



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

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LAW SCHOOL	UCLA School of Law
ORGANIZATION	Public Counsel

Final Reflection:

I recently finished my summer fellowship at Public Counsel. This summer I worked under the Community Development Project (CDP) as a Disaster Relief Fellow. During the course of the summer, I had the opportunity to work on numerous projects that related to the January 2025, Palisades and Altadena Fires as well as other work under the Community Development Project. I really enjoyed being able to write two letters of demands for rent back on behalf of tenants to their landlords. One of the clients I helped had his mobile home burnt down in the Palisades fire. The other tenants I wrote the letter for were evacuated for a few weeks during the Altadena fire. I was also able to talk to these tenants on the phone about their experiences with their landlord, FEMA, and the state government. Each tenant had their own personal story to share about the way the fire impacted their life. Although I could not help every issue, I was happy that all of the tenants were able to get their rent back for the month of January!

I was also able to develop my litigation skills over the summer. I drafted two different memos for one of the lawyers in our office. The first one explored the different routes for communities and nonprofits to buy land back after the fires rather than private realtors. The importance of this memo was to support communities and community growth in fire-impacted areas rather than private development. The second memo explored the legislative history behind rent control laws. This memo helped to support a group of tenants suing their landlord for illegal rent raises and withholding refunds for the illegal rent raises. I really enjoyed working on this memo and this case because it was actively going on. I had the opportunity to listen to a meet and confer meeting with opposing counsel as well as sit on weekly meetings that discussed updates on the case. Finally, I had the opportunity to draft a response to a motion by opposing counsel which was a really cool opportunity to be further involved in the litigation process!



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My supervisor worked as a transactional lawyer, during my time with her I was able to try transactional law. In this role we helped to support nonprofit organizations that receive federal funding. We attended and held numerous meetings on the difference between litigation risk and liability risk in regard to DEI initiatives by non-profits. I was able to spend more time with clients helping to answer questions on if their respective programs would be labeled as DEI. Additionally, I worked on a few DEI audits where I would go through the websites of different nonprofit organizations and look to see if there was anything that needed to be flagged or changed. Finally, I was able to research the different federal rules and regulations on lobbying and rules and regulations on libel to help two different organizations know their rights.

Overall, I really enjoyed the different projects I got to work on this summer and all of the different clients I got to meet. I also really enjoyed working with the lawyers from the CDP team at Public Counsel! I learned so much this summer about how to actually use the tools we read about in law school to be an advocate for others in real life. I am so grateful I had the support of EJA this summer to make this work possible!