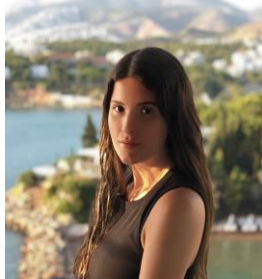




## Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Alexis Anderson

**Law School:** Cornell Law School

**Organization:** Cornell Farmworker Legal Assistance Clinic

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### Week of June 15th

My first few weeks at the Cornell Farmworker Legal Assistance Clinic have been eye-opening. I have been conducting intake interviews with clients in order to help them apply for U-Visas. U-Visas are visas for those who have been victims of a crime while in the United States and who have assisted the government in the investigation or prosecution of that crime. In interviewing the clients, I have learned about the hardships they have persistently faced, both in their home country and when they came to work in the United States. However, despite their experiences, these clients continue to find hope. They remain positive about their chances of coming to the United States. They look forward to a better future for their children and grandchildren. Getting to know these clients and hearing their stories has been such a powerful experience and I feel fortunate to be connected with them and to be in a position to help them apply for their visas.

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### Week of July 6th

At the Cornell Farmworker Legal Assistance Clinic, I have also been working with clients who are petitioning for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). It is quite a different experience from my work with my U-visa clients and I am grateful to be involved in both! It definitely proved more challenging to get these younger clients to open up (particularly because our conversations cannot as easily be held in person due to the pandemic). However, once we established a sense of trust, it was astonishing to hear what these young adults have experienced over the course of their lives and what strength, bravery, and determination it took for them to journey to the United States.



## **Week of July 27th**

At the start of my summer internship at the Cornell Farmworker Legal Assistance Clinic, I was paired with an undergraduate interpreter to help me communicate with my Spanish-speaking clients. Working with my interpreter has definitely been a highlight of my experience so far. He and I enjoy navigating the challenges that come along with building professional relationships across language barriers. Although communicating with clients through an interpreter may sound challenging, the experience in reality has been very smooth and very rewarding. The clients view my interpreter and me as a team and have formed bonds with both of us. We both feel included in the conversation and invested in our clients, and we enjoy collaborating with each other to address challenges, such as how to rephrase a question in order to help a client understand better or how to communicate through WhatsApp with an illiterate client. It is a powerful experience to be able to connect with clients who speak different languages, live in different countries, and come from different backgrounds, and I am very grateful to be a part of that experience at the Clinic this summer.

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## **Week of August 10th**

The U-Visa applications for my clients at the Cornell Farmworker Legal Assistance Clinic are finally coming together and should be ready for submission soon. It is incredibly exciting to have reached this stage in the process! Just two months ago my interpreter and I were doing our first intake calls with the clients, and now we are getting ready to file their complete applications. I am both proud of all that we have accomplished in such a short time and hopeful that these applications will change the lives of our clients. My experience at the Clinic this summer has been nothing short of wonderful. It was so rewarding to directly work with and advocate for my clients. I not only gained invaluable hands-on legal experience in the field of immigration law, but I also developed relationships with my clients that transcended our language barrier. I am so grateful for this opportunity and I am excited to continue fighting for disadvantaged clients as I move forward in my legal career.