



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Grayson Rost
LAW SCHOOL	UCLA School of Law
ORGANIZATION	ACLU of Southern California

Update 1: At ACLU SoCal, I have already had the opportunity to work on numerous interesting projects related to potential infringements on peoples' constitutionally protected civil liberties. I am working with the First Amendment and Democracy Project team, so these cases and projects relate to voting rights, free speech rights, right to protest, and so on. I have drafted a memorandum about permissible ballot measure language, done a deep dive on complicated procedural questions for an upcoming First Amendment lawsuit, and helped develop Know Your Rights materials to ultimately be published and/or distributed. In addition, I have helped process intakes by reviewing requests for legal advice or support, researching potential claims, and making internal recommendations about the best way to proceed. This has been an awesome opportunity to learn about different kinds of civil rights claims and about the process for figuring out how and when to bring litigation. I have also had exposure to other ACLU SoCal teams and their work and have been amazed by all of the work the entire organization is doing. Thank you to Equal Justice America for helping make this experience possible.

Update 2: In the past couple of weeks, I have continued working on interesting research projects and legal intakes for the First Amendment and Democracy Team. I helped one attorney by drafting a memorandum with legal research about a voting rights case currently before the California Superior Court. She passed my research along to the city attorney on the case, who ended up incorporating some of my research into the city's responsive brief. I have also had the chance to research interesting and complicated legal issues related to protests, both on high school and college campuses, and more generally. This included an analysis of the California Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 2015 and how this applies to protesters who have their electronic devices seized and/or searched. I also researched what constitutes censorship on the part of public officials and helped direct constituents to ACLU resources on this subject. Working at ACLU SoCal has provided me with the opportunity to contribute substantively to discourse – and potential litigation – relating to pertinent and timely legal issues.



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Update 3: These past few weeks, I have researched the viability of legal claims in order to help the team make decisions about whether to send demand letters or potentially bring litigation related to violations of individuals' civil rights. One legal intake led me to research the difference between the U.S. Constitution's Establishment Clause and the California Constitution's religious clauses and evaluate whether California goes further than the federal government in erecting a barrier between church and state. Another project has been determining whether state beaches, piers, and the adjacent walkways and structures are "public fora" where citizens have special speech protections under the First Amendment. It has been neat applying concepts we touched in my Constitutional Law and Property classes to real world scenarios, and I continue to learn so much from my team members about both the reach and limitations of constitutional protections under state and federal law.

Update 4: I have enjoyed continuing to work on existing projects and also taking on some new projects in the past couple of weeks. In particular, I helped draft a demand letter on behalf of an individual who was commissioned to become a notary public but objected to the language of the oath on religious grounds. This letter resulted in her being granted leave to add an addendum to the oath such that it was no longer in conflict with her religious beliefs. It was a great feeling knowing that my research helped achieve a positive outcome for a client, especially on such a quick turnaround. I also completed a several week-long research project on a city's noise ordinance and whether the areas it targeted were public fora for purposes of the First Amendment. As I wrap up my internship in the next week, I look forward to keeping in touch with my team and hearing about how the cases I have worked on continue to progress.

Update 5: As I wrapped up my internship a couple of weeks ago, I reflected on all that I learned this summer. This internship represented my first time interacting with clients and potential clients directly through the intakes system. This involved reaching out to clients for additional information to discern whether they have an actionable legal claim, meeting with them to determine their specific request and what outcome or outcomes would be acceptable to them and keeping them in the loop throughout the research and drafting process. Exposure to this sort of process was immensely insightful and I feel certain I will use the skills I learned moving forward in clinics, volunteer roles, and future employment opportunities.

In addition, I will bring the memorandum-writing skills I honed this summer with me into future academic and professional settings. I am particularly grateful to have had the chance to draft memoranda on topics that align with my interest area. Throughout the summer, I drafted research memoranda on the permissibility of ballot initiative language, the reach of the California Constitution's religious clauses compared to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, precedent for allowing public officers to add addenda to their oaths of office, and the public forum status of areas covered by a municipal noise ordinance, among other topics. Each of these presented complicated legal questions that required me to dig into the background and history of the issue. Some of these memoranda were used right away by my team or members of our broader coalition, while others may be used in future suits or inquiries. Getting to work on this research and receiving detailed and thoughtful feedback from my team on areas to expand upon or clarify my points and conclusions, was an incredible



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opportunity to apply the concepts I learned in Legal Research and Writing to real world issues. I really look forward to continuing to dive deeper into these issues as well as other First Amendment issues in future coursework and clinics, particularly as I prepare to take advanced Constitutional law courses this coming school year.

I was inspired by my team of attorneys' commitment to their work and to coming up with creative and effective legal solutions to the issues presented in the intakes, no matter how big or small. They collaborated with members of other teams to better cover their bases and make sure they were taking the approach with the highest chance of success. I am incredibly grateful for the chance to work with and learn from them this summer and thanks EJA for helping make this possible.