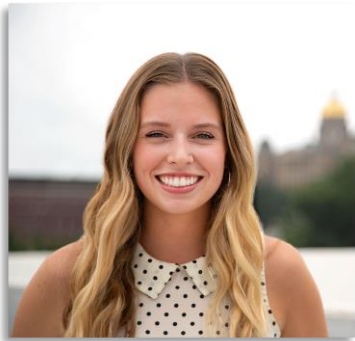




EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

SUMMER 2024

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Emma Buchanan
LAW SCHOOL	American University Washington College of Law
ORGANIZATION	Bread for the City

Update 1:

I am nearly three weeks into my new position as a Summer Law Clerk at Bread for the City! At Bread, I have the opportunity to work on immigration, public benefits, housing, and family law matters for DC residents. So far, I have observed an SIJS hearing, worked on a Motion to Dismiss an eviction case, and began my first public benefits case. I am grateful to Equal Justice America for raising funds to support law students in public interest this summer.

Update 2:

This week in my clerkship at Bread for the City, I went to D.C. Superior Court to observe a child support contempt hearing, and I've jumped into a research project regarding the enforcement of critical language access laws in D.C. I also attended the insightful Washington Council of Lawyers Summer Forum sessions on criminal and immigration law.

Update 3:

As a law clerk at Bread for the City, I spent part of my week conducting research for a memo on language access — providing limited English proficient (LEP) people with access to the same services as English-speaking people. I found that under current law, the D.C. Office of Human Rights is better suited to handle language access violations than D.C. courts. Meaningful enforcement of language access policies is critical to ensure all D.C. residents understand their rights, no matter what language they speak. 🗣️

Update 4:

My time as a law clerk at Bread for the City is quickly ending, but my interest in their work is not! Last week, I had the opportunity to help a client complete Special Immigrant Juvenile Status applications for her children. I also drafted a cover letter to accompany one of the applications.

As the daughter of an immigrant, immigration is an issue near and dear to my heart. Working



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with clients on immigration matters this summer has been impactful and inspiring for me as I look ahead to my 2L year and beyond.

Update 5:

For my final EJA Fellow Update, I want to reflect on my experience as a Law Clerk at Bread for the City. As I look back, one of my experiences stands out as particularly representative of Bread's mission.

Early on, I wrote about attending a Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) hearing in family court. Getting this status requires obtaining a custody order and SIJS predicate order in family court, so I observed this required step.

A few weeks later, the case had been passed to our immigration attorneys and it was time to fill out the required immigration paperwork on behalf of the children. The other law clerks and I helped to fill out the forms and met with the client in person to ensure all the information was correct. We wrote cover letters to support the applications, and the immigration attorneys submitted them to USCIS.

Bread for the City's mission is to help D.C. residents living with low income holistically. By providing legal, medical, food, and clothing help all in one place and at no cost, Bread makes it easier for people to access their essential needs.

It's difficult to sum up all that I learned from this clerkship, but I'll give it a try. I was trained on trauma-informed lawyering — how to operate and communicate with clients as an agent of a flawed, often re-traumatizing, legal system. I learned practical skills like how to write Motions to Dismiss and Discovery Requests for the Landlord/Tenant Branch. I received training on how to use Spanish in way that is inclusive toward LGBTQIA2S+ communities. I spent hours on the phone conducting intakes with clients and referring them to other legal aid organizations that could better serve their needs.

Like Bread's services, my work was wide-ranging and reflected some of the many needs of the D.C. community. I am grateful for this experience, as it further solidified my commitment to public interest work and exposed me to the wins and difficulties that come with it. I believe the law should help people protect their rights and interests, regardless of economic or immigration status. That's why I hope to play a small role in making the legal system more equitable as a future attorney.

A huge thank you to Equal Justice America and to The Hispanic Bar Association of DC (HBA-DC) Foundation for making my work this summer possible. I look forward to continuing my legal studies at American University Washington College of Law in a few short weeks!