



Summer 2019 EJA Fellow:



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Law School: The University of Texas at Austin

Fellowship: The ACLU of Texas - Houston office

Entry 1:

Hello, everyone! As many of you may know, I have officially started my summer at the ACLU of Texas. I am spending the summer in the Houston office, and have already had some incredible experiences.

My second week on the job, I accompanied a staff attorney to the Tarrant County Commissioner's Court as she testified before the Court to ask them to not renew the County's 287(g) contracts with ICE. These programs allow local law enforcement to check someone's immigration status when booked into a local jail, and the jail is then authorized to detain a person until ICE is able to take them into custody. These programs are costly for local government, and result in deep distrust for law enforcement in immigrant communities. I researched the downfalls of the 287(g) program, as well as costly settlements that counties in other states have entered into due to wrongful ICE detainers and detainer overstay. I also have learned about the ACLU of Texas's ongoing Criminalization of Homelessness litigation, as well as the issue of homelessness in Houston in general.

Entry 2:

I'm having a wonderful time at the ACLU of Texas. While on the job, I have learned more about impact litigation, all the way from client intake to legal research, case strategizing, and filing. I have been fortunate enough to work on several different projects, including immigrant's rights, criminal justice reform, and local activism. This experience is helping me understand more about all the different facets of public interest law, and revealing which subjects I'm the most passionate about.



Entry 3:

I can't believe how quickly time has flown! This week, I had the opportunity to tour Huntsville State Prison and its death chamber, where all executions occur in the state of Texas. This was a very somber yet eye-opening experience. It served as a reminder of one of the many things this organization, and many others like it across the country, is fighting to change. I am grateful to be in a position that offers me once-in-a-lifetime experiences such as this.

Entry 4:

I have completed my internship at the ACLU of Texas, and am so grateful for all the lessons I learned along the way. I was fortunate enough to peek into several of the different projects the organization is working on, from decriminalizing homelessness, changing unfair bail practices, securing access to the ballot for eligible voters, immigration advocacy, and much more. I also learned what topics interest me more than others, and what sorts of issues I want to tackle when I start my legal career. What I know for sure is that I remain as passionate as ever to public interest law, and want to put my JD to use by improving the structures that we all live under in Texas.