



# EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

## EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
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| ORGANIZATION | ACLU of Missouri       |

**Update 1:** This summer, I've moved back home to St. Louis to work as a law clerk with the ACLU of Missouri, where I'm helping to protect the civil liberties of my friends, family, neighbors, and Missourians.

Thus far, I've gained valuable experience working on a variety of First Amendment issues and strategies for trans justice. Though always essential, this work carries special urgency right now as Missouri tries to roll back reproductive rights and restrict access to gender affirming care. I've learned so much from my mentors and peers at ACLU-MO already and am truly honored to have the chance to work with them.

**Update 2:** My work this summer continues to reinforce my interest in impact litigation. Since my last update, I've been fortunate to work on a governmental transparency issue, as well as a voting rights issue. The latter project has sparked a particular interest for me, especially when election law is so fraught. I feel that I'm growing by leaps and bounds — especially in my legal writing and research abilities — and genuinely making an impact in my home state.

**Update 3:** In recent weeks, I've had a chance to expand my work from First Amendment issues to voting rights issues in Missouri. To this point in my legal education, I've not had any exposure to voting rights as an area of law, but I found it to be something I could envision working on next summer, or post-grad. My mentors at ACLU-MO have been terrific, guiding me through thorny legal research, and have truly helped me hone my writing abilities this summer. With each week, I'm more and more convinced that I couldn't have spent my summer doing anything I enjoyed more.



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**Update 4:** The final weeks of my time with ACLU-MO have been dedicated to the production of know-your-rights materials for incarcerated trans people. This summer, Missouri zeroed out any funding for hormone treatments related to gender dysphoria in its prisons. This development means that transgender inmates in Missouri no longer have any recourse for their medical needs while incarcerated. At a time when state officials infringe upon prisoners' basic rights (e.g., the Eighth Amendment), it was rewarding to be able to build a database of challenges that those prisoners still can make under state law.

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**Final Reflection:** I moved to St. Louis at 14, arriving in the city the same week that Michael Brown was killed by a police officer in Ferguson. The city's response to that horror was my first look at what advocacy can be, what it can do. It was also my first look at how the law often falls short of justice. Returning to the city this summer, I wanted to do something to materially protect my family, friends, and neighbors.

Missouri is not only afflicted by the excesses of national politics, but also by the state's own overreaches. My time at ACLU-MO was marked by a dual focus on national legal battles and local struggles. For example, in August the state voted on four ballot referenda, including one intended to restrict the ability of Missouri citizens to pass ballot referenda by a simple majority. At the same time, the erosion of voting rights on a national stage has wrought havoc on the Eighth Circuit (or, perhaps, allowed the Eighth Circuit to wreak havoc), leading to the recent conclusion that there may not be a private right of action in the Voting Rights Act.

I found my time with ACLU-MO to be wildly fulfilling. I had the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the team's work on First Amendment issues, government transparency, voting rights, and prisoners' rights. I was even able to write a demand letter to the city.

The state of the law in Missouri—as in many other places—is dire. I left St. Louis with a more deeply informed sense of worry than I possessed upon my arrival in June. I left also with tremendous confidence in the attorneys and advocates who are sticking up for basic rights each and every day. The people with whom I had a chance to work this summer are a dogged bunch, with a near encyclopedic memory for precedent, both legal and political. I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to work alongside such devoted individuals. I am a better legal thinker, a better advocate, and a better Missourian for having spent the summer working at ACLU-MO. The work to be done in the state remains significant, but I feel my family, friends, and neighbors are in good hands.