



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## SUMMER 2024

### EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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**Update 1:** It has been 1 week since I started my internship and I'm really enjoying the work so far! I'm happy that I'm getting to use the skills and knowledge I've gained in my first year of law school, particularly material that I learned last semester in Evidence, for one of my projects. Everyone at the office has been super nice and helpful and I'm looking forward to working with them on these important projects throughout the summer.

My first couple days were spent being trained on housing and employment. I hadn't thought about housing law much, even though it seems like everyone I know has a nightmare landlord story. The housing training was very informative, and I feel like I learned a lot in a very short period of time. While it's not necessarily something I think I'll pursue long term, I appreciated the chance to expand my knowledge of substantive law and learn about some ongoing cases. In particular, there is one big case going on right now involving some pretty horrific living conditions. I'm grateful for the opportunity to pitch in on a case that will have a major impact on people's lives.

**Update 2:** I have been here for almost a month, and I've done a lot of different tasks in that time. Most recently we've been working on a big discovery-related project, which took a little bit of time to learn how to do but now that I've gotten the hang of it it's kind of tedious. Regardless, I'm happy to be learning new skills and it's interesting to see more of the behind-the-scenes parts of the litigation process. We've been collaborating with another legal aid organization on this project which has significantly reduced the workload. It was nice to meet the people at the other organization and it was reassuring to connect with other people working towards the same goals.

The most impactful thing I've done in the last few weeks is go on a site visit to meet with some of the people we represent. This helped me get a sense for the impact we are having on people's lives and reaffirmed how important this work is. I also went to a talk my supervisor gave at a conference for other professionals in the worker advocacy space. It was interesting to hear



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

about the challenges that are faced in this area, and while some might find the current landscape disheartening, I am trying to think of all the work there is to be done as inspiring.

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**Update 3:** I've been working on some different projects as the cases I started working on wrap up. One of the cases I was involved with ended up settling so that was good. It was exciting to see the client receive at least some of what they deserved after going through such a stressful experience. I have also been learning more about the actual mechanisms involved at every stage of litigating a case, from the initial intake to settlement or going to trial. This has been helpful because I think some of what I'm learning would be difficult or even impossible to teach in a classroom setting.

I had to go out of town for a few days and I've really appreciated my organization's flexibility allowing me to work remotely. I know some employers are requiring that employees work in the office 5 days a week, so I understand what a blessing it is to be able to tend to the other aspects of my life outside work. I hope I am able to work for an organization with similar flexibility and the same level of understanding that employees have lives outside of work after graduation.

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**Update 4:** This week I wrapped up the big research project I've been working on throughout the summer. It was very rewarding to have a finished product to turn in to my supervisor and I'm very grateful for the opportunity to work on an active matter and contribute to the great work that my host organization is doing. I also did an intake this week that went pretty well. It was nice to have a chance to connect and talk face to face with someone from the community we serve.

We received some documents this week from opposing counsel on a case I've spent a lot of the summer working on. I'm excited to read through those next week and hopefully gain some additional experience drafting a response. It's exciting to see some movement on this case. This summer I think I've really gotten a sense for how slowly litigation can move.

I'm excited for the summer to wrap up and get back to school. Now that I have some practical experience, I'm curious to see how that impacts my experience in class. Overall, this has been a great learning experience and I'm so happy I got to spend the summer in this office with such nice and helpful people to learn from.

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**Update 5:** My summer at the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation has been such a great opportunity to learn and connect with others in the public interest space. As I look back on my summer, what stands out to me most are the connections I've made and the work we've done to improve the lives of underserved community members. This summer, I had the opportunity to work on a larger housing case, a wage and hour case, and two big research projects, in addition to helping out with discovery and conducting intakes. There was a great blend of learning and doing and I would highly recommend this organization to other law students as a place to spend a summer.



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

My favorite thing that I did this summer was work on a research project involving an evidentiary issue. While the case ended up settling, it was a great opportunity to use the information I'd gained from my evidence class and work on my writing skills. My other research project involved a discovery issue, and I received very helpful feedback from my supervisor after turning it in. I found that I really enjoyed honing my research and writing skills this summer and my experience at CRLAF confirmed that I am interested in pursuing a career in litigation, where I will be able to continue developing these skills.

I really appreciated how connected my host organization was with the community we serve. The other summer intern and I had the opportunity to see some of the labor camps where the people we serve live. This was a good experience because it helped us both understand more about the situations of the people we were working with. I think it speaks highly of the work that CRLAF does that they are so trusted and well respected in the community.

Moving forward, I hope to continue working in employment law. This summer there were a lot of changes to PAGA, which was interesting to hear about from people in the office. I am curious to see what happens in the future regarding this legislation and excited to continue making connections in this field.