



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

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EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT

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Update 1: This past week, I started my legal internship at the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project. I spent most of the week doing onboarding and trainings, but I was also able to start doing research to assist with *Lucy v. Skrmetti*, a class action challenging Tennessee's law that makes it a crime for certain immigrants to remain in the state. Much of my research pertained to the Judge's prior rulings on civil rights issues and I was tasked with finding throughlines among these rulings. This was a new experience for me and it was really fulfilling to be able to work on this case. During the internship, I'll have the opportunity to work with every attorney in the office, on various issues. I am excited to engage in this fulfilling and challenging work and to grow my research and writing skills. While I know that this work will be emotional and quite challenging at times, it is critical to engage in it during this time and to fight for immigrants' rights as much as possible. I know that I will greatly expand my research skills during this internship and work on issues I care deeply about. I cannot wait to become more involved with the ACLU's cases and track my experience through these updates.

Update 2: Over the past three weeks, my internship has given me the opportunity to contribute to meaningful immigration advocacy while strengthening my research and writing skills. I have assisted with research assignments for several ACLU Immigrants' Rights cases, including litigation challenging Tennessee's attempt to criminalize certain noncitizens for remaining in the state. I have also supported background research on issues involving mandatory detention for individuals who entered without inspection, as well as litigation concerning state efforts to challenge sanctuary city policies. In addition, I have helped with cite-checking to ensure filings are accurate and well-supported. Although much of my work has been behind the scenes, it directly supports efforts to protect the rights of vulnerable individuals facing significant legal and personal consequences. Seeing how careful legal research can strengthen advocacy has reinforced the importance of legal aid and impact litigation in ensuring that all people,



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regardless of immigration status, have access to justice and constitutional protections. This experience has been both fulfilling and motivating. Each assignment has expanded my research abilities and deepened my understanding of immigration law. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to work that has the potential to make a meaningful difference in the lives of clients and communities.

Update 3: I am about to hit the mid-point of my internship and I cannot believe how fast time has gone by. So far, I have worked on issues related to states creating laws making it a crime for immigrants to remain in those states, asylum seeker deadlines, sanctuary policies, and mandatory detention issues. Each of these cases has been incredibly important and so much is at stake. Very recently, The Trump v. Barbara decision came out on birthright citizenship, and it is a case that we argued at the Supreme Court. The entire organization is incredibly relieved to have won that case, as is much of the country. Yet, it is also disheartening that the vote was so close on such a critical issue. This truly shows the importance of this work and the massive impact that it can have. The team is preparing to go to the Supreme Court on more issues and the pressure is mounting, especially as some of the cases deal with mandatory detention for millions of people. This work has great implications for so many people, and I am constantly reminded of what's at stake. It has been emotional and quite challenging to know that but it has also been amazing to work with and learn from people who are so passionate about this work.

Update 4: The past few weeks working at the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project have been incredibly busy. I've worked on many cases including some for asylum seekers, the criminalization of status, and mandatory detention. I have done a lot of research related to mandatory detention and statutory interpretation principles. A few days ago, I submitted an 18-page memo on the issue. All of the attorneys have been working incredibly hard because the mandatory detention issue will be heard in the supreme court very soon. In a sense, the work seems very high stakes because there are huge implications. Helping on these cases, even as an intern is very fulfilling. I am very grateful to be contributing to immigrants' rights during this time, especially as immigrants are facing constant attacks. The past few weeks I have also learned about the importance of taking care of myself. Its easy to dedicate your entire existence to this kind of work but it's important to take breaks and to do things that make you happy. I know that to continue to do civil rights and social justice work, I have to be in a good headspace and that starts with taking care of myself.

Final Reflection: I finished my internship with the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project on Monday, August 18, 2026. Overall, I had a wonderful experience, met dedicated and passionate attorneys, and worked on some crucial cases. I gained experience in various issue areas including mandatory detention, sanctuary policies, asylum, and state laws criminalizing immigration status. Many of the cases I worked on are headed to the Supreme Court and



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learning how the attorneys navigate such large-scale cases was incredibly inspiring. I constantly thought about the pressure of doing this kind of work and the potential of setting nationwide precedent. From what I learned, many of them avoid thinking about this pressure and focus on their clients and the importance of the issue. This internship was quite busy and I had the opportunity to work on projects with multiple attorneys. The projects ranged from circuit surveys to legal memorandums to a variety of research assignments. I was able to analyze a complex statutory interpretation principle and apply it to one of our cases. I especially liked working on this project because I was able to put my analytical brain to use and become knowledgeable about a statutory interpretation principle I had never heard of. It was also very valuable for me to be a part of staff meetings and to listen to all the litigation and policy the organization is working on. It was also inspiring to see the team focus on their clients and upholding their dignity and humanity. Throughout this internship, I improved my research skills tremendously. Much of the work I did pertained to research and I gained experience researching statutes and regulations in addition to caselaw. Through everything happening in relation to immigration these past few months, a part of me has felt helpless. But seeing attorneys and an organization focused on upholding the rights of immigrants across the country and investing so much of themselves in this work has motivated me and given me hope. This internship reaffirmed the importance of this work, even when things are tough and feel hopeless. I will remember this experience as I continue to pursue civil rights work and advocate for marginalized communities throughout my career.