



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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LAW SCHOOL	The George Washington University Law School
ORGANIZATION	Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid

Final Reflection:

The Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid ("TRLA") has 17 offices and serves 68 counties in Texas. I was placed in the Brownsville office located in Cameron County, Texas. I have known the Rio Grande Valley my whole life. I am still captivated by its charm and the people who live here.

Most mornings I had the pleasure of driving into the office and seeing the scenic route of South Padre Island to Brownsville. Driving on this long stretch of highway, I saw the lagoons and sandy dunes that laid out in a sunrise haze to my left and right. Meeting me each morning were a multitude of sea birds: herons, seagulls, and pelicans. They were already in position and in flight to get their morning meals. Similarly, local fishermen were in position by the bridges, some in chairs and others wading in the murky green water, casting in that great flow of water that connects the lakes and lagoons to the Gulf.

Usually hitting a red at the only crosslight on the highway, I saw some of the region's industrial side. Here, was the large liquid natural gas plant and further down the road was Brownsville's shipyard, which housed crude, large, rusted boats. Facing the shipyard on the other side of the road was the small coast guard unit stationed in Brownsville, Texas. I knew I was close to the office when the street signs began being named after our presidents. They meticulously went in order, as they even included presidents no one thinks of like Harrison or treacherous ones like Tyler. Each day I knew when my turn was coming up, passing Jackson Street and slowing down to turn right on the administration of Van Buren.



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The office is centrally located and down the street from the Cameron County Courthouse. TRLA offers civil legal services ranging from immigration to section 8 housing to estate planning. The clients we serve are low-income and cannot afford legal representation otherwise. I assisted with the Public Benefits Team and the Veterans Advocacy Project.

Through this work, I have been able to help veterans with essential legal services such as wills, transfer-on-death deeds, and guidance on benefits they have earned through their service. I have also assisted low-income individuals and families in navigating complicated systems to obtain and keep their vital benefits like Medicaid and SNAP. TRLA's role ensures that the people most in need are not left to face complex legal challenges alone. This summer was filled with meaningful work, providing legal services to veterans and lower-income Texans.