



## Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



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College of Law

**Organization:** Northwest Immigrant Rights  
Project

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### Update 1:

This summer, I have the privilege of working with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. During the first few weeks of my internship, my work has focused on citizenship and naturalization, both supporting individuals who already have a claim to U.S. citizenship and those seeking to become U.S. citizens. I was generously granted funding for my internship in part from Equal Justice America.

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### Update 2:

In the past two weeks of my internship with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, I have had the opportunity to work on several naturalization cases that intersect with criminal law. Through these cases, I have become more aware of how systemic racism and inequity in the criminal justice system can harm non-citizens who want to obtain U.S. citizenship and the associated benefits of citizenship, including the right to vote.

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### Update 3:

While most of my work this summer has focused on citizenship and naturalization, last month I had the opportunity to assist with some intakes for individuals eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). President Biden has recently re-designated individuals in the United States from Venezuela, Myanmar, Syria, and Haiti as eligible for TPS. However, TPS is temporary and subject to the renewal by the current President, who can choose not to renew TPS for a certain country of origin. This leaves the status of thousands of people at the



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whims of the current administration every few years.

Unfortunately, this year the Supreme Court decided that TPS does not open the pathway to a green card, leaving TPS holders, some of whom have lived in the U.S. for decades, with no clear path to a permanent or stable status. *Sanchez v. Mayorkas* (2021).

For those unfamiliar with TPS, this fact sheet from the National Immigration Forum is a helpful starting point: <https://lnkd.in/eNJZ2ZV>

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## Entry 4:

As I wrap up my internship with Northwest Immigrant Rights Project this summer, I feel very fortunate to have had the chance to work with incredible clients while building my own legal skills. I look forward to utilizing the lessons I've learned in my final year of law school and beyond.

Some of the most interesting and exciting cases in my internship this summer were clients who were at risk of deportation but who had a claim to U.S. citizenship, which would protect them from removal. Individuals with claims like this are rare, but they do occur. However, folks may have trouble finding a legal advocate to support them in this claim, particularly if they are incarcerated or in ICE detention. Organizations like NWIRP (and many others across the U.S.) are doing important work to expand access to immigration legal services for those least likely to have access to private attorneys. You can learn more about NWIRP here: <https://www.nwirp.org/>.

Consider donating to Equal Justice America to support other law students working at public interest organizations: <https://www.classy.org/campaign/eja-2021-fellows-fundraiser/c320940>.