



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



Name: Gordon Estes

Law School: University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School

Organization: Community Legal Services

Update 1: This summer, I'm beyond grateful for the opportunity to provide free direct legal assistance to low-income households as an Equal Justice America fellow and legal intern with the Energy Unit of Community Legal Services of Philadelphia! It's been sobering to learn about the inequities that block people from getting the water, heat, and power they need to survive, from unaffordable bills to language inaccessibility and a tangled mess of assistance programs and eligibility requirements that can be challenging for anyone to navigate.

Still, I went to law school because I wanted to use the opportunities I've had in life to help empower others, including the most vulnerable in our society. It's my hope that the work I do this summer will help materially improve people's lives while improving my own ability to serve as an advocate for a fairer, more equitable legal system.

Thank you so much to all of the fantastic members of the CLS Energy Unit, who have been so welcoming and helpful in these first few weeks, and to EJA for helping to fund my work.

Update 2: I've learned so much as an Equal Justice America Fellow and summer legal intern with Community Legal Services of Philadelphia in the past month, from real-world legal research skills to strategies for working with clients who may not speak English. It's also been an opportunity to become a better advocate and hone my skills in creative lawyering by finding paths for clients to succeed in tough cases.

Update 3: It's been a privilege to work as an Equal Justice America fellow and summer legal intern with the Community Legal Services Energy Unit this summer, and I can't believe that summer is almost over. The direct legal services that CLS provides to low-income Philadelphians are so important, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to help our clients keep their lights on, access clean water, and make their bills more affordable.



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

LEGAL SERVICES FELLOWSHIPS

Entry 4: I've learned so much over the past ten weeks assisting low-income clients with Community Legal Services - how to empathize and work with a client; how to research a real-world legal case; and how to be a dedicated (and sometimes stubborn) advocate in the face of a challenging system.

Thank you so much to everyone in CLS's Energy Unit for being so welcoming and helpful, to Equal Justice America for supporting my work this past summer, and to the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School for encouraging public interest students to seek out meaningful work opportunities like this.

To support Equal Justice America and its mission of supporting law students who work in the public interest field, you can donate now.