



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

## Summer 2026

### EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



|                     |                                                          |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NAME</b>         | Chloe Arndt-Maynard                                      |
| <b>LAW SCHOOL</b>   | Campbell University, Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law |
| <b>ORGANIZATION</b> | North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services                   |

**Update 1:** I am grateful to be returning to North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services to spend my summer as an Equal Justice America Fellow. As part of my fellowship, I will be sharing periodic updates about my experience to help bring awareness to the access-to-justice gap and the work EJA and its fellows do to close that gap.

While with NCPLS, I will be working on both post-conviction and civil matters, broadening my understanding of civil rights litigation, the criminal legal system, and what it means to be an advocate. One of my first projects included assisting attorneys with briefing a failure to protect claim before the North Carolina Industrial Commission. Through my work on this project, I learned about the role of the Industrial Commission in the North Carolina legal system and the importance of this venue for those who have suffered harm while incarcerated.

Additionally, my fellow interns and I had the opportunity to attend a three-day orientation hosted by the Center for Death Penalty Litigation. This opportunity allowed us to listen to practicing attorneys, advocates, and mitigation specialists across different organizations speak about their experiences with capital cases, appeals, and mitigation work. It was inspiring to learn from those who have committed their careers to such difficult work, and I am thankful to CDPL for hosting us.

The first few weeks of the summer have presented many opportunities for learning and professional development, and I cannot wait to see what the rest of the summer holds.

**Update 2:** I am officially halfway through my summer as an Equal Justice America Fellow at North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services.



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Over the past couple of weeks, I have had the opportunity to work on several meaningful projects. First, I have been conducting legal research pertaining to sexual assault in prisons, and next week I will have the opportunity to meet with an incarcerated client to discuss issues related to that research.

Second, I have been doing mitigation outreach to support a client's 25-year review petition. In North Carolina, there is a law governing first-degree murders committed between October 1, 1994, and December 1, 1998, that allows a judge to review life-without-parole sentences for crimes committed during that period and to make recommendations about whether the sentence should be altered or commuted. This project has been a constant reminder that each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done (shout out to Bryan Stevenson).

Lastly, my fellow interns and I were able to screen "The Alabama Solution," a documentary exposing the violent and deadly conditions within Alabama's prison system using footage recorded by those incarcerated. Although it is not an easy watch, it is an important one, and I am grateful that NCPLS provided us with the opportunity to watch this film and engage in meaningful discussion afterward.

---

**Update 3:** It's time for my penultimate update as an Equal Justice America Fellow at North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services. It's hard to believe how quickly the summer is going by.

Since my last update, I've continued my mitigation outreach and begun drafting my first 25-year review petition. Although the work can be challenging, it has given me a valuable opportunity to strengthen my writing and advocacy skills. I am grateful to my supervising attorney for always taking the time to answer my questions and talk through difficult situations. One of my favorite parts of interning at NCPLS is the welcoming and encouraging environment fostered by all the attorneys and staff. It makes a world of difference when your work often involves difficult subject matter.

I also had the opportunity to complete a medical records review for an incarcerated client to identify potential gaps in his medical care and medication administration. Working on this project has highlighted many of the issues that persist within the prison healthcare system. Did you know that incarcerated people often still have to pay co-pays for their medical care? I look forward to continuing my work on this project and learning more about the prison healthcare system.

---

**Update 4:** I am entering my last week as an Equal Justice America Fellow at North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services.



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Over the past two weeks, in addition to continuing my work on a client's 25-year review petition, I've once again had the opportunity to work with the Safe and Humane Jails Project. I first worked with the jails team last fall as an extern, and I'm grateful to be back learning from the fantastic and dedicated folks behind this effort. The Project's mission is to ensure that those incarcerated in all 109 jails across North Carolina are housed in safe, humane conditions and that their constitutional rights are protected. This summer, my work with the team has included conducting case reviews, drafting memos, and recommending next steps.

As one of my final projects, I've been researching North Carolina's expunction laws to ensure our written resources reflect the most up-to-date information. I haven't had much experience with expunctions until now, and I'm grateful to have access to excellent resources, especially the UNC School of Government's blogs.

Thank you to anyone who has followed along with my journey this summer. Although my fellowship is coming to an end, I'm looking forward to beginning my final year of law school, and I'm more motivated than ever to continue a career in legal aid.

---

**Final Reflection:** Reflecting on my summer with North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services as an Equal Justice America Fellow fills me with deep gratitude. I am grateful for the staff and attorneys who took the time to guide me, for the clients whose stories reminded me why civil legal aid is indispensable, and for EJA's support, which made this work possible. Civil legal aid is often the only avenue through which incarcerated people can seek safety, medical care, or a meaningful review of their cases. Seeing firsthand how NCPLS meets those needs has strengthened my commitment to continuing this work.

NCPLS operates through three teams: the Civil Team, the Post-Conviction Team, and the Safe and Humane Jails Project. I had the privilege of working with all three. Early in the summer, I researched and prepared a detailed memo for a trial-level client to support the defense team's strategy. My work will be considered by attorneys and experts as they advocate for the client. I also accompanied an attorney on a prison visit, a small but meaningful experience that helped me grow more confident in the environments where our clients live and where so much of this advocacy begins.

With the Civil Team, I reviewed extensive medical records to investigate systemic delays in the prison pharmacy that were preventing incarcerated people from receiving essential medications. I compiled my findings into an accessible spreadsheet to help the attorney quickly digest hundreds of pages of records. I also conducted a client visit at a women's prison—an emotionally challenging experience that deepened my understanding of the realities our clients face. Afterward, I prepared a detailed memo to support the attorney's next steps in the case.



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

My work with the Safe and Humane Jails Project involved reviewing client correspondence about conditions of confinement, failure-to-protect issues, inadequate medical care, and more. These assignments required me to distill complex and often urgent concerns into clear, actionable memos and to recommend how the attorney might proceed. This work underscored how vital civil legal aid is for people who have no other meaningful avenue to report abuse or seek relief.

Throughout the summer, I also worked closely with a post-conviction attorney on a 25-year review for a client who has been incarcerated for nearly three decades. This in-depth project allowed me to become intimately familiar with the client's history, conduct mitigation outreach, and prepare the petition for the attorney's review. By the end of the summer, we were able to file the petition—giving the client their first opportunity for judicial review of their sentence. Engaging with issues surrounding juvenile sentencing, prison programming, and even the death penalty made this experience profoundly impactful.

As I enter my final year of law school, my time at NCPLS has reaffirmed why civil legal aid matters and why I want to spend my career in civil rights and prisoners' rights advocacy. This work is not only necessary, it is transformative. And it has motivated me more than ever to continue fighting for people whose voices are too often unheard.