

VOL. 1 ISSUE 1 · JULY 2023

PRO BONO INSIGHTS

A Monthly Georgia Legal Services Program Newsletter

First Edition!

I am pleased to share our Pro Bono Newsletter with you. Since January 2019, Georgia Legal Services Program has focused major attention on transforming our pro bono programming to enrich the volunteer and client experience. For our volunteers, this means that no matter where you are in Georgia, you can connect with our clients throughout the state. You can choose to provide advice and brief services or, if you prefer, you can help a client through limited scope work in legal clinics or through the traditional full representation on a one client, one lawyer basis.

This GLSP Pro Bono Newsletter itself is a sign of change - a commitment to keeping you informed on a monthly basis about pro bono opportunities and GLSP events.

Mike Monahan
Director of the Pro Bono Unit



This issue:

Welcome
PAGE 01

CLE & Direct Service
Opportunities
PAGE 02

Upcoming Pro Bono Clinics
PAGE 03

June Pro Bono Stars
PAGE 04 - 06

Pro Bono Stories and News
PAGE 07

Law Student Corner
PAGE 08

GLSP's Pro Bono Team
PAGE 09 - 10



CLE and Volunteer Opportunities

We provide free or at-cost CLE-accredited training to equip our volunteer lawyers to handle the kinds of civil pro bono cases we refer to them. And of course, check out our available pro bono opportunities.



DIRECT REPRESENTATION

Private attorneys take cases directly from a regional office to provide direct representation to clients. Direct representation can include appearing in court in housing or domestic violence matters, drafting wills, helping a client with a criminal record restriction, representing a client in bankruptcy, or assisting a client in obtaining a guardianship of a minor.

You can get more information about current client needs and pro bono opportunities through Paladin, our new volunteer platform. Go to <https://app.joinpaladin.com/georgia-legal-services-program-2/opportunities> to see what current volunteer opportunities await!

Temporary Protective Order Training

Date: July 27

Time: 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

CLE Credits (Pending):

- 3 General Hours
- 1 Professionalism Hour

Learn about TPO Law and Procedures, Stalking and Dating Violence, Custody and Child Support Basics, and Issues with Access to the Courts for Survivors. Attend from anywhere via Zoom.

Register: bit.ly/GLSP_TPO_Training

For more information, contact Viveca Sibley (vsibley@glsp.org)

Access and explore other training materials through our Pro Bono Learning Management System at Learning.GLSP.org

UPCOMING PRO BONO CLINICS

Clinics may be advice-only or brief services. Some clinics will be cover a variety of civil legal issues and provide clients time to meet with a private attorney for advice on their issue. Other clinics will focus on a specific legal issue, such as wills or record restriction, and will require the attorney to draft documents prior to meeting the client at the clinic. You can participate on-site or virtually.

Check out our upcoming legal clinics around the state and find one that meets your volunteer interests. Remember, for many clinics you can join us in-person or participate remotely.



Warren County Wills Clinic

Looking for 6 volunteers to draft and execute wills for 1-2 clients each. Contact Nicole DeLoach (ndeloach@glsp.org) to sign up or for more information.



Rockdale County Probate Clinic

Looking for volunteers to provide counsel and advice to clients on probate/estate matters. Contact Alex Eichenbaum (aeichenbaum@glsp.org) to sign up or for more information.



Gainesville Probate Clinic

Looking for 1 volunteer to provide up to 4 clients with counsel and advice on probate/estate matters. Contact Maria Fuentes (mfuentes@glsp.org) to sign up or for more information.



Douglas County Wills Clinic

Looking for 10 volunteers to draft and execute wills for 1-2 clients each. Contact Ashley Clark (aclark@glsp.org) to sign up or for more information.

COMING SOON...

September 20
Gainesville
Probate Clinic

September 29
Whitfield County
Record Restriction Clinic

October 18
Gainesville
Probate Clinic

October 21
Floyd County
Wills Clinic

Not able to volunteer right now, or want to increase your impact? A gift to GLSP helps support our staff and provide access to justice and opportunities out of poverty throughout the state!

bit.ly/Justice_2023

JUNE PRO BONO STARS

Join with us to applaud June's Pro Bono Stars - A Volunteer Lawyer, a Law Student, and a Pro Bono Partner



STAR VOLUNTEER LAWYER **THOMAS E. RAY**



"...MY RETIREMENT IS EVEN MORE FULFILLING BECAUSE OF MY WORK AT GLSP."

After 44 years of practicing bankruptcy law, most retired attorneys would welcome the idea of trading the practice for long days at the beach, going on cruises, or simply sleeping in late. Fortunately for GLSP and our clients, Thomas "Tom" E. Ray was not like most attorneys; he decided to take a different approach with his retirement. In July 2015, Tom became an in-house Pro Bono volunteer for GLSP's Brunswick Office, with a mission to relieve our clients of financial hardship through Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

In 2017, Tom helped the Brunswick office secure a grant from the American College of Bankruptcy Foundation to further extend our reach to those most in need of bankruptcy assistance. Through this grant, Tom filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy petitions which resulted in the successful discharge of over \$426,000 in unsecured debt. The clients also retained over \$126,000 in personal property. This financial relief would not have been possible without Tom.

Throughout his seven and a half years as a volunteer attorney with GLSP, Tom provided free legal advice and representation to 137 clients in consumer-related matters. Tom once said, "While I have many fond memories as a practicing lawyer, I have found that my retirement is even more fulfilling because of my work at GLSP."

While Tom retired from his role as a volunteer attorney for GLSP earlier this year, he was an obvious choice for our inaugural Star Volunteer Lawyer recognition!

JUNE PRO BONO STARS

Join with us to applaud June's Pro Bono Stars - A Volunteer Lawyer, a Law Student, and a Pro Bono Partner



STAR VOLUNTEER LAW STUDENT EL HAYNES

Georgia State University College of Law (GSU) second-year law student El Haynes has spent her last two spring breaks volunteering with GLSP. After taking part in one of GLSP's alternative spring break trips in her first year of law school, El returned this year to serve as trip leader for GLSP's Rural Access to Justice Trip...

El's trip focused on "legal deserts" in southwest Georgia, learning about innovative access to justice efforts around the state, such as law library self-help centers and remote legal services. Her prior experience with GLSP was critical as she shepherded several first-year law students on their first alternative spring break trips.

In addition to her volunteerism with GLSP, El has a variety of criminal law experience working with the Northeastern Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office and, currently, with the Fulton County District Attorney's Office.

In her limited spare time, El serves as Vice President of the Student Trial Lawyers Association, Vice President of OUTLaw, and is a member of the Criminal Law & Family Law Societies at GSU.

GLSP is grateful for El's leadership and her dedication to Georgians in need.



HER PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH GLSP WAS CRITICAL AS SHE SHEPHERDED SEVERAL FIRST-YEAR LAW STUDENTS ON THEIR FIRST ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK TRIPS.

JUNE PRO BONO STARS

Join with us to applaud June's Pro Bono Stars - A Volunteer Lawyer, a Law Student, and a Pro Bono Partner



STAR VOLUNTEER PARTNER THE MENTAL WEALTH CENTER



Our GLSP Pro Bono Star Partner this month is Valdosta's Mental Wealth Center, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit financial education and asset building coalition that is dedicated to empowering the community it serves.

JaTayria Thomas, the agency's founder and director, is heavily invested in the success of Valdosta residents. Formerly known as CASH Prosperity Campaign, Mental Wealth Center provides mentorship and support to community-centered small businesses in the Valdosta area,

creating wealthier minds and support services for Valdosta residents. Current services available include mental health counseling, life coaching and certification, financial stability assistance, workforce development, resource referral, tax preparation, DNA/drug screening, IT consulting, access to social justice/legal aid programs, and much more. In June of 2023, the Mental Wealth Center was approached by the local courts to take over the service provider contract with the Lowndes County Juvenile Accountability Court.

Georgia Legal Services Program has a long history of partnership with the Mental Wealth Center. This includes through the Georgia Clients Council, disaster response assistance, and as an essential host and partner in conducting community education, clinics, and other events with the Pro Bono Unit. In 2022 alone, these collaborative efforts to an estimated 111 Valdosta-area clients receiving legal assistance, mostly in areas of record restriction and estate planning. These efforts preserved homes and opened new opportunities to housing and employment for the those served.

JATAYRIA THOMAS, THE AGENCY'S FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, IS HEAVILY INVESTED IN EMPOWERING HER COMMUNITY...

How Pro Bono Benefits YOU

by Sarah J. Anderson, Pro Bono Supervising Attorney

This article originally appeared in the Volume 21 Issue 38 of the Savannah Bar Association "Citation"



Pro Bono Publico – “for the public good” – We all know the good that pro bono work does: representation for those who could otherwise not afford an attorney, better resolutions for low-income clients, improving the flow of court cases, and feeling good knowing that you helped someone out.

There are other lesser known benefits from pro bono, both professional and personal. Instead of focusing on the benefits of pro bono work to the clients, let's look at the benefits to the pro bono attorney.

There is much to be gained professionally from doing pro bono work. Pro bono cases allow attorneys to sharpen their litigation skills. A new attorney will have direct contact with a client, perfecting interview skills, learning how to speak in plain English to clients, and learning how to manage client expectations. They can gain experience in investigating facts, taking depositions, interviewing witnesses, and reviewing exhibits that may end up in evidence. A new attorney can also gain trial skills through pro bono, getting the opportunity to appear before judges in a variety of cases. Developing these skills will build an attorney's confidence as he or she gets more comfortable with client-case management.

Experienced attorneys can brush up on legal skills. A transactional attorney can go to court to advocate for a tenant or a TPO petitioner. A litigator can take a case that can be completed in the office, such as advice and counsel on a housing issue or drafting a will. Pro bono also allows many attorneys the chance to build their skills in mediating and negotiating settlements.

Attorneys can also learn a new area of the law through pro bono work. GLSP offers online resources, trainings, and assistance from experienced staff attorneys to support pro bono attorneys in areas in which they don't regularly practice. GLSP also provides malpractice insurance for any case that it assigns to a pro bono attorney.

Pro bono work also provides attorneys with opportunities to network, build business contacts, and become better known to the judges in whose courts they appear. It also helps to build an attorney's reputation in the legal community. Networking and reputation may open doors both professionally and personally as people learn about your commitment to help those in need. GLSP regularly recognizes volunteers to help emphasize the good work that attorneys do throughout their communities. Strong networking and good reputations built through pro bono work can help lead to paid work for a law firm.

There is no doubt that pro bono work helps GLSP clients, but it can also help you develop crucial skills and open doors that will help you succeed in the practice of law.

GLSP Hosts Alternative Spring Break for Emory, GSU, and UGA

by Alexandra V. Eichenbaum,
Deputy Director of the
Pro Bono Unit



In March 2023, GLSP's Pro Bono Unit supported two weeks of alternative spring break programming with 40 law students from Emory, University of Georgia (UGA), and Georgia State University (GSU).

Emory and UGA students participated in a Disaster Legal Services and Record Restriction trip. Students were trained on client interviewing, answering YLD Disaster Law Hotline calls, and how to review criminal records for restriction.

The following week, GSU students traveled for three trips focused on working with families and survivors of domestic violence, promoting community economic development in southeast Georgia, and advancing rural access to justice. In each trip, students worked directly with clients in need and assisted GLSP lawyers providing services in underserved communities.

Carly Chambers, a first-year law student at GSU, said: “We don’t have much of a chance to have client-facing interactions in law school, so it was great to be able to do that. I had never really thought about work that I could do in an area like that before. ... Being from a rural area, this trip opened my eyes to a lot of issues and showed me that I could be helping people in a community I recognize.”

Students returned to school with increased knowledge of the barriers facing Georgians in poverty and a better understanding of the many ways the legal community can support access to justice and opportunities out of poverty.

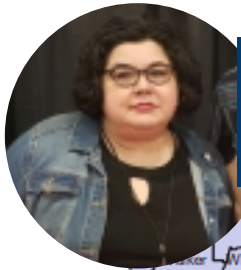


MEET THE TEAM - REGIONAL OFFICES

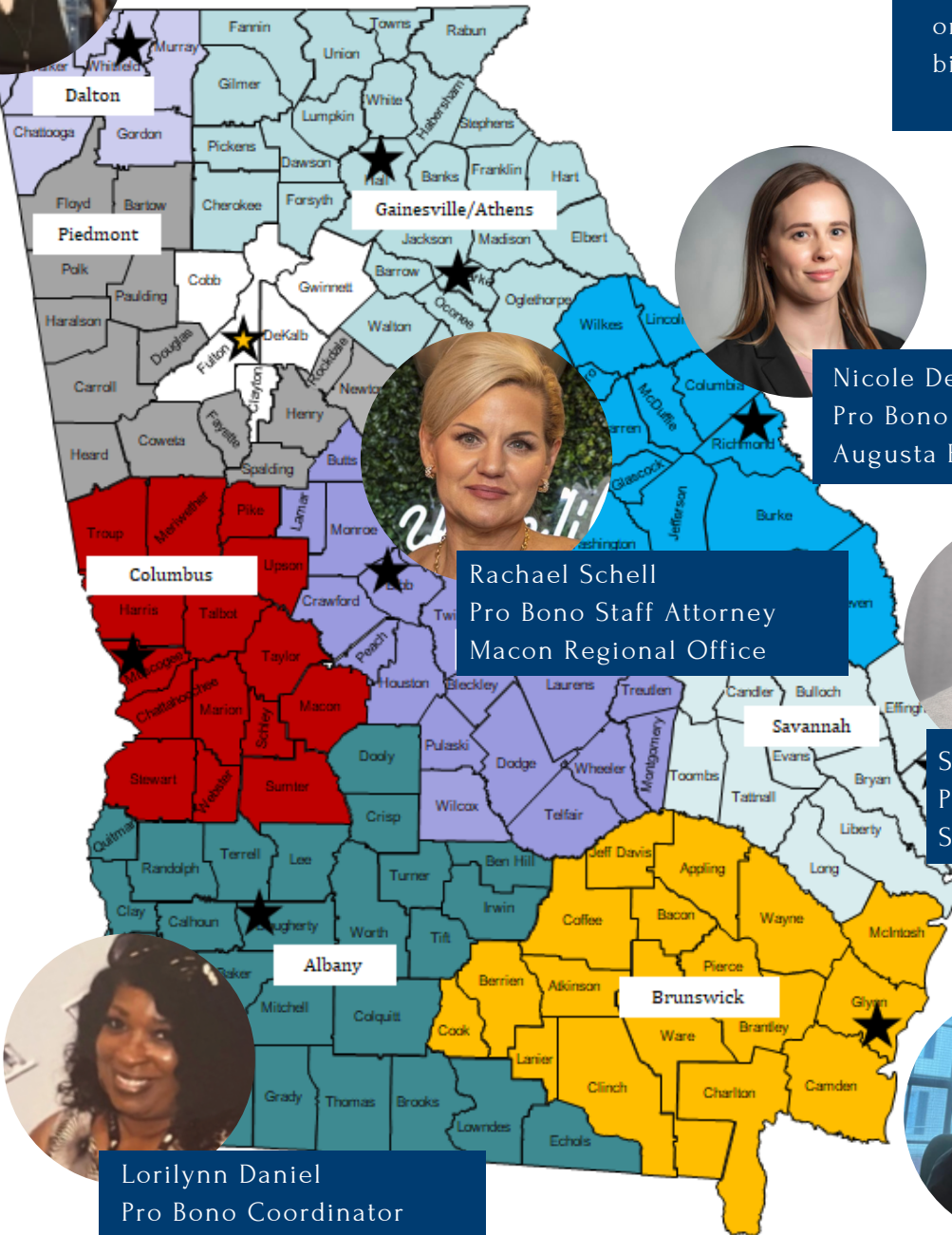
WE'RE HIRING!

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit is seeking Pro Bono Staff Attorneys for our Gainesville/Athens, Piedmont, and Columbus Offices.

To learn more, contact Mike Monahan (mmonahan@glsp.org) or view our job postings at bit.ly/GLSP_Jobs



Angelina Vaquera-Linke
Pro Bono Coordinator
Dalton Regional Office



Nicole DeLoach
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Augusta Regional Office



Rachael Schell
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Macon Regional Office



Sarah J. Anderson
Pro Bono Supervising Attorney
Savannah Regional Office



Lorilynn Daniel
Pro Bono Coordinator
Albany Regional Office



Marika LaRoy
Pro Bono Coordinator
Brunswick Regional Office

MEET THE TEAM- CENTRAL SUPPORT



Mike Monahan
Director of the Pro Bono Unit



Alexandra V. Eichenbaum
Deputy Director of the Pro Bono Unit



Ashley Clark
Pro Bono Supervising Attorney



Nobie Mitchell
Pro Bono Coordinator



Deborah Chapman
Pro Bono Support Manager



Tommy Richards
Pro Bono Coordinator

WE'RE HIRING!

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit is seeking Pro Bono Staff Attorneys for our Gainesville/Athens, Piedmont, and Columbus Offices.

To learn more, contact Mike Monahan (mmonahan@glsp.org) or view our job postings at bit.ly/GLSP_Jobs

LSC
America's Partner
for Equal Justice

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Georgia Legal Services Program (GLSP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation funded in part by the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). As a condition of the funding it receives from LSC, it is restricted from engaging in certain activities in all of its legal work – including work supported by other funding sources. GLSP may not expend any funds for any activity prohibited by the Legal Services Corporation Act, 42 U.S.C.2996 et seq. or by Public Law 104-134. Public Law 104-134 § 504 (d) requires that notice of these restrictions be given to all funders of programs funded by the Legal Services Corporation.