



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Ketevan Inasaridze
LAW SCHOOL	Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University
ORGANIZATION	Immigrant Rights Clinic, Rutgers Law School

Update 1: During my first week at the Rutgers Immigrant Rights Clinic, I participated in a series of trainings covering asylum law, removal proceedings, BIA appeals, detention and bond issues, crim-imm consequences, client intake procedures, and legal research. The trainings provided a strong foundation in both the substantive and practical aspects of immigration law.

I also had the opportunity to observe immigration court hearings, conduct client intakes, communicate with clients that are detained in several detention facilities and their family members, perform legal research, and assist with drafting legal memoranda. These experiences have given me meaningful exposure to client representation and the challenges many immigrants face in navigating the legal system. Seeing the impact that legal advocacy can have on individuals and families has reinforced my commitment to public interest work and strengthened my interest in immigrant rights. I am very excited to deepen my knowledge of immigration law during the summer, and support immigrant community through my work.

Update 2: Since my last update, I have taken on more substantive responsibilities, including assisting with a case involving protection under the Convention Against Torture (CAT). I helped prepare supporting declarations, assemble supporting evidence, create an annotated table of contents, and assist with filing the application with the immigration court. Working on this case gave me valuable insight into the preparation of complex immigration filings.

I also conducted extensive legal research on the current legal framework governing asylum bars and presented my findings to my supervisors and colleagues. The presentation focused on recent case law and provided an overview of the evolving legal standards, allowing me to strengthen both my research and oral advocacy skills.



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

In addition, I continued conducting client intake and follow-up calls, communicating with clients and their family members, and observing a variety of immigration court hearings.

Together, these experiences have deepened my understanding of immigration practice and reinforced my commitment to public interest advocacy.

Update 3: Since my last update, I have had the opportunity to take on more substantive legal work by drafting an appellate brief for my supervising attorney's review. As part of this assignment, I carefully reviewed the Immigration Judge's decision and the administrative record, conducted legal research, and drafted arguments addressing the legal and factual errors made by the Immigration Judge. Working on an active appeal gave me valuable insight into appellate advocacy and strengthened my legal research, analytical writing, and persuasive writing skills. In addition, I attended several master calendar and bond hearings, which allowed me to observe different stages of immigration proceedings and gain a better understanding of immigration courtroom practice. I also assisted with drafting bond sponsorship letters and other case-related documents, allowing me to do the work that directly support clients' cases.

Beyond these assignments, I have continued to shadow the attorneys in their day-to-day work, including client meetings, case strategy discussions, and court appearances. Observing experienced advocates navigate complex legal and factual issues has provided me with valuable insight into the realities of immigration practice and reinforced my commitment to public interest advocacy.

Update 4: I have continued to gain hands-on experience representing noncitizens in a variety of immigration matters. I had the opportunity to assist with the preparation of an I-589 Application for Asylum and to observe the strategy and advocacy involved in building a client's case. I also continued conducting legal research and assisting attorneys with active matters, allowing me to deepen my understanding of both the substantive and procedural aspects of immigration law. I attended several master calendar and bond hearings, where I observed attorneys advocate for their clients and navigate different stages of removal proceedings. In addition, I assisted with client communication and other case-related tasks, which reinforced the importance of clear communication and thorough preparation throughout the representation process.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this experience has been the opportunity to shadow the attorneys in their day-to-day practice. Observing client meetings, court appearances, and case preparation has provided valuable insight into the realities of immigration advocacy and the many responsibilities involved in representing clients effectively. Each week continues to strengthen my practical skills and reaffirm my commitment to public interest law.

Final Reflection: My experience at the Rutgers Immigrant Rights Clinic has been one of the most meaningful and formative opportunities of my legal education. Over the course of the



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

summer, I progressed from learning the fundamentals of immigration practice through trainings and observation to taking on increasingly substantive legal work. Looking back, I can clearly see how each experience built upon the last, allowing me to develop both practical legal skills and a deeper understanding of what it means to advocate for clients facing life-changing legal challenges.

During my fellowship, I worked on a wide range of immigration matters. I conducted client intake interviews and follow-up calls, communicated with detained clients and their family members, performed legal research, drafted legal memoranda, and assisted attorneys with active cases. I helped prepare a Convention Against Torture (CAT) application by organizing supporting evidence, drafting declarations, and assembling filings. Later in the summer, I had the opportunity to draft an appellate brief for my supervising attorney's review, analyzing the Immigration Judge's decision, researching relevant law, and developing legal arguments. I also assisted with an I-589 asylum application, drafted bond sponsorship letters, and observed master calendar hearings, bond hearings, and other immigration proceedings.

One of the greatest challenges was learning to navigate a rapidly evolving area of law while recognizing that every legal issue represented a real person's future. Immigration law is complex, and each case required careful attention to both legal doctrine and the unique facts of a client's story. At the same time, this challenge became one of the most rewarding aspects of the fellowship. I became more confident in my legal research, writing, and analytical abilities, while also learning the importance of collaboration, preparation, and attention to detail.

The clients I worked with left the greatest impression on me. Many were detained or seeking protection after fleeing violence and persecution, and almost all faced tremendous uncertainty about their futures. Speaking with clients and their families reminded me that effective advocacy extends beyond legal arguments – it also requires empathy, patience, and clear communication. Although my role was often behind the scenes, I understood that every declaration drafted, every piece of evidence organized, and every legal argument researched contributed to a client's opportunity to be heard.

This fellowship reinforced my commitment to public interest law and strengthened my desire to pursue a career advocating for vulnerable communities. Beyond improving my legal research, writing, and advocacy skills, it taught me the importance of compassionate representation and the responsibility attorneys have to use their skills in service of others. I leave this experience with greater confidence in my abilities, a deeper appreciation for immigration advocacy, and a renewed commitment to pursuing meaningful, client-centered legal work.