



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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LAW SCHOOL	NYU School of Law
ORGANIZATION	The Legal Aid Society – Special Litigation Unit

Update 1: So far, my time in the Legal Aid Society's Criminal Defense Practice's Special Litigation Unit has been very interesting. I am getting a lay of the land in terms of the types of cases the practice gets and am getting started on my first assignments. I had the opportunity to shadow arraignments in Queens Criminal court today and will be continuing to do so throughout the summer.

Update 2: I am learning so much from my internship in Legal Aid's Criminal Defense Practice's Special Litigation Unit. In addition to my individual research and writing assignments, I have had the privilege of shadowing oral arguments and attending practice strategy issues on pressing litigation matters. Doing systemic litigation work within a public defense office provides the unique opportunity to really develop cases from the bottom up, and to determine priorities based on what our clients are experiencing. I have done way more direct client work alongside systemic litigation than I expected to this summer, and honestly, it's been incredible merging systemic and direct services work.

Update 3: It's crazy that I am halfway through my internship with Legal Aid's Special Litigation Unit! I have been learning so much shadowing arraignments and oral arguments, conducting intensive legal research assignments, and drafting habeas petitions. I am grateful to have gotten the opportunity to learn from such talented attorneys.

Update 4: Through my internship at the Legal Aid Society's Special Litigation Unit, I have gotten exposure into various topics pertaining to civil rights violations that systems-impacted people experience. I have been able to support through conducting legal research/writing memos for potential litigation, writing policy proposals, drafting an Article 78 reply, plaintiff declarations,



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and habeas petitions. I have been able to learn about areas as far ranging as fourth amendment property violations, unconstitutional ICE stops, police accountability mechanisms, violations occurring during arrests and arraignments, and much more. I have learned so much already and look forward to finalizing my assignments and work in the last two weeks.

Final Reflection: I had an incredible summer at the Legal Aid Society as an Equal Justice America summer fellow! There is something truly special about working in civil rights litigation at a public defense office. The Special Litigation Unit works across all five boroughs, utilizing information from the front lines and identifying patterns of constitutional misconduct experienced by clients to select litigation priorities. The work of our team was fully informed by the criminal defense attorneys who see day in and day out the violations and harms that clients experience. I particularly appreciated the opportunities I had to combine direct service work with systemic litigation research, such as attending arraignments to track specific issues, or working on habeas petitions for plaintiffs in civil rights cases. Coming into the internship with a direct services background, it was clear to me that the best systemic changemaking is done by those closest to the problems.

I honed and sharpened my litigation skills throughout the summer, developing research memoranda on topics as wide-ranging as Order of Protections, administrative appeal protocols across states, police accountability measures, I-Card issues, and more. I also got the opportunity to work on my legal writing by drafting parts of habeas petitions, an Article 78 reply, and client declarations. I am incredibly lucky to have been mentored by outstanding attorneys and fellows who invested in my personal and professional growth.

The internship solidified my commitment to pursuing civil rights litigation work after law school, particularly at organizations that value collaboration with movement lawyers and direct service providers. I look forward to applying the knowledge and skills that I gained from my internship with the Legal Aid Society's Special Litigation Unit as an Equal Justice America summer fellow throughout my career.