



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



Name: Jordan Young

Law School: Regent University School of Law

Organization: Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia

Update 1: 06/18/2021

Over the last six weeks I have had the blessing and the privilege of working with the Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia. While my first year of law school at Regent University has prepared me well, it has been eye opening to see the wide variety of issues that are brought to this organization, which the staff attorneys graciously handle. Despite a heavy workload and currently being slightly understaffed, the Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia welcomed me with open arms and has challenged everything I know about legal research and the study of law.

This internship has been a very hands-on experience, and I have been given the opportunity to work or speak directly with clients, assisted in drafting subpoenas and interrogatories, and conduct research for staff attorneys. Being able to see firsthand how these attorneys put together arguments and determine the best path forward alongside their clients has taught me the importance of poise and diligence in even some of the most devastating situations.

As many of you may know, working with the homeless and preventing homelessness is something that I am very passionate about. With the eviction moratorium coming to an end, our office has been tirelessly to get rent relief and prevent the eviction of our clients. To learn more about the effect that COVID-19 has had on evictions and homelessness rates in the United States, the United Way has an excellent resource here:

<https://unitedwaynca.org/stories/effect-pandemic-homeless-us/>

Update 2: 07/01/2021

One of the most valuable lessons I have learned during my time at the [Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia](#) is one of humility. In a profession that can too often cherish dramatic turns of phrase or putting on a show, it can be easy to get caught up in the work and forget that most clients go to lawyers because they are facing hardship



they cannot deal with on their own. On television shows like Law and Order and Suits, it is rare to see the characters lose a case. No one wants to see the good guys lose or the fallout.

Three weeks after I finished my first year at [Regent University School of Law](#), I represented a client in an administrative hearing (you don't have to be an attorney for this kind of hearing). My supervising attorney warned me that it would be a long shot and that we did not have a lot of evidence, but my fellow intern and I poured hours into it. I recently received word that despite our efforts and hopes, we lost the hearing after an unexpected piece of evidence came up mid-hearing and unraveled our argument. Although I knew the consequences that losing the hearing would have on the client, it was out of my hands. I took three main points from this experience:

- (1) Sometimes more than anything, clients need someone to acknowledge the situation they are facing and to empathize with them.
- (2) No attorney is perfect. All lawyers lose cases or have motions denied every so often. I can't expect myself to be perfect after one year of school.
- (3) The practice of law is an art. Drafting arguments, finding relevant law, and speaking before someone of authority is something that takes practice and hours of fine-tuning to be skilled in.

I am looking forward to a career in this ever-evolving, ever-growing field where there is more to learn with each new day.

Update 3: 07/16/2021

Today marks ten weeks working with the [Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia](#). In my time at LASEVA, I have done a lot of research on housing issues and issues stemming from a lack of transparency in pandemic-based unemployment benefits. Many people who have faced unemployment in this time have been left with more questions and uncertain futures than answers. Thankfully, I have been guided by a (somehow) tireless group of staff attorneys who had patience not only for their clients but also for teaching me.

This fall, when someone at [Regent University School of Law](#) asks me about Legal Aid (which I hope they do), I will confidently be able to tell them that LASEVA showed me the importance of kindness, honor, and humility in the practice of law. These are values I hope to carry with me throughout my career.

I was incredibly lucky to have had such a wonderful first experience in a legal internship. I am grateful both to LASEVA and [Equal Justice America](#) for allowing me this opportunity. It was Equal Justice America who gave me the chance to explore public interest.



Entry 4: 08/06/2021

My Final [EJA Fellow Update](#). It doesn't seem real even as I write it! While the study of law can be grueling on the best days, being able to see law in practice this summer has filled my cup and spurred me forward into my passion for bettering the community around me. My time with legal aid reminded me how much I value working directly with people and helping in picking apart their problems. Shadowing attorneys in court after watching them craft legal arguments has made me feel like I am waiting in the wings for the day I too am allowed to go center stage and cross the bar.

There is a certain kind of magic in places like [Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia](#) that can be hard to replicate. I hope that where ever I end up after I graduate, it is a place like legal aid. I am incredibly grateful to [Equal Justice America](#) for giving me this opportunity, it is one that I believe has greatly affected the way I see the legal system.

Thank you also to everyone who has come along with me on this journey, it is one I will carry with me. If you have the means, please considering donating to support future fellows who need funding to work in the public interest.