



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Carley Kukk
LAW SCHOOL	UVA Law
ORGANIZATION	Greater Boston Legal Services

Update 1: Over the past few weeks, I've begun my internship with the Family Law Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services. Since starting, I have worked on a range of projects like intake interviews, restraining orders, and divorces. I am drafting a supplemental memorandum in support of a permanent restraining order for an upcoming hearing, as well as an answer to a complaint for separate support and a counterclaim for divorce. Working alongside the GBLS team and interacting directly with clients has been incredibly rewarding. I'm looking forward to becoming more deeply involved in these cases and grounding myself in community-centered lawyering.

Update 2: I have continued learning in the Family Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services! I have gone to different courts around the Boston area and assisted with multiple restraining orders. I even attended a criminal hearing with a client. It has been rewarding to work directly with survivors of domestic violence and build meaningful relationships that extend beyond traditional professional interactions.

Update 3: I have continued talking with new clients during intakes, assisting clients with the divorce and custody process, and working on different restraining orders. I have also been researching and drafting a memorandum on notice requirements for Chapter 209A restraining orders in Massachusetts. This work has been extremely rewarding, and I am grateful to learn and work alongside the GBLS attorneys and interns.

Update 4: Since my last update, I've continued working directly with survivors of domestic violence and helping advocate for their needs. This past week, I led a four-way conference with a client and her ex-partner. During the meeting, the ex-partner became extremely agitated and raised his voice at me. It was a valuable learning experience in de-escalating a tense situation



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

while keeping the discussion focused on our shared objective. After the conference, I made sure to check in with our client about the emotional impact of the meeting. Moments like these remind me why I want to do this work. Family law often involves people at some of the most difficult and vulnerable points in their lives and being able to support clients through those moments is incredibly meaningful. This week, I'll continue working with this client as we prepare for her upcoming pre-trial conference.

Final Reflection: I can't express how much I have enjoyed my summer experience at Greater Boston Legal Services. It feels like my goals and values have finally aligned with the work I've had the opportunity to contribute to. I have deeply enjoyed getting to know my clients and the incredible attorneys I've had the chance to work alongside.

It was especially difficult to say goodbye to many of my clients after working with them through some of the most intimate and difficult moments of their lives. I'm leaving this summer feeling incredibly grateful, but also more assured than ever that this is the path I want to take in my career and in my life.

Before leaving, I had the opportunity to attend a pretrial conference at Middlesex District Court. I attended the four-way conference a few days prior, which was particularly rocky. Thankfully, the pretrial conference went well, and we were able to reach an agreement with probation regarding custody and parenting time. Another hearing was scheduled regarding child support after the father had been misappropriating the mother and children's Social Security benefits for the past year or so. I spent the day with our client discussing her case and getting to know her on a more personal level. Her kindness and warmth, even during some of the most trying and violating moments of her life, were incredibly inspiring. I hope to carry even a quarter of her grace with me in my life.

I also learned that I especially enjoy working with clients on restraining order extensions. The fast-paced filings and close interactions with clients are both thrilling and empowering. I have learned how differently judges approach survivors of domestic violence and how important trauma-informed training can be in the family law space. I have also felt frustration, especially regarding the rules surrounding notice. Sometimes police stations are not especially quick in providing notice to defendants, which can result in an extended hearing and additional uncertainty for survivors.

Thank you, EJA, for helping make this experience possible for me. I am so grateful for the opportunity and will carry this experience with me for years to come! If you would like to support future public interest lawyers, please consider donating.