



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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ORGANIZATION	UCLA Miñana Family Center for Immigration Law and Policy and Immigrant Family Clinic

Update 1: As a joint summer fellow at the Miñana Center and the Immigrant Family Clinic, I am engaging in meaningful work in both impact litigation and direct client services. At the Miñana Center, I am honing my legal research skills as I assess case law for a potential lawsuit. In a short time period, I have learned a great amount about litigation strategy from staff attorneys and Center leadership. This week, I also gave public comment at the Inglewood City Council to support the passage of local legislation that would prohibit city resources from being used to assist federal immigration enforcement. I appreciated the opportunity to meet other community advocates and advocate for legislation that is so urgently needed.

At the Immigrant Family Clinic, I have learned about the process of applying for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, which requires a state court process in addition to an application for immigration status. I enjoy learning from Clinic attorneys about how to represent and advocate for immigrant children, and it is rewarding to contribute to this work as a law student.

Update 2: I am really enjoying the opportunity to continue improving my legal research skills at the UCLA Miñana Center. Through my research, I am learning about the in-and-outs of complex federal civil litigation. This will prepare me for a career advocating for vulnerable communities in federal court.

At the Immigrant Family Clinic, I completed an immigration consultation with my supervising attorney, and I am continuing to help develop our clients' Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases. It has been really impactful to see firsthand the hope and confidence that an immigration law practitioner can give a child just by helping them through the process of obtaining immigration relief. I am grateful to EJA for helping me be able to have these meaningful summer experiences.



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Update 3: As my summer fellowship continues at the Miñana Center and the Immigrant Family Clinic, I'm increasingly struck by how the two halves of my work speak to each other. The systemic, forward-looking nature of impact litigation and the immediate, personal nature of direct client services are two sides of the same commitment to serving immigrant communities. At the Miñana Center, I've deepened my research into the legal questions underlying our potential lawsuit, and I'm beginning to appreciate how much strategy sits behind every filing—how staff attorneys weigh precedent, timing, and the practical realities our clients face. Watching them think through these decisions has taught me that effective advocacy is as much about judgment as it is about legal knowledge.

At the Immigrant Family Clinic, I've continued to support our clients' Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases, and each step of the process has reinforced why this work matters. Helping a child move toward stability and safety is a reminder of the human stakes that legal doctrine can sometimes obscure. I've also valued the chance to keep learning from Clinic attorneys about how to build trust with young clients and advocate for them across both state and immigration proceedings. I remain deeply grateful to EJA for helping to make this fellowship possible; these experiences are shaping the kind of lawyer I hope to become—one prepared to advocate for vulnerable communities with both rigor and compassion.

Update 4: As my summer fellowship at the Miñana Center and the Immigrant Family Clinic continues, I keep coming back to how much the two halves of this work illuminate each other. Impact litigation looks toward the horizon—systemic, strategic, built for long-term change. Direct client services live in the present—immediate, personal, human. Yet both flow from the same commitment to immigrant communities, and this summer has shown me they're not opposite approaches so much as complementary ones.

At the Miñana Center, I've gone deeper into the legal research behind our potential lawsuit, and I'm starting to see how much judgment underlies every filing. Watching staff attorneys weigh precedent against timing, and timing against what our clients can actually withstand, has taught me that good advocacy isn't just knowing the law—it's knowing when and how to use it. At the Immigrant Family Clinic, I've kept working on clients' Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases, and every step has been a reminder of why this work matters. Helping a child move closer to safety and stability cuts through legal abstraction and is a reminder of what's actually at stake behind the doctrine. I've also learned a lot from Clinic attorneys about building trust with young clients and advocating for them across both state and immigration systems at once.

Final Reflection: On a weekday in June, I stood at a podium in the Inglewood City Council chambers and gave public comment in support of an ordinance barring city resources from



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

assisting federal immigration enforcement. I had spent that same day at a desk, reading case law. The distance between those two rooms — the quiet of legal research and the crowded noise of a council meeting full of neighbors and organizers — turned out to be the shape of my entire summer.

As a joint fellow at the UCLA Miñana Center and the Immigrant Family Clinic, I split my time between impact litigation and direct client services. I expected these to feel like two separate jobs. In reality, they complemented each other very nicely. This was my first time working in the community in Los Angeles, and I gained an appreciation of the challenges that immigrant children face in L.A. This close-up learning experience grounded my work in legal research, which was in service of lawsuits brought by and on behalf of immigrant community members much like those people I served at the Clinic.

At the Miñana Center, I researched the legal questions underlying a potential lawsuit, and in doing so learned something I could not have learned from a casebook: that litigation is not only about knowing the law, but equally importantly, about judgment and strategy. I watched staff attorneys weigh precedent against timing, and timing against what the communities we serve could realistically withstand. A theory can be correct and still be the wrong theory to file. The small victories were quiet ones — a line of cases I chased down that turned out to matter, a question I raised that a supervising attorney took seriously. But those moments taught me what it feels like to think like a litigator rather than a student.

At the Clinic, the stakes arrived in person. I helped develop Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases, which require a state court process before the immigration application can even begin — a two-track structure that is difficult to explain to an adult, let alone to a child living inside it. I appreciated the opportunity to contribute to work that attempts to push changes in systemic conduct and to help an individual child gain invaluable legal status in this country. I am truly grateful to EJA for making this summer possible.