

A Summer of Advocacy and Action in Emergency Care

|
Zoraya Rodriguez Mowzoun (SLA '27)

[View PDF](#)

August 17, 2024

Over the summer, I got to immerse myself in reproductive rights advocacy through internships at two important organizations: Midwest Access Project (MAP) in May and June, followed by Birthmark Doulas throughout July. These internships gave me a stark understanding of the intricate and desperate problem that is reproductive healthcare, particularly on an emergency basis.



At the Midwest Access Project, my work was centered around the Emergency SRH

(Sexual and Reproductive Health) Care Package. This project was designed to provide critical reproductive health resources during disasters and emergencies, where services are often disrupted or unavailable. The core of this project involved compiling and organizing academic journals and resources on reproductive care in emergencies and disasters. My role was to identify, review, and integrate relevant studies and publications into a comprehensive care package that could be utilized by healthcare providers and organizations in crises. The Emergency SRH Care Package aimed to equip healthcare workers with the necessary tools and information to continue providing these essential services even in the most challenging environments. The project also focused on the legal risks associated with providing abortion care in crisis settings, offering strategies to navigate these challenges and ensure that women's rights to reproductive healthcare are protected, regardless of the circumstances.

In July, I transitioned to my internship at Birthmark Doulas, where my focus shifted to supporting the organization's mission to provide holistic and culturally sensitive care to families, especially in marginalized communities. My tasks included conducting research on WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) in disasters and compiling infographics on heat and perinatal health. These infographics were crucial for educating the public on how to protect maternal and infant health during extreme weather conditions, which are becoming increasingly common due to climate change. Working at Birthmark Doulas allowed me to see the tangible impact of advocacy and education on the ground. The organization's commitment to empowering women and families through education and support services resonated deeply with my own goal of becoming a Gender-Based Violence Lawyer. The hands-on experience of creating educational materials and participating in outreach efforts reinforced the importance of accessible and inclusive reproductive healthcare.

Both internships underscored the critical need for comprehensive reproductive health services in all settings, particularly during emergencies. They have also solidified my desire to continue working at the intersection of law and reproductive rights. As I prepare for my future career, I am more motivated than ever to advocate for policies and programs that ensure every individual has access to the reproductive healthcare they need, regardless of the challenges they may face. I am especially excited to continue my work with the Midwest Access Project this fall. The ongoing opportunities to contribute to MAP's mission and to further explore the

intersections of reproductive health and emergency care are something I eagerly look forward to.