



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2026

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



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Update 1: Hi all! I'm excited to share that I've been selected as an Equal Justice America Fellow. I'll be spending part of my summer at Civil Rights Corps as a Legal Intern, where I'll support their innovative civil rights litigation challenging systemic injustices. Their work ranges from dismantling cash bail systems to protecting the dignity of people impacted by the criminal legal system.

This work is made possible by Equal Justice America. EJA funds law students committed to expanding access to justice to the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Update 2: Hi all! Providing my second update as an EJA Fellow. I am wrapping up my first internship this summer at the Arlington County Public Defender ahead of starting at Civil Rights Corps. My experience at the PD has been rewarding and an amazing learning experience. I've learned from incredibly talented attorneys, written loads of motions, and spent a ton of time working directly with clients.

I'm going to miss this work immensely, but I am so excited to learn how to work on topics related to the violence of the criminal legal system from a civil rights perspective.

Update 3: Hello! I just completed my first week at Civil Rights Corps, and it has been amazing! I'm working closely with the team on innovative legal strategy to address systemic civil rights abuses perpetrated by the carceral system. Today, I'm working on our Right 2 Hug work (https://lnkd.in/gFRmHD_w), focused on protecting people's fundamental right to familial association.

This work asks: Can the government ban children and parents from visiting each other if one of



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them is jailed, even though the policy serves no interest other than making money?

The team has been so welcoming, and I am learning a ton.

Update 4: After a few weeks with the Civil Rights Corps team, I have learned so much about the pretrial detention system. The system, as it exists in most America, inverts the presumption of innocence and ensures that you are innocent provided you have the money to buy your pretrial freedom. Civil Rights Corps works directly on writs to free people being held in pretrial detention purely based on their inability to pay a bond. It's been amazing to work on these projects this summer!

Final Reflection: This summer, I worked as a legal intern at Civil Rights Corps, a nonprofit litigating against wealth-based detention and abusive practices in the criminal legal system. My work centered on a lawsuit against a county department of corrections challenging its practice of detaining people even after a judge had authorized their pretrial release and research related to the group's "Right to Hug" litigation that is being launched across several states.

Much of my time went toward research: I looked into state constitutional analogs to federal civil rights doctrine, an underdeveloped area of law with limited existing precedent to draw from, to help identify durable claims for people harmed by the criminal legal system. I also supported deposition preparation, mapping the admission goals we needed from county officials and helping determine what testimony was still outstanding as the litigation progressed. Alongside that, I drafted a motion to consolidate appeals on a separate matter, developing the legal argument independently before incorporating feedback from a supervising attorney. What struck me most was how much individual case work underlies systemic change. The lawsuit went beyond theory and depended on granular, specific facts of individuals' incarceration to make broader argument about the county's practices could be made. I also came to understand how public defenders are often the first to notice patterns worth escalating.

By the end of the summer, I had a much clearer sense of how legal advocacy operates at different scales simultaneously, one client's case can become part of the evidentiary foundation for a class action, and one motion can force a court to answer a question no one has raised before. That experience shaped how I think about the relationship between individual representation and structural reform going forward.