



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:

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Organization: Legal Momentum

Update 1: This summer, I am happy to announce that I was selected to be one of Equal Justice America's fellows! Equal Justice America helps fund fellows providing civil legal services across the country. Through EJA's support, I have accepted a summer internship position with Legal Momentum, a nonprofit aiming to eradicate gender inequality and gender-based violence. This week, I've been conducting research to create an income inequality map to help inform low wage women workers about their rights! I've also been working on an FAQ for pregnant workers to help them navigate their rights under federal law. #knowyourrights! Simultaneously, I've been researching jury instructions for Legal Momentum's representation of a survivor of domestic violence. I never thought that I would be doing litigation work, let alone enjoying it, but it has been a fulfilling and informative experience so far! Stay tuned for updates about the rest of my summer internship with Legal Momentum!

Update 2: The past few weeks have been really busy at Legal Momentum, so here's an update on what I've been up to:

I'm continuing my research on two long-term projects assigned at the beginning of my internship, a Pregnancy Rights FAQ document and an income inequality map to help educate low-income workers about protective legal provisions. This week, my research focused on minimum wage legislation and pay discussion protections for employees. Did you know that many states have proposed legislation seeking to increase the minimum wage? Most proposed Bills include a provision tethering the minimum wage to the cost of living in each state, a much-needed change that will work towards giving low income workers a living wage. I was also surprised to learn that many states' statutes don't include protections for employees who discuss their salaries with their co-workers or with others. This can expose employees to discrimination by employers, which can disproportionately impact low wage workers. We need more protection for low wage workers!

This week, I was also assigned to do some research about mediation and restorative justice resources in the NYC area. Mediation and restorative justice approaches are effective alternatives to the court system, and many community-based organizations provide these resources at little to no cost to participants. After concluding that research, I was assigned to determine whether a certain legal issue was considered substantive or procedural law. If you know anything about the Erie Doctrine, my apologies. If you don't, consider yourself lucky.



That's all for this update! Stay tuned for updates about the rest of my summer internship with Legal Momentum!

Update 3: Here's what I've been up to this week at legal momentum:

Last week, I spent the majority of my research hours on two major topics: sextortion and non-economic damages. Sextortion occurs when an offender uses a victim's sexually explicit images or videos to coerce the victim into providing more sexually explicit content or engaging in sex with the offender. This behavior is becoming more common with the advent of technology, but not many states have statutes specifically criminalizing or prohibiting sextortion. I was assigned to research the state of North Carolina's sextortion legal framework. I was also tasked with determining whether any other criminal statutes could be interpreted as they currently exist to encompass acts of sextortion or whether currently existing statutes could be amended to encompass such conduct.

For trial preparation, I was asked to gather some case law regarding the evidentiary requirements necessary for a party to receive non-economic or compensatory damages. In cases seeking non-economic damages, the seeking party is required to proffer evidence to support the award amount they seek. While many non-compensatory damages are difficult to calculate in a dollar amount, as they seek to compensate parties for things such as pain and suffering or distress, parties must show certain evidence to support their claims. I found a lot of interesting case law discussing the intersection between medical evidence and non-economic damages.

This week, I am assisting Legal Momentum's representation of a domestic violence survivor in federal court. The trial began on Monday and is ongoing through the week. I was able to observe the ins and outs of the trial process; including everything from jury selection and pre-trial motions to witness and expert testimony. The main takeaway: trial attorneys work long hours, both in and out of the courtroom, and have to decide very complex issues under serious time pressure. No easy feat.

That's all for this update! Stay tuned for updates about the rest of my summer internship with Legal Momentum!

Entry 4: Here is my last Legal Momentum update of the summer:

This week is my last week with Legal Momentum. I've been interning with them since January, so this week is very bittersweet. I have learned so much from my seven months with Legal Momentum, but there are a few takeaways that stick out in my mind. First, working for Legal Momentum confirmed my desire to work for a nonprofit or nongovernmental organization with a focus on protecting civil liberties. I really enjoyed working on gender inequality issues and gained nuanced perspective on legal issues from employment discrimination to



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domestic violence law to Title IX. After two years of law school, getting some real-world experience renewed my hope about the power lawyers have to change the law for the better.

I've learned firsthand the collaborative nature of legal work. Throughout my internship, I often found myself brainstorming with others on the legal team, bouncing ideas to create a stronger solution or legal strategy. I was also allowed to research cutting edge issues outside of established legal theory and question the ways in which the law has evolved. It was refreshing to discuss these issues with my mentors and co-intern while witnessing the evolution of the law.

I'm leaving Legal Momentum with a clear trajectory to the career I've always envisioned for myself, and for that I'm eternally grateful. I couldn't have done it without support from Equal Justice America. If you want to help fund future fellows like me, donate.