



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Jeremy Costello
LAW SCHOOL	UC Law SF
ORGANIZATION	East Bay Community Law Center

Update 1:

I'm excited to share that I started a fellowship with Equal Justice America for this summer. I am working with East Bay Community Law Center to support immigrants pursuing legal relief. I'm so grateful to Equal Justice America for making this opportunity possible through this summer fellowship.

If you believe everyone has the right to critical legal services, including those who can't afford them, I hope you'll consider donating to support me AND this important work!

Update 2:

I'm already halfway done with my summer position at East Bay Community Law Center! I've been enjoying directly supporting immigrant clients and reconnecting with the work that inspired me to go to law school.

Update 3:

I'm closing in on the end of my summer internship with East Bay Community Law Center and my EJA Fellowship. Equal Justice America provides really important support to law students working in public interest. These positions are often unpaid, making it difficult to gain experience in areas of law that offer legal representation to individuals who normally wouldn't be represented by a lawyer to defend their access to housing, good health, or legal status.

Update 4:

I just wrapped up my summer intern position and EJA Fellowship! I had a great experience at East Bay Community Law Center working on the immigration team alongside students advocating for clients to keep their housing, for better health, and youth justice. EJA supported



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

my work and the work of many of my fellow interns to prepare the next generation of public interest attorneys.

Final Reflection:

My goal this summer at East Bay Community Law Center was to become a more effective advocate within a legal system that often offers clients only imperfect choices. I leave with a clearer sense of that role and how to balance an attorney's caseload.

Immigration lawyers must understand the broken system they work in and act as translators between that system and their clients, explaining the law with all its flaws and with limited paths to success. In the cases I worked on this summer there were often trade-offs that I had to communicate to clients that made it so there was not one clear path to follow in their cases. To help navigate these difficult decisions, I learned to ground each case in clients' own goals by understanding their hopes for the future and their goals, whether those were related to their immigration status or other parts of life.

That approach shaped a summer of substantive casework. I drafted a full asylum declaration for a client whose individual hearing is this fall. For another complicated case, I gathered declarations from a minor client and his family members because his mother didn't appear on his birth certificate. I interviewed a potential T-Visa applicant, evaluated the strength of his claim, and conducted a follow-up conversation so his application is ready for his attorney to prepare.

I grew the most through my work with a 13-year-old client I worked with all summer. We prepared his state court filing for guardianship and special immigrant juvenile findings, including his declaration. In his case he had to decide whether he wanted to pursue a form of relief that would prevent him from petitioning his father in the future. Over multiple conversations, I made sure that he understood the pros and cons of the process and made the decision that would give him the best chance to live the life he wanted to.

Across all of these cases, I learned to take ownership over my clients' cases and think like a lawyer by considering all the contingencies of their cases. This summer reminded me why I came to law school. I'm heading back to the classroom this fall with my clients' cases serving as reminder that my job is to support clients to fulfill their goals, and that a lawyer's role is not only to achieve a legal result but to support clients as an entire person.