



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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ORGANIZATION	Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network

Update 1: My short time at PLAN has already taught me so much about the criminal justice system. I have seen the real systematic abuses that go on in the prisons and how in many ways law fails to supply individuals with the opportunity for relief. I have had the pleasure to be a part of making small steps towards change. I have contributed to legal memos and voting rights guide that will support individuals in taking charge of their rights.

Update 2: I am about 8 weeks into my fellowship at PLAN and have already learned so much. I have been writing Memos, legal mail, affidavits and more. The work centers around helping incarcerated individuals vote, understand their rights, and advocating for unjust conditions of confinement. I am excited to keep learning!

Update 3: This week I am focusing on direct advocacy and work on Jail House Lawyer Guides. My work includes follow up interviews with individuals to talk about their experience within the prison system and developing practical legal resources that help people better understand and navigate their legal rights. I am especially excited because the first draft of the guides will be edited by the end of this week, so I am really starting to see everything come together. It has been rewarding to watch the guides transform and I am looking forward to the next stage of the process. This process has shown me the importance of making legal material clear and understandable for every person.

Update 4: This week I am focusing on my Jail House Memo to complete it before the end of my internship. I have been working on the organization and last-minute edits to put the memo in the best place possible. I am excited to see how far it has come and hope it will be a helpful



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resource for individuals who are incarcerated to understand their rights and feel more comfortable to proceed pro se.

Final Reflection: My summer at Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network ("PLAN") has been an incredibly meaningful experience that has shaped both my professional goals and my understanding of advocacy. When I began my fellowship, I was excited to gain experience in civil rights. As I have wrapped up my fellowship, I have reflected back on how much knowledge I have gained about the realities of the criminal justice system. PLAN works all over the country, which has allowed me to look at the criminal justice system as a whole and see the systematic issues that are not bound by states or facilities but are engraved within the entire system.

Throughout my fellowship, I had the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects, from interviewing clients to writing legal memorandum for law libraries. Each project challenged me to strengthen my legal research, writing, and communication skills. Working directly with clients strengthened my communication and advocacy skills. It felt meaningful being able to see the impact PLAN makes on individuals up close. However, one of my most meaningful accomplishments was developing resources designed to help incarcerated individuals better understand and navigate filing a claim. Watching the Jail House Lawyer Guide progress from initial drafts to practical resources was amazing. I feel grateful to have had the opportunity to work on something that will hopefully help hundreds of individuals feel empowered in their rights.

I also enjoyed the mentor I received through EJA. Laurel was an incredible mentor and has supported me through navigating the legal field as a first-generation law student. As it comes time to apply for jobs she has sent me many resources on how to find fellowships and jobs for after I graduate. Laurel has even taken the time to review and give me feedback on my resume, cover letter, and writing sample. I feel very grateful to have had her as my mentor.

Overall, my time at PLAN has strengthened my commitment to advocacy and reinforced my desire to pursue a career centered in protecting the rights of individuals within the criminal justice system. I leave this fellowship with stronger writing skills, a better understanding of civil procedure, and a deeper understanding of what meaningful advocacy looks like. I appreciate EJA for supporting the work I have done.