**Update 1:** Hi everyone! A couple updates from me. This summer I am working as a law clerk for Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid's St. Cloud and Willmar offices, an opportunity I am excited to explore and learn from! MMLA does incredibly important work in the community, particularly with those who are living below the poverty line and struggling with housing, family, and immigration issues. I am able to pursue this opportunity thanks to the Minnesota Justice Foundation, an amazing foundation that works with the University of Minnesota Law School and our neighboring law schools in the Twin Cities to coordinate with programs and nonprofits, creating funded positions for law students committed to public interest work. I am also the grateful recipient of a fellowship with Equal Justice America, a nonprofit that supports thousands of law students in their pursuit of equity in the law, regardless of a person's income or status.



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### Update 2:

I have never been very good at self-affirmation or ✨ manifesting ✨ a goal into existence, but I experienced a bit of a "full circle" moment last week that has really helped reaffirm my belief that I am on the right path.

Working this summer as a law clerk with Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, I've been given opportunities to assist some amazing attorneys and support staff in their efforts to provide real, valuable support to those in our community who need it most. Lately I've spent hours upon hours researching avenues of protection for DV survivors in employment and housing.

When I struggled to find current resources through the legal databases that directly address these issues, I figured I would try a resource a little closer to home. Within five minutes, I found that a recent graduate of my



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school had written on the topic last year for the Minnesota Journal of Law & Inequality (MJLI), the journal I was just invited to join as a staff member for my second year of law school.



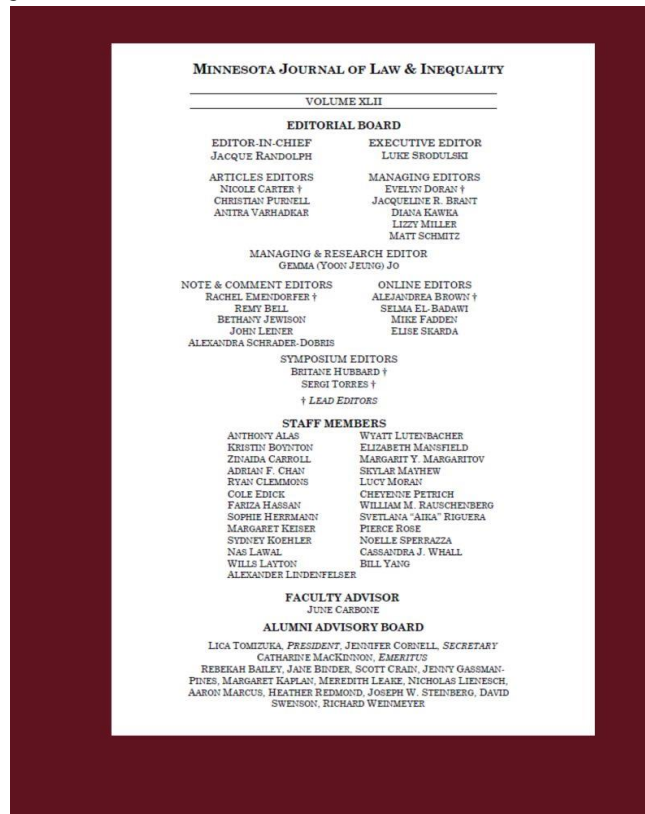
Maybe it's silly to read into this too much, but I feel really grateful right now. I feel like I'm surrounded by people who want to do good things with the opportunities we've been given. I'm ✨ manifesting ✨ that, y'all.

Minnesota Journal of Law & Inequality (MJLI) Minnesota Journal of Law & Inequality (MJLI) 356 followers 356 followers

The Journal of Law & Inequality is proud to present Volume 42 Masthead. Join us in celebrating our new editors and members! We shall continue working together in advancing JLI's mission to analyze how the law perpetuates systemic oppression, exploitation, and discrimination. Let's give our new editors and members a proud welcome!

...see more

Activate to view larger image,





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## Update 3:

If there's one thing I've learned at MMLA, it's that these laws impact way more people than you'd think. Take some time to read about the ways you can protect yourself or advocate for those around you.

### Rights and Resources for Victims of Domestic Abuse



The Office of the  
**Minnesota Attorney General**  
helping people afford their lives and live with dignity and respect

Domestic abuse impacts people across the state of Minnesota. This flyer has suggestions on how to get help.

**What is domestic abuse?**

Minnesota law defines domestic abuse as physical harm, bodily injury or assault, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury or assault, when done by a family or household member. Terroristic threats, criminal sexual conduct and interference with an emergency call are also forms of domestic abuse when they are committed by a family or household member.

**Legal Rights of Victims of Domestic Abuse**

**Orders for Protection:** Victims of domestic abuse can obtain a court order called an Order for Protection (OFP). OFPs can prohibit an abuser from contacting a victim and require an abuser to stay away from a victim's home, place of work, or school. In some cases, a parent can obtain an OFP on behalf of a minor child.

Victims of domestic abuse can contact the court administration at their county courthouse to file a petition for an OFP. Victims of domestic abuse do not have to pay for this proceeding, and are protected from retaliation by their employers if they have to miss work to obtain an OFP. When a court grants an OFP, it will send a copy of the OFP to law enforcement. It is a crime to violate an OFP. An abuser who violates an OFP can be arrested.

**Tenants' rights:**

If a victim of domestic abuse has an OFP or another kind of no contact order in place and fears imminent domestic abuse, they can terminate a lease if they provide the landlord advance written notice. Landlords cannot penalize tenants for making emergency calls in response to domestic abuse.

**Crime victims' rights:**

Victims of domestic abuse have certain rights in criminal prosecutions. These rights include the right to be informed of a prosecutor's decision to dismiss the case and to be informed of an offender's release from custody. For more information about crime victims' rights, contact the Crime Victim Justice Unit at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety at (800) 247-0390.

**Protections against financial abuse:**

Perpetrators of domestic abuse may have access to victims' personal and financial information. To protect against the misuse of their information, victims of domestic abuse may wish to place a security freeze on their credit reports. If necessary, victims of domestic abuse can also contact the Social Security Administration to obtain a new Social Security number.

**Unemployment benefits:**

People who leave their jobs voluntarily usually do not qualify to receive unemployment benefits. If domestic abuse made it necessary for a person to leave their job, however, they may be eligible for unemployment benefits.

**Keep your home address private:**

Minnesota residents who are afraid for their safety can enroll in Minnesota's Safe at Home Program to keep their home address confidential. The Safe at Home program assigns participants a PO box address, and forwards mail to their home address. For more information about this program or to enroll, contact the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office at (866) 732-3035.

**Resources are Available to Victims of Domestic Abuse**

Anyone in immediate danger should call 911. You may also contact your police department, sheriff's office, or local domestic abuse program. You can also call a confidential domestic violence hotline like Minnesota DayOne at (866) 223-1111. The crisis hotline should be able to provide a connection to the domestic violence program near you and can help you find resources like a safe shelter, advocacy, legal assistance and support groups.

Minnesota Attorney General's Office • 445 Minnesota Street, Suite 1400, St. Paul, MN 55101  
Twin Cities Calling Area: (651) 296-3353 • Outside the Twin Cities: (800) 657-3787 • Minnesota Relay: (800) 627-3529  
[www.ag.state.mn.us](http://www.ag.state.mn.us)

## Update 4:

I was invited to listen in on two hearings today for cases I've gotten to work on over the last couple of weeks, listening to two of my favorite attorneys at Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid present arguments that I researched and helped them prepare.



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It was really awesome to connect the piles of case law and predictions on these cases to the real people involved. It also reminded me that I have a lot of learning to do about oral advocacy!

Definitely going to be watching the Minnesota Supreme Court oral arguments more often. I'm excited to take what I've learned at MMLA and hopefully advocate for my future clients as well as they do.

Minnesota Supreme Court Oral Arguments - Videos

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## **Update 5:**

To all my fellow law students who are interested in working in public interest, I highly recommend getting involved with Equal Justice America. Since 1993 EJA has funded law students and recent law graduates at legal aid programs throughout the country. EJA Fellows fight to protect the rights of domestic violence victims, veterans, the elderly, people with disabilities, immigrants, voters, the homeless and other low-income Americans most at risk. With their support, I had an amazing learning experience this summer with Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid and will carry all that I've learned into my second year at the University of Minnesota Law School.

If anyone has questions on how to get involved or seek summer funding for a public interest position this upcoming year, feel free to reach out!

If you want to support EJA in their mission, consider donating to the cause.