



Summer 2019 EJA Fellow:

Name: Leslie Perlera Gonzalez

Law School: Northeastern University School of Law

Fellowship: Greater Boston Legal Services

Entry 1:

As some of you know, I was selected as one of this year's Equal Justice America fellows, and I am now two weeks into my internship in the Family Law Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS). I am so thankful and excited to be working alongside some of the kindest and most hardworking advocates I've met. For my first case, I will be helping my client obtain a divorce, as well as apply for a green card under the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA). I am honored to be helping her with her case.



Entry 2:

In the last couple of weeks, I have been assigned a couple of Spanish-speaking only clients - I am loving my work so far because I get to utilize my bilingual skills to help women access our justice system. The women we serve are courageous, resilient, and often, loving mothers working hard to support their families. Last week, I attended my first contempt hearing in court and we got to hand over a \$3,500 alimony check to our client. Without us, my client would not have known what to do about her ex-spouse's failure to uphold their divorce agreement. While in the court room, I often see women who are pro se and have no idea how to fill out the paperwork they are handed when they walk in. I'm thankful Greater Boston Legal Services exists to help mitigate the incredible lack of access to legal help.



Entry 3:

The best thing about this job are the people - the clients, my attorney mentors, and my fellow interns. In the past couple of weeks, we have attended hearings together, lobbied together at the State House, and cried together in our debrief meetings. In the family law unit, we decide as a group whether or not to take on a case, and we come together a couple of times a week to strategize and help move cases forward. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to bounce ideas off them and learn and grow alongside them. All of us are committed to showing up each day and working harder than we did the day before.



Entry 4:

My internship has come to a close, and although I am saddened to leave my clients behind, I know that I am leaving them in the best of hands. I am so grateful not only for all that I have learned and experienced in the last couple of months, but also for the great and fearless mentors I've had and all the awesome law students I got to know during my time at GBLS. They have made my time with GBLS so dear to me. I also had the opportunity of developing new skills and working on things I hadn't done before, such as negotiating with opposing parties (always a fun experience), handling discovery, drafting motions, and participating in court hearings. Every day was different from the last and the weeks have truly flown by. GBLS is an incredible organization.