



Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Neal Vinaixa

Law School: New York University School of Law

Organization: New York Legal Assistance Group

Week of June 15th

I was lucky to be selected this summer to be an Equal Justice America Fellow, and I am working this summer at the New York Legal Assistance Group. I'm only a week into my internship, but I've received several assignments relating immigration law that I'm excited to be working on. Though it is a bit different to be working to home as opposed to NYLAG's physical office, I've been able to connect with coworkers and clients on the phone and Zoom. With the courts slowly opening up and a decision on DACA coming any day from the Supreme Court, it's an anxious time doing immigration matters but I know that with hard work I can make a difference in clients' lives. If possible, please consider helping support Equal Justice America.

Week of July 6th

Today I am posting my second update after having been fortunate enough to be selected to be an Equal Justice America Fellow. Before starting at NYLAG, I had always thought I was fully aware of how broken and unreflective of reality our immigration system was and has continued to become, but with just a few weeks of hands-on work I've started to come to full terms with the extent. I've worked on multiple cases where there is a viable path to relief, but for every one of those there's a heartbreaking situation where there's really nothing to be done even if we had all the resources in the world. This can be disheartening, but it only hardened my resolve to work tirelessly on the clients that we can help while hoping earnestly for change. The attorneys with whom I work do amazing work that I am honored to be a of, and I hope to continue doing my utmost for them and most importantly the clients who have nowhere else to turn. Please consider helping support Equal Justice America in their work supporting Americans gain access to crucial legal services.



Week of July 27th

As my internship at NYLAG draws to a close, it's surprising even to me how much I've done in the short, virtual time I've had here. There's so many different assignments I've worked on focusing on so many distinct kinds of immigration relief ranging from asylum and U-Visas to military parole in place and more. I've done research memos, client affidavits, legal arguments, letter briefs, Family Court filings, a whole lot of client intakes and interviews and more. Yet I've found immigration to be somewhat paradoxical. Despite the myriad projects I've worked on for so many different kinds of relief, for many the options remain remarkably and head-scratchingly limited. I've immensely enjoyed doing all I can to support our clients, but there's still much work to be done to achieve a truly just immigration system. If possible, please help support Equal Justice America in its important work for all Americans.

Week of August 10th

While this is sadly my last update, having just finished up my time with the New York Legal Assistance Group, I'm glad to have the time to reflect on my experiences. In this unprecedented remote summer, I was very grateful to have the opportunity to work on so many different substantive projects for our clients despite frustrating delays and uncertainty. Our immigration system is extremely complex, and having the chance to fight everyday for our clients is an experience I will always treasure. I learned tremendously in the relatively short time I had at NYLAG, and I know that in the future this experience will help me be a better advocate for my clients. Thanks to the generosity of Equal Justice America, I was able to participate in this wonderful experience, and I would not have traded it for anything.