



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Update 1: I have been interning at Ayuda for around two and a half weeks. Already in that short period of time I have learned so much about the intricacies of immigration law, and I look forward to a summer full of continued learning and growing. Prior to this internship, I had a general background understanding of immigration law. However, in getting to assist with various parts of different immigration visa types so far, I have learned more about the specific information and details that go into each application type. I have also gotten experience with many types of legal writing and research, including motions to dismiss, motions for prosecutorial discretion, country conditions research, and legal research to support case strategy. In addition, I have started to get the chance to learn more about best practices when working with clients. Although I am not fluent in Spanish, the language many of Ayuda's clients speak, I know enough to generally keep up during a client meeting. Ayuda works primarily on humanitarian immigration visas, so many clients have also experienced significant trauma and challenges prior to getting in contact with Ayuda attorneys. I have learned, both from my experience at Ayuda so far and from an intern training I got to be part of last week, that even when clients are talking about stories/experiences that are not directly related to their legal matter, it is vital to actively listen to their stories to further build trust. I am looking forward to continuing to build my client-centered skills through this experience by participating in client meetings and observing how my colleagues conduct the meetings. I am looking forward to continuing to develop my skills and knowledge throughout this internship.

Update 2: These past few weeks I have continued learn and grow, especially in my client centered work and my writing. I have been attending more client meetings, which has both allowed me to better learn how to effectively conduct client meetings, and also has been improving my Spanish language skills. In addition, I recently attended an immigration court hearing to observe with my fellow interns. There were a variety of case types, and both individuals with attorneys and those without. The hearings with individuals without attorneys was particularly eye opening because it further solidified the extreme complexities of immigration law, and how difficult it can be for someone navigating the system without an



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attorney. This has further solidified my desire to work in the non-profit space assisting those who may not otherwise have access to legal support. In addition, in addition to legal and country conditions research, I recently started working on an asylum brief. I am looking forward to expanding my legal writing skills to this space and learning how to make effective legal arguments in the immigration context. I have learned so much so far, and am looking forward to continuing my learning through the rest of my internship.

Update 3: Recently I have continued to learn more about the particular immigration types. I had the chance to observe a special immigrant status hearing in family court for a young child, and was impressed with the care that the judge took to make the child feel comfortable (though unfortunately I imagine that not all judges are the same). I have also continued to work on a complex asylum brief which has challenged but also strengthened my legal writing and advocacy skills. Lastly, I have continued to get to know my colleagues, and am trying to learn as much as possible from them in this last part of my internship. Overall, I have continued to learn and grow and am proud of how much I've learned.

Update 4: I have continued to learn more about the specifics of immigration law through my internship this summer. I have still been working on a challenging asylum brief, but it has strengthened my legal research and writing skills, and I am proud of how far it has come in the last couple of weeks. I have also gotten to continue to get to know the staff and attorneys I work with, and it has been nice to learn more about their career paths and advice that they have for our future. This summer has gone by very fast, and I am sad to be coming towards the end of my internship, but I know that I have learned a lot and looking back it has been a really impactful and rewarding experience.

Update 5: As I reflect on my internship with Ayuda over the summer, I am very thankful for all of the work and learning I was able to do, and excited to continue learning more about the immigration law field through future internships and externships during the remainder of my time at law school. I also felt very fulfilled working on direct service within immigration law and hope to continue to build my skills to work in this part of immigration law as a future career. Over my time at Ayuda, I was able to work on various immigration petitions using many different legal skills including my legal research, writing, and analysis skills that I strengthened based on my first year of law school. In addition, I was able to learn more about conducting client intakes and meetings in an empathetic, effective, and client centered manner, which are skills I hope to build upon in the future. Overall, I am thankful for my experience at Ayuda over the summer and look forward to putting these skills into practice in the future.