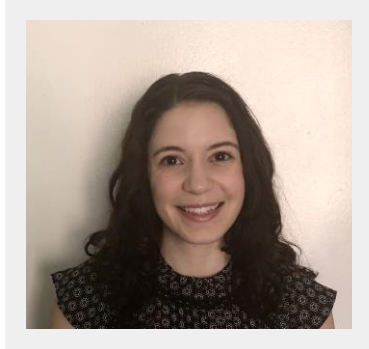




Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Nina Nevarez

Law School: New York University School of Law

Organization: Legal Information for Families Today

Week of June 15th

This week I started as a legal intern at Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT), an organization that provides unrepresented litigants with information and advice as they navigate issues like child support and custody in New York Family Court. As an Equal Justice America fellow this summer, I'll be sharing updates about what this work looks like. Through donations, EJA is able to support law students working at organizations that provide legal services for some of the most vulnerable populations in the United States. Stay tuned and donate if you can!

Week of July 6th

One way Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) assists their clients is through maintaining a telephone and email hotline. I spend my mornings either observing these helpline calls or drafting emails to learn how different elements of family law function together. These emails are each unique and deeply personal scenarios that require me to figure out what the client needs to know in order to begin or continue their family court process. Because these calls and emails provide legal information, and not advice, I include necessary materials and inform clients of the steps that may be needed to reach the outcome the client wants. Last week, I worked on an email about custody and visitation, while this morning I provided information about filing a petition to modify a child support order. This type of program is exactly why I chose to intern here. By communicating over phone or email at no cost to the client, LIFT is able to provide legal information to any pro se individual with a family court case in NY. For those who may lack easy access to their family court or reliable technology, these helpline systems help close the gap in legal services for people navigating complex and personal legal issues.



Week of July 27th

When I haven't been observing client calls or helping with emails, I've been working on researching paternity issues in New York. Paternity is already an issue many pro se litigants deal with because it affects one's rights to custody and visitation. Check out LIFT's legal resource guide on paternity below, available online and usually at the courthouses for litigants!

Week of August 10th

Today was my final day at Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)! Even though it was not the way I imagined it would be, working in direct services this summer reminded me why I came to law school. I appreciated the opportunity to not only hone my legal research and writing skills but also observe attorneys and clients bring these issues to life.