



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## SUMMER 2024

### EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	University of Chicago Global Human Rights Clinic

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#### **Update 1:**

A week ago, I started working at the University of Chicago Law School's Global Human Rights Clinic. I am fortunate to be working on three different human rights projects this summer, leading two of them and contributing to the third – I also expect there to be smaller projects and opportunities to collaborate with the Law School's immigration clinic and more! This first week I have been working on familiarizing myself with the existing body of international law, the multiple jurisdictions that are available to litigants, and more. Additionally, I have been responsible with closely researching the two human right's projects I am taking point on. Alongside another law student, we have the opportunity to work with three undergraduates at the university, we met them during the second week of the clinic, and I am excited for the collaborative environment. Most excitingly, last week I had the pleasure of meeting the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Mr. Morris Tidball-Binz, to speak on his latest mandate to Ukraine. We also discussed one of our future projects with him and sought his guidance and support on the direction and scope of the work we will be doing alongside him this summer. In the next two weeks I expect to finish the background work and begin the actual legal work, which I am very excited for!

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#### **Update 2:**

These past two weeks working at the University of Chicago Global Human Rights Clinic have been utterly inspiring. During my first update, I focused on how much time I had to dedicate to learning the body of international law. Having now learned the basics (it would take years to learn everything!), we have been comfortable moving forward. The main project I have been focused on is working on interviewing professionals in a particular field about human rights violations against children (I am avoiding specifics to protect the project and their identities). Conducting these interviews alongside professionals in another discipline is very interesting, we



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feed off of each others knowledge to extract all the necessary information. It is a very difficult conversation to have, and I admire so much the people that have chosen to speak with us. Every time I think that it is too difficult, though, I think about the end product, the litigation we plan to contribute to and the toil becomes easier. Even without the end product, this work is essential – to record human rights violations into the historical record itself is a crucial part of our civic duty. On the second project, helping write a report on global police brutality, the work has been quite interesting – it is a novel task to view the US as just one of many countries we focus on and trying to find an angle to approach the subject from that is generalized and new to the field. We have been exploring the existing research currently and are hoping to make way in the following weeks on the direction we want to go in throughout the next year.

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### **Update 3:**

These past two weeks have really picked up in work at the University of Chicago Global Human Rights Clinic! We just finished working on transcribing the interviews with certain professionals reporting potential war crimes and are now collaborating with another University to create a report that will hopefully aid in litigation efforts to challenge the alleged crimes. At the same time, we have been working on doing open-source data collection to see not just what professionals have experienced, but citizens themselves. Picking up this skill is so important to public interest law as it is a great way to highlight the voices of people themselves experiencing tragedy. I recently had to begin a memo that also explores the entire body of international law's protections for a certain demographic. This is a large project because it has required me to take the legal writing skills I picked up as a 1L and apply them to a real-world subject that has a tangible use. I am excited for the responsibility, and excited for the last two weeks of the job.

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### **Update 4:**

These past two weeks at the UChicago Global Human Rights Clinic have been the busiest and most thrilling so far. Our team, alongside the University of Toronto have been hard at work meeting to coordinate the start of our brief we plan to submit as part of international litigation. At the same time, my team and I have also been continuing to conduct interviews with professionals globally and transcribing them to create affidavits. Our work is being combined with our teams open source data research and studies to draft a brief that sums up the violations of both international humanitarian law and international criminal law. My work on the brief looking into potential provisions of IHL and ICL that may be violated has proved crucial as it will take up its own section in the brief. This project has taken priority over the other two, however, I also had the opportunity to finish a smaller project looking into international jurisprudence on protections based on sexual identity for another individual. All in all, I am excited for the brief to come together, and hopefully continue during the school year after this internship!



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## **Update 5:**

As my time at the University of Chicago Global Human Rights Clinic comes to an end, I am incredibly grateful for the work I got to do here. In the final weeks, my team and I worked diligently to complete a working draft of a complaint to be filed in international courts on our project. The work was quite intensive; it involved combining our interviews we had done over the past months alongside the open-source research that we had shared with the University of Toronto clinic as well. Working alongside a team – a team from another country – was very informative. We learned a lot from one another these past few weeks and it was interesting sharing professional responsibilities within our group but also with a separate organization. Our research on the United Nations report for last year also has been coming along, I learned so much about the interesting way we can frame domestic issues at the international level, decentralizing the United States from my legal focus. During my first year of law school, I did not learn how to do international legal research; having to learn to do so – not just for academic purposes but for actual work with real impact – posed a tremendous opportunity to learn quickly and test my resourcefulness. I am very grateful to the sense of responsibility I gained during this summer work. Coming in, I did not really know how much of an impact an international lawyer could have, especially when the law does not favor civil rights. But the very process of doing, trying, and listening proved time and time again to mean so much to so many people. Not only does it help those we represent, but it is critical for historical documentation processes. Moving forward professionally, I learned a lot about working in a legal team, doing legal work, but also thinking analytically about unique legal issues. When reviewing our work as the internship ended, it was striking how innovative my team had to be to overcome legal hurdles that the current state of international law poses. Coming up with clever legal arguments is a critical skill, I hope to use them for a long time to come in my career.