



## Summer 2019 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Victoria Bonds

**Law School:** Loyola Law School

**Fellowship:** Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

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### Entry 1:

My first few weeks as an Equal Justice America fellow at Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles have expanded my understanding of immigration. I assisted with intakes at the immigration court where almost all the potential clients had arrived in the United States within the past few months and were seeking asylum. I also visited a client at an immigration detention center. One of the most interesting cases that I am working on is a 1794 Jay Treaty case that allows certain Canadian born Native Americans to become US residents.

As part of my Equal Justice America summer fellowship, I will be posting updates every couple of weeks. I am so grateful for the financial award that EJA gave me so I can intern at such an amazing non-profit. Please join me in growing EJA and their ability to support law students around the country who are here to help those who need it most.

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### Entry 2:

It can be challenging to work with a clientele that is entirely in crisis mode. My clients are mostly asylum seekers, survivors of human trafficking and victims of domestic violence. I have helped with intakes at immigration court and detention centers where potential clients have arrived in the United States within the past few months and are seeking asylum. The Legal Aid of Los Angeles is great about educating their clerks about second-hand trauma and providing resources.

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### Entry 3:

One of my most interesting assignments this summer is drafting an amicus brief for a 9th Circuit immigration case that has to do with U Visas. U Visas are for immigrant victims of violent crimes who assisted in the investigation or prosecution of their perpetrators. It is a great tool for law enforcement to



work with a population who may be afraid to report crimes out of fear of deportation. Unfortunately, the ruling in this case would limit the victim's ability to stay in the United States while their U Visa application is pending. It is imperative that we fight to protect the most vulnerable populations.

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#### **Entry 4:**

Last week I finished my summer fellowship at LAFLA. It was an honor to work with the largest nonprofit in California. I was able to help clients apply for VAWA, U Visas for victims for violent crimes, and work permits. I also made strong progress in clients' asylum and T Visas for victims of human trafficking cases. My amicus brief will be submitted to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals next month. My work this summer reaffirmed my passion for immigration and inspired a goal of working for immigrants' rights through impact litigation.