



## / 2023 Disaster Resilience Program Project Descriptions

Below are the Disaster Resilience Program Student Fellow project descriptions for the summer of 2023. To find a specific project description, click on the name of the host site below:

- [Disability Rights California](#)
- [Disability Rights Louisiana](#)
- [Kentucky Legal Aid](#)
- [Legal Aid of Arkansas](#)
- [Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project](#)
- [Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County](#)
- [New Mexico Immigrant Law Center](#)
- [Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services](#)
- [West Tennessee Legal Services](#)



**Host Site:** Disability Rights California

**Topic of Project:** Disaster and Disability Rights

**Location:** Sacramento, CA (primarily a remote position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Disaster Resilience program responds to the legal needs of Californians with disabilities before, during, and after wildfire disasters. Issues stemming from these disasters include Public Safety Power Shutoff events, housing displacement and a lack of accessible and affordable housing, emergency transportation/evacuation, and the negative health impacts of poor air quality. This team partners with grassroots community groups throughout the state to strengthen existing disaster resource centers and coalitions and provides accessible clinics, trainings, and direct legal services to people with disabilities. Depending on the caseload, the law student fellow may gain experience with:

- Interviewing clients and consumers.
- Providing counsel and advice on self-advocacy.
- Legal research and writing.
- Legislative analysis and writing.
- Conducting trainings in law and multicultural outreach.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

N/A



**Host Site:** Disability Rights Louisiana

**Topic of Project:** Disaster and Disability Rights

**Location:** Offices in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette, LA

**Number of Open Positions:** 2

**Description of Fellow Project:**

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Ida, many Louisianans with disabilities are facing housing insecurity or eviction, are being denied appropriate services or accommodations, or are facing discrimination based on their disabilities. The Fellow will work to eliminate or mitigate barriers to critical programs, services, and housing for people with disabilities in Louisiana who have been adversely impacted by these disasters.

The Fellow will also focus on expanding stakeholder relationships and cultivating partnerships among the disaster legal community, service providers, and community social services providers. They will strategize, plan, and conduct training and outreach to communities and organizations to build disaster resilience moving forward. The Fellow will share information and resources for disaster survivors and attorneys supporting communities affected by disasters.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

No language requirements but the ability to speak Spanish and or Vietnamese is highly valued.



**Host Site:** Kentucky Legal Aid

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** Bowling Green, Kentucky (In person position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Disaster Resilience Program Summer Law Student Fellow will be responsible for assisting the Equal Justice Works Fellowship attorney(s) with legal filing, drafting, and multiple forms of communication. The summer clerk will also be expected to attend outreach events organized to perform work required in order to prepare and assist the community with disaster relief. Interactions with clients and community officials will be expected in this role.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

- Proof of citizenship



**Host Site:** Legal Aid of Arkansas

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** Rogers, AR (In person position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Disaster Resilience Program Summer Law Student Fellow will provide direct legal services to people with opioid use disorder, develop education materials, and conduct community outreach. The fellow will be assigned to engage at an opioid clinic, once or twice a week, where they will do eligibility screening, and legal interviews for patients with opioid use disorder. They will work with a supervising attorney to learn how level of service decisions are made, gain exposure to the collaborative process of identifying the best strategies to employ in extended services, and appear in court with Legal Aid attorneys.

- The RSLC fellow will spend 75% of her time learning the cradle-to-the-grave process of handling civil legal cases.
- The fellow will join recovery groups and other Beyond Opioids partners in outreach events to develop a deeper understanding of the needs of the community as it relates to the impact of the opioid crisis.
- The fellow will have the opportunity to summarize insights and propose innovative solutions to the opioid crisis through a white paper, created in collaboration with other RSLC fellows and Beyond Opioids staff attorneys, at the end of the fellowship.
- The fellow will devote 25% of their time to this deliverable.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

N/A



**Host Site:** Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** St. Louis, MO (In person position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 2

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The MICA Project is a community organization that works with low-income immigrants to overcome barriers to justice. We provide legal services for immigration cases, and we also work in immigrant communities to create partners through educational and outreach activities. By working with the MICA Project, immigrants are reuniting with family members, obtaining legal status, and avoiding deportation.

The Disaster Resilience Program Summer Fellow will work with survivors of the 2021 Missouri tornadoes to help prepare immigration cases for affirmative filings and for Immigration Court. The fellow will have responsibility for drafting legal documents, assembling evidence, legal research, preparing for court hearings, and other legal casework. The fellow will also assist in planning community outreach activities for disaster preparedness.

The fellow needs to have a passion for working with nonprofits and/or underserved communities, excellent oral and written communication skills, organizational and time management skills, and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively. Knowledge of immigration law is helpful but is not required. The majority of the MICA Project's clients are Spanish-speaking, so Spanish language skills are helpful but not required.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

- No language requirements but the ability to speak Spanish is highly valued and preferred.



**Host Site:** Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** Glendale, CA

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Fellow will conduct client outreach to natural disaster survivors by distributing consumer flyers and attending community events. In addition, the Fellow will represent wildfire survivors in administrative hearings and court cases throughout Los Angeles County. Further, they will communicate with other Disaster Resilience Fellows across the country to engage in peer-to-peer learning exercises.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

N/A



**Host Site:** New Mexico Immigrant Law Center

**Topic of Project:** Disaster and Immigration

**Location:** Albuquerque, NM

**Number of Open Positions:** 4

**Description of Fellow Project:**

Detention/Asylum focus (1 Student Fellow)

The Fellow will assist in addressing the legal needs of asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, and incarcerated immigrants in the New Mexico border region who have been impacted by policies related to COVID19, human rights, and other disasters. They will work with NMILC staff on legal issues stemming from the humanitarian crisis at the border and support asylum seekers on a wide-range of legal issues, including asylum and work-permit applications, navigating the detention and removal process, and seeking bond and release. The Fellow will respond to the legal needs of asylum seekers and support them in navigating incredibly complex and constantly changing administrative and legal systems during and after the COVID-pandemic. They will also work with other community organizations to strengthen support for asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors in the border region.

Economic Justice Policy focus (1 Student Fellow)

The Fellow will address the economic mobility of immigrants impacted economically by the pandemic through direct services, education, advocacy with administrative agencies and licensing bodies. In 2021, the NM State Legislature passed legislation that removed immigration status as a prerequisite for obtaining professional licensure for individuals who have completed all educational and training requirements, in industries including medicine, nursing, dentistry, real estate, respiratory therapy, massage therapy, and more. However, many administrative licensing bodies are unaware of the new legislation or have yet to make internal changes, and immigrant professionals in these fields continue to be denied licenses and, therefore, access to more stable, higher-paying jobs. The fellow will provide legal support and advocacy to immigrant entrepreneurs who are impacted by these barriers.

Humanitarian Relief focus (2 Student Fellows)

The Fellow(s) will provide screening to immigrant survivors of crime adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and those who have recently been survivors of border-crossing related violence and exploitation and advise them of their rights and options for normalization of status and other forms of relief. In addition, they will provide direct legal representation to immigrants with a meritorious claim for humanitarian immigration relief. These forms of immigration relief will mitigate many of the risk factors that make immigrants more vulnerable in disaster and humanitarian



situations, such as lack of work authorization and reluctance to engage with public agencies and service providers due to fear of deportation. Humanitarian relief will include U visa, T visa, and VAWA petitions.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

Language requirement for candidates to speak Spanish.



**Host Site:** Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** Nashville, TN (Hybrid position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services is seeking a Disaster Resilience Program Summer Law Student to work with TALS and the TALS' Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow for 7-10 weeks (300 hours) over the summer of 2023. The summer fellow will assist the TALS Disaster Resilience Fellow work on legal issues for individuals and families impacted by the 2021 tornadoes, will conduct education and outreach, and will complete other work related to disaster recovery and resilience.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

N/A



**Host Site:** West Tennessee Legal Services

**Topic of Project:** Disaster

**Location:** Jackson, TN (In person position)

**Number of Open Positions:** 1

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Disaster Resilience Program Summer Law Student Fellow will work with a newly formed disaster legal team at West Tennessee Legal Services to provide civil legal aid and develop disaster resiliency to West Tennesseans affected by the December 2021 tornado. In addition to providing direct legal assistance under the supervision of WTLS disaster attorneys, the fellow will also assist with community outreach and development of disaster legal forms and resiliency tools.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

Proof of Citizenship