



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Clara Keane
LAW SCHOOL	LMU Loyola Law School
ORGANIZATION	Public Counsel

Final Reflection:

This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to serve as an Equal Justice America fellow at Public Counsel, working with their Opportunity Under Law project. As I reflect on the past few months, I'm grateful for the chance to support civil rights impact litigation alongside attorneys who are dedicated to advancing systemic justice for underserved communities across California. My work this summer focused on several high-impact cases, each revealing the urgent need for legal advocacy in the face of structural failures. Early in the summer, I contributed legal research to *Ocean S.*, a case challenging the state and county's ongoing failure to provide transition-age youth (ages 16–21) in foster care with the housing and services they are legally entitled to. The plaintiffs are seeking transformative injunctive and declaratory relief—aiming to ensure that young people exiting foster care have access to trauma-informed supports, robust housing options, and comprehensive case planning. It has been incredibly meaningful to see how civil rights litigation can give voice to youth who are too often overlooked by the systems meant to protect them. I also had the privilege of observing a key hearing in *Vasquez-Perdomo v. Noem*, a federal lawsuit challenging unconstitutional immigration raids conducted by DHS in Southern California. The suit alleges that DHS unlawfully stopped and arrested community members, detained them in inhumane conditions, and denied them access to counsel. Shortly after the hearing, the federal court granted two temporary restraining orders, recognizing that DHS's conduct likely violated constitutional protections. Witnessing this case unfold underscored the power of litigation to check governmental overreach and protect fundamental rights.

Throughout the summer, I drew heavily on the knowledge I gained during my 1L year at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. I also saw firsthand the importance of legal aid organizations like Public Counsel, which serve as a lifeline for communities often excluded from the justice system.



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

I'm incredibly thankful to Equal Justice America for making this experience possible, and to the phenomenal attorneys and clients at Public Counsel for welcoming me into their work. This summer reaffirmed my commitment to pursuing a career in public interest law, rooted in service, accountability, and the belief that everyone deserves equal access to justice—regardless of their income, immigration status, or background.