



Summer 2019 EJA Fellow:

Name: Sarah Reasoner

Law School: University of Michigan

Fellowship: Legal Services of South Central Michigan

Entry 1: 6/10

As some of you may know, this summer I have the pleasure of working at Legal Services of South Central Michigan, an organization with the Michigan Advocacy Program. I have spent the last two weeks immersed in the fields of housing law and public benefits law. These first two weeks have been an amazing experience, with lots of client contact and hands-on work. From drafting (and serving) discovery documents to preparing to speak at an upcoming expungement hearing, LSSCM is giving me the skills I will need to someday be a successful litigator (and not just a pretend one like in undergrad). The only reason I was able to focus entirely on working full time for LSSCM is because of my fellowship with Equal Justice America, so I would like to give a shout out to them.

Entry 2: 6/26

This is my second update from my time working at Legal Services of South Central Michigan in the Equal Justice America fellowship program. The past month has simultaneously been a blur and had felt like a year. I have so many different awesome projects on my plate! Here is a list of just some of the many things I have learned over the past month:

- How a fax machine works
- “Personal service” means actually handing a document to someone, not taking it to their house and leaving it in their mailbox (oops).
- Bed bugs release a smell similar to the spice Cumin
- For the reason stated above, dogs can be trained to detect and alert to the smell of bed bugs
- You should try to work in the same building as an organization that helps people get green cards, because happy clients with new green cards love to bring in ethnic treats as thank you gifts! (shout out to Michigan Immigrant Rights client who brought in middle eastern pastries last week)

On a more serious note, I have also learned about how absolutely insane our subsidized housing and public benefits system is to navigate, but about the enormous pressure we put on low income individuals to understand exactly what they are doing when applying for these benefits. That is why places like LSSCM, which



serve to give free legal advice to those having difficulty maintaining their housing and benefits, is so important. I am proud to be part of this organization.

Entry 3:

This is my second update from my time working at Legal Services of South Central Michigan in the Equal Justice America fellowship program.

Over the past few weeks, I have been able to do so many cool things! I have conducted an administrative hearing where I cross examined witnesses, responded to and made objections, and wrote a brief. I have gotten to appear in court, work on criminal record expungements, and have had several cases resolve with favorable outcomes. I look forward to finishing the rest of my time at Michigan Advocacy Program's Legal Services division while completing OCI next week. I am so grateful for the financial support of Equal Justice America for making this summer possible.

Entry 4: 8/8

Yesterday was my last day working for Legal Services of South Central Michigan. I had an amazing time this summer working with clients on their housing law and public benefits law issues. Although helping clients who are afraid of losing their housing was challenging both intellectually and emotionally, it was rewarding work. I have learned so much not only about those specific areas of law, but about what it means to be a good lawyer. My last day was bittersweet: I am sad to be leaving, but excited as I look toward the future.