



Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:



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Law School: UVA Law

Organization: Just Neighbors

Update 1:

After finishing up an unconventional first year of law school at University of Virginia School of Law, I'm excited to share that I've been selected to serve as an Equal Justice America fellow at Just Neighbors, a non-profit providing vital immigration services to low-income immigrants, asylees, and refugees.

I've spent an incredible few weeks at Just Neighbors working directly with clients of all backgrounds. From helping a client apply for DACA for the first time, to helping a U visa recipient finally adjust status, I've been inspired by the bravery and resiliency shown by each of them.

These last few weeks at Just Neighbors have also highlighted a very important truth – the complexities of our immigration system should not be left to immigrants and refugees to navigate alone. I am honored to be able to spend my summer doing what I can to make the process a little less daunting and to empower those who are their own fiercest advocates.

Update 2:

It's time for my second EJA Fellow Update! I've now spent a month here at Just Neighbors and it's hard to believe how fast time is flying. I've been interacting more and more with clients and I'm now working on a variety of cases, some more tougher than others. I'm grateful to continue learning about what it means to be a trauma-informed lawyer who exercises compassion and empathy when interacting with clients. Kindness and professionalism are not mutually exclusive, and when dealing with an immigration system that is oftentimes adversarial, I'm learning that we must do our best as advocates to mitigate re-traumatization whenever possible.



Update 3:

Hi everyone – I’m back with a third EJA Fellow Update. Today is a reminder that although our current administration is working to undo the restrictive immigration measures taken by the previous administration, there will still be rulings that will negatively impact our clients’ cases. With a federal judge in Texas now declaring the DACA program illegal and halting new enrollments, hundreds of thousands of individuals are once again catapulted back into immigration limbo – my client being one of them. Delivering this news will be hard, but I am hopeful this is just a temporary setback. In the meantime, we’ll be pushing forward and looking for new avenues of relief.

Update 4:

It’s time for my fourth and final EJA Fellow Update! I’m happy to announce that I’ll be staying on with Just Neighbors for the fall semester! When I first started my internship, I didn’t realize how invested I would become in the cases I’ve been working on. As my official “end” date approaches, it’s great knowing I’ll be able to continue working on these cases in the fall and even see some of them to completion! I’m particularly excited about having even more time to explore the different areas of humanitarian-based immigration and to refine the skills I’ve developed over the summer.

My work this summer is made possible by the very generous support of Equal Justice America, and if you are interested in supporting the next generation of public interest lawyers, please consider donating to EJA.