



## Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



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**Organization:** American Friends Service  
Committee, Immigrant Rights Program

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### Update 1:

Hello! Just wanted to give a quick update on what I'm up to this summer as an intern on the detention team at American Friends Service Committee in Newark. I've been on the job for three weeks now and although it's been a steep learning curve, I think I'm starting to get the hang of things. I've been working on research and writing for an appeal, and also have been working directly with a few of our detained clients on various strategies to hopefully get them out - the pandemic has made things worse inside the immigration jails and also in terms of communicating with folks who are detained, but we're doing our best. I'm really appreciative of being on a great team with all the attorneys and others at AFSC, but I know there are lots of other parts of the country where the same resources aren't in place for immigrants who really need legal help, including those who are in ICE detention.

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### Update 2:

Another update on my summer internship experience for those following along: I'm more than halfway done with my internship now and things are starting to come more naturally to me, I think. The biggest news came a couple of weeks ago when ICE started transferring a bunch of our clients out of the Essex County jail, bringing some of them hundreds of miles away from their homes in New Jersey, shackled for entire days during the journey. It was challenging to try and get in contact with my transferred client, not to mention reaching out to his loved ones to explain that we didn't even know where they had taken him. The whole experience really drove home for me how important the work that AFSC and similar organizations are doing is, and also how important it is to keep organizing and advocating for change in this country's profoundly heartless immigration enforcement system. I'm still feeling hopeful about the summer - it feels good just to be able to listen to our clients' stories and make them feel a little bit more heard.



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**Update 3:**

Another week, another update from me about my summer internship (you're welcome). This week has been kind of hectic: I've been gathering evidence for a possible bond hearing for one of my clients where I might be appearing myself in immigration court, which is exciting and stressful at the same time. Because of all the ICE transfers, at this point I'm working with clients who are detained in Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Florida, in addition to New Jersey, which is wild but also just barely doable since we're working remotely. Yesterday I counted and I had made 27 calls on my work phone in just the one day. I think my phone voice is sounding pretty good, not to mention a very noticeable improvement in my Spanish since the beginning of the summer. Anyway, thanks to those of you who are following along.

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**Entry 4:**

Today is my last day as a summer intern at AFSC. Some final takeaways: although I didn't have any big wins this summer (none of my detained clients were released, and most of them were transferred to jails that are very far away), I'm proud of my little victories. For one, I have accidentally been referred to as "Aidan Langston Esq." several times now, which I think officially makes me a lawyer. More seriously, I am really glad that I was able to get a couple of my clients to laugh on the phone with me - I think being able to make the clients feel comfortable and that they can trust me is my biggest personal win. Immigration work is really tough sometimes: it was really hard to come to terms with the injustice that one of my clients' whole life in the US might be over because of an arrest that didn't even result in a criminal charge. But I'm coming out of this summer feeling energized and excited to keep doing this work in my career to come. Thanks for listening.