



Summer 2018 EJA Fellow



Name: Tommy Statkiewicz
Law School: University of Washington School of Law
EJA Fellowship: ACLU of Washington

Entry: 6/29/2018

I was a recipient of the Equal Justice America Fellowship!

Update: I completed two weeks of my ACLU internship! This experience is flying by! Week one I researched the right to practice Native American religion in a youth detention center, visited the youth in the center, attended inspiring meetings, and marched in the Seattle Trans March. Week two I began writing my memo based on what I learned in week one and was assigned to conduct research on prosecutorial misconduct! Next week I will also get to begin work on immigrant rights!! #EJAFellowUpdate

Entry: 6/21/2018

Internship update: I've been with ACLU for 5 weeks! Since my first update, among other tasks, I've been conducting research on prosecutorial misconduct. Did you know that prosecutors are ELECTED officials who have the power to set bond, determine whether to prosecute, and choose what to charge? If you can, educate yourself and vote for your prosecutor this fall. Get more info at: <https://www.aclu.org/issues/smart-justice/power-prosecutors>

Personal update: Clara and I sent off my permanent green card application to USCIS this Friday (currently I have a conditional green card)! Hopefully next year we'll be submitting my naturalization application. As tight as money is, I can see how so many immigrant families have to forgo their immigration applications and lose their legal statuses. It's been difficult not earning a wage, not being eligible for bank loans, and not getting FAFSA support over the summer. That's why fellowships, scholarships, and community support is so important! If it weren't for the Equal Justice Fellowship, Stokes Lawrence Diversity Scholarship, William H. Gates Public Interest Law stipend (while not selected, as a finalist I was provided financial support), and support from my beautiful wife and mom, I wouldn't have been able to pay for the USCIS application, have a roof over my head, and food in my belly. It takes a community. I know it's tough for many of us.

Entry: 9/4/2018

It's been a week since I completed my ACLU internship. It was 10-weeks of learning and healing. One project lasted the entire 10-weeks and gave me the opportunity to research, write a (first rough draft) memo, meet with clients, and write a persuasive letter that was received positively. Other projects also included loads of research, either via WestLaw (an online legal research tool) or trusty ol' Google. I attended multiple inspiring meetings, hearings at the Federal District Court, a WAISN Deportation Defense training, and more. The staff was kind, demonstrated passion for their work and the ability to laugh during tough times, took time to mentor me, brought too many delicious treats (I miss the donuts!), and filled the office with the love of their brilliant four-pawed comrades (pictured in this FB post is "Linus Dark Prince Akira," a gentle giant <3).

Financial support from scholarships and fellowships made this work possible. I'm grateful that such support exists, including to non-citizen students. If you're able, support an institution that is willing to invest in underrepresented folks in higher education. One such org is Equal Justice America.
#EJAFellowUpdate

October 4, 2018

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
Building II – Suite 204
12540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Via email to katie@equaljusticeamerica.org

Re: Tommy Statkiewicz, University of Washington School of Law, Class of 2020

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I'm pleased to write this evaluation of Tommy Statkiewicz's work with the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington (ACLU-WA) during the summer of 2018. Tommy worked with us for 12 weeks, 40 hours per week, as a full time intern with our Policy Advocacy Group. I served as Tommy's primary supervisor, but he also worked closely with the ACU-WA Immigration and Police Practices Counsel and the director of our Campaign for Smart Justice. Tommy is a thoughtful, committed advocate who is passionate about equal justice and puts enormous effort into ensuring that his work is the best it can be.

Tommy worked on a variety of projects during his time with us. One of his largest projects involved representing youth incarcerated in a detention facility who were denied access to Native American religious practices. Tommy conducted copious research into the constitutional and statutory schemes governing this area, met with and interviewed the young people, produced a legal memo to share with cooperating attorneys, and drafted an advocacy letter to the detention facility's managers. Tommy's advocacy letter was excellent. It was thoroughly researched, well-written, and persuasive, and laid a successful foundation for ongoing policy conversations with the detention facility. He interacted with our juvenile clients professionally, empathetically, and with cultural competence.

In addition to that case work, Tommy worked with various ACLU staff on public education and advocacy projects. He researched prosecutorial misconduct cases throughout the state, to identify those prosecutors' offices with a pattern of reversal for misconduct. He also developed know your rights materials on the intersection between immigration and local law enforcement, and conducted data analysis on disproportionate suspension and expulsion from school. Tommy pushed himself (and his supervising attorneys) to think deeply about the goals of each project and to execute the work thoroughly. He was an active participant in our office



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Vanessa Torres Hernandez
Youth Policy Director

strategy sessions, and an eager thought partner as we developed strategies to address complex legal issues.

Tommy is already a valuable member of our public interest legal community; he comes from a personal understanding of the myriad ways that the legal system can serve as a force of empowerment or oppression, and he couples that personal passion for the work with a formidable intelligence. I look forward to seeing Tommy continue to grow in skills and confidence. Thank you for supporting his opportunity to work with us this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vanessa Torres Hernandez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Vanessa Torres Hernandez
Youth Policy Director, ACLU-WA