



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Final Reflection:

I can't believe my legal internship on the Immigrants' Rights team at TakeRoot Justice has come to an end! I am grateful to TakeRoot for the kind mentorship provided to me this summer, and to Equal Justice America for supporting my work.

During my last few weeks, I completed annotated indexes with country conditions research on Haiti and Egypt. In Spanish, I interviewed a client's family member and drafted her statement into a sworn affidavit. I wrapped up my in-office tasks, made sure that ongoing matters were in a good stopping place, and reflected on the summer over a delicious lunch at Al Badawi with coworkers.

Most importantly, I was able to take stock of my ten-week experience and the astonishing amount that I learned and grew in such a short time. It's hard to believe that in just one summer, I met with community organizers, attended legal clinics, and drafted legal briefs. I attended court, and I built meaningful relationships with clients and coworkers. Most of all, I glimpsed the important, difficult work that is representing clients and working toward systemic change in a political moment and structure that is so hostile to immigrants. I saw the horrible impacts of the Trump administration's new policies – less protections for immigrants, more detention and family separation. I watched the attorneys at TakeRoot respond in real-time, pooling knowledge and employing creative techniques to provide the best possible representation to their clients. At the same time, the attorneys remained committed to big-picture organizing and empowering immigrant communities of color. As someone who believes deeply in the need to aim public interest work at both short-term and long-term outcomes, it was reaffirming to me to see the ways that TakeRoot embodies that philosophy.



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Since my background is in anti-carcer work, I entered this summer eager to participate directly in immigration law. I know the prison and immigration systems are intertwined, and I felt I had more experience working with people who have been incarcerated, so I wanted to deepen my experiences with immigration law. Now, I've started to bridge that gap and feel I have a concrete understanding of immigration lawyering in New York City (at one amazing organization at one particular political time, of course). The internship affirmed my desire to pursue immigration law, and I'm excited to continue exploring at the University of California, Berkeley - School of Law what that will look like in my future. I remain committed to challenging the criminalization of immigration and to building a world in which people have both the right to stay and the right to migrate.

Again, a huge thank you to TakeRoot Justice and EJA for facilitating such a meaningful summer. I can only hope to have contributed to the movement at least a fraction of what I gained out of the experience.