



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

SUMMER 2024

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

NAME	Keenen McMurray
LAW SCHOOL	University of Michigan Law School
ORGANIZATION	NAACP Legal Defense Fund

Update 1: This is my first EJA Update! It's a shock to realize that I'm already nearing the mid-point of my litigation internship at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund! During my first few weeks I've been working on cases in LDF's Economic and Criminal Justice impact areas. Particularly, I have had the honor of working on issues surrounding housing discrimination. As we all know, a person's access to housing can alter their life outcomes. Being able to contribute to a project that will work to help those most in need secure adequate housing is not only a source of professional pride, but also a source of personal pride as someone who has experienced housing insecurity.

I am so thankful for the support of Equal Justice America this summer. Please consider donating to their fund to help public interest attorneys and law students continue this vital work.

Update 2: This is my second EJA Update for the summer. For the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to do legal research and analysis in support of litigation seeking to protect the First Amendment rights of activists working to stop wealth-based pre-trial detention. It is a massive privilege to be able to do work that I find to be both intellectually stimulating, and vitally important. I chose the path of impact litigation because I wanted to affect change for low-income people at the structural level. And thanks to Equal Justice America, I have been able to pursue that dream while at LDF.

Update 3: It's time for my third EJA Update. It's very hard to believe that there are only two weeks left in my summer litigation internship with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Recently I have started working on a project that has allowed me to dig into the intricacies of Section 208 of the Voting Rights Act. Section 208 ensures that voters with disabilities and voters who are unable to read or write can receive assistance from a person of their choice when seeking to exercise their right to vote. States across the country have passed laws that burden this precious



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

right, and there is no doubt that the weight of these laws fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable people in our country. I'm proud to contribute to LDF's work challenging these harmful laws!

Update 4: This is my fourth EJA Update. Last week I wrapped up my time as a litigation intern with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in Washington D.C. During my time at LDF, I was able to work on issues ranging from the First Amendment rights of charitable bail organizations to the right to freedom from source of income discrimination under the Fair Housing Act. One of my primary motivations for choosing a career in the law was the ability that I would have to affect positive change for people living in poverty. And thanks to the help of Equal Justice America, I have been able to meaningfully contribute to LDF's economic and criminal justice work this summer. This was a summer that I will never forget, and I want to thank all of the wonderful attorneys and co-interns that I had the pleasure of working with for these past ten weeks.

Update 5: This is my fifth and final EJA Update. As you all know, I had the tremendous opportunity to intern this summer at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. It was an honor to help push forward LDF's mission of securing equal justice for Black people throughout the country. During my time at LDF, I worked on issues ranging from the First Amendment rights of charitable bail funds to the right to be free from housing discrimination under the Fair Housing Act. I was mainly responsible for drafting research memos exploring the legal claims available in various cases. Further, I helped to develop the factual record in cases by combing through the legislative history and other sources. During this summer I grew tremendously as a legal writer and researcher, which are vital skills for an aspiring civil rights litigator. My supervising attorneys at LDF empowered me to take the lead on various assignments and encouraged me to be a thought partner capable of contributing meaningfully to pending litigation.

Beyond this substantive legal experience, I had the opportunity to participate in strategy sessions with tirelessly committed impact litigators. I was able to see what it takes to build a high stakes case at the earliest stages of litigation and walked away with a greater appreciation for the time and care that it takes it even bring a case in the first place. Further, my time at LDF helped me realize that there is a robust community of public interest litigators who are generous with their time, and who want to leave the field a better place than they found it by supporting the next generation. I can truly say that I formed relationships with mentors that will continue long past this summer.

In short, interning with the LDF this summer was a dream come true. I want to thank the University of Michigan Law School and Equal Justice America for helping to make this opportunity possible. If you can, help to support the next generation of public interest lawyers and please consider donating to Equal Justice America.