



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

SUMMER 2024

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Sanye Sichinga
LAW SCHOOL	University of Chicago Law School
ORGANIZATION	Mandel Legal Aid Clinic

Update 1: As many of you may know, I have just finished my first year at the University of Chicago Law School and I am currently interning at the Civil Rights & Police Accountability Project! I am getting to work on projects that I know will positively impact my community in ways that will last far beyond me and my time in this clinic. I am also elated to say that my time in this clinic is being supported by Equal Justice America, as I am a 2024 Equal Justice America Fellow! EJA is a non-profit that supports people by supporting law students just like me and lawyers in programs that provide services to the community such as pro bono legal assistance! Thank you to EJA for making opportunities such as this more attainable for myself and many other law students alike!

Update 2: 80% of those living in poverty who require civil legal services don't have access to it, but there are organizations like Equal Justice America who are working to change that! This summer I am working in the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic, supported by EJA, to provide legal services to people whose civil rights have been violated by police.

Update 3: The past few weeks at the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic, I have seen firsthand the power of people coming together to support everyone having equitable access to legal representation. I would love to invite my community to do the same, by partnering with Equal Justice America. It cannot be understated the importance of representation and the work of organizations like EJA.

Update 4: I am wrapping up my time at the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic, and I have had the opportunity to research various Public Defender offices around the country. Seeing how different states structure, support, and oversee indigent defense reminds me of how important it is to have legal representation! Public Defender offices nationwide do not have the resources they need, so raising awareness around this is important! Organizations like Equal Justice



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

America agree and support students like me who are passionate about everyone having the legal representation they need!

Update 5: My summer has come to a close and I have completed my time with the Civil Rights and Police Accountability Project at the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic at the University of Chicago Law School.

Working at the clinic this summer was incredibly formative for me, both professionally and personally. Professionally, I got to see the incredible work that so many people engage in on a daily basis. I was able to see what it actually looks like to be a lawyer, collaborate with others, engage with stakeholders, and so much more. I met amazing attorney's and was exposed to so much in such a short period of time. Further, I was trusted to contribute to the team in a way that built both my skills and confidence, and I am going to take that with me as I step into the next stage in my career. I also had the opportunity to engage with members of the community and understand more of the nuances of advocacy, understanding that there is so much work done behind the scenes to get the change we need, desire, and are championing for.

On a more personal note, I have always said that I wanted a career where I can have a tangible impact on people's lives, and this was one of the most valuable parts of my experience this summer. The chance to work directly on projects that I see and understand how someone will benefit from the end goal. Whether it was researching case law, drafting memos, or attending meetings to represent various stakeholders, each task provided me with a more in depth understanding of why we do what we do. I saw firsthand how attention to detail and thorough preparation can influence conversations and outcomes, and I gained a profound appreciation for the role that practice, persistence, and zealous advocacy play in achieving justice for everyone.

I want to thank everyone who has supported my ability to engage in such important and impactful work this summer: my school, the clinic, my clinical Professor, and fellow students in the clinics. Also, thank you to Equal Justice America for championing such experiences for myself and other fellows!