



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Emma Buchanan
LAW SCHOOL	American University Washington College of Law
ORGANIZATION	Legal Aid Chicago

Final Reflection:

This summer, I spent ten weeks with Legal Aid Chicago in the Trafficking Survivors' Assistance Program, part of the Immigrants and Workers' Rights Practice Group. Over those ten weeks, I developed my lawyering skills, built great relationships, and reinforced my commitment to public interest law yet again.

I conducted trauma-informed intakes with clients to assess whether they could be eligible for a T visa. I presented client stories to the trafficking team and made legal arguments regarding their eligibility for immigration relief. I worked directly with trafficking survivors to assemble T visa and adjustment of status packets. I compiled employment authorization applications for five members of a trafficking survivor's family. I drafted cover letters and declarations. I wrote memos on research I conducted and presented my research to the immigration team. I practiced my Spanish and attended an FBI interview. Outside of the immigration team, I participated in various trainings on topics like the effects of vicarious trauma, how to support clients facing housing instability, and news briefings on how new laws affect the organization's work. I was busy and so fulfilled.

It has been my goal to work in immigration law because I have immigrant family. I can only imagine how hard it was for them to move to the United States, and I am inspired by their vision and bravery. Working with clients and staff at Legal Aid Chicago constantly reminded me why I want to be an immigration attorney – because immigrants deserve to have their rights respected, no matter their ability to pay.

I am incredibly grateful to the amazing team I worked with this summer for their constant support. I learned so much from watching how they worked – with care, commitment, and



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accuracy. I am returning to my third and final year of law school inspired to become the best attorney I can be.

Thank you so much to Equal Justice America, American University Washington College of Law, and the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) for funding my work this summer! Your support is critical for law students in public interest jobs.