

# PRO BONO INSIGHTS

A Quarterly Georgia Legal Services Program Newsletter

## THANK YOU & HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024

2024 was a great year for GLSP's Pro Bono Unit!

We are proud to announce:

- We closed **602** pro bono cases. Volunteers represented clients in a variety of legal issues, including appearing at temporary protective order hearings, drafting wills, and advising on disaster legal issues.
- Over **450** volunteers worked for our clients throughout the year, including attorneys, law students, and paralegals.
- Volunteers donated over **1000** hours to GLSP's mission in 2024, most in the form of direct client services.
- **2024** volunteer time equates to more than **\$300,000** of legal services for Georgians whose access to justice was hindered by income limitations and other barriers.

**Thank you to all of the volunteers and dedicated staff who made this possible!**

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# DISASTER WORK: HURRICANE HELENE

When Hurricane Helene struck Georgia on September 27, 2024, many communities completely unprepared for the devastation that followed. Much of the western part of the state was affected, with homes and other property destroyed or damaged, widespread power outages, and limited access to food and water.

Following the hurricane, residents in 85 Georgia counties were declared eligible for some sort of assistance, such as food stamps issued under a special disaster program.

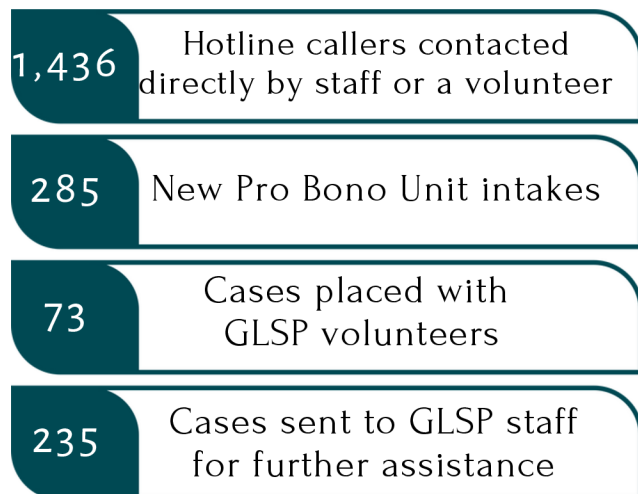


Helene damage in Augusta, GA (Nov. 2024)

63 counties received Individual Assistance declarations from FEMA, meaning that residents could be eligible for funds to help with repairing their property, replacing items, obtaining new housing, and gaining access to emergency items like medications, food, and water. Many people were confused about what to do and initially concerned about accessing basic needs, like food.

The Young Lawyer's Division of the Georgia Bar hosts a Disaster Legal Hotline where disaster survivors can leave voicemails and be connected with legal help. GLSP processes these voicemails, arranges for callbacks, and connects eligible clients with staff or volunteers (the YLD connects ineligible clients with volunteers as well). By September 30, the Hotline had already received 356 calls. As of March 2025, we have received over 1700 voicemails.

## GA Disaster Legal Hotline "By the Numbers"



# DISASTER WORK: VOLUNTEER RESPONSE & WHAT'S NEXT

When the Georgia Bar Young Lawyers Division and GLSP asked for volunteers for Hurricane Helene response, we were impressed by the outpouring of support. Hundreds of individuals completed our volunteer interest form and dozens of volunteers have taken cases, with most providing brief advice to survivors and some going above and beyond to help those impacted.

## You can still help!

We are still fielding calls from Hurricane Helene survivors. The most common legal issues we are now seeing relate to disputes with an insurance company, FEMA appeals issues, and disputes with contractors about repairs related to the hurricane. GLSP provides volunteers with a Disaster Law Manual to refer to, as well as other specific reference materials.

If you are interested in volunteering to give legal advice to a survivor, please email Deputy Director of Pro Bono Partnerships and Collaborations Cari King at [cking@glsp.org](mailto:cking@glsp.org).



## The Volunteer Response

**387**

People completed our volunteer interest form.

**297**

Of those were Georgia-barred attorneys.

**Over 70**

Volunteers have taken cases so far.

## What's Next?

Pro Bono Unit Deputy Directors Sarah J. Anderson and Cari King attended and presented at the 2025 Disaster Resilience Symposium with Georgia Bar YLD Director Jessica Oglesby in March. We will be using the information they brought back to refine our disaster planning in the year ahead!

# ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK 2025

Last month, GLSP was proud to host 16 Georgia State University College of Law students for Alternative Spring Break. This year's program was developed in partnership with former GLSP staff member Alexandra Eichenbaum, now Deputy Director for GSU Law's Center for Access to Justice and Director of their Law Public Interest Programs.

One group of 10 students focused on general rural justice issues, including visiting Wilcox County Judge Shawn Rhodes and our Macon office, working on a legal self-help forms project for the Judicial Council Standing Committee on Access to Justice, and helping local Piedmont staff attorneys with in-person clinics in Rockdale and Floyd counties.

Another group of students focused on the Hog Hammock community on Sapelo Island, the last intact Gullah Geechee community on Georgia's barrier islands. Students visited GLSP's Brunswick office and Sapelo Island, learning about the island ecology and history.

On their last day in coastal Georgia, students assisted with a GLSP property tax exemption clinic at the Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society. Clients received assistance in applying for homestead and other property tax exemptions. The Southern Poverty Law Center partnered with GLSP on the Sapelo Island trip.

Next year, we hope to expand the projects to incorporate more local and out-of-state law schools.



Raphaëla Alemán

Noah Kroeger

Destiny Kimani

Sarah Pechenik

Jack Breslin

Mia Plachkinova

Philip Garnett

Ava Smith

Joseph Hernandez

Sean Wills

THANK YOU!

Andy Paul

Allison Bantimba

Erin Braden

Bella Hyeon

Hannah Sanchez

Lauryn Wellington



## VOLUNTEER WITH GLSP

### VOLUNTEER WITH GLSP

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit offers a wide array of direct service, clinic, and other opportunities throughout the state of Georgia. Attorneys and law students can support access to justice by joining us and helping clients with legal matters such as 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...

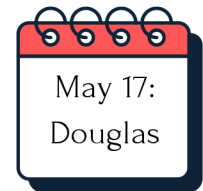
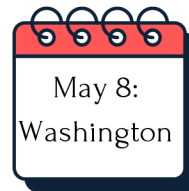
More information on direct service and clinic opportunities is available on GLSP's Paladin page ([bit.ly/GLSP\\_Paladin](https://bit.ly/GLSP_Paladin)).

Don't see anything that interests you, or ready to volunteer? Contact Sarah J. Anderson, Pro Bono Unit Deputy Director for Clinics and Compliance at [sjanderson@glsp.org](mailto:sjanderson@glsp.org).

### UPCOMING CLINICS

#### Wills Clinics

Volunteers assist clients with completing simple estate planning, including wills, advance directives for healthcare, and financial powers of attorney. Training, sample forms, and mentoring and support are provided. We often work with local community partners on these events. We have events in many different counties coming up:



#### Columbus Record Restriction Clinic

Volunteers provide brief advice and service to clients seeking to restrict criminal records. Training, mentoring, and support are provided.

# MEET THE TEAM- REGIONAL OFFICES

## WE'RE HIRING!

GLSP's Pro Bono Unit has an open position in the Savannah Regional Office.

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



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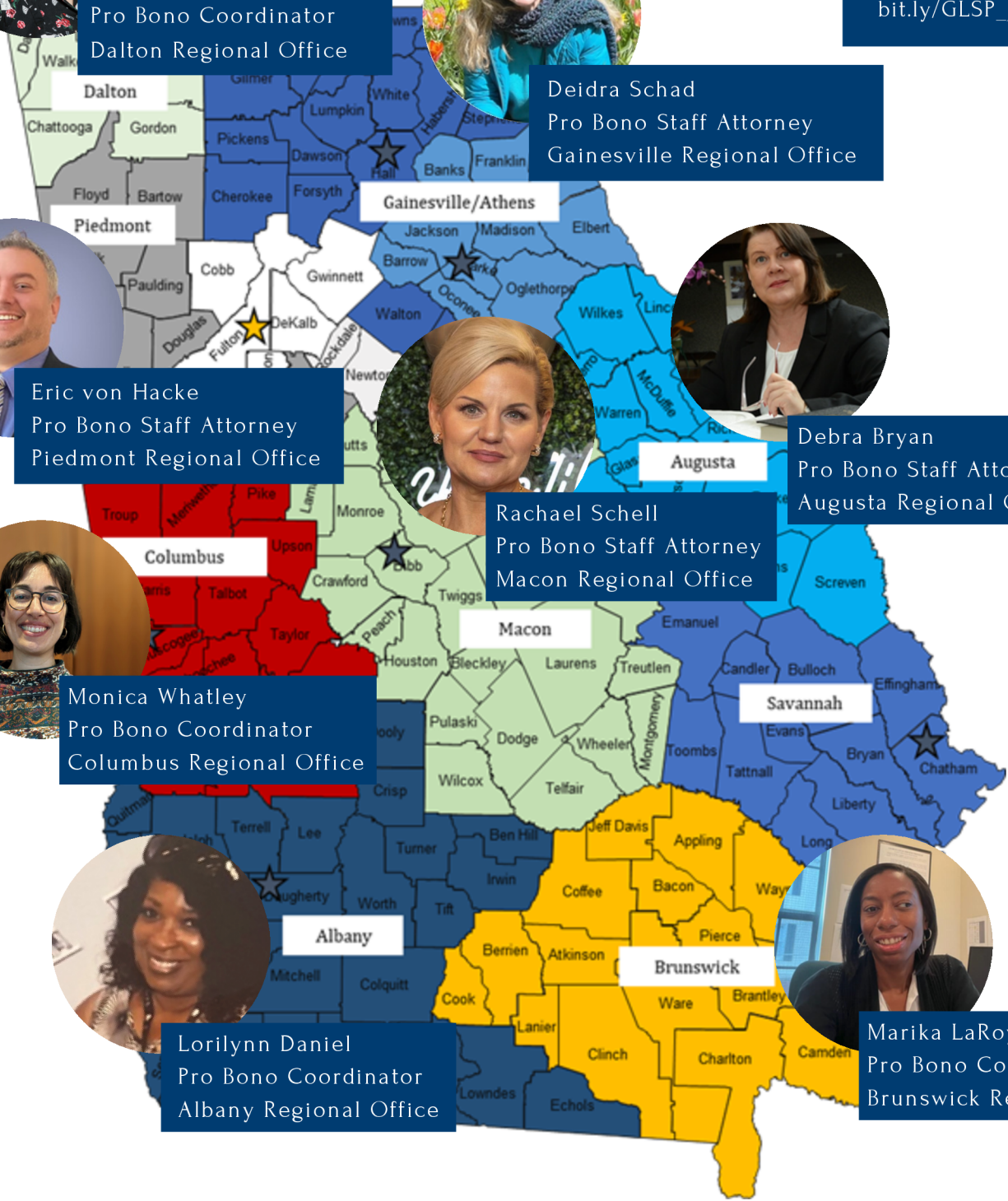
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Lorilynn Daniel  
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Marika LaRoy  
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Brunswick Regional Office



# MEET THE TEAM- CENTRAL SUPPORT



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Sarah J. Anderson  
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Pro Bono Coordinator



Tommy Richards  
IT Analyst

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