



Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Cecilia MacArthur

Law School: Northeastern

Organization: Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

Week of May 25:

My first two weeks at Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project have been super interesting! I'm fresh out of 1L at Northeastern University School of Law and have never taken immigration law, so the first few days were spent acquainting myself with the basics. My first assignment was to write a memo comparing BIA and First Circuit decisions on asylum cases where the applicant is fleeing gang violence. After that, I worked to translate Angolan adoption documents from Portuguese to English. Because the documents raised questions about whether the transfer of parental rights granted adoption or guardianship, I spent some time reading Angolan adoption and guardianship law to try and discern what had happened in this case.

Now, I'm working on a letter brief for a T Visa case. It's a bit challenging, but the attorney I'm working with has been very supportive. In spite of COVID forcing me to work remotely, I've enjoyed my first few weeks at ILAP!

Week of June 29:

I'm four weeks into my internship at Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project! I'm still working on that T Visa case, but the deadline is this Thursday. I'm so glad to be nearly done—this letter brief is giant, with legal arguments that fold in on themselves and citations I can't seem to get right. I found the case research to be the most difficult, as immigration appeals tend to be housed in the BIA and AAO archives, which I do not think are very researcher-friendly (any tips would be greatly appreciated!). I encountered a similar hurdle in research another project this week, a 209(c) waiver for an asylee applying for adjustment of status. As the lawyer I'm working with has never filed a 209(c) waiver, I was tasked with researching past decisions to understand how courts exercise their discretion in granting a waiver based on the vaguely-



defined "humanitarian, family unity, or other public interest" grounds. I felt like a terrible researcher for coming up with nothing, until I found an article confirming that indeed no cases had been published. Mostly recently, I've begun researching SIJ petitions to prepare a training on filing a SIJ petition, and to file one on my own!

Week of July 7:

My internship at Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project is now more than halfway done! In the past few weeks, I've continued working on the 209(c) waiver and the SIJ petition but am also now working on two U Visa cases, two I-601 waivers, an N-600, and more. One of the I-601 cases involves understanding how the First Circuit—and immigration law in general— deals with false claims to U.S. citizenship. I've been shocked to learn how seemingly easy it is to have falsely claimed U.S. citizenship, and how wide-reaching the consequences can be. I also spent the end of last week venturing into the world of crimmigration, as I researched and compiled a client's record in order to help determine whether he is deportable. I am continuing to learn so much from my colleagues and clients and am so grateful for this opportunity!

Week of July 27:

I just finished up my internship at Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project! It flew by!

In the last few weeks, I have worked on a number of cases. I spent the majority of my time preparing an I-601 waiver for a client who is currently in Honduras. The work required numerous interviews with his family members to draft declarations about the effect the separation has had on them, as well as researching how the BIA, AAO, and Circuit courts have dealt with misrepresentation of country of origin. Although I already know about the cruelty of the American immigration system, witnessing the cold legalese of the statutes and decisions against the torrent of pain the client and his family have endured was striking. My other projects were just as upsetting, as I finalized my research on false claims to U.S. citizenship, researched waivers for T Visa applicants, analyzed another client's criminal record to determine his deportability, and conducted country conditions and medical research. I learned so much this summer and am so grateful for EJA's support!

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