



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2025

### EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



<b>NAME</b>	Lily Marshall
<b>LAW SCHOOL</b>	Loyola University Chicago
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

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#### Final Reflection:

For my Equal Justice America ("EJA") Summer 2025 Fellowship, I worked in the Family Law Practice Group at Chicago Volunteer Legal Services ("CVLS"). CVLS is a civil legal aid organization providing pro bono representation to clients in Cook County, Illinois who lack the financial resources to hire legal representation. As an intern in the Family Law Practice Group, I worked primarily with divorce cases and adoption cases. Over the summer, I received my 711 License which, under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711, allows a law student who has completed a certain number of credit hours to represent clients in court under direct supervision by an attorney. This license allowed me to take a very active role in my cases. I worked directly with clients, being their main point of contact, and hired my own caseload – writing and filing motions, drafting proposed judgments, and advocating for my clients in front of the judge.

Over the summer, I was fortunate to work on a number of matters that felt impactful. I was able to prove up several divorces during my time with CVLS. In each case, as the judge told my client that their Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage was granted, I saw such genuine relief wash over their face. Seeing that emphasized for me just how important it is to ensure that domestic relations courts are accessible regardless of income. Marital and familial relationships are complex and often filled with emotionally-charged difficulties. Many legal issues may arise that can have serious consequences on a person's stability and quality of life. Legal assistance in resolving those difficulties should not be limited to the affluent.

In one of the adoption cases I handled, I worked to get a mother and stepfather legal parentage of their daughter. This was an adult adoption. The stepfather was the only dad the daughter had ever known. The two had a very strong, loving bond. It was a beautiful and moving moment to see them receive legal recognition of that bond. Their joy was truly radiant.



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This, likewise, emphasized for me the importance of accessibility to these processes and reaffirmed my commitment to working for that accessibility.

The EJA Fellowship made it possible for me to do this impactful work. Without EJA's funding, I would have been unable to work with CVLS as I was working pro bono. My work over the summer reaffirmed my commitment to public interest work. I look forward to taking the skills and knowledge I acquired into my legal career and continuing the work to ensure equal access to the courts.