



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



Name: Natalie Archer

Law School: Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Organization: Legal Aid Chicago

Update 1:

This summer, I am interning with Legal Aid Chicago on the Education Law Team as an Equal Justice America Fellow. Legal Aid Chicago provides free civil legal services to people in Cook County living in poverty. The Education Law Team primarily represents youth in foster care who are seeking support in obtaining special education services or youth facing school disciplinary action. Through watching my supervising attorney advocate for clients, attending trainings, and conducting research, after just three weeks, I already feel like I have learned so much about education law. I am really excited to continue to learn over the next several weeks.

Update 2:

Chicago Public Schools is officially done for the school year, however, I have still been busy these last two weeks as we finish IEP meetings for the summer. I have also had the opportunity to write multiple dissents to eligibility determinations to advocate for more testing and services to better accommodate our clients.

Over these last few weeks, I have really noticed the value of Legal Aid services for clients. The path to obtaining special education services for students can be very challenging. I have heard clients express their gratitude for the support of their attorneys at Legal Aid Chicago as they guide them through the process and help them advocate for services.

Update 3:

I have interned for seven weeks now at Legal Aid Chicago, and I have learned so much from this experience. Over the last couple weeks, I have had the opportunity to conduct legal research, write a research memo, and write a request for a case study evaluation. I am very grateful for this experience and look forward to the rest of the summer.



Entry 4:

This summer has gone by so fast and these last ten weeks at Legal Aid Chicago have been great. I have learned so much about education law. This summer I have conducted legal research, written dissents to eligibility determinations, written requests for case study evaluations, attended IEP meetings, led a meeting with a client, and worked on a due process complaint. Throughout the summer, I have also been able to learn about other practice groups and hear about the important services that Legal Aid offers and the impact it has. I am very grateful to have had this experience and I look forward to applying the skills I have gained to the rest of my legal career.