



Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



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Law School: Boston College Law School

Organization: Greater Boston Legal Services

Week of June 15th

I am happy to say that for the past 3 weeks I have been helping provide free legal services for those in need with the Greater Boston Legal Services Housing Unit. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the growing housing/homelessness crisis in the United States and its disproportionate impact on minority communities. Many families who have lost their jobs are unable to pay their rent and as such will be evicted following the lifting of the moratorium on evictions in August. GBLS's housing unit has been working relentlessly to provide assistance applying for government funds for rent relief while at the same time preparing client's defenses for housing court. While I have only been working for a short period of time, the dedication and passion I have seen from my fellow workers has inspired me. The right to affordable, secure housing is fundamental and necessary for an equitable society. A lot of the issues surrounding housing are inherently tied with our country's struggle with systemic racism. I implore everyone reading this to please make an effort to learn and understand the Black Lives Matter movement. Issues surrounding institutionalized racism do not end with police brutality: it is an entire system that needs to be changed. For anyone who would like to make an effort to learn more here is a link to some resources: <https://parade.com/1046031/breabaker/anti-racist-tv-movies-documentaries-ted-talks-books/?fbclid=IwAR0PwyyqCAdXbOzogPSsxOEF2RPgsKLZheGMroyUYCwrn8Rm86nTvbCGUhY>

Week of August 10th

As my work in housing comes to a close this summer, I wanted to use this post to raise awareness for the looming eviction crisis. While different states and localities have enacted various policies aimed at preventing evictions in the coming months, the federal government eviction moratorium



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for federally subsidized and federally backed housing expired on July 25th.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/camilomaldonado/2020/08/11/trumps-executive-order-does-little-to-stop-potential-eviction-crisis/#24e55e4b5329>

If there is one major takeaway that I have from this summer, it is that the issue of housing in the United States is overlooked and underfunded. In the upcoming election cycle, please research and vote for candidates that believe people have a right to housing.

My work this summer, and many other law students working in public interest law, would not be possible without organizations like Equal Justice America (EJA). Equal Justice America believes that income should not determine outcomes in the US justice system, and is committed to ensuring that legal help is available to those who need it most. Through its fellowships, EJA provides law students an opportunity to help provide legal services to those who can not afford them. It would be greatly appreciated if you could please take the time to check out their website and possibly donate.