



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

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LAW SCHOOL	American University Washington College of Law
ORGANIZATION	Florida Legal Services

Final Reflection:

As I enter my sixth week as a 2L and get back into the flow of day-to-day student life, I continue to reflect on my experience as a summer fellow with the Florida Legal Services Disaster Resilience team. As a Floridan, I was drawn to the Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Program's mission of providing legal aid to communities across Florida who are most vulnerable after natural disasters. We served these communities through both pro-bono legal services and educational outreach, including a Disaster Preparedness Information Session at the Palm Beach County Main Branch Library in late July. I learned that disaster resilience was intrinsically interconnected with so many issues, since natural disasters can often become risk multipliers, further illuminating just how important the disaster resilience team's work was. As a result, I worked on many immigration and family law cases and gained valuable insight into complex legal issues that were both challenging and rewarding, molding me into a better researcher, writer, and advocate. Additionally, I was given the opportunity to visit the Baker County Immigration Detention Center and assist with legal intake to ensure eligible detainees had the opportunity to be released on bail as they awaited their hearings. This experience was particularly memorable, as it was my first time working with detained people, many of whom did not otherwise have access to legal representation.

My time as Summer Fellow allowed me to work directly with clients, under the supervision and guidance of two extraordinary attorneys, Anne Piervil and Daphnie Guilirme, who showed me what true care and advocacy looks like. I was especially inspired by their passion for the Haitian community in Florida, particularly at such a turbulent time when so many Haitians in the US struggle with the sudden rescision of their temporary protected status. Often, it is so easy to lose hope in the legal system while seeing so many people suffer from inequities and injustices that one would assume the legal system should exist to solve. However, working in legal aid,



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especially under such passionate and driven attorneys, showed me that legal advocacy is capable of changing lives in the most unlikely ways. Whether it is helping an immigrant reach legal status or aiding a victim of domestic violence in finding the resources they need, legal advocacy can be life-changing, and organizations like Florida Legal ensure that this advocacy is accessible to those who need it the most.

After my fellowship came to an end, I looked forward to my legal career more than ever. This summer truly affirmed for me the incredible role that legal advocates play and affirmed my excitement in entering the legal profession. I am truly so grateful to Anne, Daphnie, and Florida Legal Services for equipping me with the knowledge and experience to continue in my legal education and career with confidence and compassion, and I am incredibly grateful to Equal Justice Works and Equal Justice America for supporting me. My summer experience would not have been possible without them.