



Summer 2018 EJA Fellow



Name: Annika Olson

Law School: Boston College Law School

EJA Fellowship: GBLS: Elder, Health, and Disability

Entry 1: Week of 6/11/2018

#EJAFellowUpdate

Today is Elder Abuse Awareness Day! This summer I'm interning at Greater Boston Legal Services in the Elder Justice Unit. I'm finishing up my third week here and have been learning about and working on elder abuse prevention. 1 in 10 elders have experienced some form of elder abuse and in almost 60% of elder abuse and neglect incidents, the perpetrator is a family member. A huge contributing factor to elder abuse is having low social support – so reach out to an elder today and let them know that you're part of their support system.

Entry 2: Week of 6/25/2018

#EJAFellowUpdate

This week I went to a Chinese senior center in Quincy to present about elder abuse. Most of the Chinese elders living in the United States were born in China and may face great language barriers to getting the help they deserve when encountering elder abuse. Additionally – we had a training yesterday on Accessibility and Disability Cultural Competence.



Entry 3: Week of 7/9/2018

Time for another #EJAFellowUpdate!

I'm in the middle of my 7th ☺ week at Greater Boston Legal Services and I'm having a blast. Yesterday I got pulled into an emergency 3-hour client interview for a potential multifaceted case involving three units at GBLS. The patience our clients have with the legal system is astounding. Most of them had previously tried their cases on their own or with paid counsel and we're their last resort. The legal system is time consuming and runs on its own schedule so our clients have to essentially put their life on hold. So grateful for the people at GBLS for doing this work and Equal Justice America for funding people like me to help take some of the evergrowing case load.

Entry 4: Week of 7/23/2018

Final #EJAFellowUpdate!

This is my second to last week at Greater Boston Legal Services and it has gone by so fast. This week is full of writing. I finished up a letter for good cause and am working on a blog post on mahjong and its relatedness to elder abuse prevention. Big thank you to Equal Justice America for assisting in my funding for this summer. With proposed budget cuts to Americorps, as well as proposed cuts to medicare, social security, and welfare programs, my supervisor is losing two attorney fellows + funding for interns at a time of great need. So again, thank you to EJA for helping to fill that funding gap.

Please consider supporting Equal Justice America, so that my work, and the work of my peers, may continue.

<https://www.classy.org/campaign/equal-justice-america-2018-fellows-fundraiser/c170372>



GREATER BOSTON
LEGAL SERVICES
...and justice for all

August 1, 2018

Katie Toman
Office Manager
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

RE: Annika Olson

Dear Ms. Toman,

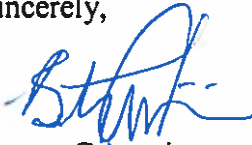
Annika Olson worked in the Elder, Health, and Disability unit at Greater Boston Legal Services this Summer from May, 2018 through August 3, 2018 and I was her direct supervisor. She focused on elder abuse prevention, which included legal work in the substantive areas of eviction defense and Social Security disability cases. She also participated in off-campus awareness seminars at senior centers in the greater Boston area. Annika's internship was made possible through funding from Equal Justice America. I greatly benefited from her work here as did our clients.

Annika worked on several cases involving complex legal and factual issues and in each case she came up with thoughtful and creative approaches to the issues. For example, in a public supportive housing eviction case, Annika coordinated efforts with the residential team at the public housing and scheduled a meeting with the attorney representing the public housing authority. The eviction was related to HUD's new smoke-free policies and our client was being evicted for alleged violation of the public housing authority's smoke-free policy. Annika researched the HUD policy and the requirements of a reasonable accommodation and while smoking is not a reasonable accommodation, a resident's physical or mental limitations can trigger a reasonable accommodation. Annika drafted a letter for reasonable accommodation and brought it, along with extensive research, to the meeting with the resident service team and the public housing authority's attorney. She led the meeting and her oral arguments persuaded the public housing authority to dismiss the notice to quit.

Katie Toman
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Annika showed great initiative and was a real self-starter. In her time here she worked on a large number of cases and was an incredibly valuable resource to our unit and to our clients. She was a pleasure to work with and we enjoyed having her here this Summer. On behalf of GBLS and our clients I want to thank EJA for funding the important work that Annika did and I look forward to working with future interns supported by EJA.

Sincerely,



Betsey Crimmins
Senior Attorney