



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



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Organization: Kids in Need of Defense – Los Angeles

Update 1: With all grades finally in, I can happily say I have completed my first year of law school at the University of California, Berkeley - School of Law. After a year filled with a lot of sacrifices but many memories I am happy for my journey thus far and excited for what is to come. For the past few weeks I have been working at Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) in Los Angeles as a legal intern. In my time here so far I have already gotten so many hands on opportunities doing the work that inspired me to go to law school. This summer I will be supporting my supervising attorney (shoutout Javier!) on cases regarding unaccompanied minors and learning about what type of lawyer I need to be. I look forward to exploring this intricate part of the immigration field that requires so much. I am especially happy to be doing this work at KIND as they not only prioritize the holistic well-being of the clients but their staff as well. I am excited to reaffirm my passionate commitment to my community. What made choosing this internship that much easier is the financial help I received from my school, the Law Students of African Descent at Berkeley Law, and Equal Justice America. EJA is a nonprofit that helps fund law students working with vulnerable people in poverty—increasing the number of future lawyers who have experience doing public interest work and ensuring everyone has access to justice. Equal Justice America is able to assist students like me through the generous donations of others.

Update 2: With this week filled with various disappointing announcements coming from the Supreme Court, the space curated by Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) has kept me optimistic about my future in the legal field. So far in my first month of this internship, in addition to strengthening my skills needed to provide holistic assistance to unaccompanied minors, I have also received mountains of advice from the team surrounding me. They have provided me so much guidance on what I should look for in future internships and how to avoid the burn-out that plagues so much of the public interest realm. Every day that I work here I am reaffirmed in my passion to do this work and reminded why I belong here. I would like to thank Equal Justice America again for assisting in funding my summer.

Update 3: Besides hands-on direct work with clients, what I wanted to get out of my internship with Kids in



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Need of Defense (KIND) was a chance to engage in impactful research. Luckily, I have been able to do that on multiple occasions throughout this summer. With the confidence of my supervising attorney, I am conducting research on why two clients should be granted asylum. While everyone has a right to seek asylum, it has become increasingly difficult to receive it under recent presidential administrations. The research I am doing will eventually be placed in briefs with other supporting documents explaining why our clients deserve to remain in this country. With this project I have utilized the invaluable skills drilled into me throughout my entire 1L year at Berkeley Law. I am excited to see this long-term project come together and hopefully sometime in the future prove effective in getting the clients the relief they deserve.

Update 4: Happy (belated) National Intern Day! With entering my last week of my internship at Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), I am filled with so many emotions. But the most prevalent emotion is gratitude for everything I have been able to accomplish this summer. Within this past month alone, I have conducted intakes with potential clients. These were definitely a nerve racking but fulfilling experiences that I was more than happy to partake in. With the confidence and teachings of my supervising attorneys instilled in me, I was able to engage in the work that inspired me to go to law school. I got to put my trauma-informed lawyering skills to use and work closely with my co-interns. This experience proved to me I am on the right path. PS: Check out Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) Instagram post highlighting their interns! (You might see someone you know 😊)

Update 5: After a fulfilling summer, I will be rating this legal internship with Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), a 10 out of 10. This summer reaffirmed why I am going to law school and why I need to continue working through all that is thrown at me. I went into this internship wanting to improve my Spanish skills, learn more about immigration law with specific regard to children, and continue to build my network. I believe that all of these things were accomplished and more. Throughout the summer I got to work with clients (such adorable kids!), do a lot of research into various areas of immigration law, and got to support my supervising attorney with many of his ongoing cases. I got to engage in an array of things that really informed what are the different ways I can fulfill my dream of becoming an immigration attorney for children. My supervising attorney and the office as a whole did a great job exposing me to different things and making sure I felt supported in accomplishing the goals I had set for the summer.

I am very happy with advice I received from all of the attorneys for my legal career following this internship. Many of the attorneys were more than happy to share how they made their way to KIND. It made me feel good to know that there was nothing I could really do wrong to become as successful as they are. I am definitely going to internalize everything they shared with me. My co-interns were also amazing people to work with in reaching my goals. These wonderful students also took time out of their learning experience to teach me different skills to maximize the time in our internship. My co-interns helped me become more confident in client interactions and have given me excellent tips on how to navigate tough research assignments.

In all I would recommend this organization to others and am so happy I had this experience.