



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

**Summer 2025**

## EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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### Final Reflection:

This summer, I had the privilege of serving as an Equal Justice America Fellow with Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A (now called Build Up Justice NYC) in the Preserving Affordable Housing unit. My work placed me at the intersection of law and lived experience, where the consequences of legal determinations are felt most severely by low-income tenants at risk of losing their homes.

One of the most meaningful aspects of my fellowship was the opportunity to conduct client intakes. Meeting with individuals and families navigating the threat of eviction grounded my legal work in real human stories. I witnessed firsthand how the eviction process, though often reduced to court dates and filings on paper, is violent and traumatic in practice. Listening to clients describe their struggles reminded me of how housing instability destabilizes entire families and communities. These conversations emphasized that the law does not just consist of abstract concepts; it is lived and deeply personal.

I also had the chance to shadow attorneys in housing court and contribute directly to casework. My hands trembled as I drafted a stipulation for a client in front of opposing counsel. It was a stark reminder that, in this line of work, a single document can make a tangible difference in protecting someone's home. Among my most significant projects was drafting a motion to dismiss for a tenant who had been wrongfully accused of nonpayment. Crafting legal arguments to counteract an unjust claim not only sharpened my writing and research skills but also illuminated the power of advocacy to correct misinformation and protect rights. I also worked extensively on an Article 78 petition, which was a last-resort effort to prevent a client from being evicted based on a New York City Housing Authority determination. The intensity of that project once again reminded me of the stakes of housing law: every word and every procedural choice could mean the difference between shelter and displacement.



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The impact of this work is not just measured by legal victories but also by the reassurance clients feel when they know someone is standing beside them. Even in cases that faced steep challenges, my presence allowed clients to feel they weren't fighting alone. I remember having a particularly long conversation with a client who was being regularly harassed by a landlord. Just listening to, and affirming, him gave him a shred of hope in a bleak situation. At the end of our meeting, I held his hand as he wept. And as he left my office, he thanked me profusely for simply being a source of sanctuary. This work is not just about black letter law. It is not about making a large check and living a lavish life. It is about serving people who desperately need their voices to be heard.

Personally, and professionally, the EJA Fellowship has been transformative. I have long been motivated by a commitment to social justice, but this summer reaffirmed for me that public interest law is not only where I want to be; it is where I am needed most. The fellowship reminded me that my work is valuable, not only in the abstract sense of theory or classroom discussion, but in the concrete lives of tenants who face systemic inequities and exploitation. This experience deepened my commitment to pursuing a career in public interest law. Our most vulnerable populations are often those least equipped to navigate the legal system, and it is our duty, as advocates, to stand with them.