



Host Site: Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid

Topic of Project: Disaster Assistance

Location: Corpus Christi, TX or Victoria, TX

Description of Fellow Project:

The Rural Summer Legal Corps Disaster Assistance Student Fellow will work with TRLA's Disaster Assistance Group. The Fellow will participate in long-term recovery work to assist survivors of Hurricane Harvey (which impacted 16 counties in the Coastal Bend and Golden Crescent in August 2017), as well as survivors of the multiple flooding events that have occurred in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) between 2015 and the present. Most recently, RGV residents were affected by Hurricane Hanna in June 2020, but the area has averaged one significant flood event each year since 2015. The Fellow may also have an opportunity to work on legal matters arising out of a different type of crisis - the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Fellow will conduct legal work and join projects related to disaster preparedness and mitigation on existing and new crisis responses during the Fellowship. The Fellow may assist with appeals and/or litigation against the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as other disaster-related legal issues, including landlord-tenant disputes, clearing title to real property or manufactured housing in order to seek home repair assistance, disaster unemployment, consumer issues such as problems with contractors, or insurance disputes.

The Fellow will be invited to join outreach activities within communities impacted by disasters, primarily within the rural counties of the Coastal Bend, Golden Crescent, and throughout the Rio Grande Valley. The Fellow will meet with clients and community partners, train key stakeholders on how to identify disaster-related cases, and educate the community about TRLA's legal services for disaster survivors. Some of these activities may be conducted virtually depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional Applicant Qualifications:

Applicant must display good legal research and writing skills and interest in community lawyering and development. Spanish proficiency is preferred, but not required.

