



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## SUMMER 2024

### EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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**Update 1:** Last week I started my summer internship at the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center. We started out with training and orientation. Confidentiality, something that was a topic for reading in ethics, now applies in work and life. My work does not only reflect on me but also the attorney who I work under.

I have experienced 3 hotline calls on our multilingual hotline where we direct clients to the resources they need in the language they are comfortable with. The intake process was very scary in training and before the first call, but after my first I knew what to expect. I had the most questions after the first call but my supervisor was as always wonderful.

I have done Spanish and English, and I am nervous to speak in Korean. I am glad I am not the only intern at APALRC. My fellow interns help me daily with legal research and brightening the dreariest days.

I have learned more about immigration law than I did in my 1L year which was nothing. Immigration law is purposefully complex and long when it does not need to be either. I wrote my first memo for the workplace on adjustment of status and have practiced the art of confidentiality in my work and in my externship class. Heading into this week on my to-do list includes working on a U-visa for a client and preparing for trial for my first time.

**Update 2:** Almost done with June and I have learned a lot since starting in May. I have done training with other public service organizations in the D.C. area and connected with more people than I had just in school. Working at the Center is wonderful because of the attorneys and my fellow interns. Every attorney present specializes in a different area so I am not bound to any one subject. I will get started on helping preserve Chinatown with the local residents, giving them a voice in a district that moves them without input. I have also started working on promoting Anti-Asian hate in Montgomery Maryland through teaching AAPI history and teaching the rights of those who have experienced a hate crime. In the immigration field I am



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helping clients adjust their immigration status and brushing up on my Spanish. We get feedback and weekly training on substantive law to better help our clients.

I have done more memos here than at school, those are shorter than our school memos. Putting academic theories into practice has given me a new appreciation for the law and for the response "it depends." For now, when I have trouble, my fellow interns are who I turn to and we help each other in our endeavor to be public servants!

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**Update 3:** June has ended and July has spread her wings. I have dabbled in writing affidavits, and it is an experience I do not wish to do too often anymore. I have done about three applications for naturalization and two for adjusting status. A project I am excited about is turning my memo into a brief to be submitted with an application for adjustment of status. That memo required researching 2005 USCIS policy and its importance in determining a client's current immigration status.

Completing intakes for new clients has required me to utilize the customer service skills I acquired through my jobs outside the legal field. These skills are useful in translating the work that needs to be done for the client. It requires patience, sympathy and translation. Patience because when clients first meet you, they are usually very stressed about their issue and want you to solve it that day. Sympathy because of the problems they have sometimes have a deadline or are really traumatic. Translation is necessary because government forms and legal terms can be very confusing and overwhelming, which we can remember being 1L's.

I appreciate the atmosphere at my workplace, and I am interested in working further with non-profits. Being surrounded with individuals who also want to change the world for each client is inspiring for the future.

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**Update 4:** In the two weeks since my last update my work life has progressed quite quickly. On the 9th I went with an attorney to present on rights for those that experience anti-asian hate. It was interesting because we were talking to middle schoolers and not my own peers. It was easier because it was not my peers while being hard because it was middle schoolers and to them, we are the least interesting people on the planet. Luckily the interns and I had younger siblings and know if you get kids talking, they will be engaged and they walked away feeling listened to and knowing skills to prevent harm in their community.

On the 17th my coworkers and I went to a conference recommended to us by our attorneys. It was hosted by the World Without Exploitation Youth Coalition and Rights4Girls. It was from 9am to 3pm hosted at George Washington University. We learned of online facilitated sex trade websites, child sex trafficking victims and the policies in place that either harm or help them. We heard from panels linking onlyfans to prostitution to sex trafficking. Hearing critiques for brothels in Nevada and the Netherlands and child marriage in the United States. Leaving the conference, my peers and I learned of the new pervasiveness of sex trafficking and the steps we can take to save our fellow humans.



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I have connected with not only my fellow legal interns but the attorneys at my internship. They get to know us, and they allow us to get to know them. We have a birthday coming up for one of the attorneys and we have something planned for her. We are all excited and coordinated so our gifts do not overlap. I look forward to what else I will experience, who else I will help and how much more I will enjoy this summer.

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**Update 5:** In my last update for the summer, I reflect on my internship. My summertime at the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC) was one of great joy, heat and new skills.

The heat was felt by all. While I sheltered inside from the heat, I bonded with my fellow legal interns and the attorneys who supervised us. We moaned when the power went out, we stood above the vents after coming in, we took turns buying sweets to keep us cool, we pushed all our food to the back of the fridge because it was the coldest spot. In these moments we learned more about each other and the people we still hope to become.

For me it meant making friends outside my law school. And getting to know my attorneys beyond just networking or professionally, but personally. Networking was not scary, long and invasive any longer. Communicating and caring replaced networking for me. With all staff events like happy hour, lunches and movies it was easier to become myself and follow my passions.

The joy felt was because of the steps taken to make friends and talk to my attorneys about more than work. I found that I get along well with the attorneys, and they know people I wish to know. From my peers I found friends who helped me when I was lost and who helped me laugh even when the day was tough.

The goals I wanted to reach at the beginning of this internship have been accomplished. I finally got to practice Korean in my last two weeks at APALRC. I translated a Virginia voter registration guide from English to Korean. It was hard and it was exactly what I needed to practice. I can confidently say now I know what the word for vote is in Korean: 투표. I worked on my public speaking, and I wrote more research memos than I ever had. I learned affidavits and intake interviews. I learned immigration and I learned that I want to continue helping the community. I helped clients in various ways this summer via immigration, housing or anti-Asian hate. I will continue the fight for a better world, one client at a time.