



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2023 EJA Fellow:



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**Organization:** East Bay Community Law Center

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**Update 1:** After just a few weeks at East Bay Community Law Center, I've already lost track of how many clients my cohort and I have assisted in eviction defense. The learning curve for unlawful detainer cases was quite steep because of how quickly these cases move in the legal system, so diving headfirst with my supervisor was the only way to be successful. The mix between ongoing cases my supervisor has been on for years and walk-in appointments where we find a resolution to their issue within a few hours, has shown me all sides of eviction defense and tenants' rights work.

EBCLC does incredibly important work and it's been an invaluable experience to learn from EBCLC attorneys. Being able to file high quality answers with the Court, write compelling letters to landlords, and connect clients with long-term resources as a part of almost every day in the office has been inspiring work. Navigating the complex paperwork for the Court feels like an impossible task to some people and adds to the already overwhelming situations folks find themselves in by the time they make it to our office, so taking just a few things off their plates has proven to be the support many people need. I have appreciated the fact that each client has walked away from their time with us feeling renewed hope for their situation and certainty in their advocates.

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**Update 2:** Now that I'm halfway through my time with East Bay Community Law Center, I feel confident in the things I've learned and my abilities to assist clients efficiently. The hands-on learning experience has meant that I've spent my days working with clients directly and have developed relationships with folks we are assisting. It has been rewarding to have the opportunity to follow along with a client's case over the weeks and see the forward motion and progress being made to their benefit. The most exciting task to be a part of thus far, was a clinic client who needed help with their unlawful detainer. Another intern and I worked together to see if opposing counsel would be willing to negotiate a better situation for our client. I drafted a motion for summary judgment and my co-intern communicated with opposing counsel to let them know we were looking to file the



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MSJ. We ended up negotiating a 9 month move-out and waiver of back rent for our client, which was everything they needed in order to move forward.

With only a few more weeks left at East Bay Community Law Center, I hope to continue to try new tasks and further strengthen my understanding of eviction defense. I've been fortunate to develop a strong network with the attorneys at EBCLC and have made a lot of good friends in my co-interns. I'm hopeful that my connection to EBCLC will go beyond my internship with them and I'm eager to see the work we continue to do.

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**Update 3:** With only three weeks left at East Bay Community Law Center, I'm excited and nervous to wrap up my time as an intern. I've had such a positive experience working with EBCLC's housing clinic and feel proud of the work I have done with my co-interns and supervisors. With each passing client meeting, answer filing, and clinic appointment, I feel more competent in my ability to assist folks in this area of law. However, I simultaneously feel a sense of anxiety looking forward. With the end of Oakland's eviction moratorium just around the corner, we have been operating at the office with a sense of a looming force in front of us. I know that the end of the moratorium will bring a slew of folks in incredibly difficult positions as eviction defense resources work to stay afloat, and the timing of my internship class leaving shortly after the moratorium lifts may complicate things for EBCLC further.

I know that EBCLC is equipped to face the challenge, but I do wish I and my co-interns could continue providing our assistance to the attorneys here. I feel so appreciative for the amount of knowledge I have gained throughout the summer. I am especially grateful for the "brown bag" chats the attorneys have had with us about various aspects of their law school experiences and careers. My time here has been a very holistic learning experience and I will take many lessons from the people with whom I have worked and from whom I have learned.

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**Update 4:** My internship with the East Bay Community Law Center concluded last week and I already miss the work so much. I feel very fulfilled by the work I did alongside the other interns in the Housing Clinic and feel so hopeful knowing the next group of students will continue on with the hard work. The final weeks of my time at EBCLC were some of the busiest all summer as the eviction moratoriums in the East Bay lifted. The increase in the number of eviction notices that showed up within the last week reminded me just how important the work is that EBCLC does. Seeing the attorneys take the challenge head-on and remain committed to fulfilling the needs of the clients was an inspiring way to end my internship. Such commitment is exactly what I hope to do with my legal career in the future.

The other EBCLC interns and I were fortunate to gain an incredible amount of knowledge on the topics of housing law. The opportunity to work with such a prominent organization in the community is one I will always look back on fondly. I feel thankful that this opportunity is one I was able to say yes to, and funding support from Equal Justice America played a critical part in my ability to do so. I hope the work of public



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interest students is always valued as it is by EJA because I have seen this past summer what a difference it can make.

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**Update 5:** It has been a few weeks since I finished my internship at the East Bay Community Law Center. I have been busy preparing for my second year of law school to begin, but I haven't stopped reflecting on my time with EBCLC this summer. I feel as though I've made life-long friends in the other interns, have connected with mentors I will always look to as I move forward, and met clients who taught me so much even in the limited time I worked with them. I feel incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to intern at such a well-respected organization. EBCLC's work is recognized throughout the East Bay and it's been such a cool experience continuing to build that legacy.

Eviction defense and housing rights work is an area of the law I had only some previous professional experience with coming into the summer, so I knew I would learn a lot. But the huge amount of knowledge I'm walking away with is more than I could have anticipated. I feel confident that I can expand my horizons in the public interest world and always return to the knowledge I gained this summer if the opportunity to work in housing rights presents itself in the future.

Taking an unpaid position at a nonprofit this summer is an opportunity I feel very thankful to have had. I know many people are pushed out of such opportunities because funding presents an issue. I feel immense gratitude towards Equal Justice America for helping to make it possible for me to take this opportunity with EBCLC. Public interest students everywhere depend on organizations like EJA and we are fortunate that public interest work is valued by such organizations. I hope many future students are afforded the opportunity to gain such invaluable experience with the support of EJA.