



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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ORGANIZATION	Texas RioGrande Legal Aid

Update 1: As I head into my fourth week of working with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA), I want to take this time to reflect on my experience thus far. I am deeply grateful to St. Mary's University School of Law and Equal Justice America for providing me with summer funding, enabling me to dedicate my efforts to serve those who might otherwise go without legal services.

During my time at TRLA, I have had the opportunity to work on a variety of projects across the Home Foreclosure Prevention and Wills and Estates Teams. From drafting my first request for discovery to speaking about how our team will strive to keep them in their homes, each experience serves as a powerful reminder of the impact we can have.

While it is always exciting to join my colleagues, I have found particular satisfaction in writing advice letters to clients we are unable to serve directly. Though we cannot assist every individual who seeks our help, ensuring they have options to pursue justice is crucial.

I am immensely thankful for the opportunity to make a difference in my community this summer.

Update 2: I am now six weeks into my clerkship at TRLA. Since my last update, I have had the unique privilege of seeing my completed discoveries filed in court for our clients. Witnessing my work being submitted to the court has reinforced my commitment to assisting those most in need at TRLA.

I want to express my gratitude to my supervising attorney for entrusting me with more responsibilities as I become more familiar with my role at TRLA. Recently, I have had the opportunity to take on several new cases, allowing me to examine the facts and discuss the clients' needs to identify the legal issues. This experience, along with numerous drafting opportunities, is exactly what I hoped to gain from this fellowship—the chance to act as a true



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attorney would.

I would not be able to pursue this opportunity without the support of Equal Justice America and St. Mary's University School of Law, who have helped fund my experience.

Update 3: After taking a refreshing break during the July 4th week, I hit the ground running this week to prepare for upcoming trials. Today, my supervising attorney and I spent the morning at the Bexar County Courthouse speaking with opposing counsel. After reviewing our current standstill on the case, we were able to agree on a next step, which both parties signed off on.

I am grateful for the opportunity to observe how courtroom conversations can lead to agreements without the need for arguing in front of a judge. Opposing counsel even took the time to emphasize how crucial such discussions are for achieving results. While we might be eager to come into the courtroom ready to fight, it's equally important to engage in civil conversations with opposing counsel to achieve the best outcome for our client.

I am thrilled to announce that I will be staying with TRLA through the Fall semester, working with the Wills and Estates Team. I am eager to continue serving my community and expanding my knowledge.

Update 4: Week 9 at TRLA, and what an eventful week it was. This week was filled with many great moments of observing what it is like to be an attorney. I began the week by attending client preparations with my supervising attorney for a Motion for a Temporary Injunction hearing yesterday. It was fascinating to see how the attorneys strategized and tried to anticipate the opposing side's arguments. Once we got to court, it was even more intriguing to see how the court can sometimes throw us curveballs: the evidence we planned on may not be admitted, or arguments we did not anticipate are presented. It was incredible to watch the attorneys pivot and adjust their arguments to respond and rebut opposing counsel. I could not have asked for a better experience.

Outside the courtroom, I also completed my first Motion for Summary Judgment and my first settlement agreement. These are assignments I have drafted during class at St. Mary's University School of Law, and it is fascinating to see the skills I have learned reflected in the work I am now doing for real-world clients.

As a first-generation law student with limited experience in the legal field, I am very grateful for the chance to gain experience in both litigation and transactional work.

Update 5: As I reflect on my journey at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA), I'm filled with immense gratitude for the opportunities that have come my way. From the start, my experience at TRLA has been both challenging and rewarding. I had never fully understood the true work of an attorney until now. Having the opportunity to not only take on the role of a lawyer but also to help resolve real people's problems has profoundly influenced the kind of attorney I aspire to be. From drafting my first request for discovery, motion for summary judgment, and settlement agreement to seeing these documents used in actual litigation and case resolutions, this



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experience has been incredibly eye-opening.

In the final weeks of my summer fellowship with TRLA, I had the chance to see the resolution of several cases I worked on throughout the summer. First, my supervising attorneys successfully argued against a temporary injunction filed against our client. We also secured a settlement in another case. Finally, I had the opportunity to speak with several clients I assisted and provide them with the best advice as we closed out their cases. I'm grateful to my team for allowing me to connect with our clients and witness the impact of our work firsthand.

I am deeply grateful to Kelly Hogue, Molly Rogers, Christina Trejo, and the entire Foreclosure Prevention and Colonias teams for welcoming me with open arms and teaching me invaluable skills. Your trust and support have had a lasting impact on my growth and confidence.

I am excited to continue my journey with TRLA this semester, working with the Wills and Estates Team. I look forward to deepening my knowledge and continuing to make a positive impact in my community. This experience has been truly transformative, and I cannot wait to see where it takes me next.

Before ending my final EJA Update, I wanted to express my gratitude to Equal Justice America and St. Mary's University School of Law for their financial support, which made this summer opportunity possible.