



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



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Law School: University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School

Organization: Eviction Defense Clinic

Update 1:

I am happy to share that I am working with the Eviction Defense Clinic in the Economic Justice Institute this Summer as a clinical law student!

Working in eviction defense is a passion of mine as it relates to economic justice and housing rights. Coming into law school, I wanted to use my privilege and degree to assist communities in the public interest realm. I love being part of work that is so personal and meaningful, including going to court regularly and personally assisting clients facing eviction. As a first-generation lawyer, this clinical experience allows me to put my personal passions to work while under the supervision and guidance for faculty alongside my peers.

I am very grateful for the work this clinic does for our Madison community!

Update 2:

For this EJA Fellow Update, I am reflecting on my first court appearance as a clinical law student. Not only am I able to assist those facing eviction, but I am able to do so while learning how to appear in court under the supervision of a licensed attorney. In my role as a clinical law student, I get to have a first-hand experience in court including, but not limited to, preparing arguments, calling clients, writing briefs, and appearing on behalf of clients. Making those personal client connections and assisting them through the stressful, complicated time period of the eviction process is fulfilling and much needed work in our community.

I am very grateful for our wonderful supervisors at the clinic and for the passion and dedication to eviction defense that I see every day. I can already see how much I've grown as a professional in this role.



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Update 3:

For today's EJA Fellow Update, I am preparing for my first in-person hearing. Since small claims court is mainly on zoom in Dane County, all of my appearances so far, under the supervision of a licensed attorney, have been virtual. While most of the Eviction Defense Clinic's work is virtual (i.e., electronic filing, calling clients, and appearing on zoom), this work is still very personal. Whether it is getting a case dismissed for a client facing eviction or getting a client's name redacted off of CCAP, the outcome is very meaningful to both the client and the clinic. Getting to call a client after a dismissal is one of the most rewarding parts of working at the clinic. I am looking forward to my first in-person hearing and am grateful for the opportunity to represent those facing eviction in court!

Update 4:

For this EJA Fellow Update, it was great to make art with my peers as clinic comes to an end. Not only have I had the opportunity to work on eviction cases with others who are passionate about providing free legal aid, I have also gained invaluable experience. Making art with my clinical professors and friends was such a nice way to spend Friday afternoon.

Update 5:

For my final EJA Fellow Update, I am reflecting on a great summer of work with the Eviction Defense Clinic. Words cannot describe how much I have taken away from just a few months of working in small claims court for pro bono eviction cases. I have not only learned valuable lawyering skills, but I have also learned things that you simply only learn from practice, such as talking to clients being evicted in a short timeframe. This work is very personal which is why it appealed to me. My favorite part of the work was getting to personally call my clients after getting an eviction case dismissed or getting a motion to redact signed so that they could find future housing more easily. Even on harder days were I was handed a case the day before we had court, I still loved it because it was fulfilling. I am eternally grateful for the trust that the clinic put in its students for both the Eviction Defense Clinic and the Neighborhood Law Clinic. It is from this trust that I got to do intake for clients, conduct legal research, draft answers, write and e-file motions, and appear in court for clients. The clinic students truly are entrusted to be the client's representation from start to finish. The clinic's design of having a supervising attorney there for you if you need help or a guiding hand while also keeping an autonomous work environment for the students is something I treasure. Coming out of clinic, I feel competent carrying out small claims court procedures. I also gained a lot of professional development when it comes to client interactions and also communications with other attorneys or judges. Not only am I taking away a new confidence in lawyering, but also a feeling of accomplishment. As a first-generation lawyer, this experience has helped me grow in more ways than one. Before this clinic, I honestly had no idea how court procedures were carried out. "Do I say may I please the court?" "What happens next?" "When do I hand over copies" I now feel competent in providing legal services to those facing housing issues while eager to continue this important work in Madison.