



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Final Reflection:

This summer taught me so much about the obstacles that we in the legal profession face in our fight for justice. When I first started working at Resilience Force, we had a case that looked like it would result in a criminal prosecution, something which does not typically happen with the type of case we were handling. As the summer progressed, things changed, and we had to shift to another form of litigation if we wanted to get justice for the clients. I also helped handle cases that had been going on for years and were now in the hands of the Department of Labor and the NLRB. Even though the government agreed that the rights of workers had been violated, it still took weekly calls to see any progress in those cases. This all sounds pretty gloomy, but in one of the last meetings with my supervising attorney, she told me that she was happy we were finally seeing some progress in those cases that were before the Department of Labor and the NLRB. Her comment reminded me that justice oftentimes takes years to come about, and it takes a lot of perseverance and patience on behalf of the client and their advocate. While I may have felt as though the cases did not develop or progress in the way I would have wanted them to, Kerry and the rest of Resilience Force taught me that small progress is still progress and that, even if it takes years to happen, justice is still justice for these workers.

As someone who is interested in going into immigration law when I graduate next year, the lessons I learned at Resilience Force of being patient, taking the wins we could get, and centering the needs of the client will prove invaluable. My time at Resilience Force was made gratifying by the amazing coworkers I had – Kerry, Maria, and Jessica – and by the amazing stories I got to hear from clients. I was able to hear the stories of people who took a risk and temporarily left behind their family or relocated their family in order to take on the job of rebuilding a community after a natural disaster. These clients were hardworking people who were taken advantage of by contractors and other employers looking to increase their profit. As



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I mentioned in a previous update, natural disasters will only continue increasing in frequency and severity given that our government refuses to tackle (or even recognize) the issue of climate change. We must ensure that these workers, who we will be relying on to rebuild the communities affected by climate change, are protected and have access to justice when their rights are violated. That is why the work of Resilience Force is so important, and why I am incredibly proud to have worked there this summer.