



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



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Law School: University of Richmond School of Law

Organization: Blue Ridge Legal Services

Update 1: This summer, I am blessed to be an Equal Justice America fellow and a member of Blue Ridge Legal Services team. During my first few weeks, I have been working on the most interesting projects in elder law, housing law and consumer law. I am grateful to have had an opportunity to explore my areas of interest and take part in Pro Bono work - something that I have been interested in ever since I learned about its existence (where I come from, Pro Bono legal services simply don't exist).

I am thankful to Equal Justice America for providing law students like me with additional support on our way of bridging the justice gap and making legal services available to those who need them the most.

As you may know, all types of legal aid services rely heavily on donations and a severely limited amount of government funding. If you are interested in helping us to make our dream of accessible legal services become a reality, please donate. Thank you!

Update 2: For the past two weeks, I have had a pleasure to work on high impact Medicaid cases and dive deeper into the world of elder law. I am learning so much every day, and I can't express how grateful I am for the opportunity to work with such wonderful people.

I am thankful to Equal Justice America for supporting us law students in our public interest jobs and making it possible to make legal services accessible to everybody.

Update 3: For the past few weeks, I have been working on a variety of complex bankruptcy, family law, employment law, and elder law cases. The more I get familiar with our legal aid clients, the more I realize how difficult their lives are and how much they rely on our help. It is so easy to forget how different our lives are from theirs and it is so easy to underestimate the importance of helping those in need. Legal aid services are essential for the well-being of our community. I am thankful for all the organizations, including Equal Justice America, that make it possible for us to contribute to bridging this justice gap.



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Update 4: During my last weeks at Blue Ridge Legal Services, I have been working on guardianship, partition, employment, family law and nursing home fraud cases. It breaks my heart to learn about the ways our elders can be exploited by - some of the stories are so inhumane and cruel they are almost impossible to believe. Legal aid offices play a vital role in protecting such vulnerable categories of our society. We are thankful to have had the support of Equal Justice America and many others in helping legal aid offices provide such essential help to those in need.

One of the other highlights of my last weeks was an outreach project to the Russian-speaking community in Harrisonburg, which is historically underrepresented due to potential clients' lack of awareness of such programs, cultural differences and a language barrier. I am extremely happy to have had a opportunity to reach out and provide resources for legal help to someone who is speaking my native language which is so, so rare here.

I am incredibly thankful to have been a part of Blue Ridge Legal Services' team and having had exposure to so many different areas of law and having been able to apply and upgrade my legal research and writing skills. I will miss my lovely supervisors and our whole team dearly, and we are definitely staying in touch!