

VOL. 2 ISSUE 1 · MARCH 2024

# PRO BONO INSIGHTS

A Monthly Georgia Legal Services Program Newsletter

## Message from the Director

Look what you did! Look at you changing lives.

In 2023 you took on over 700 pro bono clients, agreeing to help people with critical legal needs across the state.

Many of you worked locally with clients in your own or a neighboring community and you did so by responding to the pro bono coordinator in one of our Georgia Legal Services offices. Many of you signed up for one or more of our statewide pro bono signature project clinics and served remotely or onsite.

We know your time and skills are valuable and you trust us to deliver a quality volunteer experience. We appreciate your trust. And on behalf of our clients we thank you.

We look forward to working with you in 2024.



Mike Monahan  
Director of the Pro Bono Unit

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## CLE and Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are encouraged to access and explore our substantive training materials through our Pro Bono Learning Management System ([Learning.GLSP.org](https://Learning.GLSP.org)). Additionally, GLSP and our partners host a variety of free or at-cost CLE sessions throughout the year.

To learn more about our training program, volunteer to host/present a training, or recommend new topics, please contact Mike Monahan ([mmonahan@glsp.org](mailto:mmonahan@glsp.org)).

## CLE Training Events

Stay tuned for more CLE opportunities in the next edition of Pro Bono Insights.

## DIRECT REPRESENTATION

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit offers a wide array of in-person and remote direct service opportunities throughout the state of Georgia. These opportunities are a great way for attorneys licensed in Georgia to assist clients one-on-one with legal matters ranging from appearing in court, drafting documents, or obtaining access to new resources. Opportunities exist statewide in the following substantive areas:

- Wills and Powers of Attorney
- Restriction of Criminal Records
- Bankruptcy
- Protective Orders for Victims of Violence
- Name Changes
- Probate of Estates
- and more

Paladin, our new volunteer platform, lists some of our existing opportunities. You can access it by going to [https://bit.ly/GLSP\\_Paladin](https://bit.ly/GLSP_Paladin).

To learn more about region-specific opportunities, contact one of our Pro Bono Coordinators or Staff Attorneys (see page 11 of this newsletter) or contact Mike Monahan ([mmonahan@glsp.org](mailto:mmonahan@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.



## Moultrie Record Restriction and Wills Clinic

Looking for volunteers to assist clients in restricting their criminal records and/or assist clients in completing wills and powers of attorney. Record restriction volunteers must appear in-person. Volunteers interested in drafting wills may be able to participate remotely. Contact Sarah Anderson ([sjanderson@glsp.org](mailto:sjanderson@glsp.org)) to sign up or for more information.



## Chatham County Record Restriction Clinic

Looking for volunteers to assist clients in restricting their criminal records and/or assist clients in completing wills and powers of attorney. Volunteers must appear in-person. Contact Sarah Anderson ([sjanderson@glsp.org](mailto:sjanderson@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 Deidra Schad ([dschad@glsp.org](mailto:dschad@glsp.org)) to sign up or for more information.



## Whitfield County Record Restriction and Wills Clinic

Looking for volunteers to assist clients in restricting their criminal records and/or assist clients in completing wills and powers of attorney. Record restriction volunteers must appear in-person. Volunteers interested in drafting wills may be able to participate remotely. Contact Sarah Anderson ([sjanderson@glsp.org](mailto:sjanderson@glsp.org)) to sign up or for more information.

## COMING SOON...

Summer 2024 Wills Clinics in  
Appalachian Circuit,  
Columbus, Athens,  
and Dougherty County,

May 15

Gainesville

Probate Advice Clinic

June 17

Gainesville

Probate Advice Clinic

July 21

Gainesville

Probate Advice 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\\_2024](https://bit.ly/Justice_2024)



## A Look Back at 2023

by Mike L. Monahan, Director of the Pro Bono Unit,  
Alexandra V. Eichenbaum, Deputy Director of the Pro Bono Unit,  
and Heidi E. Behnke, Statewide Project Manager

2023 was a year of partnership and innovation that demonstrated the movement of GLSP's Pro Bono Unit in a new direction. We continue to increase the number of pro bono clients we serve and create more fulfilling opportunities for volunteer lawyers and law students.

In addition to the many clients served in a one-on-one setting, our Pro Bono Unit model relies heavily on two types of clinics. The first type is our "signature project". These ongoing projects are tried and tested, led by one of our team's attorneys, and continually improved to maximize client success. Our Disaster Legal Services Signature Project was twice implemented to provide assistance in the wake of federally-declared disasters this year. The Wills and Estates Signature Project held several events and, with the assistance of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, is integrating new technology into its approach that will dramatically enhance the Pro Bono Unit and GLSP staff's ability to draft and execute wills, powers of attorney, and other documents. Finally, our Record Restriction Signature Project continues to gain popularity among our clients and volunteers with the completion of a clinic in Waycross in late 2023 and upcoming clinics in Dalton and Moultrie in early 2024.

Our second clinic type, "impact projects," are one-off events requested by our partners or other GLSP staff, or which arise out of a sudden client need. Our November 2023 Veterans Clinic was one such example. We partnered with several organizations, including the Legal Services Corporation and the United Way's Mission United, creating holistic service opportunities for clients as well as new partnerships between GLSP and community services agencies throughout Georgia. Other 2023 examples include the UPS and Butler Snow Wills & Estate Clinic, where large law firm and corporate counsel partners remotely attended a CLE session and collaboratively served clients from the Rome, Georgia area.

While our clinic and direct services experiences can be brief and easy for volunteers, they are still incredibly impactful for our clients. At one of our probate clinics, a 22-year-old client took concrete steps after learning about his rights to the family house where his parents and sister had, tragically, been murdered. We put him on the path to obtaining title to the property, which meant he could sell the home and begin healing after such a traumatic experience. In partnership with GLSP staff, volunteers from Eversheds Sutherland and Djuric Spratt served another client with a complex probate matter. The result: the client, who had been living in poverty, has gained more than \$1,000,000. We look forward to highlighting these stories and more in future editions of Pro Bono Insights.

Our team relies on effective training, communication, and outreach to support our volunteers and engage our clients. And we happily share what makes us most effective! In 2023 we improved our ability to communicate with stakeholders through this newsletter and the use of the Paladin online case referral system. We offered free CLE training on substantive matters related to our client needs in a number of formats, including for community-based practitioners, with large firms and statewide partners such as the YLD and DLA Piper, and in partnership with large corporations like Coca-Cola and Inspire Brands. We also shared our expertise on a national stage multiple times, discussing our experience with learning management systems, integrating project management principles into pro bono programs, and supporting clients who reside in legal deserts.



## A Look Back at 2023 (Continued)

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The Pro Bono Unit heavily invested in law students this year, hosting a semester-long bankruptcy clinic in partnership with Mercer Law School, visiting GSU as practitioners in residence, hosting a plethora of law student interns from each of Georgia's law schools, and organizing several alternative spring break experiences with Emory, GSU, and UGA. This work led to life-changing experiences for participating students. We celebrated their efforts at a spring and summer reception, and invited five students to publicly share their experiences as panelists at our annual pro bono conference which was held at the University of Georgia School of Law in November of 2023. We look forward to seeing you at the 2024 GLSP Pro Bono Conference in September 2024. You'll be hearing from us soon about the conference.

In addition to the panel of law students, our annual conference included speakers from the Supreme Court of Georgia, the American Bar Association Center for Pro Bono, Georgia's Access to Justice teams, GLSP leadership, and more. We were joined by judges, community partners, and law school partners to collaboratively advance the GLSP mission of providing access to justice and opportunities out of poverty for Georgians with low incomes. We also honored five (5) outstanding supporters of our work at an awards reception – check our November Pro Bono Insights to catch up on the Awards recipients. Their efforts to serve clients, support GLSP staff, and connect us with our client communities exemplifies the best of our efforts in 2023.

These many accomplishments and more would not be possible without the support of our donors, grantors, and our GLSP Board of Directors. The Pro Bono Unit is especially grateful to the Pro Bono Innovation Fund team of the Legal Services Corporation, who invested in our transformation with two separate grants awarded to us in 2020 and 2021. We are excited for the growth and potential made possible through their vision and support!

# MEET THE TEAM- REGIONAL OFFICES

## WE'RE HIRING!

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit is seeking Pro Bono Coordinator in the Columbus Office.

To learn more, contact Mike Monahan ([mmonahan@glsp.org](mailto:mmonahan@glsp.org)) or view our job postings at [bit.ly/GLSP\\_Jobs](http://bit.ly/GLSP_Jobs)



Angelina Vaquera-Linke  
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Dalton Regional Office



Deidra Schad  
Pro Bono Staff Attorney  
Gainesville Regional Office



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Pro Bono Staff Attorney  
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Aubree Smith  
Pro Bono Staff Attorney  
Augusta Regional Office



Rachael Schell  
Pro Bono Staff Attorney  
Macon Regional Office



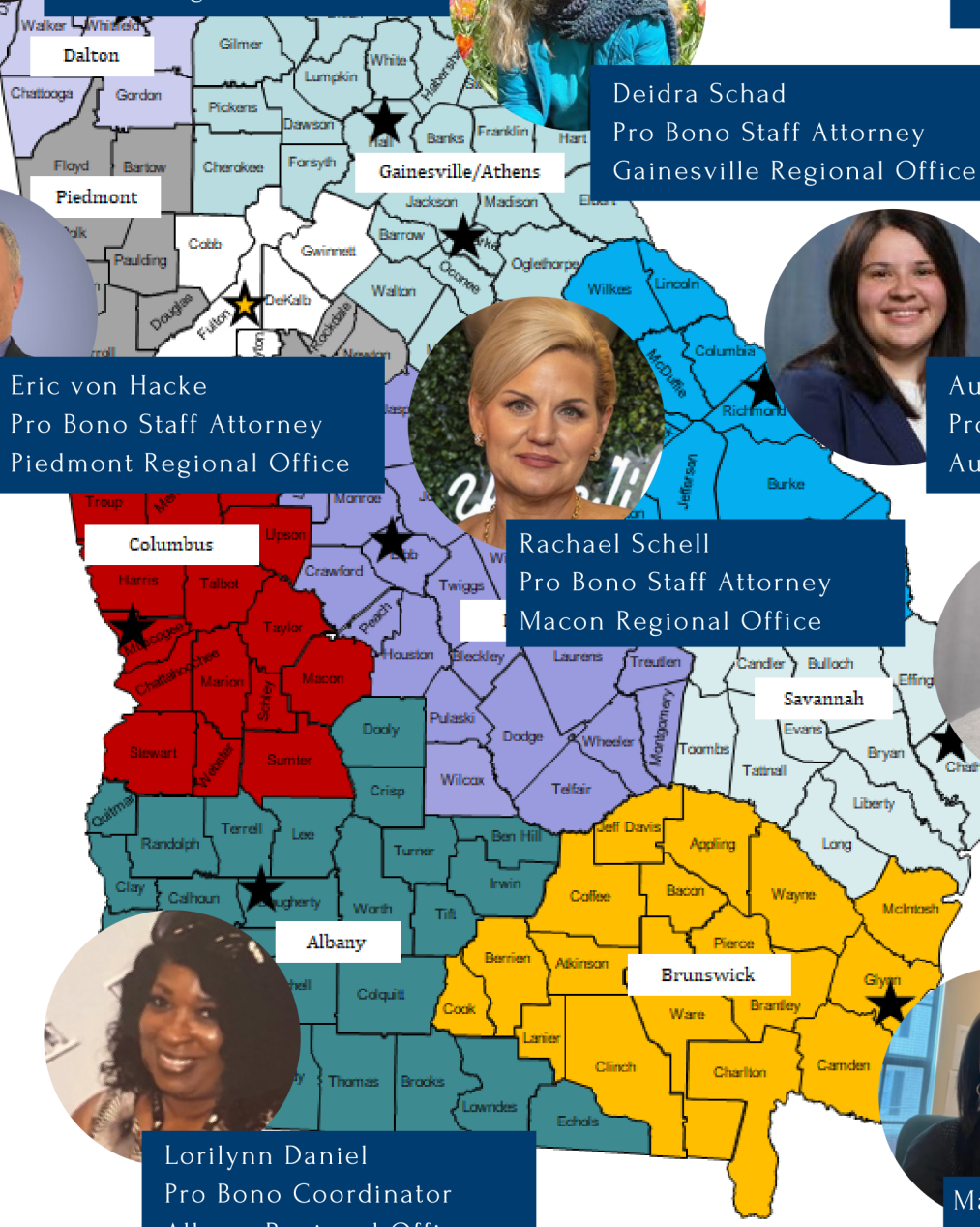
Sarah J. Anderson  
Pro Bono Supervising Attorney  
Savannah Regional Office



Lorilynn Daniel  
Pro Bono Coordinator  
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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

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