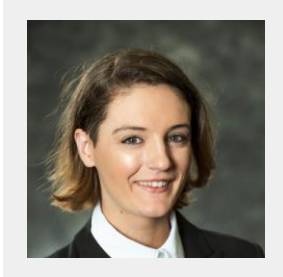




Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Lydia Harris

Law School: St. Mary's University School of Law

Organization: Texas RioGrande Legal Aid

Week of June 15th

It's time for my first EJA Fellow Update

First, I want to say a huge thank you to Equal Justice America for the opportunity to be an EJA Fellow. I also want to say a big thank you to Texas RioGrande Legal Aid for hosting me this summer.

This is not at all what I thought my first summer as a law student would look like, but it is an incredible experience that I am so grateful to participate in. This remote internship experience has definitely taught me to be flexible in my approach to learning and connecting with people, and it has been such a positive experience for me.

I am getting to do the kind of work I want to do when I graduate, working with survivors of sexual assault and family violence. I am getting to serve my community. I am learning so much.

If you'd like to help support students like me working to help ensure "justice for all" and access to civil legal services for everyone, regardless of income status, you can donate.

(Pictured is my workspace, featuring a photo of the best coworker - Gary the Cat)



Week of July 6th

I'm really enjoying my time as an Equal Justice America fellow at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. The opportunities I have been so privileged to receive through these organizations are astounding. I have



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received mentorship and guidance from my supervisor and other attorneys that no doubt will help me be a better advocate for future clients. I have gotten to engage with clients, research interesting legal issues, and observe legal proceedings. My favorite experiences so far include calling clients to gather information for the attorneys I am assisting and observing mediations. Talking with clients shows me that the work I'm doing makes a real impact on people's lives. I also really enjoy the opportunities to grow my network and make new friends through the Summer Clerk Lunch Series. I am so grateful for the many opportunities I have been so fortunate to receive, and I am looking forward to the rest of my summer as an EJA Fellow, TRLA Clerk, and St. Mary's student.

Week of July 27th

Thank you to Equal Justice America for selecting me to be an EJA Fellow and allowing me this opportunity. Thank you to Texas RioGrande Legal Aid for hosting me this summer and allowing me to have such a wide variety of experiences. Thank you to St. Mary's University School of Law for encouraging me to apply to EJA and TRLA and for teaching me the skills I needed to be successful in my fellowship.

For this EJA Fellow Update, I want to talk about one of my favorite experiences as an EJA Fellow.

This summer, I have observed two different clients during mediation. I found mediations to be so interesting because it allowed me to see clients set goals for themselves and what they wanted out of the interaction and then make them happen! During mediation, the clients advocate for themselves with the attorney's support, which I found to be incredibly different from watching a divorce proceeding in court where the attorney does the advocating. In the mediations I got to observe, both clients' cases came to a resolution they were happy with. It was a really positive experience! I loved seeing the clients' goals realized.

Week of August 10th

It's time for my last EJA Fellow Update!

Last week, I finished my 400 hours as an Equal Justice America fellow at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. It was an incredible opportunity filled with so many learning experiences, and I am so thankful to EJA and TRLA for giving me this opportunity.

I spent my summer working as a law clerk for the Family Law Team at TRLA. I researched interesting legal issues, wrote memos, drafted pleadings, observed hearings and client meetings, and so much more.

I knew going into this experience that I wanted to work in legal aid doing family law when I graduate, and this experience solidified that for me.

I am excited to return to St. Mary's University School of Law next week and continue my legal education so that I can accomplish my goal.