



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

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ORGANIZATION	The Human Trafficking Legal Center

Update 1: Last week, I started as a Summer Legal Fellow with the Human Trafficking Legal Center! I am excited to contribute to HTLC's mission of ensuring access to justice for trafficking survivors and seeking systemic change and accountability from traffickers, governments, and corporations. This summer, I will be working with their domestic program that provides direct services to trafficking survivors, as well as their international strategic litigation program that focuses on combating forced labor in global supply chains. I will be working on projects advocating for criminal restitution and civil damages for survivors, while supporting the Center's provision of direct legal services on immigration matters.

I would like to thank Equal Justice America for supporting this opportunity, and for supporting so many students at schools across the country, including Harvard Law School, who are pursuing public interest experiences. Equal Justice America provides funding for law students working at organizations that provide direct civil legal services to people experiencing economic hardship and facing systemic barriers. This support is incredibly important given the lack of civil legal aid lawyers in the United States.

Update 2: I have now completed approximately five weeks of my summer legal fellowship with The Human Trafficking Legal Center in Washington, D.C.! It has been a great experience thus far, and I am looking forward to the experiences I will have throughout the rest of the summer. So far, I have updated a resource for internal use at the organization that tracks federal civil human trafficking cases involving A3 and G5 visas. These visas are available to diplomats and employees of international organizations, but are frequently used to traffic individuals, particularly those doing domestic work. In previous years, this resource has been shared with the U.S. State Department, so it may be used in the organizations' advocacy efforts in the future. From being at The Human Trafficking Legal Center, I have also had the opportunity to meet many survivors and learn about trauma-informed interactions and provision of services. I have



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observed the care and connection that all of the members of the staff, whether they are lawyers or not, have for their clients. It has been touching to witness this connection and begin to meet their clients through meetings and events.

I have also had the opportunity to begin working on a green card application for a survivor's four children. This experience has been an incredible learning opportunity. I have not done immigration work before, so I have learned a lot from simple assignments like drafting a cover letter or meeting with the clients to discuss the required documents. I have learned a lot about client contact from this experience as well; being flexible and learning to communicate in an accessible way, in regards to both phrasing and mode, is important for lawyers engaged in direct services work. It has also been very meaningful to assist a survivor's family members and support their family unity; especially during a time in our country where extreme delays in immigration processing, coupled with intense immigration enforcement, is a threat to so many people.

Update 3: I am now officially halfway through my legal fellowship with The Human Trafficking Legal Center in Washington, D.C. I am looking forward to continuing to contribute to the organization's critical work that supports survivors and demands accountability for forced labor violations by individuals and corporations.

Since my last update, I have continued to have the opportunity to meet survivors and their families and see the impact The Human Trafficking Legal Center has for them. The organization held an Advocacy Week with its Harriet Tubman fellows, which included trainings, receptions, and meetings with legislators and their staff on the Hill. It was incredible to meet this group of survivors and hear about their vision for the anti-trafficking movement. From creating specific resources for male survivors of trafficking to supporting trafficking victims' children and families, their goals varied greatly while all aiming to broaden the movement's reach and the available support for survivors. These meetings affirmed the value of survivor leadership within movements, and lawyers' role in supporting survivor leadership. Lawyers, especially those with expertise gained from providing direct legal services, have a critical role to play in advocacy missions that support the vision and priorities of those most impacted.

I have also continued to work on a Green Card application for a survivor's family, as well as attend technical assistance meetings on other immigration matters. These experiences have helped me gain familiarity with immigration processes and will provide a critical background for any legal services role I pursue in the future.

Another project I have continued to work on is an analysis of civil damages in federal civil trafficking cases across the United States. When this analysis is completed, it will help civil



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litigators, who often take on human trafficking cases in a pro bono or legal aid context, evaluate how much to request for damages.

Update 4: As I begin to wrap up my work at The Human Trafficking Legal Center in Washington, D.C., I am continuing to reflect on the importance of civil legal aid services. Through my experience at The Human Trafficking Legal Center, I have had the opportunity to meet with many survivors, observing and supporting the direct services on immigration matters that the attorneys here provide. Given the current climate and administration, T-visa processing timelines have increased to over two years, almost effectively stopping. Knowing this context, it has been meaningful and motivating to continue to support survivors in the process of gaining stable immigration status alongside the attorneys at The Human Trafficking Legal Center.

It has also been incredibly informative to witness the advocacy and knowledge-sharing that occurs within a strong network of civil legal service providers. Each week, lawyers and advocates at The Human Trafficking Legal Center engage in a number of technical assistance calls with legal aid and pro bono counsel across the U.S., supporting the provision of affordable legal services from afar, in a different way than we normally envision this work. They also host and attend meetings that address new, pressing issues faced by civil legal aid lawyers, creating space for discussion about different lawyers' individual experiences with the issue, and strategies they used to address such issues based on their client's unique circumstances. This has shown me how critical civil legal aid networks, and connections between individual lawyers working in the same field, are to providing effective, responsive representation to individuals experiencing poverty or are otherwise marginalized who need legal services.

Final Reflection: I have had a meaningful summer interning at The Human Trafficking Legal Center in Washington, D.C., thanks to the support of their staff and Equal Justice America. This summer, I have had the opportunity to contribute to The Human Trafficking Legal Center's mission of ensuring access to justice for trafficking survivors and seeking systemic change and accountability from traffickers, governments, and corporations. I have contributed to this mission through projects encompassing a variety of topics and matters, including humanitarian immigration benefits, criminal restitution and civil damages for trafficking survivors, interdisciplinary collaboration, and survivor leadership. The most meaningful part of my summer was assisting a survivor's family in their adjustment of status, or Green Card, application. I am so thankful for the opportunity to provide direct legal services on an immigration matter for these clients, and I hope that my work supports stability for their family. Other projects I worked on included updating a resource for internal use and advocacy that tracks federal civil human trafficking cases involving A3 and G5 visas, updating another internal resource tracking civil damages awards in federal civil trafficking cases, working on a fact sheet that provides case summaries and resources on trafficking for medical providers and outlining an amicus brief to challenge new DHS policies and ICE actions against survivors in relation to humanitarian



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immigration relief. I also authored a report that analyzes a selection of significant civil damages awards in federal civil trafficking cases and aims to provide guidance regarding damages awards to future litigators across the United States, many of whom may be pursuing these cases on a *pro bono* basis.

During my placement this summer, I have seen firsthand the importance of civil legal aid for individuals experiencing poverty or who are otherwise marginalized. As a result of their experiences of trafficking, many survivors cannot afford to bring civil cases against their traffickers and trafficking accomplices. The Human Trafficking Legal Center has made a positive difference in the lives of many survivors by connecting them to *pro bono* counsel who can promote recovery for survivors by providing quality legal services in civil cases. I have also seen how the provision of *pro bono* representation and other related services for survivors in federal criminal trafficking cases can also make a difference in criminal restitution outcomes.