



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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ORGANIZATION	Legal Aid DC

Update 1: I'm excited to have begun my Equal Justice America fellowship at Legal Aid DC. Even only two weeks into my work in Legal Aid's housing unit, I can already tell this will be one of the most formative experiences of my professional career so far.

Already, I've shadowed client intakes and observed proceedings through Legal Aid's courthouse project, an outpost of Legal Aid staff on-site in the D.C. Superior Court, Landlord and Tenant Branch who provide same-day advice and limited representation to clients facing evictions, unhealthy or unsafe housing conditions, or the threat of losing their housing vouchers.

In addition, I've had the opportunity to engage in a brown bag lunch at the DC Office of the Attorney General, to learn more about their office's work in consumer protection. Plus, the Washington Council of Lawyers' Consortium of Legal Service Providers coordinated a one-day training so interns in civil legal services organizations across the District could learn skills in client-centered lawyering from experienced practitioners.

Everyone deserves a safe, stable place to call home. I am excited to spend my summer working with and learning from attorneys who advocate every day to protect our neighbors' access to housing. I am grateful to Equal Justice America for helping fund this summer.

Update 2: My summer at Legal Aid DC continues to be a valuable experience! In addition to working on a variety of client matters, every Monday, I shadow Legal Aid attorneys at the DC Superior Court Landlord and Tenant Branch through Legal Aid's Courthouse Project. Through this legal equivalent of an emergency room, Legal Aid provides ad hoc legal services to clients who have hearings before the court as soon as a few hours later. This is exactly the intensive, client-serving experience I hoped to get out of this summer. I am learning much more than just



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the law: I am learning from how attorneys deliver bad news and good news, work through a thorny fact set quickly, and make the most of at-times-difficult cases, all in service of our neighbors. Thanks to EJA for supporting my summer at Legal Aid DC!

Update 3: My summer at Legal Aid DC continues to be a fantastic experience! Over the last two weeks, I had the opportunity to tour the DC Superior Court and learn about the Court's history and work. We met with both court staff and judges and watched proceedings to gain a deeper appreciation of the work it does. This week, we also had the opportunity to attend the Washington Council of Lawyer's pro bono and public interest forum. It was a great opportunity to learn from practitioners in areas of law close to and far afield from my experience so far. We even heard from the former US Pardon Attorney, Liz Oyer, who told the story of her work at DOJ and her efforts now to protect the rule of law. Over the next few weeks, I will be helping attorneys respond to discovery and continuing to help staff Legal Aid's courthouse project in Landlord & Tenant court.

Update 4: My internship at Legal Aid DC continues to be a fantastic experience. In the last two weeks, I have continued to assist with Legal Aid's courthouse project, observing intakes and advice for clients with time sensitive legal needs in the courthouse of DC Superior Court, Landlord and Tenant Branch. Even when delivering bad news, I have seen firsthand how an attorney can make a client feel more in control of a legal process that to most tenants feels impenetrable, unpredictable, and impersonal. I have also had the opportunity to attend a training on trauma-informed tactics for deescalating conflict, which I have already applied to client interactions. We also had the chance to tour the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, meeting three different judges to learn more about the history of the Court and their advice for law students interested in public service. In the next two weeks, we will also attend a brown bag discussion with Legal Aid's attorneys about their career paths and post-grad opportunities in public interest law.

Final Reflection: In my summer at Legal Aid DC, I worked with dozens of clients facing eviction in D.C. Superior Court, largely through Legal Aid's Courthouse Project. The project provides same-day legal information and advice to clients, many of whom have court dates that day. This intensive, client-serving experience is exactly what I hoped to get out of this summer. I feel like I learned much more than just the law (and I learned a lot of law): I saw firsthand how attorneys deliver bad news and good news, work through difficult cases quickly, make the most of unfavorable facts, and help our neighbors through the high-stakes labyrinth of Landlord and Tenant Branch. In addition, I had incredible experiences connecting with other public interest law students, meeting judges, touring courthouses, learning from staff of the DC Office of the



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Attorney General, and even hearing from the former US Pardon Attorney. This experience has deepened my resolve to use my career to be of service.

I went into this summer with the goal of discerning whether direct client work is for me, and I have learned that it is. But this is not to say that the work is easy. I have sat in with attorneys as they told a client in no uncertain terms that they would be evicted and there was nothing we could do to help. Yet, even in those moments, I was surprised that some clients found a small measure of relief in someone finally being direct and clear with them and walking them through what the process would look like. Even when we could not make the situation different, the simple act of telling them what the situation is was at times enough to make it just a little bit better. This isn't the kind of difference they tell you about in Civil Procedure, but it's a kind of difference that can actually matter to the people who simultaneously face the highest legal need and the lowest access to legal services. I am grateful to Equal Justice America for helping fund my summer at Legal Aid DC! It has helped sharpen my goals for what kind of lawyer I want to be.