



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

SUMMER 2024

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Update 1:

Hi everyone! This will be the first of five updates that I will be making this summer as an Equal Justice America Fellow. These updates will document my professional experiences as a summer intern with Legal Aid Chicago!

I am beginning my fourth week with the Long-Term Care Practice Group. The orientation on my first day was exciting. I met several attorneys & interns across several practice areas, and I learned about what it means to work at Legal Aid Chicago. Most importantly, I am now a part of the huge impact we make on underrepresented marginalized Chicago residents.

Since starting here, I have learned about different types of long-term care facilities, mental health institutions, and what it means to be an advocate for those residing in Nursing Facilities. I understand now, how vulnerable elderly and disabled people are and how they are easily taken advantage of in these care facilities. I am working with a wonderful team to enact change across Chicago, and I feel I have learned so much already.

As an Equal Justice America Fellow, I am helping other public interest law students pursue their careers and serve communities desperately in need of help. Pleas

Update 2:

So far, my time at Legal Aid Chicago has been incredibly rewarding. While in the long-term care practice group, I have met with several residents in their facilities to discuss their needs, and how our team can better advocate for their rights. My knowledge of elder abuse and vulnerability expands everyday with the assignments I am given and the people from the community I get to speak with.



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I have also participated in Legal Aid's community clinic where I, along with several attorneys and other interns, go into various underrepresented neighborhoods of Chicago and speak one-on-one to potential clients. Not only has this broadened my experience to property law, tax law, employment discrimination and more, these opportunities have also strengthened my problem-solving skills, increased my confidence in speaking to clients, and affirmed my desire to engage in public interest work. Thousands of Chicago citizens are without legal representation or advice, and it makes a huge difference to provide resources and a helping hand to so many people!

Update 3:

This summer has been flying by, and I only have a few weeks left at Legal Aid Chicago. I have been writing letters to courts to advocate for people in the community, and I have been working one on one with clients to determine how Legal Aid Chicago can help them. Through my research, I have learned about different opportunities for those in long-term care, how to enforce injunctions against nursing facilities, and various healthcare and legal documents for people to use.

For the rest of the summer, I am excited to continue enhancing my legal research and writing skills. Writing for judges and sitting in on court proceedings has been an eye-opening experience. Long-term care is not a field that I knew a lot about, but with each week at Legal Aid, I am truly understanding what it means to be an advocate for vulnerable populations.

Update 4:

My internship experience at Legal Aid Chicago is coming to a close! Over the past few weeks, I have worked closely with clients to ensure their rights in long term care facilities. I have helped prepare for hearings and litigation with Administrative Law Justice on behalf of our clients! My favorite part so far has been the Legal Aid Clinics that Legal Aid Chicago sponsors in low income and marginalized communities. These clinics have given me the opportunity to work with clients across a variety of practice areas and give advice with the assistance of attorneys. I look forward to the remaining few weeks of my job!

Update 5:

My internship at Legal Aid Chicago is ending soon. I am so proud of the work that I have done helping vulnerable populations in Long-Term Care Facilities. Engaging directly with underrepresented neighborhoods in Chicago not only enhanced my understanding of various legal fields such as property law, tax law, and employment discrimination, but it also allowed me to develop essential skills in problem-solving and client communication. My commitment to public interest work has grown, especially considering the significant number of individuals in Chicago who lack access to legal representation.



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Providing resources and support to these communities can have a profound impact on their lives. Being a public interest attorney is a vital role within the legal profession, as it focuses on serving the needs of the community and advocating for social justice. Legal Aid Chicago taught me that attorneys can do so much more than work for non-profit organizations, government agencies, or legal aid societies. Our primary goal may be to represent individuals and groups who may not have the financial means to secure legal representation, but it is also about connecting our community and environment to make it a better place. This work is crucial in ensuring that the legal system is accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic status.

The importance of Legal Aid and similar pro bono organizations extends beyond individual cases; they play a significant role in shaping public policy and addressing systemic issues. By taking on cases that highlight injustices, these attorneys can bring attention to broader societal problems, such as discrimination, environmental degradation, and inadequate access to healthcare. Our efforts can lead to meaningful changes in laws and regulations, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.

I truly loved working collaboratively with community organizations and advocacy groups, amplifying the voices of marginalized populations. These collaborative arenas allowed me to foster a more equitable legal landscape and empower individuals to assert their rights. In a world where legal representation can be a privilege, our Legal Aid attorneys are essential in bridging the gap, ensuring that justice is not just a concept but a reality for everyone. Their commitment to serving the public good exemplifies the ethical responsibilities of the legal profession and underscores the importance of advocacy in achieving social change.