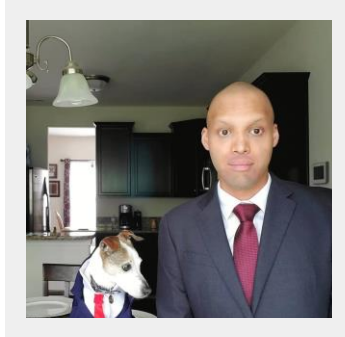




## Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



**Name:** Jaime Portillo

**Law School:** Rutgers Law School

**Organization:** Bet Tzedek Legal Services

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### Week of June 15<sup>th</sup>:

I've been with Bet Tzedek Legal Services for a month now in their Low Income Tax Advocacy Clinic, and it has been a phenomenal experience. As a rising 3L at Rutgers Law School-Newark, I've had the opportunity to learn more about tax law, and it has sparked a growing interest in how tax law and the finance world impact vulnerable communities, and how assistance is sought and delivered to those in need. As someone dedicated to public interest, I've had the privilege thus far to research, write, and assist clients with a range of tax related matters such as federal and state tax relief, joint and individual filing disputes, collections, among much more. Working remotely is a different situation to be in, but I've enjoyed my time so far and am look forward to continuing to help the greater Los Angeles community

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### Week of July 6<sup>th</sup>:

As of this writing, I've been with Bet Tzedek Legal Services for nearly 2 months now with the Low Income Tax Advocacy Clinic, and the time has really flown by. As a rising 3L at Rutgers Law School, I imagine time in general will begin to fly by. Working in tax has really been an eye-opening experience as to how tax law and other financial obstacles impact vulnerable people. I've assisted in a myriad of tax related matters on local, state, and federal levels and continue to do so. For me, the most eye-opening thing about working in tax matters has been just how commonplace these matters are in people's lives, regardless of one's background or economic status. The exposure to tax law has been an interesting experience to learn and work in, especially from a public interest-oriented perspective, to understand the inter-sectional functions of tax law and public interest. It's been humbling to continually learn and be educated about the many areas of tax law so that I can better help those who seek out tax assistance and is something I strive to continue doing.



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## **Week of July 27<sup>th</sup>:**

Today was my last day as a Summer Law Clerk with Bet Tzedek Legal Services in their Low Income Taxpayer Clinic. The summer truly went by in the blink of an eye, but nonetheless I am grateful for the experience. Having the opportunity to help vulnerable and underrepresented clients with a variety of tax matters of differing tax laws was a privilege. The inter-sectional functions of tax law and public interest, including Tax return controversies, Treasury and State regulations, Benefits and Collections, and a variety of IRS tax controversies were areas of interest that I enjoyed delving into. Tax law's intersection with serving those in need is an avenue of law I have come to respect and appreciate, and I reflect on this on my last day as an intern. A big thank you to my awesome supervising attorney in the LITC for all the input, opportunities, and advice from start to finish! Helping those in need has always been my driving force through law school and will continue to be during my final year.

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## **Week of August 10<sup>th</sup>:**

It has been almost 2 weeks since I wrapped up my Summer Law Clerk position with Bet Tzedek Legal Services, and looking back, it was a great experience in their Low-Income Tax Clinic. I have always been someone keen on working in the public interest sector following graduation, and my time this summer affirmed that commitment. Helping those in need has always been my passion, and that has never been truer than it has been in these historic times. This summer has taught me the ever-increasing importance of representation and access to resources for underprivileged communities and how the law actively and continuously shapes people's lives. No matter where you look, there will always be people in need. Fortunately, there will also be people ready and willing to help those in need. I find it to be a personal obligation to use my privilege of higher education and the opportunities afforded to me as a method of giving back to communities and aiding them in the best way the law can. As I soon enter my final year of law school at Rutgers Law School, I remain cognizant of my path ahead and know that I'll soon fulfill that vision of helping those in need, not just as a law student, but one day as a practicing attorney.