



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Update 1: As I start wrapping up my second week at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, I am amazed by the real-life experience I have gained in such little time. By having my own cases that I am responsible for, I am the most independent I have ever been with my legal work. It is especially exciting because I am working on family law cases that involve divorce, child custody, and family defense; many of which I have limited experience with. So far, this internship has confirmed my passion for helping others, particularly within family law. While it has been nerve-wracking to be in a place where you feel like a true attorney, there is truly no better way to learn. I cannot wait to see how confident I become in my work by the end of the summer. All of this experiential learning would not be possible without the guidance of my supervisors at Harvard Legal Aid Bureau and without the support of Equal Justice America.

Update 2:

I cannot believe that it is time for my second EJA Fellow update! As I had hoped, I have gotten much more comfortable in my role as a student attorney. Yesterday I had the opportunity to argue a motion on the record for the first time! While I was incredibly nervous leading up to the hearing, I am very proud of my preparation, composure and advocacy. I was concerned that my anxiety and nervousness meant that I am not cut out to be in the legal field. However, I have come to realize that I am nervous because I am passionate about my work and my clients. These feelings do not make me any less qualified to become an attorney. I am exactly where I am meant to be.

Big thank you to my mentors at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau and to Equal Justice America.

Update 3: How is it already time for my third EJA Fellow update?!



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Normally, I would only post about my academic accomplishments or internship experiences, however it would be disingenuous to ignore the personal battles that I have experienced this summer. While trying to put 100% into my work at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, and working a part-time job on the weekends, I have also experienced a myriad of health issues.

In the tail end of my Ireland study abroad program I suffered a multi-ligament knee injury, which requires surgery to repair. I found out the results of my MRI during my first week at HLAB and my supervisors were extraordinary in how they handled the various doctor's appointments that have followed. As a result of the hot weather and wearing a knee brace, I have been battling a persistent rash that turned into a bacterial infection and resulted in needing a biopsy and receiving stitches.

With all of that being said, I received this anonymous shout out at my internship which really brightened my day. I cannot say that there haven't been times where I am so frustrated and defeated that I could cry, but this summer has truly shown me how resilient I am. If I can juggle all of this with positivity and a smile, I think that I can do anything!

As always, big thank you to Equal Justice America for helping ease financial stress while working an unpaid internship this summer.

Update 4: Time for my fourth EJA Fellow update!

I cannot believe that I am in my last two weeks of my internship! I will be closing out this summer with a bang, as I have two Fair Hearings during my last week at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau. It has been amazing to work with my co-counsels and my clients to make the best case that we can. While the preparations are stressful and it is difficult getting two cases prepared at the same time, I am thankful for the extensive trial advocacy experience that I am gaining.

It is bittersweet to see my internship coming to a close, as I look forward to starting my last year of law school at Suffolk University Law School but am sad to leave this work behind. I have learned so much in such a short amount of time, and this experience has helped me become a more capable and confident legal professional.

Update 5: Throughout this summer I have been trying to find my "professional identity." On my first day at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, my supervisor reminded me that this summer was the time to find out who I am professionally and how I want to present in professional settings. She reminded me that the best "professional identity" is one that is genuinely you. This could look different for everyone but it can be difficult to find.



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One of the compliments that I received this summer is that I had a very calming presence while interacting with my colleagues and my clients. This was a big motivator for me because I always strive to be a person who makes others feel comfortable and understood. I went into law with the intention of helping others and being a helping hand for underrepresented communities. Taking these attributes that I already knew that I had, and applying them in a professional setting, allowed me to better understand what I wanted my "Professional Identity" to be.

Having this be my final EJA Fellow update shocks me that the summer has flown by so fast. No words could express how grateful I am to have worked with my supervisors and fellow HLABers. I have gained amazing experience, skills, friends, and mentors. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors!

Finally, please donate to Equal Justice America. Without their help this internship would likely not have been possible. It is with their support that I was able to help so people through legal aid work at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau.