

Dear EJA Supporter,

I am a rising 3L at the University of Chicago, and this summer I worked at the National Immigrants' Rights Project at the ACLU. This office is the first line of defense against the onslaught of anti-immigration policies. As an immigrant myself, this work was truly fulfilling, and allowed me to use my legal skills to defend some of the most marginalized people in our country. Over the summer, I was involved in many of the country's most pressing issues related to immigrants: I was able to assist in the ongoing challenge against the Muslim Ban; I investigated ways to litigate against the abusive conditions of detention at the border; and, I engaged in broad legal and political advocacy to defend the rights of Asylum seekers.

Specific Projects I worked on:

I worked with the director of the Immigrants' Rights Project, Omar Jadwat, on the ongoing Muslim Ban litigation and I researched ways to support the legal theory in our case. I wrote a memo discussing the role that "controlling issues of law" play in cases involving exceptional circumstances (like the Muslim Ban), and whether those circumstances afford greater discretion for the government. I found cases where the judge in our case denied requests for interlocutory appeal on the grounds that a controlling question of law cannot simply be a disagreement over an application of the law.

I worked with Michael Tan to challenge the Department of Homeland Security's authority to deport immigrants to Mexico while they wait for their asylum cases. Many of these individuals are not from Mexico, and I argued that the government is abusing its authority and violating international law by deporting them to a dangerous third country.

The government also recently crossed the Rubicon by announcing their intention to go after naturalized citizens in an ongoing denaturalization campaign. In preparation for these policies, I wrote a primer on government denaturalization efforts outlining the differences between civil and criminal denaturalization proceedings. I drafted a list of arguments we could potentially use to defend clients facing denaturalization proceedings

The Supreme Court recently removed certain protections granted to immigrants by stating there is no statutory right to challenge a prolonged detention of an immigrant. To counter this new obstacle, I conducted exhaustive research to find ways to challenge prolonged detention as a constitutional matter and to argue for the release of immigrants on bond.

I did factual and legal research on the issue of overcrowding in El Paso detention centers. I started by compiling all the reports that describe the conditions of the El Paso detention center, and I discussed the causes, alternatives, and possible responses to the situation. I then wrote a memo to answer whether individuals the detains have constitutional protections regarding conditions of confinement. I then moved on the issue of "sub-regulatory policies" to determine whether the CBP's internal guidelines were legally binding.

In sum, I produced research memos on various topics, and participated in litigation across several stages of a case's life cycle. My work varied from substantively cite checking articles to participating in strategic planning meetings and policy discussions. All of this in the pursuit of protecting immigrants' rights. None of this work would have been possible without your generous contribution. On behalf of all the clients I helped represent, thank you for your support.

Osama Alkhawaja, *Equal Justice America Fellow*