



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## SUMMER 2024

## EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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**Update 1:** I am thrilled to announce that I am working as a legal intern with the ACLU SoCal Jails Project team!

In just three weeks, I have had the opportunity to make a public comment at the Board of Supervisors meeting regarding the establishment of a care-first pre-trial agency and have actively contributed to the campaign to shut down Men's Central Jail. Every day, we file grievances addressing the appalling conditions in LA County jails, advocating for the incarcerated population to receive a basic standard of care.

I am deeply grateful for the financial and professional support provided by Equal Justice America! I have met many incredible people and am excited to see where this opportunity will take me this summer.



**Update 2:** Since my last update, I have continued to work on improving the conditions within LA County jails with ACLU SoCal. Currently, I am researching the Sybil Brand Commission for Institutional Inspections. Their role involves conducting regular evaluations of county jails and collaborating with authorities responsible for enforcing state and county standards. My focus



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lies in examining the LA County Sheriff's Department's (LASD) responses to the commission's assessments and recommendations and evaluating whether their decisions align with the commission's findings. It has been interesting to see if and how LASD addresses the problems within these facilities. I look forward to looking further into the significant contributions that SBC does for our county!

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**Update 3:** During these past 2 weeks at ACLU SoCal, we have focused on gathering information for the Rosas v. Sheriff Luna class action lawsuit. In 2015, the ACLU reached an agreement with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, requiring them to adopt a plan to reform their use of force policies. The ACLU is now seeking modification of the implementation plan because the LASD has failed to follow key aspects of the agreement. This past week, I began reviewing force packages, which includes watching surveillance videos from inside county jails that show potential use of force incidents by deputies against incarcerated individuals. We look for any actions that violate the agreement, such as strikes to the head, face, or neck. We have also been interviewing people who have filed Rosas grievances. Going inside the facilities, sitting with people, and hearing their stories has been an invaluable experience. It is frustrating and upsetting to hear incarcerated individuals recount their experiences with use of force incidents. Yet, I am hopeful that the modifications will be implemented and will force a cultural shift within the LASD, reducing the amount of force used and disciplining employees for their violations.

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**Update 4:** As my time at ACLU SoCal comes to an end, all I can say is how grateful I am for this experience! I have met so many incredible attorneys and advocates. Thank you, Melissa Camacho, and Berklee Donovan for trusting me to take on important projects! I'm excited to apply the knowledge I gained, especially in how well they both interacted with incarcerated individuals and clients, in the juvenile justice clinic this fall. I look forward to using the other skills and knowledge I obtained from this internship in the future. 😊