



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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| ORGANIZATION | Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project |

Final Reflection:

My summer with the Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project has been an extraordinary opportunity to deepen my legal skills while engaging with the urgent realities of prison conditions and systemic injustice. From the outset, I was immersed in substantive constitutional litigation, working on cases involving the denial of adequate medical care, prolonged solitary confinement for individuals with serious mental health needs, and violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I quickly became familiar with the legal landscape governing the rights of incarcerated people—through deposition summaries, targeted legal research, and persuasive writing—and was fortunate to receive thoughtful feedback that strengthened my research and writing.

As the weeks progressed, I gained a more nuanced understanding of the litigation process. I researched legal issues in potential new matters, listened to judge conference calls, and began to see how discovery unfolds in practice. Observing a live deposition offered valuable insight into attorney strategy and client advocacy in real time. My research also delved into federal civil procedure and the structural barriers incarcerated people face in asserting their rights, such as grievance systems that can procedurally bar legitimate complaints and the lasting harm. These experiences sharpened my analytical skills and deepened my appreciation for the role of impact litigation in advancing justice.

Toward the end of the summer, I had the opportunity to see my research integrated into briefs filed by my supervising attorney—an especially rewarding milestone that connected my behind-the-scenes work to the advocacy practice. Perhaps most impactful was visiting two of our clients in federal prison, taking handwritten notes as they shared their experiences. Hearing their stories



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firsthand underscored both the immense challenges of incarceration and the resilience of those enduring it. It also reinforced the vital importance of PILP's client-centered approach, which combines strategic litigation with a commitment to meeting clients where they are, both figuratively and literally.

This internship has not only expanded my knowledge of prison law and civil rights litigation but has also strengthened my conviction in pursuing a career dedicated to protecting the rights of marginalized and incarcerated individuals. I leave this experience with a sharpened set of legal tools, a deeper understanding of the human stakes in impact litigation, and a renewed commitment to using the law as a vehicle for systemic change.