

PRO BONO INSIGHTS

A Quarterly Georgia Legal Services Program Newsletter

VOL. 4
ISSUE 1

Thank you

2025 was a particularly challenging year for the Pro Bono Unit. We lost our incomparable leader Mike Monahan, even as we grew our team. Mike's legacy lives on with us, and he would be proud of what we accomplished in 2025. (For some fun pictures of Mike through the years, scroll to the end!)

With the help of our amazing volunteers, the Pro Bono Unit handled 352 more cases in 2025 than in 2024. We engaged new volunteers, explored new models for service delivery, and reached clients in 93 counties across Georgia. Our staff presented in national forums and worked together to reach new heights.

Pictured above: Piedmont Region Pro Bono Coordinating Attorney Eric Von Hacke with Coweta County Bar Association members Ashley Nechay, Elizabeth Boswell, and Stewart West, at the annual Coweta County advice clinic sponsored by the Bar Association.

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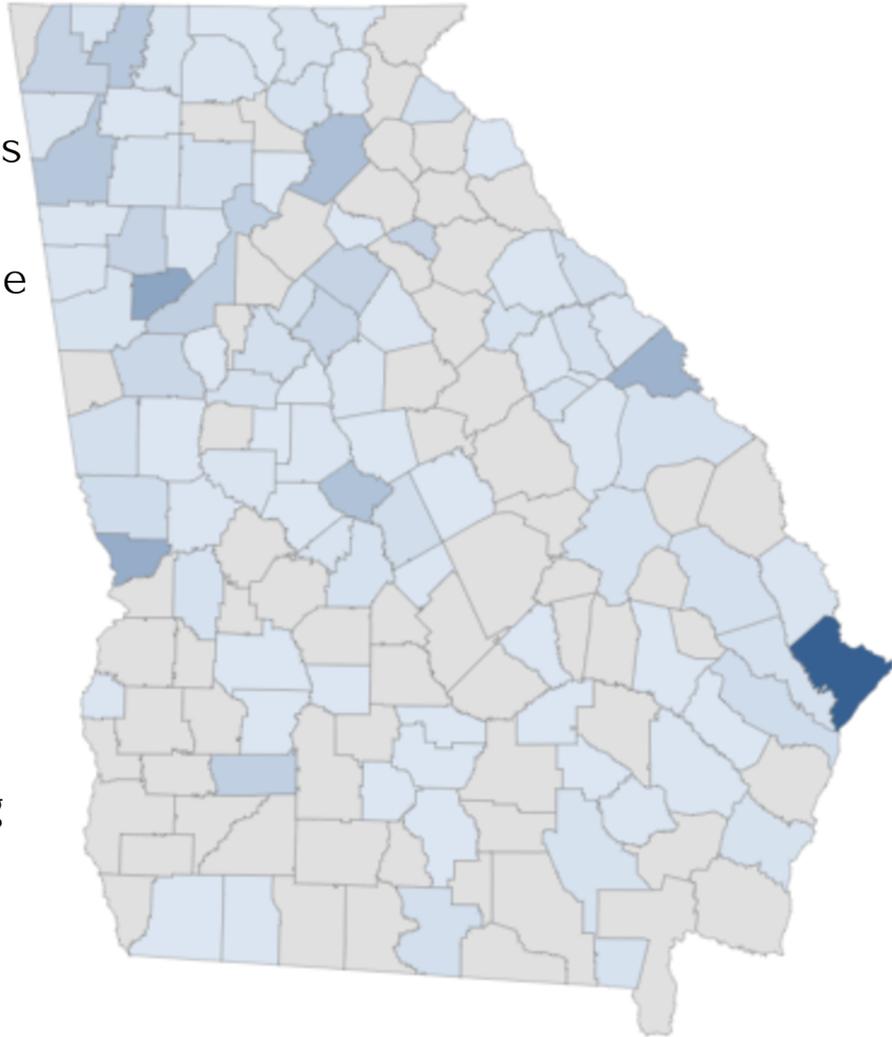
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OUR PRO BONO UNIT: BY THE NUMBERS

In 2025, GLSP's Pro Bono Unit handled more than **1,000 cases**. Our volunteers assisted people in 60% of GLSP's 154 counties (see the map on the right).

Volunteers represented clients with a variety of legal issues, including appearing at temporary protective order hearings, drafting wills, restricting criminal records, obtaining bankruptcy discharge, representing families in domestic relations cases (including adoption), and advising on disaster legal issues.



Counties with any pro bono cases in 2025 are blue, with darker blue indicating more cases.

Volunteers donated more than **1500 hours** to GLSP's mission in 2025, most in the form of direct client services. This volunteer time equates to more than **\$470,000** of legal services for Georgians whose access to justice was hindered by income limitations and other barriers.

PRO BONO STAFF ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

• 2025 •

Staff members from the Pro Bono Unit regularly present locally in CLEs or informational sessions for potential volunteers, but throughout 2025, we also had several staff members present at national conferences on different pro bono topics.

January

LSC Innovations in Technology
Conference
Phoenix, AZ

Pro Bono Deputy Director Sarah Anderson and Statewide Project Manager Heidi Behnke participated in a session on rural pro bono work and overcoming technology challenges, and Sarah presented on new tech developments supporting our clinics.

February

Pro Bono Institute Annual Conference
Washington, D.C.

Pro Bono Deputy Director Cari King presented with Tamara Serwer Caldas, Pro Bono Partner at Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton, LLP, and Jacqueline Haberfeld, Global Director and Pro Bono Counsel at Kirkland & Ellis, about mobilizing volunteers during unanticipated events (like disasters).



March

Disaster Resilience Symposium
St. Pete, FL

Pro Bono Deputy Directors Sarah Anderson and Cari King presented with Georgia Bar YLD Director Jessica Oglesby (above) on pivoting responses during a disaster.

PRO BONO STAFF ON THE NATIONAL STAGE



May

Equal Justice Conference
Washington, DC

Statewide Project Manager Heidi Behnke presented at three different sessions about using data analytics to enhance the impact of legal aid, serving clients in rural communities effectively, and growing pro bono units, all with other leaders from nonprofit law firms.

June

Disaster Forum
Washington, DC

Pro Bono Deputy Director Cari King (below, with LSC President Ron Flagg and representatives from other legal services organizations) spoke in a legal aid forum hosted in collaboration with U.S. Representative Laurel Lee (FL-15) and the Legal Services Corporation. In addition to legal aid leaders, the event brought together congressional staff, agency officials, and nonprofit partners to spotlight the urgent legal needs that arise before and after natural disasters across the Southern United States and how legal aid organizations respond.



PRO BONO STAFF ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

• 2025 •

October

2025 ABA Forum on Building Access To
Justice For All
Atlanta, GA

Ashley Clark, Director of the State Bar of Georgia Pro Bono Resource Center, participated in a panel titled “Resilience Amidst Uncertainty: Protecting Access to Justice in the Face of a Shifting National Landscape” with other leaders in the access to justice space (below).



From left, Jayme Cassidy, Pro Bono Transactions Counsel, McDermott Will & Schulte; Ashley Clark; Doan Nguyen, Director, Office of Access & Inclusion at State Bar of California; and Sylvia Nam, Ph.D, Senior Program Analyst, Office of Access & Inclusion at State Bar of California

THANK YOU, DEBORAH!

Deborah Chapman served as the Pro Bono Support Manager for the State Bar of Georgia Pro Bono Resource Center. Deborah was the liaison for nonprofits and state bar meetings; facilitated events, including coordinating recognition for attorneys and others who volunteered their time; organized community education and outreach initiatives; and responded to individuals with legal issues who contacted the State Bar because they did not know who to call. She worked closely with Mike Monahan, former Director of the Pro Bono Resource Center, and was an essential part of GLSP and the Pro Bono Resource Center during her tenure.

While exceptional at her work, Deborah was also a joy to work with. She was always willing to jump in and assist with pro bono issues. She worked diligently to ensure that the individuals who contacted her for legal help were connected with the organizations best poised to provide them assistance, all with kindness and empathy.

Deborah retired in late 2025 after 18 years in this role.



From left, Mike Monahan, Deborah Chapman, Nobie Mitchell, and Ashley Clark



Georgia-based attendees at the Equal Justice Conference in Minneapolis, MN, in 2022, including Deborah (far right).



Deborah representing the Pro Bono Resource Center at the Annual Georgia Bar Meeting



VOLUNTEER WITH US

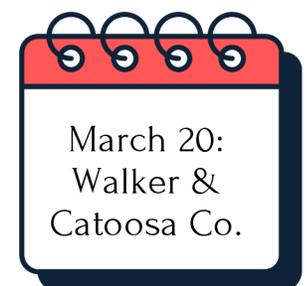
GLSP's Pro Bono Unit offers a wide array of direct service, clinic, and other opportunities throughout the state of Georgia - both **in person and remote**. Attorneys and law students can support access to justice by joining us and helping clients with legal matters. This may include appearing in court, drafting documents, or assisting the client in obtaining access to new resources. Check out our page on the State Bar's Pro Bono Portal, Paladin, at bit.ly/GLSP-Paladin, to review our cases, or contact Deputy Director of Partnerships and Collaborations Cari King at cking@glsp.org.

What if I'm not sure how I can help?

Reach out directly to us! We are happy to speak with you about your skills and interests and how they might align with our clients' needs. While we welcome attorneys with existing expertise in issues our clients need (like bankruptcy, family law, housing, and probate, among other civil areas), we have training and guidance documents available for attorneys interested in learning a new area of law.

UPCOMING CLINICS

Our general Legal Advice Clinics seek to match client legal matters with volunteers who have existing expertise. Common topics include family law, probate/estate planning, and other general civil legal issues.



MEET THE TEAM- REGIONAL OFFICES



Angelina Vaquera-Linke
Pro Bono Coordinator
Dalton Regional Office



Deidra Schad
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Gainesville Regional Office



Eric von Hacke
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Piedmont Regional Office



Debra Bryan
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Augusta Regional Office



Rachael Schell
Pro Bono Staff Attorney
Macon Regional Office



Monica Whatley
Pro Bono Coordinator
Columbus Regional Office



Catherine Sansonetti
Pro Bono Staff 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



Sarah J. Anderson
PBU Deputy Director
Clinics and Compliance



Cari King
PBU Deputy Director
Partnerships and Collaborations



Ashley Clark
Director, Georgia Bar Pro Bono
Resource Center



Welcome

Elise Brown
Pro Bono Support Manager



Nobie Mitchell
Pro Bono Paralegal



Tommy Richards
IT Analyst



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