



Summer 2020 EJA Fellow:



Name: Samantha McCoy

Law School: St. Mary's School of Law

Organization: Texas Advocacy Project

Week of June 15th

This summer, I have the honor to work alongside the amazing attorneys at Texas Advocacy Project, Inc. as an Equal Justice America Fellow. I am officially one month into my fellowship where I have focused my work around the new Title IX regulations and what that means for survivors who are attending classes at the secondary and post-secondary level. In addition, I have further expanded my knowledge surrounding protective orders for victims of domestic and sexual violence. It is clear that many victims of violence are unable to afford legal representation and they are attempting to juggle the trauma they have experienced and the confusing legal system simultaneously. I am humbled by the dedication and care that it takes for attorneys working in this field and I am even more motivated to continue to make a difference for survivors throughout my professional career upon graduation from St. Mary's University School of Law. This work is what I was called to do and I am incredibly grateful for the support of Equal Justice America for making this experience possible.

Please consider supporting EJA for future students to continue pro bono services for the many victims who are unable to afford adequate legal counsel.

Week of July 6th

I am already halfway done with my summer internship at Texas Advocacy Project, Inc. and I feel like I have truly grown professionally and personally. COVID-19 has caused an increase in danger for people working remotely. Many victims of domestic violence are stuck with their perpetrators in their house, endangering their safety and increasing the severity of their situation. I have turned on the national news and I have consistently seen more lives lost due to domestic violence. It is heartbreaking. I am so glad resources exist to provide victims the space to come forward and seek protection. It has been an honor observing and assisting dedicated attorneys fight for victims of abuse to obtain protective orders



and other legal services at no cost to the victim. I can only imagine the fear and struggle a victim must experience when reaching out for help during a pandemic. It is imperative that the brave victims who reach out are heard, understood, and helped. Texas Advocacy Project does just that. As I look toward the future, I can only hope that, through education, prevention, and access to the legal system, we will see the end of domestic violence.

Please consider supporting Equal Justice America.

Week of July 27th

I am in awe that the summer is almost over! The opportunities that I have had at Texas Advocacy Project, Inc. has been nothing short of wonderful. In the recent weeks, I have focused my efforts on analyzing the new Title IX regulations that become effective in August. These regulations determine whether a student is able to receive the protections and support to continue their education after sexual harassment or sexual assault. The regulations further impact how a university or institution must respond to allegations. It is imperative to have the knowledge and understanding of these regulations to better help clients and to prevent the survivor from navigating these new changes alone. Advocating to make changes to these regulations further requires an understanding of what exists and what gaps are present. I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to equip myself with this knowledge and to ensure that survivors have educated and passionate advocates during their Title IX process in the Fall semester and beyond.

Thank you Equal Justice America for making this summer possible. I have continued to grow personally and professionally. Please consider donating.

Week of August 10th

As I have concluded my time at Texas Advocacy Project, Inc., I cannot help but be overwhelmed with gratitude. I was able to work alongside amazing attorneys to assist clients who were fleeing abuse obtain a protective order, provided materials that supported parents and students with understanding their rights if they are victimized at their school institution, and advised clients on their options to better their lives and their children's. These are just some of the many life-changing advocacy opportunities I was able to take part in. Words cannot describe how truly wonderful the staff was to work with and how deeply they care about their clients and one another. I will strive to live up to the model they have established. Thank you Equal Justice America for making this summer possible! I could not have done it without your generosity as well. We were able to assist many clients access justice and freedom from abuse who would not have otherwise been able to afford legal representation.