



Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Fernanda Herrera Spieler

Law School: LUC School of Law

Organization: Legal Aid Chicago

Week of June 15th

I started my summer internship at Legal Aid Chicago this week. I'll be working in the human trafficking survivors team in immigration. The stories of the clients I'm working for are heart-breaking. As difficult as my life has been at times I've not suffered anywhere near what these amazing survivors have suffered at the hands of their abusers and traffickers. I am grateful for this opportunity to learn and hone in on my craft of helping others with words and forms. I am taking breaks. I am breathing. Please consider donating so that other student may be able to have similar experiences!

Week of July 6th

Hey everyone! I've been working as an EJA Fellow now for about 3 weeks with Legal Aid Chicago. I've been helping victims of trafficking--drafting declarations and putting together applications, helping with new updated birth certificates so that clients can't be tracked down by their traffickers, and overall it has been an amazing experience! Because of Equal Justice America, organizations around the country are able to have paid interns do the work that is necessary to keep them going. I am incredibly privileged to have this position and to be able to learn valuable skills for my future as an advocate. If you're able to donate to ensure future law students have this opportunity to help others, please donate!

Week of July 27th

I am a fellow with Equal Justice America this summer. EJA provides funding for students who are passionate about doing public interest work and helping communities in need. We are raising funds so that future law students may be able to use their talents and time to ensure that individuals with legal needs are able to access representation. Currently, the organization I am working with is helping folks with housing needs, employment needs, and domestic violence and trafficking abuse get access to legal services in a tumultuous time. I am proud to be doing this work and am hopeful that future generations of law students are able to have this amazing experience as well!



Week of August 10th

My time at Legal Aid Chicago ended a couple of weeks ago, but the lessons I've learned will follow me wherever I go. I am hopeful that future law students with a passion for public interest will be able to have these experiences. Remote work was difficult, but I cannot imagine being on the clients' side of this--everything from needed extra assistance to pay for meals, needing furniture because a home kept flooding, or simply trying to make ends meet during a pandemic while they waited for a work permit. It's so frustrating to see all of the things that can happen when employers take advantage of immigrant and non-immigrant workers, and the few safeguards that are in place for immigrants and non-immigrants alike to seek a means for escape. My eyes have been opened, and I will continue to advocate for victims of human trafficking.

Please consider donating so that future clients can be served by hopeful attorneys wishing to fill in the gap in legal aid.