



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

SUMMER 2024

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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| LAW SCHOOL | UC Davis School of Law |
| ORGANIZATION | ACLU of Southern California |

Update 1: I am incredibly grateful to be receiving a fellowship from Equal Justice America to support my summer work with ACLU SoCal on their Economic Justice project. The Economic Justice project is dedicated to advocating and ensuring fundamental rights and resources for those most economically vulnerable in California. As part of my fellowship, I will be sharing periodic updates of my work throughout the summer.

These past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to work alongside a passionate team of lawyers and policy advocates on litigation and advocacy efforts to ensure the fundamental rights of unhoused individuals in Southern California. I have also been working on budget justice and advocacy efforts in the Inland Empire. This week, I attended the Riverside County Board of Supervisors' Meeting alongside community organizations to advocate for a fair and transparent fiscal budget that prioritizes housing initiatives and those underrepresented in the County. These efforts have taught me the importance and difference collective advocacy can make, and I am looking forward to building on this work in the upcoming weeks.

Update 2: As a part of my fellowship from Equal Justice America, I am excited to share the second update of my work with ACLU SoCal this summer.

These past few weeks, I have been learning more about the integrated advocacy approach, discovering how litigation, legislation, and organizing can be used together to drive meaningful change. With that, my budget advocacy work in Riverside County has continued, and we have partnered with local organizations to advocate for a fair budget and budget process. I have enjoyed working alongside passionate and empowered community members during this time.

I have also been assisting in litigation efforts to protect the rights of unhoused individuals and combat the criminalization of homelessness throughout Southern California. As the decision for *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson* is announced, legal challenges such as these are critical in the fight for protecting the rights of our unhoused neighbors.



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I have learned a tremendous amount about advocacy and litigation in the last six weeks, and I look forward to the rest of my internship.

Update 3: Here is update #3 of my work with ACLU SoCal this summer!

In recent weeks, I have been busy with legal research projects for our ongoing litigation efforts to protect the rights of those experiencing homelessness. I have also been collaborating with the Police Practices team to assist with research on their cases. While I am not able to share many details, I have been learning a great deal about the litigation process and it has been wonderful to work alongside a passionate and knowledgeable team.

I have also been attending meetings to discuss the best path forward after the Supreme Court's decision in *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson*, which held that it is not cruel and unusual punishment to arrest or ticket unhoused individuals for sleeping outside when there are no safe alternatives. While this decision is disheartening, it has been empowering to see the collective and ongoing efforts from organizations nationwide.

I am looking forward to the rest of my summer with ACLU SoCal.

Update 4: As a part of my fellowship from Equal Justice America, I am excited to share the fourth update of my work with ACLU SoCal!

The past two weeks, I have been busy wrapping up my legal research for litigation efforts and projects for the Police Practices Team. It has been exciting to gain experience in a new project area and to understand the work the Team does to ensure there is oversight of law enforcement to create transparency and accountability in our communities.

I also attended the ACLU SoCal Advocates for Justice Event last week, where we celebrated the remarkable efforts of our attorneys, policy advocates, and plaintiffs involved in our cases. This was an opportunity for me to meet our clients and witness how this litigation and the legal process has directly impacted them. It was humbling to see their courage and hear their stories, and it served as a great reminder of the importance of fighting against injustices and advocating for the rights of all members of our communities.

As my internship with ACLU SoCal comes to a close, I am deeply thankful for this opportunity, made possible with the support of Equal Justice America.

Update 5: I am excited to share my final update with Equal Justice America!

I am grateful to have received a fellowship from Equal Justice America to intern with ACLU SoCal's Economic Justice Project this summer. This opportunity allowed me to work alongside a team of passionate and dedicated lawyers and policy advocates to advocate for housing justice and champion the rights of unhoused community members in Southern California. Overall, this summer deepened my commitment to fight for housing as a human right for all.



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Among my projects, I had the chance to advocate for equitable and transparent county budgets, assist in litigation for a civil rights case aimed at safeguarding the rights of unhoused individuals with disabilities, and investigate potential misuse of police funds. While working on a variety of projects, I further developed my research and writing skills and gained experience in the integrated advocacy model, learning how litigation can be used alongside legislation and community organizing to implement change locally and on a broader scale. As I enter my last year of law school and begin my legal career, I will reflect on how these different approaches can be used to create social change.

Moreover, this summer reinforced the impact public interest work makes for those who would otherwise lack access to legal representation and resources. It is essential that we continue to advocate for the dignity of every community member to pursue equality. This experience has not only equipped me with valuable skills but has also reinforced my resolve to ensure that all individuals have access to justice.

Equal Justice America funds law students dedicated to public interest work and makes it possible for students like me to work in legal aid and civil rights work. If you would like to support future EJA fellows, please donate.