



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Amanda Santini
LAW SCHOOL	American University Washington College of Law
ORGANIZATION	Hispanic Bar Association of DC at the DC Superior Court

Update 1: In these first few weeks at the D.C. Superior Court, I've had the opportunity to observe a wide variety of proceedings and learn how a busy trial court operates behind the scenes. One of the biggest adjustments has been learning to approach legal issues from the Court's perspective rather than as an advocate for one side. I've also seen how much preparation, research, and collaboration happens in chambers before a decision is issued.

Update 2: As the summer progresses, I've started taking on more substantive assignments, including conducting legal research and assisting with drafting judicial orders. One of my favorite projects has involved researching issues in a judicial foreclosure case and working through procedural and substantive questions that do not always have obvious answers. It has been exciting to apply concepts I've learned in law school to real cases and see how careful legal research contributes directly to judicial decision-making.

Update 3: During my internship, I've also had the opportunity to connect with legal professionals from across the D.C. public service community through events coordinated by the Hispanic Bar Association of D.C. I've met attorneys from organizations such as the Department of Justice, the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. Hearing about their different career paths and areas of practice has helped me understand just how many opportunities there are to serve the public as a lawyer. It has been especially valuable to learn about the many different ways attorneys can use their legal skills to make an impact.

Update 4: Toward the end of my internship, I had the opportunity to visit the U.S. Supreme Court alongside fellow judicial interns from the Hispanic Bar Association of D.C. Judicial Internship Program. Being inside such an important institution and learning more about the Court's history was incredibly inspiring, especially after spending the summer gaining firsthand



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experience in the judiciary. Sharing the visit with other law students who are similarly passionate about the legal profession made the experience even more meaningful and was a memorable way to close out the summer.

Final Reflection: This summer, serving as a judicial intern at the D.C. Superior Court gave me a perspective on public service and access to justice that I could not have gained in the classroom. Working in chambers exposed me to the day-to-day realities of a court that handles matters with immediate and significant consequences for people's lives. I observed proceedings ranging from criminal cases to mortgage foreclosure matters, conducted legal research, assisted with drafting judicial orders, and worked on projects designed to make court procedures more accessible and efficient.

One of the most meaningful parts of my experience was working with the Court's Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Calendar. Many of the individuals appearing before the Court were homeowners facing the possibility of losing their homes, often while navigating a complicated legal process without an attorney. Observing these proceedings made the importance of clear communication and meaningful access to legal resources especially tangible. I saw how much difference it could make when a judge took the time to explain the process, connect a litigant with available resources, or ensure that the parties had a genuine opportunity to pursue loss-mitigation options.

I also had the opportunity to help update the Court's Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Benchbook. Although much of that work involved researching procedural rules and organizing information, I came to understand that seemingly small improvements in court administration can have a real impact. Creating clearer guidance for recurring issues—from service of process to mediation procedures and available legal resources—reinforced for me that access to justice depends not only on the substantive law, but also on whether people can meaningfully navigate the system.

The experience also challenged me professionally. Drafting judicial orders required me to approach legal questions differently than I had in law school. Rather than advocate for one side, I had to examine the record carefully, consider each party's arguments, research the governing law, and reach the result the law required. That responsibility strengthened my research and writing skills while teaching me the importance of precision, impartiality, and attention to the practical consequences of judicial decisions.

What will stay with me most is the human dimension of the Court's work. Behind every caption and docket number was a person dealing with a real problem. This summer strengthened my commitment to public service and reminded me why I came to law school: to develop the skills necessary to advocate effectively while never losing sight of the people whom the legal system is meant to serve.