



ADVANCING EQUITY

2021 Annual Report

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GEORGIA HEIRS PROPERTY
LAW CENTER

CONTENT

IMPACT & INNOVATION

Our Mission	4
On the Map	5
Opportunity	6
Impact: By the Numbers	7
COVID and New Ways to Serve	8
Raising Awareness through Innovative Approaches	8
Hybrid Outreach Program Empowers Local Communities	8
Market Bulletin	9
Webinars for a Wider Audience	10
Connecting with Nonprofits, Grassroots Organizations, and Local Governments	12
The Future of Unlocking Generational Wealth	12

RESILIENCE & RECOVERY

Heirs Property Hinders Community Resilience and Recovery	13
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STRENGTH & SUPPORT

Growing Georgia's Economy through Property Rights	14
Partnerships Unlock Generational Wealth	14
Educating and Advocating within the Business Community	15
Banks Do Not Grow if Communities Do Not Grow	15
Clear Titles Create Clients	15
Scaling Up: The Model to Resolve and Prevent Heirs Property	15
Return on Investment	16
Pro-Bono Connections and Community	16
Truist Pro Bono Program	16
Legal Community Works to Increase Equity	17
Financials	18
Donors	19
Pro Bono Volunteers & Organizations	20
Partner Organizations	22
Our Team	23

Dear Friends, Partners, and Colleagues,

“Strength and Resilience” has been the theme for an unprecedented year at the Georgia Heirs Property Law Center, Inc. (“the Center”). “Advancing Equity” is the result. In the face of COVID, economic instability and natural disasters, the Center’s staff, clients, and community partners rallied to ensure access to bedrock community stabilization legal services that resolved heirs property through title clearing, prevented heirs property through estate planning, and provided asset education that helped low- and moderate- income Georgians build generational wealth.

Heirs property (aka “tangled title”) is a home or land that has passed from generation to generation in a way that results in ownership divided among multiple living descendants in a family. **Representing \$34 billion dollars in tax appraised value in Georgia**, the negative impacts of heirs property affect families and every aspect of community, including the functioning of local government, court systems, state departments, banks, businesses, and nonprofits.

As FY2021 unfolded, the Center forged new ways to Advance Equity- both economic and social- in Georgia. Partnerships became stronger as the Center’s legal services were delivered deep into Georgia’s most vulnerable communities. This was no easy task since the ability to travel and gather was restricted; however, the determination of the Center’s staff, paired with the creativity of our clients and partner organizations made what initially seemed impossible, possible.

For example: the Center partnered with a South Georgia community to facilitate a hybrid neighborhood meeting designed to allow residents to participate in-person and socially distanced or via Zoom. A historic African-American high school cafeteria was transformed into a multi-media event space with a laptop, projector, screen, camera, and microphone provided by the local government. A nurse from the neighborhood volunteered to take temperatures at the door. Families sat together spread out through the large, airy room, community leaders welcomed their neighbors, and the Center’s attorneys answered questions about how to address heirs property in their community.

Video conferencing was not only a way to provide asset education to a larger audience, it also became a means to create educational videos - one of which starred our partners “cast” as a team of colleagues on a Monday morning video call - discussing the importance of estate planning. Collaboration helps mitigate the effects of economic and natural disasters. Our municipal and nonprofit partners attest that **resolving and preventing heirs property is the ultimate form of recovery** that provides long-term stability for communities throughout Georgia.

Clear titles change lives. One client was on the brink of homelessness when the Center’s staff cleared her title and saved her home. A family farm was saved when the Center’s legal work resulted in a judge granting our client the right to purchase back an interest in property that had been procured by a developer. Another client, upon obtaining clear title, began the process of enrolling their property in a conservation program. Several clients, impacted by tornadoes and hurricanes, are now armed with clear title and can receive funding to repair their homes.

This is good work; and the Center, its staff and board are committed to leveraging the hard-won lessons and skills of the past year to Advance Equity by growing Georgia’s economy through property rights. We hope you will join us.

With gratitude for your support and leadership,



Skipper G. StipeMaas, J.D.
Executive Director



The background of the entire page is a photograph of a house with a grey roof and white siding, partially obscured by dense green trees and foliage. A large, solid red rectangular block is positioned on the left side of the page, containing the text for the 'Our Mission' section.

Our Mission

The Georgia Heirs Property Law Center increases generational wealth, economic value, and community stability by securing and preserving property rights of low- and moderate-income Georgians.

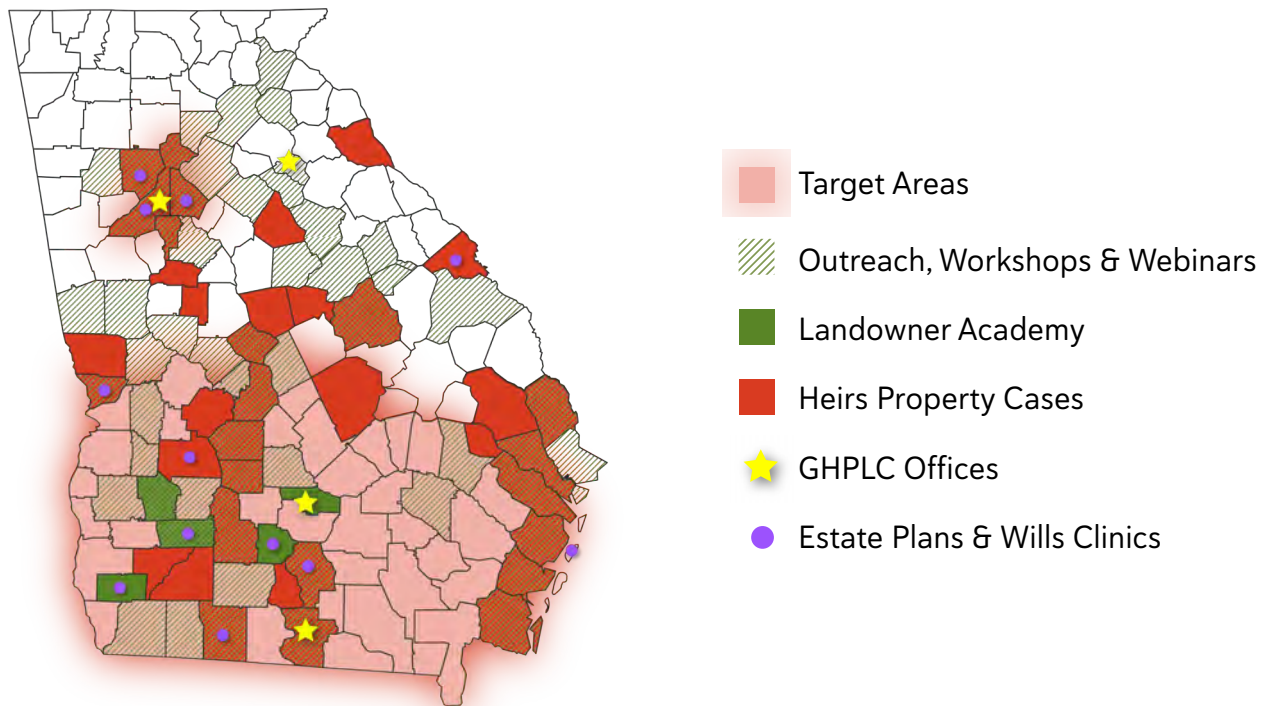
*Growing Georgia's Economy
through Property Rights.*

IMPACT & INNOVATION

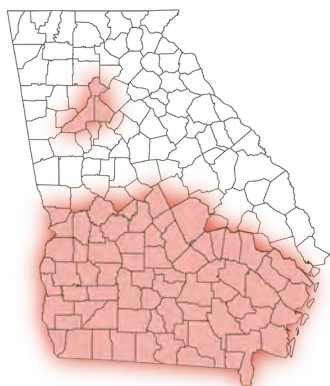
On the Map

IMPACT

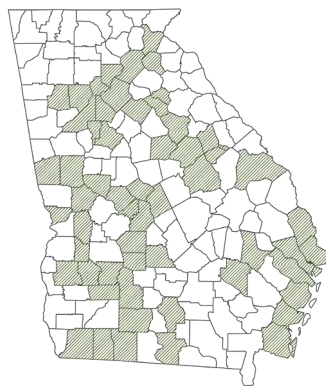
As of June 30, 2021



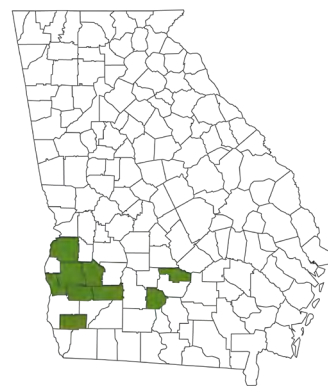
TARGET AREAS



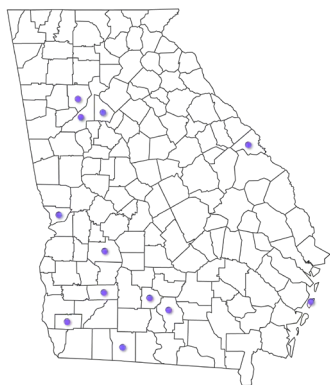
OUTREACH, WORKSHOPS & WEBINARS



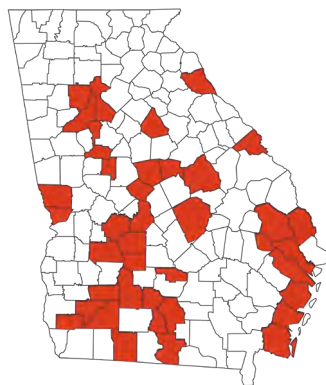
LANDOWNER ACADEMY



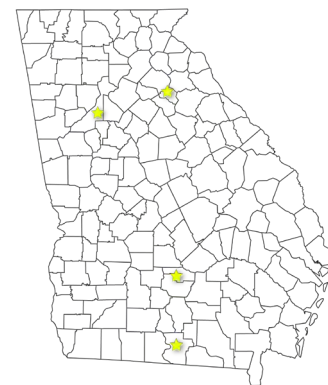
ESTATE PLANNING CLINICS



HEIRS PROPERTY CASES



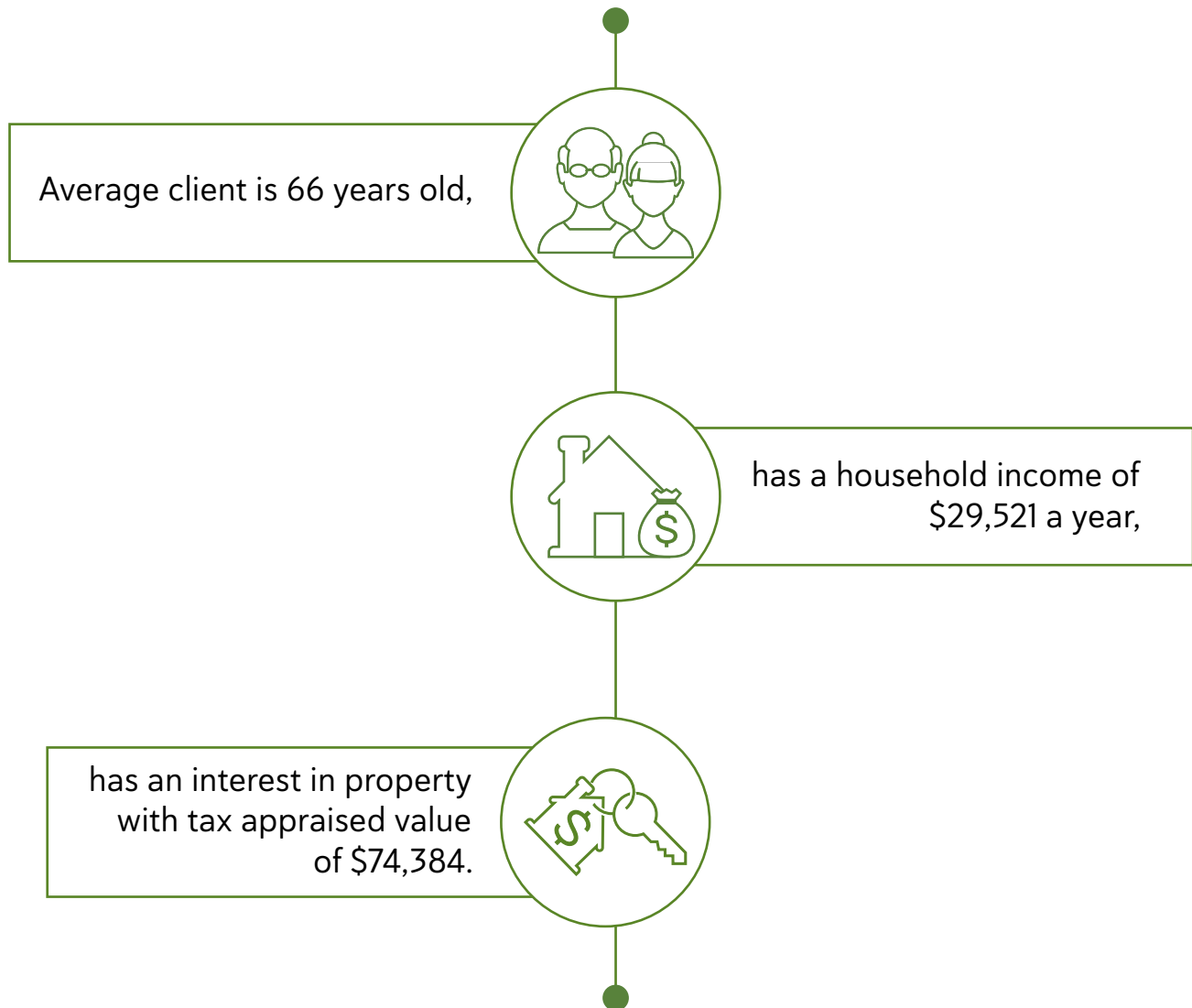
GHPLC OFFICES



Opportunity

IMPACT

As of June 30, 2021



USDA Forest Service and UGA-Carl Vinson Researchers determined that 11% to 25% of parcels in every Georgia county are probable heirs property. This represents over \$34 billion in tax appraised land that is “Locked Equity,” contributing to blight, unmanaged farmland, and generational poverty.



Impact: BY THE NUMBERS

IMPACT

As of June 30, 2021



The Center has provided legal services for and closed **470 matters**: **178** title clearing matters, **107** title searches/audits, and **185** estate planning matters.

Titles for **72** properties have been cleared in **19** counties valued at approximately **\$5.03 million**.



The Center, in collaboration with private attorneys and pro bono title companies, reviewed titles for **325** tracts of land, involving properties in **53** counties, collectively valued at **\$22.11 million**.

The Center, solely or in collaboration with other partners, completed **324** community outreach programs, trainings, and stakeholder meetings, reaching approximately **12,995** individuals.



The Center, in collaboration with its partners, completed **15** webinars, reaching approximately **1,500** individuals from around the state and around the nation.

CLIENT STORY

Preserving Family Land: A non-family member acquired 40% of a 100-acre family owned farm and tried to force a sale. The family's patriarch, Mr. Brown* reached out to the Center for help. The Center's attorney prevailed in obtaining the legal right for Mr. Brown to purchase the non-family member's interest, which enabled Mr. Brown to buyout the non-family member and clear the title so that the family land could be farmed again.

*Client's name has been changed.

COVID and New Ways to Serve

COVID has had a lasting impact on how we work, live, and connect with one another. The need for housing stability, estate planning, and economic security has been underscored and the Center has seen an increase in requests for its services.

The Center helps heirs property owners, non-profits, and local governments remediate fractured title, increase equity, and transfer wealth through title clearing, will creation, estate planning, education, and facilitating access to government, private sector, and non-profit land management/home improvement programs.

Raising Awareness through Innovative Approaches

Outreach and education are key components to remediating, preventing, and ending heirs property. The reality of COVID resulted in the Center's team of professionals looking for ways to innovate, adapt, and pivot to new strategies for reaching clients and communities. A combination of in-person and virtual meetings and presentations, as well as updated educational materials and Center website, allowed the Center to connect with staff, community, and organizational partners.

Hybrid Outreach Program Empowers Local Communities

The Center partners with the Dewey City Neighborhood Watch, Community Outreach Training Center, City of Thomasville, and the Douglas High School Alumni Association, on an innovative, place-based program to address heirs property in Thomasville. The Center, in collaboration with the other partners in Dewey City and Thomasville, leveraged hybrid events to continue to raise awareness of heirs property.

Cafeteria Meeting

The first hybrid presentation, which included in-person social-distancing and Zoom, was held in the cafeteria of Douglass High School and geared towards residents of Thomasville's Dewey City neighborhood. This "Cafeteria Outreach" was attended by 16 in-person attendees and 11 via Zoom. This meeting included testimony from a grassroots partner about a client who was unable to access a USDA forgivable loan because they did not have clear title, information about the genealogical resources of the Thomas County Public Library and encouragement from Thomasville's NAACP President to utilize the services of the Center.



The Center staff also attended an in-person Juneteenth celebration hosted by the City of Thomasville and distributed 200 fliers about our services and 50 Georgia Estate Planning Handbook for Communities to community members and local outreach organizations. The team also distributed door hangers with a QR code that directs neighbors to the Center and the Thomasville library for copies of the Estate Planning Handbook.



The Center's website serves as the hub for our educational materials. The website's navigation was updated this year and provides nonprofits, municipalities, and residents with access to outreach and training anywhere. Available on our website is the Georgia Estate Planning Handbook for Communities, Heirs Property Myths and Facts, and recorded Webinars.

Heirs property was one of the top three challenges identified in a survey sent to schools, farmers, churches, county commissioners, mayors, county managers, extension agents, family connections, chambers of commerce, and NRCS in the rural, persistent poverty counties of Terrell, Randolph, Stewart, Clay, and Calhoun. In addition to heirs property, high-speed internet and unpaved roads and infrastructure needs were identified.

In response to this survey, the Center created a 10-minute video for Golden Triangle's Prosperity Council members. The video is a component of the work aimed at building the capacity of the Golden Triangle RC&D and Community Training Center to support residents in 15 rural counties in preparing to work with the Center on title clearing and estate planning.



CLIENT STORY

Outreach is an important aspect of the Center's work as it connects heirs property owners with programs and resources offered by the Center and its partners. Ms. Smith was a Landowner Academy program participant who learned that obtaining clear title with the help of the Center would allow her to participate in programs to increase the productivity of her family land. After probating two estates and clearing the title, the Center's staff attorney set up an LLC to hold two different family properties. Once the LLC held title to the property, Ms. Smith applied to the ARC/PLC Program and Conservation Stewardship Program.

*Client's name has been changed.

Market Bulletin

The Georgia Market Bulletin, a publication of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, which has a circulation of 35,000 provided a new avenue to help raise awareness of heirs property and the resources available to resolve and prevent heirs property, and educate Georgia residents by publishing:

- A guest column by the Center's Executive Director printed on October 21, 2020.
- One of the Center's Myths and Facts in each Market Bulletin.
- Advertisement for the March 18, 2021, Preserving Family Heritage Webinar.

The Center saw an increase in intake calls because of the Market Bulletin, as well as an offer of pro bono services from a retired rural bank lawyer who has extensive experience in resolving heirs property.

Webinars for a Wider Audience

The Center conducted five workshops via Zoom and Facebook Live that tailored to meet the needs of rural homeowners and underserved landowners. These presentations reached over 1,500 participants from 85 Georgia counties.

The Center and Ft. Valley State University's Cooperative Extension Agents conducted a webinar titled "Preserving Family Heritage" with 156 participants by Zoom and 591 via Facebook Live for a total of 747. The participants were from 60 counties and 12 states including Georgia.

Pictured: This webinar was marketed with a commercial discussing the myths around estate planning in the context of a "Monday morning work meeting."



GEORGIA FORESTRY
COMMISSION



"Tangled Title and Timber: Resolving Heirs Property to Manage Your Woods as A Resource" was a two-part workshop on November 18, 2020 and November 19, 2020 in partnership with the Georgia Forestry Commission, Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia, and Georgia Alabama Land Trust.

This two-part workshop capped a project undertaken by Coastal Regional Commission and Georgia Forestry Commission to:

- Connect timberland owners with Georgia Forestry Commission resources;
- Identify timberland owners with heirs property issues;
- Provide information and resources to timberland heirs property owners with an emphasis on residents in the coastal counties of Liberty, Evans, Camden, McIntosh, Bryan, Tattnall, and Long; and
- Provide resources on conservation easements.

This webinar had 86 registrants. Participants joined from 39 counties, including at least one participant from each of the target counties, 13 participants owned property in the target counties.

One hundred percent of the participants who responded agreed that the webinar was valuable, informational, and a good use of their time.

11/18 - 11/19/20

"Tangled Title and Timber: Resolving Heirs Property to Manage Your Woods as A Resource"

- 90 Participants Over Two Days
- 40+ Counties Represented

12/09/20

"Don't Spend Your Pines: Managing Timber, Hunting Leases, and Heirs Property for Generational Wealth"

- 92 Registrants from:
 - 36 Georgia Counties
 - 11 States

09/24/20

"Preserving Family Heritage"

- 156 Participants on Zoom
- 591 Watching on Facebook Live

3/18/21

"Preserving Family Heritage: Estate Planning Basics"

- Viewed by 747 people from:
 - 52 Georgia Counties
 - 13 States





The Center conducted a webinar on December 9, 2020 in partnership with the Georgia Forestry Commission, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Fort Valley State University Cooperative Extension, and Golden Triangle RC&D. This webinar was titled, “Don’t Spend Your Pines: Managing Timber, Hunting Leases, and Heirs Property for Generational Wealth,” and had 92 registrants from 36 unique counties and 11 states.

What attendees found most valuable about the Center’s webinars...

Learning
“how to
protect my
children.”

“The need to
put people in
charge so the
land can provide
generational
wealth.”

Ability “to share
with my family
members...to
discuss moving
forward with our
property.”



The Center conducted a Zoom webinar with partners titled “Estate Planning Basics” which focused on:

- What estate planning entails;
- How to build wealth and provide for your family for the next generation;
- What happens when you die without a will; and
- How estate planning can prevent heirs property.

There were 130 Attendees via Zoom and 490 viewers via live stream on five Facebook Pages - Fort Valley State University Ag, FVSU Crawford & Twiggs County Cooperative Extension, and the Georgia Heirs Property Law Center. In total, the webinar was viewed by 620 people from 60 Georgia counties and 11 different states.

CLIENT STORY

Ms. Johnson*, an elderly woman with medical concerns, came to the Center in fear of becoming homeless. A family member had probated the estate of Ms. Johnson’s husband and through a lengthy legal process, was trying to force the sale of Ms. Johnson’s home. The sale of the home would have left her with only \$10,000 for her interest. Instead, the Center’s staff attorney was able to obtain the legal right for Ms. Johnson to purchase the interests of the other heirs so that she could remain in her home.

**Client’s name has been changed.*



Connecting with Nonprofits, Grassroots Organizations, and Local Governments

To tackle heirs property, communities need long-term, sustained efforts supported by local and statewide nonprofits and grassroots organizations. These partnerships create a web of resources and connection points with and across communities and the state.

The Center has developed an Estate Planning “Signing Day” Program which includes: curriculum development, technical assistance to organizational partners, and the formation of a network of grassroots non-legal and pro bono Legal volunteers.

The Signing Day Program aims to meet the expanding demand that COVID has created for estate planning services in communities that lack the resources to provide these services.



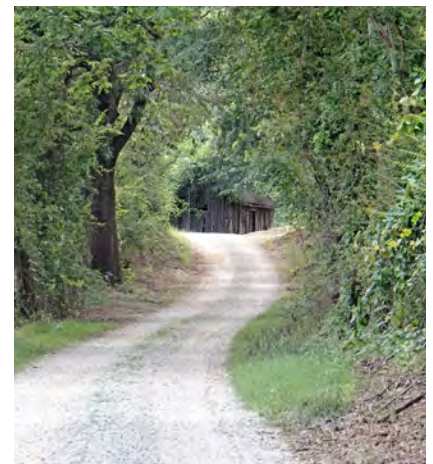
With support from the USDA Rural Community Development Initiative, the Center is building capacity within Golden Triangle RC&D and Community Outreach Training Center - two nonprofits serving Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Randolph, Seminole, Stewart, Terrell, Thomas, and Worth counties. Golden Triangle and COTC are receiving direct technical assistance from the Center to help county residents work on title clearing and estate planning.

CLIENT STORY

Ms. Moore* and Ms. Larkins*, two separate Center clients, would be eligible for home repairs through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Natural Disaster Home Repair Program for damage sustained by Hurricane Irma if they had clear title. Because each of these clients owned their home with their spouses as joint tenants with right of survivorship, the Center's staff was able to simply file an affidavit of surviving joint tenant and record it with the death certificate in the real estate records. This allowed each of these clients to participate in DCA's Home Repair Program.

The Future of Unlocking Generational Wealth

After a year of adapting to the challenges brought by the COVID pandemic, the Center is looking to continue to innovate and collaborate to bring awareness, education, and action to heirs property owners and communities, and ultimately prevent future heirs property. Many of the challenges the Center faced have turned into opportunities for future growth.



RESILIENCE & RECOVERY

Heirs Property Hinders Community Resilience and Recovery

Families often discover they own heirs property when they apply for disaster recovery programs following a hurricane or other natural disasters. The Center is leveraging its growing body of expertise in Disaster Recovery and Mitigation Planning to support multiple Georgia efforts in education, outreach, and awareness.



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (DCA)

The Center clears titles in the areas hardest hit by natural disasters in Georgia to unlock access to state and federal resources and expertise. In collaboration with DCA, the Center continues to work with heirs property owners recovering from the 2017 Hurricane Irma and 2017 tornadoes in Albany, Brunswick, Kingsland. The Center **cleared and closed 12 title clearing matters** to their HRRP Case Managers in Brunswick, Kingsland, and Albany and is currently working **26 title clearing matters**.

DISASTER PLANNING AND HEIRS PROPERTY GUIDE

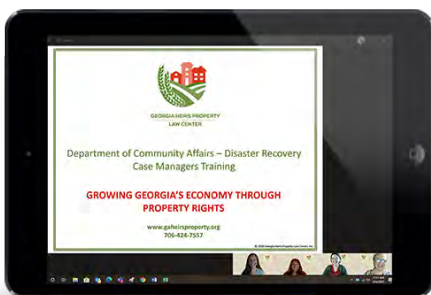
The Center has developed a Disaster Planning and Heirs Property Guide, as well as an Emergency Document Checklist to help nonprofits and municipalities engage residents in disaster planning that emphasizes the importance of clear title and estate planning for resiliency. These new outreach materials are part of the Center's work with DCA as well as other outreach partners.



HELPING COMMUNITY LEADERS

ADDRESS HEIRS PROPERTY DURING RECOVERY

The Center is working with UGA Cooperative Extension Agents leading four Regional Disaster Recovery Teams to provide agents with a working understanding of heirs property in the content of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation. The agents will understand how heirs property is created, how to identify it, how legal tools are used to clear titles, and where to find legal resources to help communities and individual heirs property owners.



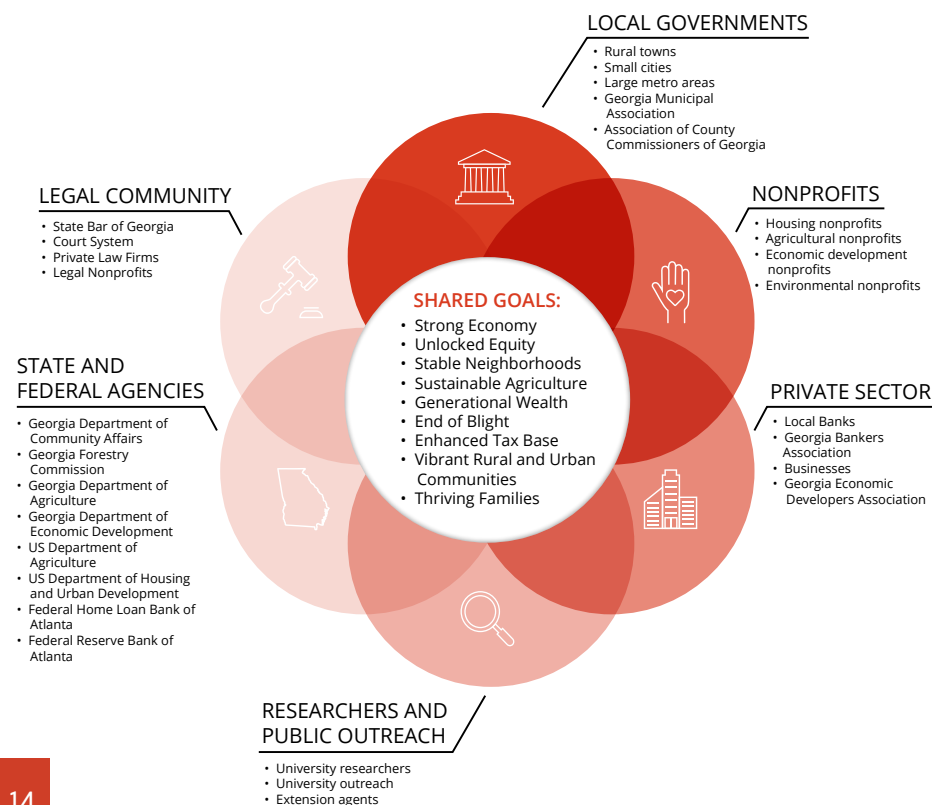
STRENGTH & SUPPORT

Growing Georgia's Economy through Property Rights

The Center empowers families and communities impacted by heirs property. Through strategic partnerships focused on legal services, land loss prevention, and asset educational outreach, the Center advances economic justice at the micro (individual) and macro (community) level. These partnerships with clients, nonprofits, and public sector leaders allow our state to address heirs property and rebuild a healthy economy for Georgia. A multi-sector approach is vital to the Center's statewide and systems-based approach to address heirs property.

Partnerships Unlock Generational Wealth

The Center's partnerships extend the work of the Center in its key areas of focus:



Legal support for families, individuals, nonprofits, and municipalities through:

- Title audits;
- Title clearing; and
- Remediation of fractured title.

Land loss prevention services to help slow down land loss and secure property assets through:

- Legal counsel; and
- Development of estate plans.

Asset education through:

- Education of community members and stakeholders about heirs property and potential impact on owners and their communities; and
- Education of landowners about ways to increase the value of their property and generational wealth.

Educating and Advocating within the Business Community

From the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta to Truist, Synovus, and Wells Fargo, private sector partners create a framework to leverage their expertise to address heirs property. With a vested interest in revitalizing communities, the private sector plays a vital role in educating and advocating within the business community.

Why Lenders, Developers, the Public Sector, the Legal Community, and Community Organizations have a Vested Interest in Solving the Problem



The Center continues to work with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta after the success of the Atlanta Heirs Property Forum, which brought together thought leaders from the municipal, legal, financial, governmental, and nonprofit sectors. The Center is working with Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta on funding opportunities for pilot programs and scalable solutions to heirs property. The Center worked with Arthur Fleming for a presentation titled, “Unlocking Generational Wealth Opportunities in Minority, Rural and Poor Communities: Solving the Heirs Property Problem” which was presented as part of a panel at the American Mortgage Conference in April 2021 and was sponsored by the American Bankers Association and the North Carolina Bankers Association.

Banks Do Not Grow if Communities Do Not Grow

Clear Titles Create Clients

Lenders’ vested interest in resolving heirs property is that each clear title is a potential customer. With clear title, a property owner can open a line of credit, apply for a mortgage, and use the property as collateral to start a business or send a kid to college. They can also sell the property, which increases the likelihood of new mortgages for lenders.

CLIENT STORY

Creating Generational Wealth: Ms. Gibson’s* aunt had a will, which created heirs property by leaving the home to Ms. Gibson and other family members. Many years had passed and the will had not been probated. The Center’s staff attorney had to open four estates and have a guardian ad litem appointed to represent 4 of the 29 heirs who could not be located. After this extensive probate process, the clear title was conveyed to Ms. Gibson, who then executed a deed gifting the property to her daughter, the next generation.

Scaling Up: The Model to Resolve and Prevent Heirs Property

The Center is unique in its mission to serve the entire state (rural and urban), its expertise in probate and litigation, its robust education/outreach program, its leadership and model for other states, and its work with local governments on Natural Disaster Mitigation and Recovery. Scaling-up the Center means increasing the number of clients served, generational wealth transferred, and equity unlocked. The Center is developing best practices as a national model to advance this work in other states.

Return on Investment

Since 2015, the Center has closed 470 matters and cleared title for properties worth a combined \$5.03 million. The Georgia Center's return on investment:

- Every \$1 invested in the Center's title clearing program results in \$14 of unlocked equity.
- Every \$1 invested in the Center's estate planning services results in \$24 in protected equity.



Pro-Bono Connections and Community

The Center continues to create a state-wide network of pro bono attorneys to provide services related to heirs property. During COVID, this network allowed the Center to continue to provide support across the state and help meet the increased demand in services related to heirs property.

Pictured: Jake Honeycutt of Woodall & Pflepsen, PC and client in Albany, Georgia during a virtual estate plan signing with Georgia Heirs Property Center

CLIENT STORY

The Center has a skilled staff of attorneys to help clients through the legal process of clearing title, even the ones that seem simple, at first. Mr. Jones* and his wife, who passed over a decade ago, owned a home together. Mr. Jones had attempted to probate his wife's estate; however, made a mistake in the process and the title for his home was still clouded when he reached out to the Center. The Center's staff corrected the previous probate filing and set up an estate. In the meantime, Mr. Jones passed and the Center also filed a probate petition for Mr. Jones's estate. Opening these two estates prevented a foreclosure on the home, and allowed the heirs to sell the home and divide the proceeds.

*Client's name has been changed.

Truist Pro Bono Program

The Center works closely with Truist and their pro-bono program on innovative ways to create forms tools to help with identifying heirs and manage the creation of legal documents.

The Center hosted lunch-and-learn CLEs titled *Unlocking Equity: Legal and Economic Opportunities of Heirs Property* for Truist and FHLBank of Atlanta Legal Department.



Legal Community Works to Increase Equity

By partnering with the Center, attorneys can resolve and prevent heirs property so that generational wealth is unlocked, and community revitalization efforts can succeed.

The Center works with a variety of legal community partners:

- American Bar Association
- Fulton County Probate Court
- Georgia Council of Probate Court Judges
- Atlanta Council of Young Lawyers
- American Bar Association Estate Planning & Probate Section
- Fiduciary Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia
- Pro Bono Attorneys and Law Firms



Georgia Estate Planning Handbook

In June 2020, the Center launched the Georgia Estate Planning Handbook for Communities to help nonprofits, local government, and legal community partners. In August 2020, the Center followed it up with the Georgia Estate Planning Handbook for Nonprofit Law Firms and Their Pro Bono Attorneys. This comprehensive Forms Handbook includes ways to draft last wills and testaments that prevent, and do not create, heirs property. The Center engaged a committee of volunteers to support the effort including the Fiduciary Law Section of the State Bar and its members. The Handbook was distributed to every executive director of Georgia's nonprofit law firms.

Developing Georgia-Specific Legislation for Resolving Heirs Property

The Center is gathering input from members of the State Bar of Georgia, the Georgia Council of Probate Judges, the Fiduciary Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia, and the Atlanta Bar Association Estate Planning and Probate Section about legislative ways to support and streamline the resolution and prevention of heirs property.

CLIENT STORY

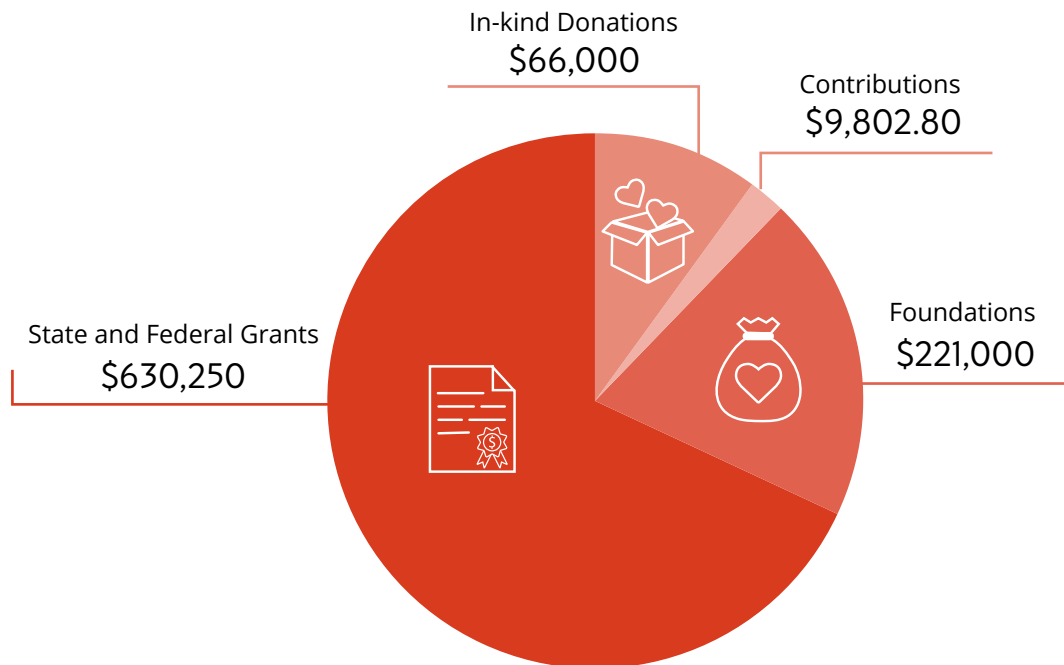
Clear title results in a new house for the Center's rural client! Ms. Baker* was gifted her home, which she lived in her entire life, by her step-grandfather when she was a minor. Because she was a minor, the deed included Ms. Baker's mother's name. Several decades later, Ms. Baker's mother passed away without a will, which resulted in Ms. Baker owning her home with her mother's 14 heirs. The Center's staff attorney probated Ms. Baker's mother's estate, and was able to negotiate the heirs conveying their interests over to Ms. Baker. Due to the age and condition of the house, Ms. Baker's home was replaced with a brand new house with CDBG funds, and she has moved into her new home, with clear title and an estate plan crafted to prevent her new home from becoming heirs property and to create generational wealth.



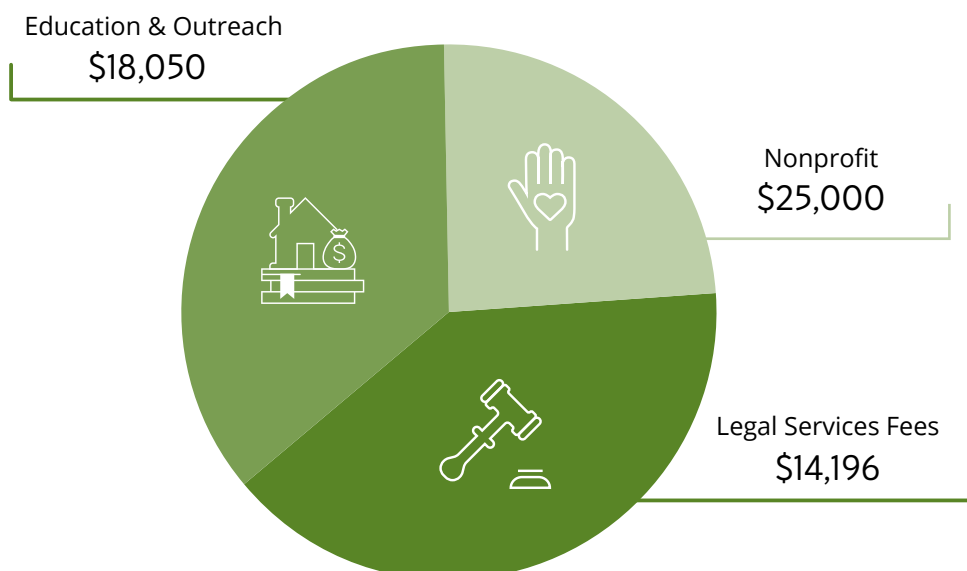
“Thank y’all so much for helping me get my house. I hope you will be blessed and blessed. Thank you soooo much!”

As of June 30, 2021

PUBLIC SUPPORT



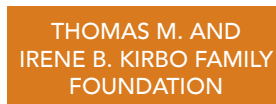
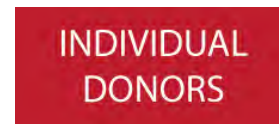
REVENUE



Donors

SUPPORT

As of June 30, 2021



Pro Bono Volunteers & Organizations



Cassandra Johnson
Margaret Scott
Cheryl Naja
Sean Bedford
Mary Benton
Mike Stevens



Dina French
Hilary Leland
Stacy Reynolds
Cari Hipp
Steve Crumm
Charles Bliss
John Warchol
J. Rachel Scott



David Kelly



Pearson Beardsley



Bert King



Amanda Calloway



Richard Coleman
Ryan Pulver
Richard Bauer
Pam Brosemer
Bart Davis
Russ Henry
Brett McNeill



Jessica Haygood



Shelly Donaldson



Stacy Funderburke



LAW OFFICES OF WOODALL & PFLEPSSEN, P.C.

J.D (Jake) Honeycutt, III



Jasmin Serverino



Alan Rosselot



Rebekah Allison
Nick Djuric
Phoebe Edge
Elizabeth Faist



William Rothschild
Patrick Spook
Martiza Badio
David Cone
Michael Mannio
Henry Parkman
Larry Polk
Maria Rivera-Diaz
John Sharpe
LT Jackson
Lori Broderick
Jose Valasquez
Mack Heller
Monica Mosely
Claudia Chafloque-Siu
Tessa May Deardorff
Monika Hur



Georgia Legal Services Program

Rachael Schell
Adrienne Freeman
Rachel Henderson



Mary Radford



Beth Boone



A. Dixon Revell
Harry D. Revell



Karen Robertson



LINDSEY & LACY, PC

Alexandre Kachin



Farley Andersen



Kristen Quinton



Jonathan Alderman



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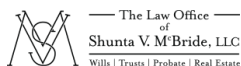
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Atlanta Legal Aid Society	Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia	Georgia State Law School	Thomas County Public Library
Atlanta NPUs	Georgia Alabama Land Trust	Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin	Thomasville Habitat for Humanity
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Georgia Heirs Property Law Center is a not-for-profit law firm that helps heirs property owners, nonprofits, and local governments remediate fractured title, increase equity, and transfer wealth to the next generation through title clearing, wills creation, estate planning, and facilitating access to government, private sector, and nonprofit land management or home improvement programs.

APPLYING FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE WITH HEIRS PROPERTY ISSUES

Who Does the Center Serve?

The Center works throughout Georgia but, due to limited resources, cannot accept every case. The Center gives priority to potential clients with properties located in Atlanta and South Georgia. The Center's services are either free or discounted depending on a client's qualifications.

How Do I Apply for Assistance?

To apply for assistance, contact the Center at (706) 424-7557, Ext. 1 for a free initial telephone interview. To fully evaluate your case for representation and best serve you, these documents may be needed:

- ☐ Copies of any deeds for the property, including the deed where the family acquired the property and the last recorded deed (if different);
- ☐ An heirs determination packet, filled out to the best of your ability, beginning with the original owner, and showing the names of all living and deceased heirs and their spouses (if presently known), how they are related, and whether any are deceased. All biological and adopted children must be included regardless of whether born within a marriage or not;
- ☐ Death certificate for the original owner and any of his or her deceased heir(s);
- ☐ Obituary for the original owner and any of his or her deceased heir(s);
- ☐ Copies of wills or probate documents for the original owner and any of his or her deceased heirs;
- ☐ Copies of written agreements among family members or with third parties regarding the property;
- ☐ Copies of any legal notices relating to the property, such as tax sale, foreclosure, pending or threatened lawsuits, and code violation notices;

Upon receiving all requested information and documents, the Center will review your matter and determine whether your case can be accepted on a "pending" basis. If you are accepted on a "pending basis," you will be required to provide the Center's income worksheet and complete a detailed heirs determination packet. Upon receipt of your income worksheet and heirs determination materials, the Center will make a determination regarding whether you are eligible for services and what legal fees, if any, you would be required to pay.

Please bear in mind throughout the process that the Center has not yet agreed to represent you and has not established an attorney-client relationship with you. You will only become a client if the Center formally accepts your matter and you sign an engagement agreement.



Georgia Heirs Property Law Center is a not-for-profit law firm that helps heirs property owners, nonprofits, and local governments remediate fractured title, increase equity and transfer wealth to the next generation through title clearing, wills creation, estate planning and facilitating access to government, private sector, and nonprofit land management or home improvement programs.

Building Generational Wealth and Strengthening Communities by Securing and Preserving Property Rights.

WHAT WE DO



LEGAL SUPPORT

Georgia Heirs Property Law Center provides legal support for families, individuals, nonprofits and municipalities. Title-clearing services include title audits, family meetings, probate, quiet title actions, and legal tools like management agreements; powers of attorneys; consolidation of title into single ownership, LLC, or trust.



LAND LOSS PREVENTION

Georgia Heirs Property Law Center develops estate plans and prepares last wills and testaments for individuals to foster generational wealth transfer and prevent land loss. Services may include advanced directive for healthcare, financial power of attorney, and establishing a trust or LLC. In addition, the Center provides educational materials for nonprofits through its Estate Planning Forms Project.



ASSET EDUCATION

Georgia Heirs Property Law Center provides financial education on home and land ownership to grow assets for the next generation. The Center engages nonprofit and governmental partners to help clients develop land/timber management plans, qualify for USDA programs, and access home repair, Disaster Recovery and Resilience programs.

WHO WE ARE



Center attorneys, support staff, and a network of pro bono volunteers and grassroots organizational partners



Statewide work with geographic outreach in Atlanta and South Georgia



Serving families, individuals, nonprofits, and municipalities with legal support, prevention, and asset education services.



Offices in Atlanta, Athens, Fitzgerald, and Valdosta.

Heirs Property is the hidden story behind blight and generational poverty in Georgia.

Heirs property refers to a home or land that passes from generation to generation without a legally designated owner resulting in ownership divided among all living descendants in a family. This unstable form of ownership limits a family's ability to build generational wealth and hampers the efforts of nonprofits and cities to revitalize neighborhoods.

CONTACT US

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 706-424-7557