

TakeRoot Justice Seeks 2021 Legal Fellowship Candidates

TakeRoot Justice announces the opportunity to apply for sponsorship for **post-graduate legal fellowships** starting in the **fall of 2021** (applications to fellowship foundations due fall 2020). TakeRoot Justice specifically seeks a fellow to work on a project developed by our **Housing Rights** or **Workers' Rights** practice.

TakeRoot Justice seeks rising third-year law students, recent law graduates with judicial clerkships beginning in the fall and those currently clerking to sponsor for two-year public interest law fellowships offered by the Skadden Fellowship Foundation, Equal Justice Works, and similar programs.

About TakeRoot Justice

TakeRoot Justice provides legal, participatory research and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic and social oppression. TakeRoot Justice employs a unique model of partnership with grassroots and community-based groups. Our partners take the lead in determining the priorities and goals for our work, and advance our understanding of justice. This upends the traditional power dynamics between communities and service providers. We believe in a theory of change where short-term and individual successes help build the capacity and power of our partners, who in turn can have longer-term impact on policies, laws and systems that affect their communities. Our work has greater impact because it is done in connection with organizing, building power and leadership development. We believe that community organizing should be at the center of any effort to create sustainable, systemic change. TakeRoot Justice has a long history of partnering with grassroots and community-based organizations that build leadership and power within New York City's low-income communities, particularly communities of color, immigrant communities and others who are traditionally excluded from policy-making. Only true democracy will achieve the progressive change we need to end systemic oppression. We model our internal structure on anti-oppressive and democratic principles in order to create an environment that mirrors the progressive change we pursue through our work.

About the Housing Rights Practice

We believe that access to safe, affordable housing is crucial to an equitable New York City. Our team works side-by-side with tenants as they fight against gentrification to demand better living conditions, affordable rents, and a voice in the policies that shape their neighborhoods. By partnering with tenant associations, community-based organizations, and city- and state-wide coalitions, we help tenants build their power. This advocacy has resulted in millions of dollars worth of repairs in low-income housing and kept New Yorkers in their homes. We empower tenants in a variety of ways. Many landlords illegally harass and intimidate low-income and rent-stabilized tenants to drive them out in favor of higher-paying tenants. We help tenants fight back against this harassment and hold landlords accountable. We represent tenants in litigation to combat willful neglect and correct poor and dangerous housing conditions. This includes lead paint, lack of heat and hot water, inadequate security, faulty plumbing and unsafe elevators and staircases. We help community groups and tenants come together in coalitions across the city to advocate for policies that stop predatory and abusive landlords.

About the Workers' Rights Practice

When workers stand up for their rights in the workplace, they are transformed and empowered in every area of their lives. This empowerment is fundamental to a just society. The TakeRoot Justice Workers' Rights team uses legal, policy and legislative advocacy to support workers as they assert their rights in the workplace. Our partners are grassroots worker centers, advocacy groups, and their

members—including workers in private homes, restaurants, nail salons, garment factories, food processing and construction. Our mission is to ensure that labor laws and anti-discrimination laws are enforced and workers are able to lead lives of strength and dignity. We have helped secure more than \$22 million in judgments and settlements for our clients. We partner with community groups to: Use litigation to recover stolen wages, combat violations such as unpaid minimum wages and overtime, tip theft, discrimination, sexual harassment and retaliation against workers who assert their rights under the labor laws; Hold community education workshops on workers' rights; Build legislative and policy advocacy campaigns; and Fight human trafficking cases around New York City.

Qualifications:

Skadden Fellowship Foundation, Equal Justice Works and similar organizations provide fellowships to graduating law students or outgoing judicial clerks who seek to begin their careers at public interest law offices like TakeRoot Justice, which sponsors the fellowship candidate. Applicants with experience working with community-based organizations are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants must either be admitted to the New York Bar, or sitting for the New York Bar no later than July 2021, COVID permitting. Applicants with foreign language abilities, especially Spanish, are also encouraged to apply.

Project Proposals:

TakeRoot Justice is interested in sponsoring candidates who either already have a vision for their project or would like to work with TakeRoot Justice staff to develop a new proposal. Any proposal must consider TakeRoot Justice's model of partnering with community-based organizations.

Application Instructions:

Interested applicants who are eligible for the fellowships described above (i.e., rising third-year law students, those with clerkships beginning in fall 2020 or recent law graduates currently clerking), should send, **in a single PDF document**, a resume and cover letter. The cover letter should include a brief description of the applicant's interest in being considered for sponsorship by the TakeRoot Justice, any proposal for a project connected with community organizing (although such a proposal is not required), and any prior experience that they may have had in the area of housing rights or workers' rights.

Please note: this is not a job posting.

General application materials will not be considered. Send the requested documents by e-mail with the words "Fellowships 2021" in the subject line to Greg Baltz at gbaltz@takerootjustice.org. We will begin reviewing applications at 3 p.m. on August 24, 2020, but will continue to consider applications on a rolling basis after that date.

Contact Information: TakeRoot Justice, 123 William Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY, 10038, Attn: Fellowships 2021.

TakeRoot Justice is an equal opportunity employer. TakeRoot Justice encourages applications from people with diverse backgrounds, including women, people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, people from low-income backgrounds, and people with personal experience with the criminal justice system. We strongly encourage applications from people with lived experiences in the communities we serve. This is a bargaining unit position and any successful fellow would be a member of the UAW/NOLSW Local 2320 with conditions of employment subject to a collective bargaining agreement.