



James and Sharon Maida Public Interest  
Fellowships Program

2020 Report

# James and Sharon Maida Public Interest Fellowships Program 2020 Report

Dear James and Sharon,

We are positively delighted and grateful to learn that you have committed to continue the Maida Public Interest Fellows Program for another five years. Your legacy is helping us build a better law school and a better world.

What a year 2020 has been. In the midst of the pandemic, social change, and terribly difficult times for so many people, the Maida Public Interest Fellowships Program has been a source of hope and desperately needed help.

When the pandemic was declared in March, we were naturally apprehensive about whether our partner organizations would be able to train and supervise students. But as it turned out, your family funded 40 students from Camden and Newark in summer internships at the Camden County Surrogate's Court, the AIDS Law Project, the ACLU, the law school's mortgage foreclosure clinic, South Jersey Legal Services, and many more. These students, struggling themselves with family illnesses and job dislocations, contributed at least 14,400 hours of legal work to help immigrants, people suffering from illness and disability, people living in poverty, and government agencies attempting to support people in need. Thanks to your stipends, the students were able to learn substantive law - often on the front lines of a disaster response - and developed human-to-human skills and sensitivities. We are so proud of how our Maida partner organizations and students rose to the occasion and continue to work tirelessly to help in this time of need.

Your sixth post-graduate fellow, Diego Gonzalez, is working at Make the Road-NJ, an immigrants' rights collective. His main focus is to help "Dreamers" and recipients of Temporary Protected Status to find more durable forms of immigration relief. He also assists with the general work of the organization, which seeks to protect immigrant workers from wage theft and other forms of abuse. Diego was a two-time Maida summer fellow, interning in 2019 with Kids in Need of Defense, and in 2018 with the American Friends Service Committee. His application for the post-graduate fellowship expressed his personal motivation to make a career at Make the Road:

As a lawyer, I know the trepidations my future undocumented clients face because I have lived those trepidations. I remember fearing the police because I didn't understand my rights and thought that a poor interaction with any police officer could end with my deportation. I know the stress and fear of having a family member detained thousands of miles away: the summer before starting law school, my [relatives] were detained in El Paso, Texas. I can empathize with immigrant women that are victims of domestic violence because [reference to close family member whose abuser used her immigration status against her]. I can fully comprehend the feeling of frustration of a DACA or TPS recipient when they are told that they could have applied for immigration relief years ago, because I, too learned that myself, through the study of immigration law.

As for your prior fellows, Dan Oates (2019-2020) is working at the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council, continuing his analysis and implementation of large homelessness prevention and mitigation strategies. Tyler Dougherty (2018-2019) is in a second fellowship, again working with children in the juvenile justice system. Her work focuses on advocating for children in dangerous conditions of confinement during the pandemic. Deanna Christian (2017-2018) is an associate at Day Pitney, dedicated to pro bono service. She has a particular interest in special education matters, primarily for children with special needs, such as those she represented in her fellowship in the Education Clinic. Alexi Velez (2016-2017 fellowship at ACLU-NJ) remains at Perkins Coie, where she works to challenge a wide variety of voter suppression laws specifically designed to disenfranchise young, impoverished, elderly and disabled voters. Alexi also represents clients in matters pertaining to election recounts, as well as in matters pertaining to public records requests and government transparency. As you can imagine, she was busy this fall. We get to see Josh Bauers (2015-2016) frequently. He continues on at Fair Share Housing, and has become a capable and confident advocate and public interest leader.

As was the case last year, several women you funded as summer interns are serving with prestigious national and regional organizations:

- Joanna Gardner, whom you funded for two summers, is a second-year Skadden Fellow at HIAS, representing immigrant women who have been subject to human trafficking;
- Ashley Maddison, also funded by the Maida Program for two summers, is a second-year Equal Justice Works Fellow at the Medical Legal Partnership between Rutgers and the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, where she is helping people with chronic and serious illnesses resolve civil legal problems including Covid-related housing issues and fines and fees; she is advocating for systems change in the municipal court system;
- Tamara Anaie is an Immigrant Justice Fellow at the Center for Immigrant Representation in New Jersey, helping detained immigrants;
- Amelia Vangellow, another two summer Maida, is a second-year Equal Justice Works Fellow at Kids in Need of Defense in New Jersey.
- Kathryn Robinson, whom you funded in summer 2018 at the UNHCR (the United Nations Refugee Agency), and who was a Rural Justice Fellow at California Rural Legal Assistance, has now become a staff attorney at CRLA.

You also may be pleased to learn that Abby Cook (two Maida summers, at ACLU-PA and Community Legal Services) is now clerking in the New Jersey Supreme Court, and Colin Sheehan, whom you funded at the Mazzone Center in 2018, will be clerking there next year.

James and Sharon, your gift has lifted the law school's spirit and reputation in many ways. As you know, the Social Justice Scholars Program has thrived in part because of the promise of summer funding. Again this year, we enrolled 10 promising Social Justice Scholars, including students committed to immigrants' rights, justice system reform, and other advocacy. We just learned that Sydney Groll, a member of the first SJS cohort, will become an Independence Foundation Fellow at the Support Center for Child Advocates next year; she will be working to keep North Philadelphia families with challenging life circumstances together and safe.

James and Sharon, we wish you and your family continued good health. We remain thankful to you more than we could possibly express.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JF', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Jill Friedman  
Associate Dean for Pro Bono and Public Interest

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kim Mutcherson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kimberly Mutcherson  
Co-Dean and Professor of Law

# **2020 James and Sharon Maida Public Interest Fellowships**

## 2020 James and Sharon Maida Public Interest Fellowships

Sabah	Abbasi	Newark	Legal Aid Society - Criminal
Saad	Admani	Newark	NJ Public Defender's Office
Samuel	Amon	Camden	Mortgage Foreclosure Project
Tess	Berkowitz	Camden	AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania
Micah	Bowden	Newark	ACLU-NJ
Lauren	Brotherton	Camden	PA Human Relations Commission
Brooke	Buchan	Camden	South Jersey Legal Services
Julia	Burzynski	Newark	Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Emahunn Raheem Ali	Campbell	Newark	NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund
Pati	Candelario	Newark	Center for Security, Race, and Rights
Juliana	Davis	Camden	Camden County Surrogate Court
Alexis	DeFillippo	Camden	Child and Family Advocacy Clinic
Andrew	Frankel	Camden	Expungement Law Project
Benjamin	Gibson	Camden	Mortgage Foreclosure Project
Cindy	Guaman	Newark	KIND (Immigrant Justice Fellow)
Adina	Heistein	Newark	Criminal and Youth Justice Clinic
Tue	Ho	Camden	ACLU-PA
Morgan	Humphrey	Camden	ACLU-PA
Lisa	Laffend	Camden	Community Health Law Project
Sawyer	Like	Newark	Volunteer Lawyers for Justice
Joseph	Lin	Newark	American Friends Service Committee - AFSC
Constance	Long	Camden	American Friends Service Committee - AFSC
Megyn	MacMullen	Newark	Disability Rights New Jersey
Moriah	Mendicino	Camden	Pennsylvania Innocence Project
Casey	Murphy	Newark	Partners for Women and Justice
Natima	Neily	Camden	Santa Cruz Public Defender's Office
Mumbi	Ngugi	Camden	Homeless Advocacy Project
Jaime	Portillo	Newark	Bet Tzedek Legal Services
Justin	Reilly	Camden	NJ Attorney General's Office - Criminal
Gina	Riccardi	Newark	Make the Road - NJ
Kimberly	Roman	Newark	New Jersey Office of the Public Defender
Sam	Romeo	Camden	Philadelphia VIP
Christina	Sabato	Newark	US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Sophie	Sitar	Newark	Kids in Need of Defense
David	Sullivan	Camden	Fair Share Housing
Tisha	Sylva	Camden	Mortgage Foreclosure Project
Bailey	Thomas	Newark	CAMBA Legal Services
Destiney	Wilson	Camden	Philadelphia Defenders Association
Viktoria	Zerda	Camden	HIAS

**Sabah Abbasi**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Montgomery, NJ

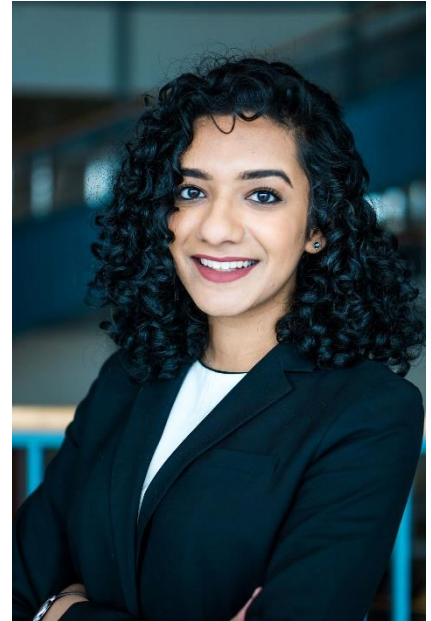
Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University

**Legal Aid Society - Criminal**

This summer, I was a Legal Intern in the Exploitation Intervention Project (“EIP”) at the Legal Aid Society in New York City, though I completed the internship remotely due to COVID-19. I worked under the supervision of Leigh Latimer, the director of EIP, and Sabrina Talukder, EIP’s immigration attorney.

The Exploitation Intervention Project provides post-conviction relief to survivors of sex and labor trafficking. This mainly includes vacating criminal convictions related to their trafficking experiences under New York State’s vacatur law, Criminal Procedure Law Section 440.10(1)(i). I had the additional and very unique experience of addressing the immigration consequences of these survivors’ cases. Most sex workers and trafficking survivors in New York City are immigrants or undocumented people, and their immigration status is severely jeopardized when they are criminally charged, even if that charge is dismissed or vacated. They may still be deported or become ineligible for citizenship or other protections. As an intern, despite the challenges of remote work, I was able to speak with clients directly and assist them with everything from adjustment of status for approved asylum cases to more complex T-visa applications. I learned so much about just how important it is to be at the intersection of immigration and criminal law, which is what I hope to do in my career after law school.

I am so grateful to have received the Maida fellowship. My internship at the Legal Aid Society was a full-time, 10-week position, and it was more challenging than any other internship or job experience I’ve had so far because of the many complications arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Without the financial support from the Maida fellowship, this summer would have been so much more difficult to get through, let alone complete the internship. I am beyond humbled to have been selected for this fellowship again in my 2L summer, because public interest work is my passion but it’s hard (if not impossible) to complete the requisite unpaid internships without financial support. I sincerely hope that I can do my part to pass on the generosity after I begin my own career as an attorney in just a few more months.



**Saad Admani**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Jersey City, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University

**NJ Office of the Public Defender**

This past summer I had the opportunity to intern at the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, Appellate Section as a Maida Fellow. While this internship was intended to take place in Newark, due to the pandemic it was shifted completely online. This internship allowed me the opportunity to research a wide array of criminal justice issues ranging from

juvenile waive up to compassionate release policy. The Public Defender's Office also did a great job in organizing trainings throughout the ten-week program on issues like crime scene analysis, search and seizure, and expungement. My work consisted of representing indigent defendants who filed a post-conviction relief petition (PCR). Additionally, I completed legal research and writing for cases being appealed from the trial level.

One of the most impactful assignments I had was reviewing Department of Corrections records to find inmates that were juveniles when first incarcerated but were waived up and sentenced as adults to life in prison. This was part of the OPD's research in juvenile waive ups that have led to life imprisonment. Furthermore, I conducted research for the OPD continuing legal challenge to the DOC's arbitrary denials for parole which in effect turn sentences into life imprisonment. These cases really opened my eyes to the work of the Public Defender's Office and the crucial role they play in our courts system.

I am thankful to the Rutgers Law School and the Maida Public Interest Scholarship Committee for awarding me a stipend in order to intern over the summer at the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender. Had it not been for this stipend I would not have been able to intern at this organization and have such an impactful summer experience. I truly believe that every law school student should intern at the OPD or a similar civil rights organization before graduating. This experience has truly shifted my career focus and I owe it to being a Maida Fellow.





**Samuel Amon**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Cherry Hill, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Muhlenberg College

**Mortgage Foreclosure Project (Camden)**

I spent the summer of 2020 working for the Rutgers Law School Mortgage Foreclosure Clinic. I did my work for the Clinic virtually. Most of the work was done individually, and we had weekly staff meetings to share our work with other Clinic employees. The Clinic planned and prepared to be flooded with clients that needed assistance with foreclosure mediation and filing motions to modify mortgages. However, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the home foreclosure process just like it affected everything else, and very few clients came to the Clinic because Governor Murphy put a moratorium on all home foreclosure proceedings. This moratorium ended up being extended for the duration of my time with the Clinic.

As a result, I spent most of my employment assisting with existing cases that the Clinic began working on during the Spring 2020 semester. This work included editing memos and certifications for clients who were attempting to modify their mortgages in an attempt to save their homes from being foreclosed upon and being sold at a sheriff's sale. I spent the remainder of my time with the Clinic researching several topics including New Jersey landlord and tenant law and the history of redlining and housing discrimination in inner cities. The majority of my research was for one of the Clinic's clients. I wrote a memo on the Consumer Financial Protection Borough, unfair and deceptive acts and practices, and the New Jersey Consumer Fraud Act.

I am very thankful to have received a stipend for my work with the Mortgage Foreclosure Clinic. The original job I had for the summer was taken away due to the pandemic and I was lucky to land a position with the Clinic. At first the position was unpaid, but then I got the great news that I would be receiving a stipend, and I am grateful that I was able to use that towards my tuition.

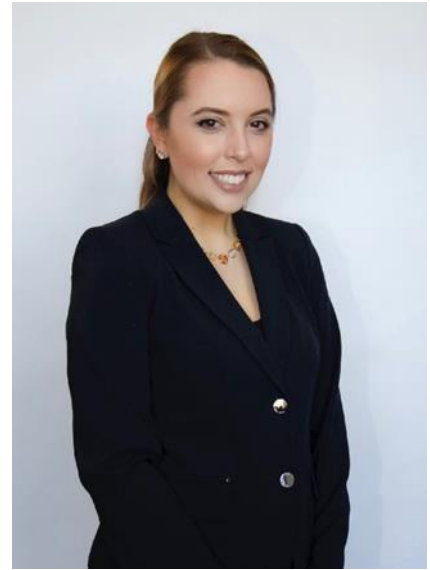


**Tess Berkowitz**  
J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Sharon, MA  
Undergraduate Institution: Roger Williams University

### **AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania**

I spent my IL Summer of 2020 as a legal intern at the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania. The AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania set up their summer internship program in a way that allowed me to participate in many areas including employment discrimination, HIPPA violations, immigration and landlord tenant disputes. I also learned, and by the close of the summer greatly improved, my client interviewing skills through daily participation in the firm's intake department.



Two cases that I worked on this summer stood out to me. First, I assisted a staff attorney with a demand letter, seeking damages for an inadvertent HIPPA violation by her doctor regarding her HIV status. Just a two-page letter involved extended legal research on previous cases that awarded damages on these grounds, multiple interviews with the client to ensure the details of the event were accurate, as well as many rounds of editing from numerous levels of management. Not only did I take away sharpened research skills and experience with a new kind of writing assignment, I learned the multiple layers of obstacles that many disadvantaged clients face. This client has two young children she was raising alone, did not speak English, lost her job as a result of the HIPPA violation, and was facing unstable immigration status. The multifaceted nature of poverty was evident in not just in this case, but the majority of clients the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania serves.

The second case that stood out to me was a mother whose landlord refused to repair multiple issues with her apartment. This case stuck out to me, as I got to directly apply the material I learned last semester in my Property class to a real-world dispute. Our client and her two children were living in a home that had a broken refrigerator, a gaping hole in the roof, and a severe rodent infestation. While the living conditions were shocking, the most upsetting part of her case was that she did not realize she had the legal right to withhold rent and demand the landlord fix these issues. She only reached out to us because she casually mentioned her frustration with the conditions to a medical social worker whom she was in contact with for an unrelated reason. After requesting to work on this case, I got to draft the initial contact letter the staff attorney sent out to the landlord. When my time at the AIDS Law Project ended a week or so later, I felt content leaving knowing that repairs were being scheduled.

Both of these cases stuck out to me due to the direct effects my work had on the clients'

lives and the lives of their children. Not only through these cases, but the multiple cases and client calls I answered, I saw first-hand how desperately vulnerable populations need knowledge of their legal rights as well as access to advocates to enforce them. I want to thank the Maida Program for making this opportunity possible and supporting the important work that the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania does for their clients.

**Micah Bowden**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Hazlet, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University

**ACLU-NJ**

I had the privilege of interning at the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey this past summer. While interning I had the opportunity to work on a broad range of issues and work with various talented attorneys. I conducted research on prisoners' rights, which has now informed my interest in pursuing a career in criminal justice reform. I wrote various legal memorandums and engaged in citation checks which helped me improve my legal writing skills. I also had the opportunity to conduct client intake. Hearing the powerful words of those telling their stories and advocating for themselves was moving and inspiring. Further, I participated in research on women rights, free speech, protests, police misconduct, and more. These experiences have made me more passionate about pursuing a career in public interest and fighting for the rights of the most marginalized.



Although my internship was remote, the ACLU-NJ made me feel connected and included each day. The office held various department meetings and virtual brown bag lunches. During these meetings I learned about the operations of a law office and non-profit. During the brown bag lunches, the ACLU had different attorneys join the meetings to speak about their work. I met lawyers from different legal fields and learned about various areas of the law.

I am so proud and honored to have been selected as a Maida Fellow. I cannot express how thankful I am to the Maida Program for their generosity, and for creating a program for public interest-oriented students. The Maida Program allowed me to intern with a public interest organization, pursue my passion, and remain financially stable throughout the summer. Due to the provided stipend, I was able to fully dedicate myself to my internship, without needing to find additional employment. Thank you, James and Sharon Maida, for a summer I will never forget.

**Lauren Brotherton**  
J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Greenville, SC  
Undergraduate Institution: Clemson University

### **PA Human Relations Commission**

This summer, I had the pleasure of working at the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (“PHRC”). The PHRC is determined to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and in communities throughout the state of Pennsylvania. At a time where racial justice is at an all-time high, I had the distinct honor of working on a racial injustice case.



Over the summer, I was responsible for researching and writing an appellate level brief in support of the Commission’s ruling that the term “Redskins” was racist and uncalled for in a public-school setting. This brief included First and Fourteenth Amendment arguments proving how the school district is responsible for protecting their students from racial discrimination, not perpetuating it. I was also able to make evidentiary and witness credibility arguments. I found these to be valuable since I had not yet been exposed to these issues as a 1L.

Further, I participated in conference calls discussing new cases that were brought to the PHRC. The investigators discussed their interviews and findings of the case and presented a recommendation to pursue or drop a case to the supervising attorneys. The attorneys were able to ask questions, give further tasks to the investigators, and determine the next steps of a case. I enjoyed this aspect of the job because it showed me what to look for in deciding if a case has merit or does not. It also gave me a look at what specifics “triggered” a meritorious or superfluous claim.

Finally, I wanted to take a moment to express my extreme appreciation for the funding I received. Without this funding, I would not have been able to focus on the important work that I was given this summer. It truly made a difference and allowed me to dive head-first into work that is paramount in our country today. I appreciate the effort and consideration from both the funders and the administration to make this program possible for students like myself. Thank you.

**Brooke Buchan**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

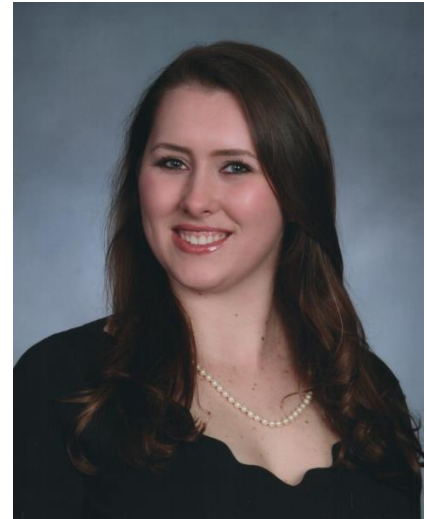
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Beach Haven, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: The College of New Jersey

**South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.**

This summer, I was fortunate to have served as an intern for South Jersey Legal Services, Inc. (SJLS) in the Camden office. My internship was funded through the Maida Partners Program, which generously granted me a \$4,000 stipend for my work.



Having just concluded my first year of law school, I was thrilled to begin my first legal internship with SJLS. But with the ongoing pandemic, I was nervous that expected challenges would be greatly exacerbated. I knew I would be facing the challenge of establishing and maintaining relationships between myself and the attorneys, staff, and clients at SJLS while the office worked remotely. However, my fears were pacified by Managing Attorney John P. Pendergast. Through his guidance, patience, and sense of humor, I quickly became comfortable doing legal work in the remote setting and engaging in professional conversations with my colleagues during Zoom meetings.

To expose me to the many different areas of the law SJLS provides services for, Mr. Pendergast assigned me to several cases with staff attorneys throughout the summer. I researched whether the elements to be met for vacating a final judgment differed depending on the type of judgment. I was also assigned to a case where I investigated a client's likelihood of enforcing a workmanship and/or manufacturer warranty for a faulty home improvement job. At the end of my internship, I was investigating the status of a several hundred-thousand-dollar bail bond taken out as collateral on a home.

Despite my lack of experience, Mr. Pendergast had enough confidence in my abilities to assign clients to me to counsel on my own. I mainly worked with clients facing collections proceedings and landlord-tenant issues. I successfully negotiated a stipulation of settlement and counseled the client on the terms of the agreement. I also provided advice to a client who sought to have the landlord eliminate strong odors emitted from a neighboring commercial tenant's premises where there was no legal remedy. When my internship came to an end, I was still in the process of negotiating the reduction of a debt by several thousand dollars with a collections company, investigating the status of a lien on a home, and investigating a potential hoarding situation that had been cited by the health department. I then relayed the status of each of these cases to the attorneys at SLJS, making for a smooth transition for the clients and giving a head-start to the attorneys taking over.

Although the pandemic presented unforeseen challenges, I parted from my internship at South Jersey Legal Services with newfound wisdom, critical thinking strategies, and communication skills. With the generous monetary stipend funded by the Maida Partners Program, I was able to receive the invaluable gift of substantive legal work experience while I aided low-income persons in achieving legal equity.



**Julia Burzynski**  
J.D. Candidate, 2021|  
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Essex County, NJ  
Undergraduate Institution: The College of William & Mary

### **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law**

This summer, I worked at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in Washington, D.C. Since I signed a non-disclosure agreement, I am unable to fully expand on the work I performed while at the Lawyers' Committee. I interned in the Lawyers' Committee's Voting Rights Project, where I was able to learn and work on pressing voting rights litigation. As a summer intern, I drafted a complaint concerning absentee ballots and sections of a brief concerning election security. I also researched several state's election statutes to update the Lawyers' Committee's published voter guides.



I am very grateful to have received a summer stipend to work at the Lawyers' Committee. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to get the fully refunded amount for the place I would have stayed at in D.C. Having the funding ensured that I could pay my rent, buy groceries, and even a new desk chair that helped me to stay up late working on voting rights litigation. It would have been incredibly difficult to work at an unpaid internship during a global pandemic were I not fortunate enough to receive funding.



**Emahunn Raheem Ali Campbell, PhD**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Spotsylvania County, Virginia

Undergraduate Institution: University of Virginia

**NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund**



This past summer, I was a legal intern at the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. (LDF), in which I was under the supervision of Rachel Kleinman, Senior Counsel and Director of Professional Development; and Omavi Shukur, Assistant Counsel.

During the summer, I worked on two significant matters that were apropos considering the racial climate of the past summer. The first matter I worked on was drafting a motion to compel discovery and conducting document review for discovery in a case, in which an Arkansas police officer shot and killed a Black man. I was fortunate to have produced a draft that was used by counsel to move the court to have opposing counsel in that matter provide evidence that was necessary to learn additional facts about the case.

Working on that case extensively dovetailed nicely with the second matter I had the great fortune to work on, which addressed the ways in which individuals with prior criminal records were denied housing by various property management companies. In this matter, I created a comprehensive chart that outlined the various companies that have changed their policies as a result of the threat of litigation, as denying housing to those with a prior criminal record contravenes current HUD guidelines. In addition, I drafted client profiles and memoranda related to other racial justice issues for the organization.

My 14-week position at the premier civil rights law firm in the country would not have been possible without the generous funding from the Maida fellowship. More specifically, if it was not for the Maida fellowship, I would not have been able to fully commit myself to my internship and the world LDF envisions. In addition, I would have found it challenging to build important support systems and engage in networking opportunities without the Maida fellowship.

**Pati Candelario**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Ridgefield, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: The College of New Jersey

**Center for Security, Race, and Rights**

This summer, I worked as a law fellow at the Center for Security, Race and Rights with Professor Sahar Aziz. I was responsible for three major projects this summer. My first project was the Summer lecture series. I led a three-part virtual webinar on systemic race and racism in U.S. politics. The shift to remote events did not hinder the Center's growth—for each event we had over 500 registered participants. I mastered the Zoom webinar feature and was able to train other team members on how to run a successful webinar. I also electronically standardized all of the event surveys and event planning checklists that were previously done on hard copy. My second project was to make an annotated bibliography with 50 sources on teaching race in legal education. This bibliography has been distributed widely to undergraduate campuses and law school campuses. My last big project for the summer was preparing an Oxford University Press book proposal for Professor Aziz's upcoming edited volume. Some of the tasks involved conducting a prior literature search on populism (resulting in an annotated bibliography with over 20 research articles on populism), reaching out to academics to invite them to contribute to the book, and putting together a draft of all the necessary book proposal requirements per the Oxford guidelines. My work this summer helped me work towards my ultimate goal—to become a law professor.



I am eternally grateful for this opportunity as it allowed me to grow in practical legal areas and receive feedback and mentorship from a trailblazer in the legal profession. As a result of this summer fellowship, I became a stronger legal writer, learned more sophisticated methods of citation, and expanded my domain knowledge on populism, race and racism, and the legal education.

Thank you again for funding my fellowship this summer. The fellowship provided me with a unique and unforgettable experience.

**Juliana Davis**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Sicklerville, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rowan University

**Camden County Surrogate Court**

This summer I had the opportunity to continue my position at the Camden County Surrogate’s Court. Without my summer stipend, I would not have had a summer internship, as the County did not want to pay for a legal intern due to their move from Camden to Blackwood. This internship provided me with a strong foundation of knowledge in Estates and Trusts and showed me how small government offices make such a large impact in people’s lives. My main specialty at the Surrogate’s Court was guardianship applications for incapacitated persons. These are very important for those with a loved one with a developmental disability or other reasons for incapacitation. I worked on many adoptions, ensuring that files were correctly secured in the system and redacted where needed. My knowledge of valid wills and will substitutes was strengthened as I learned how to prepare fiches and ensure that information was properly safeguarded. My legal research and writing were improved over the summer as I prepared many memos for the probate judge and had to work out issues with various filings. I learned how to be a better attorney this summer and how to change people’s lives in a different way other than the typical images of public interest law. I am blessed to have received my summer funding and thank everyone from the bottom of my heart for this opportunity to grow.



**Alexis DeFillippo**  
J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Ocean Township, NJ  
Undergraduate Institution: St. John's University

**Child and Family Advocacy Clinic (Camden Clinic)**

This past summer I had the amazing opportunity to intern with the Child and Family Advocacy Clinic under the direct supervision of Professor Meredith Schalick.

Additionally, I had the honor of being a Maida summer stipend recipient. I am very grateful to be a recipient of the stipend because it allowed me to focus on my internship and summer courses without worrying about finances and I am sincerely grateful for the Maida funding.



Working for Professor Schalick and the clinic was a hands-on learning experience. I had the opportunity to learn more about what the job as a Law Guardian entails and how essential of a role it plays into the lives of foster children. The Child and Family Advocacy Clinic not only showed me a career path I never knew about, but it fostered my desire to become an advocate for children. This internship has since influenced my choices in courses I enrolled in, such as family law, youth rights and race, and child welfare law. Throughout the summer I was able to expand upon my research and writing skills. I also had the chance to compose a memo on how Pro Se litigants proceed with representing themselves during the COVID 19 pandemic through an online system called “JEDS”. Moreover, I also got to work with Clinic Staff Attorney Cheryl Turk on education law cases.

Working for the clinic was beneficial to me in more ways than I can explain. Despite being completely remote the Clinic leaders made sure that us interns felt connected and had a sense of community. Every Wednesday the clinic interns got to attend lunch meetings where we would hear from different clinic directors about what their clinic did. The interns got a chance to get to know one another while being educated on the kind of work their bosses performed.

Overall this past summer I was able to have a great legal internship. I am grateful for the Rutgers clinical program and the Maida funding!

**Andrew Frankel**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Ventnor City, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Stockton University

**Expungement Law Project (Camden Clinic)**



First and foremost, I'd like to express my utmost gratitude for providing funding to myself and other law school students to engage in incredibly rewarding and important public interest. Thank you for the opportunity for the invaluable experience I was able to partake in this Summer, not only due to its educational value but the satisfaction in engaging in work that serves to help those less fortunate than myself. I decided to come to law school to help people and I know these opportunities come few and far between during the course of your studies.

During the Summer of 2020 I received a Maida Public Interest Fund to continue the work of the Expungement Law Project, which I began in Fall 2020. Specifically, I represented five clients on their expungement cases by drafting their petitions, obtaining the relevant records, writing briefs in support of their petition when applicable, and keeping the clients apprised of the status of their case during the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was particularly rewarding for me to serve as a beacon of stability during a period of time that has caused such societal unrest amongst us all. While I know an expungement case being managed is not enough to alleviate all of my clients worries and concerns, I was proud to be able to give them at least some semblance of normal and consistency during this unprecedented time in history. It was your donation that allowed me to accomplish this and I am eternally grateful.

**Benjamin Gibson**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Bottineau, ND

Undergraduate Institution: University of North Dakota



**Mortgage Foreclosure Project (Camden)**

During the summer of 2020, I worked with the Mortgage Foreclosure Clinic at Rutgers. In addition to working on a case, I translated materials into Spanish for the substantial Hispanic population of South Jersey.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting moratorium on foreclosure sales, the Clinic did not get any new cases in the summer. However, I worked on a holdover case researching ways to void the previous mediation and try to give them another shot at mediation before a sheriff's sale could take place. I found some procedural defects that I included in my memo at the end of the summer so that the class in the fall could pursue them. I also discovered that the lender in question has a history of engaging in shady practices and has settled multiple class-action lawsuits.

The bulk of my own work involved translating materials into Spanish. Because of the large Hispanic population in South Jersey, there has recently been an initiative to translate more materials for the clinics into Spanish. I translated the intake form, with the idea that it will eventually be available online or sent via e-mail to the potential client to streamline the intake process. I also provided a translation of the web page that provides visitors information about what the Mortgage Foreclosure Clinic does and how it helps homeowners avoid losing their homes. The goal is to eventually have other clinics follow suit and provide translations so that more people can access the services provided.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to do work with an organization providing legal help to people, and I am thankful for the Maida funding. It helped fund my textbook purchases for the fall semester.



**Cindy Guaman**  
J.D. Candidate, 2021  
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: West Deptford, NJ  
Undergraduate Institution: American University

**Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)  
Immigrant Justice Fellow**

I am eternally grateful to have received Maida Funding to intern with Kids in Need of Defense. Interning with Kids in Need of Defense has been a very rewarding experience. I was able to represent unaccompanied minors and it is there where I realized I wanted to continue to represent children in immigration proceedings. It helped me form the basis for a project for one of my fellowship applications, involving juvenile system involved noncitizen youth. The formation I experienced at KIND was integral to my project and positioned me exactly where I needed to be to begin my career in immigration law. I became well versed in new law and learned new practices, which helped me expand my legal knowledge. I have also built personal and professional relationships with the attorneys at KIND and hope continue to foster those relationships to continue to do groundbreaking work with KIND. Thank you to the Maida Family for all that you do for us students and for the community.



**Adina Heistein**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Teaneck, New Jersey

Undergraduate Institution: Brandeis University

**Criminal and Youth Justice Clinic (Newark)**

This past summer I interned in the Criminal and Youth Justice Clinic at Rutgers Law School. The Criminal and Youth Justice Clinic represents juveniles in the state of New Jersey in all of their post disposition matters, as well as individuals in their post-conviction relief matters stemming from adjudications they received as juveniles. Throughout this internship, one of the main things that I accomplished was maintaining my own caseload of juvenile clients who are currently incarcerated in detention centers or in youth programs throughout New Jersey. While I handled my own caseload of juvenile clients, I spoke to with my clients multiple times a week, wrote recall motions to the judge in order to ask for their sentences to be reduced, and maintained contact with their family members to keep them abreast of the situations with their children and siblings.



This past summer, I also conducted research in the field of juvenile sex offender registration. Juveniles are often placed on sex offender registries for offenses that were committed when they were teens, and it very often has lifelong effects. If an individual is placed on a sex offender registry, and subsequently has kids, they may not be able to visit their kids at school or live close to their children's school. That is why I felt as if it were very important to research and try to assist youth who are still suffering with these collateral consequences.

I am extremely grateful to have received a Maida stipend this past summer. It made it possible for me to focus on my public interest work, which is something I plan on pursuing upon graduation. I am extremely appreciative of the generous funding opportunity. Thank you for everything.



**Tue Ho**

J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Philadelphia, PA  
Undergraduate Institution: Temple University

**ACLU-PA**

This past summer I had the privilege of working at the ACLU-PA. I never imagined being able to work at such a premiere public interest organization, and I used my 10 weeks there to absorb as much information as I can. After my summer at the ACLU-PA, I'm even more determined to work in Public Interest and in the Philadelphia area.



Fun fact: I am the ACLU-PA's first ever remote legal intern. I started immediately after spring finals, and began a week before the other legal interns arrived. During my time at the ACLU-PA I worked on various projects that allowed me to practice multiple skills. One project I worked on my entire summer was researching COVID conditions at multiple detention centers. I poured over thousands of pages of medical reports, detention complaints, and scientific guidelines. Through this work, the ACLU-PA was able to send inmates who were most at risk from COVID home on house arrest, potentially saving their lives.

I also did a lot of legal research and writing. I researched a range of topics including what constitutes probable cause for an ICE detainer, to the amount of attorney fees that can be received due to partial success and lack of documentation. I really appreciated the opportunity to work on my research and writing daily.

My most memorable work involved investigating excessive force or disparate treatment on protestors from the police. This past summer was hectic for multiple reasons, but one close to Philadelphia was the police responses to protests. At the ACLU-PA, we received many complaints and requests to investigate. I was a part of the investigation team tasked with speaking to individuals, following leads, and even observing in person in order to accurately document the truth. Many individuals who felt harmed from police actions were given referrals if they had a unique need, or a space for them to at least document their experience.

The stipend attached to this opportunity was crucial for me in order to participate. I would not be able to afford my rent or pay living expenses without it. Additionally, I got married this past summer immediately after my Internship, so the added financial security was a blessing towards a smooth and joyful beginning of our shared life.

I want to thank the MAIDA program for the amazing summer. It really impacts people's lives.

**Morgan Humphrey**  
J.D. Candidate, 2021  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Trenton, NJ  
Undergraduate Institution: University of Pennsylvania

### **ACLU-PA**

This summer I was blessed with the opportunity to intern at the ACLU-PA. Working at the ACLU-PA this summer was especially exciting, because I had the opportunity to work on a lot of police reform work with various community organizations throughout Pennsylvania. This included writing letters to City Council about proposals for police reform, meeting with community organizers, and learning all about the powers of Home Rule Charters. I continued my internship into the fall semester, where I became the resident expert on Home Rule Charters. Because of my work and growing expertise, I was given the opportunity to remain on the team during this upcoming spring and continue my work in police reform. Working at the ACLU-PA was such an amazing opportunity, and I am so grateful for the Maida funding that made it possible for me to do the work I love. My goal is to one day work full-time at the ACLU, so the Maida funding has really allowed me to put expand my network, and find mentors for my legal career. I really enjoyed my summer with ACLU-PA and I am so appreciative of the Maida Summer Public Interest stipend, which allowed me to intern at the organization of my dreams.



**Lisa Laffend**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Media, PA

Undergraduate Institution: Ithaca College

**Community Health Law Project**

During a summer where it felt like everything that could go wrong in the world was going wrong, the Maida Scholarship gave me some piece of mind and I was still able to gain incredible insight and experience at Community Health Law Project. With COVID-19 painting the backdrop for what became a remote internship, I learned what it is like to provide legal services during an international pandemic. Alongside my supervisor and the staff attorneys, I attended weekly meetings to discuss concerns surrounding court reopenings and tactics for combatting the growing housing crisis and the coming wave of landlord-tenant cases. Between these meetings, I researched and deciphered government-funded aid programs and executive orders on the discussed topics.



On top of everything I learned about disaster lawyering, I learned a lot about working at a legal services organization serving low-income clients with disabilities. My work, helping provide direct services, spanned many areas, including public benefits, housing, and expungements, as well as the previously mentioned changes in funding, regulations, and procedures due to COVID-19. One of my biggest projects this summer was going through the most recent version of the New Jersey expungement statutes to prepare expungement petitions for clients as well as prepare a presentation to educate the staff attorneys on the changes.

Like all good internships, however, one of the most valuable parts of my experience were the connections I made and the lessons they taught me. For example, while the pandemic made client-contact hard, managing attorney Brian Smith, Esq. was still able to teach me vital lessons about talking to client such as the importance of listening to everything your client has to say. Furthermore, I received a lot of insight and advice into what direction to take my studies to aid my career path and ultimate goal of helping my community.

**Sawyer Like**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Overland Park, KS

Undergraduate Institution: Kansas State University

**Volunteer Lawyers for Justice**

I had the opportunity to intern for the Volunteer Lawyers for Justice (VLJ) this past summer through MAIDA, and it proved to be one of the most personally and professionally rewarding experiences I've had in law school. My co-workers were very patient and compassionate, and they were always willing to answer any questions I had and to provide feedback.

I was assigned to three programs within the VLJ, which were the South Ward Promise Neighborhood (SWPN), Reentry Legal Services (ReLeSe) and the Veterans Legal Services programs. Within the SWPN program, I was able to conduct extensive research into poverty in America and New Jersey, and how much access lower-income communities have to free legal services and civil representation.

Within the ReLeSe program, I had the ability to be involved in their monthly clinics, conduct legal research, and draft memoranda for my supervising attorney. I prepared client files / criminal history information prior to clinics, participated in client interviews, discussed the matters with the volunteer attorney assigned to the case, and subsequently evaluated client cases to determine high-priority cases. I also completed intake applications with clients over the phone and conducted questionnaires for bankruptcy and estate planning. My research involved First Amendment issues with commercial publishing of criminal record information, New Jersey's amended expungement statute, the state of female incarceration and reentry, et al. I communicated my findings to my supervising attorney via memoranda.

My work in the Veterans Legal Services program involved completing intake applications/questionnaires with clients, conducting legal research and participating in clinics (*see ReLeSe section*). My research involved landlord-tenant law in New Jersey and identifying other legal service organizations in the state.

My internship was one of the most professionally and personally enriching experiences I've had in law school and I'm happy I got to spend the summer working with so many dedicated and compassionate coworkers.



**Joseph Lin**

J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Queens, New York  
Undergraduate Institution: NYU

**American Friends Service Committee – AFSC**

I am truly grateful for this opportunity that the Maida program has supported in my professional development.



I found my time as an AFSC intern to be rewarding. In the midst of COVID-19, protocols regarding immigration detention were constantly shifting and legal service providers like AFSC were unwavering in their commitment to immigrant advocacy. I came into this position knowing about immigrant rights, but very little about the immigration detention system. I found that I achieved my goal of developing skills in research, client interaction, and knowledge of the defensive asylum process. For this reason, I find myself more confident in my ability to be a lawyer.

Staff are passionate about what they do and welcome curiosity and creativity from interns. I am grateful for my supervisor, Laura Rodriguez, for her support, guidance, and encouragement of feedback. For example, when I mentioned an interest in LGBT-related claims, she spoke with another attorney and found a case for me to work on.

**Internship Accomplishments**

- Motion to Reconsider for Client’s Custody Redetermination Hearing: I researched regulations, immigration law statutes, and case law to correct the Immigration Judge’s misinterpretation and misapplication of case law so that the client could obtain a bond hearing. I feel accomplished because this assignment cultivated my skills in statutory interpretation and apply persuasive techniques in the brief. Since I had worked on Client’s custody review (evidence and Client preparation), I felt even more dedicated to portraying the Client’s sympathetic facts, including his devotion to his family and church, and how his illiteracy presented substantial challenges in his application process for relief.
- Developing client engagement techniques in intake and declarations: I learned ways to work with clients with emotional trauma by applying a strengths-based approach with clients. Though clients were depending on recounting traumatic experiences to seek certain relief, I expressed sympathy, paced the interviews, and guided the Client through targeted questions based on the Client’s responses. Moreover, I learned additional areas of improvement may come with practice, notably: 1) explaining relevant law or legal process to clients and 2) measuring the client’s expectations.



- Country conditions research: I honed my skills in identifying sources and summarizing themes relevant to the Client, ranging from land right defenders in Guatemala to LGBT rights in Guyana and State-sponsored violence against suspected drug activity in Brazil.

While the landscape of detention work continues to change amidst the pandemic, I found myself challenged to reflect on how we define success and theory of change amidst a broken immigration system – be it a judge’s misinterpretation of the law or at a more basic level, faulty technology impeding a detained person’s access to counsel. While a client’s outcome from a hearing is important and can be defined as a “success,” I also found joy in just providing resources for clients even when we could not represent them or hearing about AFSC’s community work, from bail funds to campaigning for the eviction of CoreCivic and the Elizabeth Detention Center.

With the Maida funding for my summer internship, I was able to pursue my passion for immigration and criminal justice reform and learn firsthand from passionate social justice attorneys. I would certainly recommend this experience to my fellow classmates.

**Constance Long**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Waynesboro, PA

Undergraduate Institution: Temple University

**American Friends Service Committee - AFSC**

My summer funding gave me the opportunity to salvage a last minute change in plans when my original summer internship fell through due to Covid-19. Thanks to my sponsor's support I was able to take part in a remote internship with American Friends Service Committee as the legal intern for the VOCA team in Newark, NJ.



For the first half of the internship I worked under a supervisor to provide direct services to clients in the process of adjusting their immigration status. I was in charge of client interaction for eight different cases and prepared forms and documents for applications for permanent residence, work permits, and naturalization.

The second half of the internship I worked with the advocacy director of AFSC to gather data and draft a report on compliance among New Jersey Law Enforcement agencies with the attorney general's New Jersey Immigrant Trust Directive. I was in charge of contacting a total of 43 different state and local law enforcement agencies including prosecutorial offices and police departments to interview their representative about the agency's protocols for providing U-Visa certifications. It was then my responsibility to review each agency's publicly available website to verify whether the protocol was open and accessible to the public as required by the Directive.

We were so successful with the data collection that at the end of the 10-week program, AFSC offered to pay me to stay on for two more weeks to help them draft the report which would be presented to the Attorney General's office. I was responsible for drafting the methodology, results, and recommendations sections of the report (about 50% of the final product).

I am so grateful for the funding that enabled me to have such a fulfilling internship with AFSC. I learned that I love the environment of working in a non-profit organization and I was able to create a network which I have already used to organize two Know Your Rights Panels through the Rutgers Immigration Law Society. My supervisor from AFSC conducted a Spanish-language session which we were able to livestream to the community and had over 160 viewers. Thank you!

**Megyn MacMullen**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Wayne, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Drew University

**Disability Rights New Jersey**

As an intern at Disability Rights New Jersey I was given the unique opportunity to help advance the rights of persons with disabilities. I conducted client intake, attended meetings with the New Jersey Department of Health, and participated in National Disability Rights Network webinars, which all gave me a wide variety of experience to prepare me for my future as an attorney. Learning how to properly write citations and getting constant feedback on my legal writing style will help greatly in the future. However, my favorite part of my internship was monitoring psychiatric hospitals to promote proper care of patients.



One of the biggest influences to go to law school was because I wanted to do work within disability law, specifically within public interest. Monitoring the patients in various psychiatric hospitals in New Jersey reaffirmed my desire to help those who cannot afford attorneys. Each patient had a different story whether they were on KROL status or they were self-admitted. I learned how to listen to their needs and determine the best course of action in how to solve their legal dilemmas. Through my experience monitoring psychiatric hospitals, my supervisor became a great mentor for me.

Without the generosity of Mr. James and Dr. Sharon Maida, and their creation of the Maida Program, I would have not had the amazing experiences at DRNJ that I did. I am so grateful that a program exists that allows students to follow their passion, aid the most vulnerable populations, and still afford their living expenses. The funding from the Maida program allowed me to fully experience and dedicate as much time as possible to my Summer internship without worrying about trying to do small jobs on the side to make money. My Summer internship experience was truly invaluable and I am forever grateful.



**Moriah Mendicino**  
J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Salida, CO  
Undergraduate Institution: University of Colorado

### **Pennsylvania Innocence Project**

This summer I had the privilege of serving as a legal intern at the Pennsylvania Innocence Project. Each intern is typically expected to go through the case file of one incarcerated person claiming actual innocence. This summer was an abbreviated program due to delays in scanning documents to allow for a virtual experience, in light of COVID, and we had to work quickly to get through our case files and write an investigative report on our assigned individual before the summer program came to an end.

Over the course of the summer I was able to work through trial transcripts, appeal documents, and other court documents. I also had the chance to do legal research for a volunteer attorney who was helping to represent an Innocence Project exoneree in his case against his negligent defense attorney. For me, this was the highlight of the summer because I got to work on my research but I also got to contribute to the effort being made to get some justice for a young man who was arrested at 18 and lost 10 years of his life to a conviction for a crime he demonstrably did not commit. This person never should have been in jail, and but for his negligent attorney he likely would not have been! It was exciting to research for his case, and I was proud to see that my work influenced the attorney's final brief.

I am also happy and proud to be staying on with the Innocence Project as an extern this semester. Unfortunately, these appeals take many years and the Innocence Project counts on the work of committed volunteers, interns, and externs and I am so thankful to have been able to spend my summer and now fall with them, thanks to Maida!



**Casey Murphy**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

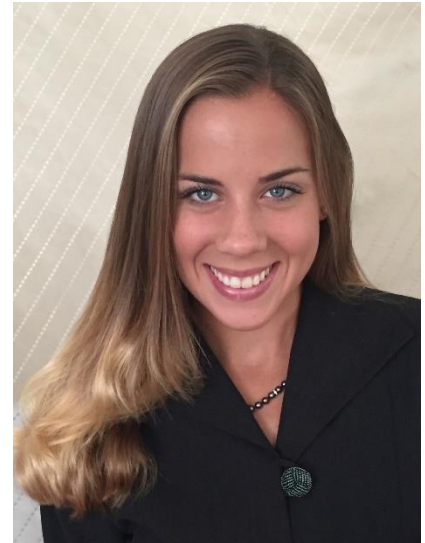
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Bogota, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University

**Partners for Women and Justice |**

This past summer, I had the privilege of working as a legal intern with Partners for Women and Justice in Bloomfield, NJ. One of the prime reasons I decided to pursue law school was to fight for gender equality, so working with an organization that represents impoverished domestic violence victims was inspiring.



My responsibilities were different and varied depending on what the attorneys and or policy staff needed that day. I drafted a number of subpoenas, provided research on criminal laws in surrounding states such as Pennsylvania and New York, and assisted with trial prep. Additionally, I was able to shadow trials that were conducted via “zoom” and provided intakes for potential clients. I was also able to work on long term projects for the policy team, which I thoroughly enjoyed. For example, I went county by county seeking statistics of domestic violence stats for the second quarter of 2020 in comparison to the second quarter of 2019 (keeping in mind that this is when New Jersey was at its peak quarantine, putting domestic violence victims at risk throughout the state). As my final project, I drafted commentary arguing against a newly proposed regulation by the New Jersey Vehicle Commission which would ultimately make it much more difficult for undocumented immigrants to apply for identification.

I’d like to thank the Maida Partners Program for both this opportunity and the funding in the amount of \$4,000. I continue to be grateful my family is healthy, but COVID-19 impacted my family’s financial situation extremely negatively and to be able to continue to support them in any way I can was monumental. Summer 2020 will certainly be one for the books.

**Natima Neily**  
J.D. Candidate, 2021  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Santa Cruz, California  
Undergraduate Institution: Arizona State University

**Santa Cruz Public Defender's Office**



I am the first in my family to go to law school. Moreover, I don't think I met someone with a law degree until I was a junior in undergrad. Throughout my time in law school, I have sought to find ways to connect the community I was raised in to the legal career I will have. This past summer, as I transitioned from my second to third year in law school, I wanted that connection to be more direct.

Thankfully, as a Maida recipient, I was able to secure a summer legal clerkship with the public defender's office of my hometown, and work to represent the interests of the accused just a ten-minute drive from my family home. There aren't many silver linings to be found in the midst of a global viral pandemic, but I found just that in remote classes, returning home, and writing motions to suppress. Interning with the public defender's office this summer was an especially unique experience, in that the pandemic put a twist on everything. My first assignment was to write a memo exploring the ways that social-distancing protocols would violate a defendant's constitutional right to effective assistance of counsel; how the local mask mandate might infringe upon the confrontation clause of the 6th amendment; and how virtual viewing of a courtroom was not in line with the meaning of a public trial. These were certainly questions I had never before been asked in law school, and ones that had no clear answer - yet it was at this novel and never-before explored territory that my summer internship commenced.

I was one of the lucky few this year that were able to keep their summer internships, and that is entirely thanks to the funding I received from Maida. As the summer started, I had friends whose offers were rescinded because of sudden budget cuts, as organizations had to drastically restructure in the face of a summer-long quarantine. Fortunately, my Maida stipend insulated me from those realities, and ensured my summer clerkship.

**Mumbi Ngugi**  
J.D. Candidate, 2022  
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Irvine, CA  
Undergraduate Institution: Wilkes Honors College, Florida  
Atlantic University

### **Homeless Advocacy Project**

This summer 2020 I had the joyous opportunity to intern at the Homeless Advocacy Project in Philadelphia. It was a partial remote internship, but I also got the opportunity to go into the office three times, with proper social distancing protocols, and experience the joy of the community of my workplace in person.



I appreciate the funding I received for the summer greatly. It took until July to receive, which was about half way through the summer, which put a strain on my finances; when I received it opened up the possibilities and I felt so grateful to be a member of the Social Justice Scholars Program and feel the freedom to work in public interest over summer due to the guaranteed funding.

My relationship with my supervisors was a great joy of my internship. I made two mentors for life, and professional relationships with the rest of the employees and even the Executive Director that I will cherish for the rest of my career. I felt welcomed as a member of the workplace and I felt so sad to leave.

I also got to help unhoused people without licenses apply for birth certificates. I also had the opportunity to help people with the SOAR applications, a special program for accelerated social security benefits. Lastly, I also got to write as my summer project a discharge upgrade memo for a most worthy homeless veteran. I made relationships with my clients that were so fulfilling. When I told one client that it was my time to leave the internship she told me: “It’s like you’re graduating... I’m so proud of you”.

Thank you to the Maida family and SJS for my summer funding which made my internship possible.

**Jaime Portillo**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

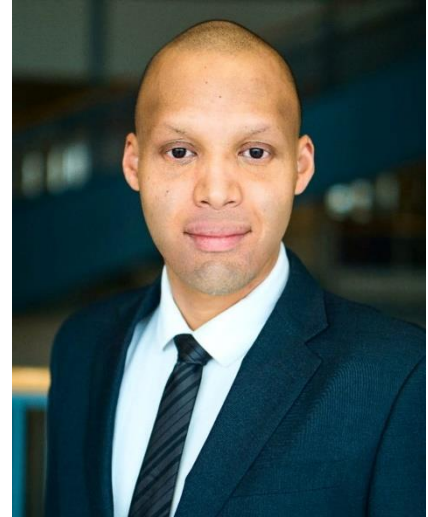
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Los Angeles, CA

Undergraduate Institution: University of Southern California (USC)

**Bet Tzedek Legal Services**

This past summer, I was with Bet Tzedek Legal Services, a nonprofit legal aid organization, specifically in their Low-Income Tax Clinic (LITC). While there, I had the privilege of helping vulnerable communities with a range of tax matters, notably federal and state matters that varied widely. The organization is based in Los Angeles, my hometown, but luckily, we had the resources to go remote. Among us all, there were roughly 30 or so interns, each spread across different departments, and I was the sole LITC intern, which worked in my favor really since I had an amazing cool and educated boss.



While the experience was all remote, I still felt very much connected to an organization that cares deeply about those in need. There is no doubt that 2020 has been an entirely different experience in itself, with the ongoing pandemic and racial movement not seen since the 1960's. I remained cognizant of these experiences during my time with Bet Tzedek. Nearly every client had been impacted by the ongoing events of 2020 in some way, shape, or form. Their stories and experiences reminded me of why I got into public interest in the first place. It reaffirmed my passion for helping those who are most vulnerable, and in the many prior months, many have been hit hard. I know many people, myself included, were lucky to have been spared of some of the devastating impacts of this year, yet there were countless others who were indirectly or directly harmed by the events of this past summer and beyond. Underrepresented people and communities were at most risk of the pandemic, and this was heavily reflected in many of the clients I got to help. The events reminded me that, whether the events of this year happened or not, there are still people who are vulnerable and need legal assistance. The implications of this year so far have simply shed a light on the social inequality and devastating effects of poverty, low income, lack of resources, and need for legal representation, especially with tax matters that I worked on. Regardless of what may come next, I am humbled that I am on the path to give back to the community, to use the privilege I've had to help those who need and deserve it most, and ensure that I give my best efforts to helping those in need. Remedying social inequalities and assisting underrepresented communities is a collaborative effort, and I will ensure that I do my part in that effort both now and when I finally become a lawyer.



**Justin Reilly**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Shelter Island, NY

Undergraduate Institution: Union College

**NJ AG Criminal**

This summer I interned with the Attorney General Office in the Appellate Division. Thankfully, the Attorney General’s Office remained committed to offering an internship program despite the challenges caused by Covid-19.



Under normal circumstances, I would have reported to Trenton every day for my internship. Due to Covid-19, all of the interns worked remotely. Although the internship was remote, I was still able to have many experiences I would have had if the internship was in person. Under the supervision of my supervising deputy attorney, I was able to argue an appeal to a criminal sentence in the Appellate Court via a telephonic appearance. Arguing my first appeal in court (albeit telephonically) will be a memory I will carry with me for years to come.

In addition, I researched issues focused on search and seizures that were brought up on appeal. I assisted my supervising attorney with submitting a brief to the Appellate Court. I wrote an overview memorandum that summarized current New Jersey case law in the area of search and seizure.

Finally, throughout the entire summer, the Attorney General’s office had a “brown-bag lunch series.” During lunchtime we would have zoom sessions with various individuals and departments of the Attorney General’s office. We explored areas that impacted both civil and criminal law.

This experience offered me the opportunity to learn from experts in the field. In this current era of criminal justice reform, Attorney General Grewal shared with us the efforts that New Jersey is making in the effort to address contemporary issues in criminal justice. This summer I had the opportunity to intern for an organization that is in the forefront of current issues facing New Jersey. The summer funding provided through Rutgers made this internship financially possible for me. The experiences I had this summer will shape my legal career for years to come.

Thank you for making this internship a possibility for me.

**Gina Riccardi**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Livingston, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University

**Make the Road**



This summer, I interned with the immigration attorneys at Make the Road New Jersey, an organization based in Elizabeth that provides free lawyering, community organizing, and policy work on issues affecting workers' rights and immigrant rights. I spent most of my time with this organization working on two immigration asylum cases. These cases provided me the opportunity to work with country condition experts, perform country condition research, meet often with the attorneys at Make the Road, meet with clients, write and edit briefs, and learn the ins and outs of the complicated body of immigration law. I also worked directly with clients to complete DACA renewals, ensuring that childhood arrivals are able to work and attend school here. Make the Road also welcomed us interns to organizing events. I was able to attend protests and see the real-time successful results of organizing efforts, which are just as important to the fight for equality as legal wins.

I am incredibly grateful for the funding from Maida that allowed me to intern with Make the Road this summer. Public interest work is invaluable to our communities in New Jersey and throughout this country, and I would not be able to work for an organization with little funding such as Make the Road were it not for this amazing opportunity. Make the Road inspired me and centered me. When the world seemed to be crashing because of COVID-19, the attorneys and members of Make the Road were on the ground raising money for immigrants who could not receive the stimulus payments. When the Supreme Court ruled that immigration authorities must accept DACA initial applications for people who have been residing in the US since 2007, Make the Road jumped into action to create a program to efficiently help people apply. I have been blessed to be able to meet the people working at Make the Road and work alongside them on these important issues.

**Kimberly Roman**  
J.D. Candidate, 2021  
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Perth Amboy, NJ  
Undergraduate Institution: Brown University

### **New Jersey Office of the Public Defender**

This summer I had the pleasure of working in the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender at the Middlesex Trial Region. As a Middlesex County native, working there was especially meaningful. While the internship was undoubtedly affected by the current global pandemic, I was still able to learn so much – perhaps I was able to learn more by doing the work under less than ideal circumstances.



Initially in my internship, I did a lot of legal research and writing. Some of the research topics were very interesting, as they dealt with issues surrounding COVID-19 and the racial and political climate immediately following the death of George Floyd. Towards the end of my internship, I was able to appear in court and represent clients for detention hearings. To have had that type of hands-on experience was invaluable. Being able to observe other attorneys was equally as beneficial. One time, after losing a hearing, the client’s girlfriend called me very upset and said that I did not care since I worked for the state. I listened to her vent, and we ended up having a conversation that I think left her in a better state than when she first called. That conversation will stay with me forever.

I always knew that I wanted to be a public defender, but to have had this type of practical experience just solidified that desire. Because I come from limited means, being able to take advantage of unpaid opportunities has been difficult. So this Maida Fellowship funding has meant everything to me. It has provided me the opportunity to work towards my dreams of being an advocate for communities like the ones I grew up in. I am so grateful for the generosity of those who value the importance of public interest work.



**Sam Romeo**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

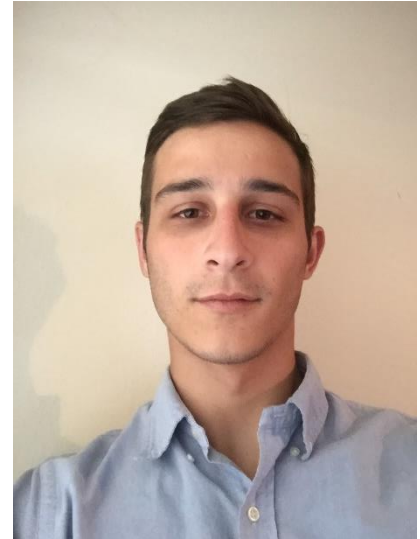
Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Orlando, FL

Undergraduate Institution: Florida State University

**Philadelphia VIP**

I spent my 1L summer as an intern with Philadelphia VIP, a non-profit organization that provides pro bono legal services to impoverished Philadelphians. The mission at VIP is to find a volunteer attorney that can assist clients with a wide variety of cases, including: divorce, child custody, probate, name changes, deed transfers, and others. I assumed the role of a “Pro Bono Case Manager”, and was assigned about twenty new cases that were accepted during the pandemic. The pandemic made this a unique summer because I was unable to meet with any of my clients in person--I had to build a relationship over the phone with them as I asked them a slew of questions to prepare a case summary about their matter. I would then attempt referrals to possible volunteers with these case summaries. Because of coronavirus, many of my clients needed urgent assistance or guidance regarding the court closures and case postponements in Philadelphia. It was a true honor to be able to be the main point-of-contact for these clients. I was able to find a volunteer attorney for my favorite client just two days before her collections hearing in Municipal Court. Her appreciation really showed me how valuable pro bono legal services can be in Philadelphians' lives. Helping these clients through their legal problems, whether they involved homeownership or family law issues, was the exact type of rewarding experience I was seeking for my 1L summer.



I cannot thank the Maida funders enough for their contributions that allowed me to accept a pro bono position over one of the most difficult summers in history. Enabling students like me to work in the pro bono field and not worry about falling behind on bills or tuition is truly special. Working with the VIPsters was such a fulfilling experience and I am eager to volunteer for some of VIPs' cases in the future.

**Christina Sabato**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Jersey City, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Michigan State University

**US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

This past summer I served as a Legal Intern at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). I had the opportunity to join the EEOC's New York District Office and work in their Legal Unit. As part of the trial team, I shadowed telephonic mediations, interviewed charging parties and witnesses, purged through my first set of personnel files for discovery, and conducted research for use in pending and future cases. The experience was tremendously valuable because it offered an insight into what it would be like to work as a litigator. I was grateful for mentorship I received from my three supervising attorneys, each of whom answered my questions, offered advice about the field, and gave me thoughtful feedback. During this time, one of the most rewarding parts of the role quickly became the conversations I had while interviewing charging parties and witnesses. The parties were so open with me, even after a simple introduction. Learning about the parties as people, hearing their stories, and having repeated conversations with them, motivated me to gather the best facts, evidence, and comparators that I could. The summer solidified my future path as a litigator, specifically in employment and labor law. I am extremely grateful for the Maida fund's support. Their generosity offered me, and many others, the opportunity to accept public interest roles and focus on the crucial issues our organizations seek to support.



**Sophie Sitar**

J.D. Candidate, 2023

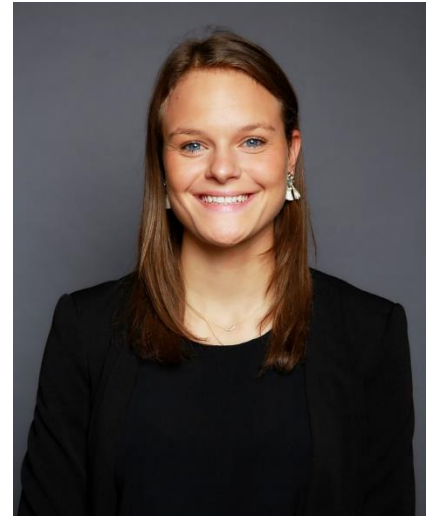
Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Chatham, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Villanova University

**Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)**

This summer, thanks to MAIDA, I had the privilege of interning at Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) which is a non-profit organization that provides high quality legal and social services to immigrant families/children nationwide. I spend the summer virtually working with the New Jersey team and it could not have been a better experience.



Before starting at Rutgers as a dual degree JD/MSW student, I spent my undergrad and post graduate career working with various different underserved communities. I have interned at an anti-human trafficking non-profit, volunteered at homeless shelters, been an online sexual assault counselor for R.A.I.N.N. for two years, been an elderly companion aide, and even interned at a family law firm in Bangalore, India. KIND, however, was my first experience working within immigration. I am beyond grateful for this experience because the attorneys were able to involve me in many different projects to really be able to get a firm understanding of the work that needs to be done. I was able to do a long-term research paper about the reliability and admissibility of border interviews, attend client meetings, write the CAT section of an asylum brief, attend virtual trainings and seminars, and learn about the extensive paperwork involved in the asylum process. I also was privy to attend nationwide calls to understand the challenges that all the different KIND offices around the country were handling the COVID border shut down.

All of the attorneys at KIND are brilliant, hardworking, and determined people who strive to help children and young adults rightly achieve status within the U.S. They are a close knit group of people who were beyond welcoming to the summer group of interns, which made the virtual environment easy to access questions, to get involved, and to feel excited for work every day.

**David Sullivan**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Cherry Hill, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Rutgers University



**Fair Share Housing Center**

Thanks to the Maida funding, I was able to spend the summer going into 3L year at Fair Share Housing Center, in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. This was not my first legal work experience, but it was my most rewarding. Before I delve into the projects I worked on, I must thank the benefactors of the Maida Summer Fellows Program for making this summer possible. The experience was life changing, and the peace of mind of having a paid summer position during the COVID-19 shutdown cannot be downplayed. I hope I can pay the kindness and generosity forward one day.

During my time at Fair Share, I worked with a variety of the organization's departments but spent most of my time working alongside the Legal team. One of the projects I enjoyed the most was working with another summer intern to draft a rent stabilization ordinance for a town in Northern New Jersey. To prepare for the ordinance assignment, I had to read several rent stabilization ordinances from around the State. Not only did I learn how ordinances are drafted, and the process it takes to get them passed, but I also learned the way courts and townships interpret statutory language. The ordinance is currently on track to be on the November 2020 ballot and could become law by January 2021. If that happens, I can say I helped write a proposed ordinance that became law. One of our hopes is that the ordinance becomes a model for other towns to follow. I got to draft this ordinance alongside affordable housing advocates and made numerous valuable connections during the process.

An additional project I worked on was alongside the trial team to help prepare for an upcoming trial. With most trials being postponed, I was not able to visit a courtroom this summer, so the trial preparation experience was invaluable. My task was to focus on possible objections that the attorneys may have to handle. I assisted them by cataloging those objections and speculating as to ways to overcome them. This process helped me refresh my knowledge on things such as the Rules of Evidence, especially the rules regarding hearsay. The work was tedious, but I enjoyed it and the evidence knowledge makes the thought of preparing for my own future court appearances less daunting.

Another project I worked on was alongside community organizers, and affordable housing advocates to pressure the Hoboken City Council to rethink an ordinance they were considering that would have gutted the city's affordable housing regulations. The Council was prepared to let a developer build a swimming pool instead of fulfilling its previous obligation to build affordable housing in the city. Though I was not able to speak in a courtroom this summer, speaking at a city council meeting was a valuable experience. I spoke about a subject

I am passionate about to folks that had the power to impact change. Our hard work pressuring the Council culminated in the Council eventually taking the proposed changes off the agenda. A settlement was later reached, and the developer will be building the housing.

These were just some of the projects I worked on this summer, but these examples highlight the variety of work I was able to accomplish, and the lasting impact of my brief work over the summer. I enjoyed the organization so much, I volunteered to stay on for the remaining days of the summer. I truly cannot thank the funders of the Maida Fellowship enough for the opportunity to work at such a fine organization.

**Bailey Thomas**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Newark

Hometown: Manorville, NY

Undergraduate Institution: Binghamton University

**CAMBA Legal Services**

Thanks to the Maida stipend I worked with CAMBA Legal Services in their Housing Unit. COVID-19 emphasized the importance of shelter and through my internship, I was able to help people stay in their homes. I worked with clients who had cases in Brooklyn’s landlord-tenant court as part of New York City’s Universal Access to Legal Services Program. Almost all landlords have lawyers, but the overwhelming majority of tenants do not, and the Universal Access Program helps tenants know and enforce all of their legal rights. The remote court appearances caused by COVID-19 presented new client’s rights issues because there was a struggle to balance legal rights and safety concerns. I learned about the complex issues in these ongoing debates through court memos and emails, administrative orders, and observing Brooklyn Tenant Lawyers Network meetings.



Although I worked remotely, I was still able to learn about the walk-in advice services some legal service providers offer. This was done through a hotline for housing advice coordinated by the program that heads the City’s Universal Access program. The hotline not only let people explain their legal issues over the phone, but also gave them the chance to email any relevant documents they may have. After understanding and researching their situations I would call to explain the law surrounding their situation and also send a letter with the advice.

The majority of legal issues were eviction cases dealing with non-payment or holdover cases where tenants were asked to leave for other reasons. As well as assisting my supervisors on their cases, the cases I was responsible for were both nonpayment cases. While managing my own caseload I was responsible for communicating with the clients about their cases and assisting them with filling out an application for rent relief from New York State. I also worked on an interesting illegal lockout case that was complicated because it was between family members and did not involve a landlord. My largest assignment of the summer was working on a motion to dismiss based on a procedural error and moving for summary judgment because the client could stay in the apartment based on succession rights.



**Destiney Wilson**

J.D. Candidate, 2021

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: Pleasantville, NJ

Undergraduate Institution: Montclair State University

**Philadelphia Defenders Association**

This past I had the opportunity to intern at the Philadelphia Defenders Association. Defender Association attorneys represent clients in adult and juvenile state courts, at civil and criminal mental health hearings, and as child advocates for children with open dependent petitions. The Defender's Association is essentially a private non-profit law firm that is back by private funding sources to carry out their mission of helping indigent defendants in the criminal justice system. Usually as an intern I would be rotating through different units, and spending a two-week time frame in each. This is so interns can have a change to learn what each unit does, and to be exposed to different areas of practice. However, this summer due to COVID-19 I was able to do zoom trainings on the computer. My task this summer was to help the attorneys in the office get through a huge backlog of client interviews. So I was put on a team and I was given a spreadsheet to work off of with the other interns or my team. On the spreadsheet were the names and the phone numbers of clients that we had to reach out to and speak with. We could also see what the clients were being charged for that way in our interviews we would know what questions were relevant to ask them based off of what defense we thought might be relevant for the attorney. The interviews that I conducted with the clients were over the phone. I would call them and set up a time where we could talk. This was necessary because oftentimes interviews took anywhere from an hour to two hours depending on the charges. We had to be very thorough in our interviews and try to get as much information as possible this was helpful for the attorney because by translation it was less work that they had to do. I really enjoy my internship and I really enjoyed helping as many clients over the phone as I possibly could it gave me a deep appreciation for being able to communicate with clients and really help them as much as I can even if just on a minimal level. I'm so grateful for the funding that I received this summer it was a huge help and it really gave me an opportunity to do something that I actually wanted to do this summer opposed to being forced to do something that I wouldn't enjoy based off a monetary need. My internship was a great opportunity and I'm so blessed to have received it .



**Viktoria Zerda**

J.D. Candidate, 2022

Rutgers School of Law | Camden

Hometown: San Antonio, TX

Undergraduate Institution: University of Texas at San Antonio



**HIAS**

During my 1L summer internship with HIAS-PA in Philadelphia funded by the Maida Partners Program at Rutgers Law School-Camden, I provided pro-bono immigration services to dozens of clients. I conducted intake for immigrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees who were either seeking immigration relief or looking to explore their rights as immigrants in this country. I drafted an asylum affidavit for an LGBTQ youth, worked with another youth immigrant who was seeking legal permanent residency and assisted others with renewing work authorization. I got experience conducting discovery to build asylum cases and also got to participate in a COVID relief program for qualifying HIAS-PA clients which provided school supplies, groceries, and other essential services or goods to communities in need. We participated in several training sessions a week with some of the top attorneys in the immigration field to update us and teach us about the complex and ever changing field of immigration law, especially during a time where courts were closed and immigrants were being disproportionately harmed by COVID and mass detention. Not only did this summer job teach me about the law, but it taught me how to be the sharpest advocate for my clients in times of need and uncertainty.

Through the Maida Partner Program, I was able to gain valuable experience in the immigration legal field. As a chicana from a single mother household in South Texas, I grew up advocating for the rights of immigrants and oppressed communities. The partner program funding gave me the ability to further empower those communities that I plan on dedicating my life to. Working with an organization like HIAS-PA was literally a dream job for me and without the summer funding I received through the MAIDA Partners Program I would have never been able to gain the experience and knowledge that I gained this past summer. In the future, I see myself working specifically interested around the asylum rights of unaccompanied minors and non-citizen women who experience domestic abuse. I have now started my 2L year and I have been working with the Immigrant Justice Clinic at Rutgers Law School in Camden. My summer job with HIAS-PA was necessary experience that allowed me to take on the Immigrant Justice Clinic as the only 2L in the seminar. I cannot stress enough how thankful I am to be able to do this work and gain this kind of experience.

**2019-2020**

**Maida Post-Graduate**

**Public Interest**

**Fellowship**

Dear James and Sharon Maida,

As a Maida Post-Graduate Public Interest Fellow at Homebase, I supported communities across America in their pursuit to end homelessness. At Homebase, I supported communities in three ways.

First, I researched, wrote, and distributed guidance on homelessness prevention. This effort required me to crawl academic journals, reports, programs, and local examples of practice. In particular, I focused on homelessness prevention interventions that were both efficient and effective. Here, efficient indicates getting the right services to the right person at the right time; effective indicates obtaining a significant, measurable, beneficial impact. My work considered questions and potential solutions that local decision-makers should or must navigate when selecting a respective intervention. Homebase staff and our communities relied upon my findings; this work in a subsequent form ultimately reached a federal audience.



Second, I tracked and analyzed homelessness policies at the local, state, and federal levels of government. By examining homelessness policies in these various laboratories, collectively, we can have a better understanding of what is possible, what works, and what falls short. More specifically, my effort enabled our team to inform all communities of the latest happenings so they could stay ahead of the information curve. For example, I presented orally and in writing on key issues including a state's proposed homelessness budget, a federal executive order, a federal agency report, and the findings from a regional homelessness task force.

Third, and most importantly, I served within the nerve center for Homebase's COVID-19 response. My team's efforts enabled us to provide all communities, both large and small, urban and rural, with timely guidance. For example, I dissected the federal CARES funding and its local implementation as related to homelessness. This substantial project required a deep understanding of government infrastructure. For another example, I secured and aggregated emerging homelessness literature from across institutions and collated it for the benefit of homelessness practitioners. To provide a sense of scale of this curated library, I personally reviewed 1100 documents, reports, or official memoranda as related to homelessness and COVID-19. This trove of information enabled Homebase, all levels of government that relied upon our work, and communities both near and far to better inform their efforts.

Post-fellowship, I have secured a position with California's state government in its nerve center for homelessness. The agency, the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council, spearheads the majority of CA's homelessness policy and population-specific state funding. My responsibilities will include analysis, administration, technical assistance, and policy development.



My necessary, innovative, evidence-based effort at Homebase would not have been possible without the significant support of the Maida Family; their investment in my fellowship has materially benefitted our most vulnerable neighbors. Though my tenure at Homebase has concluded, my work and the Maida's impact will endure. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
*Dan Oates*