

# PROGRESS

Twelve months after the JLA awarded \$1 million in grants to local charities

In the summer of 2017, The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc.'s (JLA) year of centennial celebration came to a close with the highly anticipated \$1 million in grants being awarded to nonprofit organizations in the Atlanta community. But the JLA's involvement with the selected organizations did not end with the financial contributions. JLA members spent the following league year working alongside these organizations to ensure the grants' successful results in providing abundant service to the Atlanta community and its residents. These one-time, transformational gifts to the Atlanta Community Food Bank, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and the Generational Poverty Law Project have already started to make a difference. We checked in on the progress of those organizations and asked, "How has the grant from JLA benefited your organization?"

## ATLANTA COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

The Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) and JLA share a vision of positively impacting generational poverty in the Atlanta community. The goal of ACFB's Child Nutrition Program is to identify and implement strategies to reduce food insecurity for children in the organization's twenty-nine-county service area. The three key Child Nutrition Program initiatives that help increase access to nutrition for children include:

- **School Breakfast Initiative**
- **School Pantry Program**
- **Summer Meals Program**

The grant made to the ACFB supports these three programs through the Child Nutrition Program to make an impact on the entire family through distributing meals to students. After a busy year, the Child Nutrition Program is on track with both the School Pantry Program and the Summer Meals Program. Both provided services over the past year and ACFB is set to increase the number of children

benefitting over the next year along with growing the amount of food distributed.

The School Breakfast Initiative is now working with three school districts and will implement the program beginning with the new school year this August. "If the Atlanta Community Food Bank did not receive funding from The Junior League of Atlanta, the work we accomplished over the past year would not have had the impact that it did," Skye Thompson of ACFB says. "We would not have had the ability to serve the large number of children and families that benefitted from our programs. These children and families would have had to look elsewhere to get food and meals or go without the help. Without Junior League's support, this growing network would not be as robust or have the ability to serve the hundreds of children that attend these schools," Thompson notes.

Social worker Dr. V. Sparks Cooke and Annette M. Muhammad, assistant principal at Margaret Fain Elementary School, reported to ACFB: "The Atlanta Community Food Bank's school pantry has had a tremendous impact on Margaret Fain Elementary School and our surrounding community. Since we have incorporated the Atlanta Community Food Bank, parents have become increasingly engaged in the school community and the students are excited about

# REPORT

we check in to see the impact this money is already making

By Sara Simonds



Top: Volunteers who work together to sort food for the Atlanta Community Food Bank are an integral part of the organization's mission. Bottom: Some children in the Atlanta area depend on meals from the ACFB to eat.



*"If the Atlanta Community Food Bank did not receive funding from The Junior League of Atlanta, the work we accomplished over the past year would not have had the impact that it did."*

—Skye Thompson, Atlanta Community Food Bank

servicing the families in their community. Now parents are able to identify the school as a trusted resource."

## **BY THE NUMBERS:** **Atlanta Community Food Bank's Child Nutrition Program**

Through the grant, the School Pantry Program expanded its

efforts to include twenty-seven schools. Four school districts worked with ACFB to implement the School Breakfast Initiative to provide technical assistance and funding to schools to expand or implement Alternative School Breakfast models in twenty schools, such as Grab and Go and Second Chance Breakfast. This includes more than 43,000 summer meals to

## **BEHIND THE PROGRAM:** **Stories to Share From ACFB**

Veronica D. has frequented the School Pantry Program at Norton Park Elementary throughout the past year. Participating in the pantry provides assistance to her and her family. "The pantry allows me to save money that can then be spent on other necessities," Veronica said. "I am able to receive a lot of food, which allows me to cook in different ways." According to Veronica, the school pantry helps her family in more ways than we can imagine.

*continued*

## CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA INSTITUTE ON HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

With the grant from JLA, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) was able to launch the Institute on Healthcare and Human Trafficking (the Institute), which addresses the shared focus of raising awareness of child and human sex trafficking. The Institute, led by Dr. Jordan Greenbaum, is developed out of the robust training and prevention programs within the Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe and Healthy Children, a certified child advocacy center that provides the highest level of clinical care to children who have been abused and neglected.

"If The Junior League of Atlanta had not helped launch the Institute on Healthcare and Human Trafficking through their generous centennial grant, the growing healthcare industry in Atlanta would not have the tools and resources to take a stand against human trafficking," notes Cailin Copan-Kelly, associate development officer at CHOA. From the grant's support, CHOA has offered free training to more than 2,300 healthcare providers locally and nationally—this is more than double the initial goal of training 1,000 providers. The Institute has focused on implementing this training into medical schools, nursing schools, and public health programs, since it is critical that providers are aware of this issue from the earliest stages of their careers. Most of these programs do not contain curricula pertaining to trafficking, but with the centennial grant, the Institute is closing the gap.

"While Atlanta is, unfortunately, a hub for human trafficking, the Institute and our partner organizations have the power to mobilize Atlanta's healthcare industry so providers can effectively advocate for their patients who are also trafficking victims," Copan-Kelly says. "The support of The Junior League of Atlanta is continuing to translate this vision into reality."

### BY THE NUMBERS:

#### Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Institute on Healthcare and Human Trafficking

Of the 2,319 providers trained within the first year of the Institute, 894 trainees were local healthcare providers in Atlanta. The Institute has trained an additional 1,073 providers nationally and 353 providers via online webinars. In the first year of the Institute, referrals were tracked to Georgia Cares, the statewide victim service agency serving children who have been victimized by sex trafficking and exploitation. Georgia Cares received referrals for 596 children in 2017. This is a significant increase from 2013-2014, when they received 311 referrals. With the combined multidisciplinary efforts of organizations like the Institute, Georgia Cares, local law enforcement, the

**Look Beneath the Surface**

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS MODERN-DAY SLAVERY**

Any child induced to perform a commercial sex act is a victim of trafficking. Children made to work against their will (such as farm labor, domestic servitude or factory work) are victims of human trafficking.

There are safe housing, health, immigration, food, income, employment, legal and interpretation services available to child victims, but first they must be identified.

For more information about human trafficking visit [www.acf.hhs.gov/endtrafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/endtrafficking). If you are concerned that a child may be a victim of human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **888-373-7888**.

**LOOK BENEATH THE SURFACE**

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**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS MODERN-DAY SLAVERY**

A victim of trafficking may look like many of the people you see everyday.

Ask the right questions and look for clues. You are vital because you may be the only outsider with the opportunity to speak with a victim.

There are safe housing, health, immigration, food, income, employment, legal and interpretation services available to victims, but first they must be found.

If you think someone is a victim of trafficking, call **1.888.3737.888**. For more information about human trafficking visit [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking).

*"If The Junior League of Atlanta had not helped launch the Institute on Healthcare and Human Trafficking through their generous centennial grant, the growing healthcare industry in Atlanta would not have the tools and resources to take a stand against human trafficking."*

—Cailin Copan-Kelly, associate development officer at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

FBI, DFCS, Wellspring Living, Street Grace, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and many other organizations,

more victims and children who are at risk for exploitation are being identified and linked to critical resources for help.

# THE GENERATIONAL POVERTY LAW PROJECT

Combating generational poverty lies at the center of the grant made to the Atlanta Legal Aid Society (Legal Aid) to establish the Generational Poverty Law Project. This project created a partnership between Legal Aid, Georgia Heirs Property Law Center (GHPLC), and the Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta (PBPA) to leverage existing services, improve current work by developing new projects and programing to identify, protect, and build clients' limited assets and financial resources, and support the nonprofits that serve those clients. The Generational Poverty Law Project has given these partners the opportunity to strategize about additional services around generational wealth creation and preservation that would provide continued support and resources to their clients after their immediate legal needs have been resolved.

## BY THE NUMBERS:

### The Generational Poverty Law Project

"The project has handled 429 cases for families this year," says Sarah Stein, an attorney with Atlanta Legal Aid. "The Project successes include: increased referrals between partners and collaboration with Georgia Institute of Technology to develop data-based, community outreach priorities. Our generational poverty lens has re-framed existing work and created new opportunities for cooperation among partners. It has informed project and goal development and helped us envision a more integrated approach to services."

## BEHIND THE PROJECT:

### Stories to Share from the Generational Poverty Law Project

Mr. Raymond\* has lived in his home on the west side of Atlanta since 1973. He came to our office in the summer of 2017 certain that he was about to lose his home. His mortgage servicer had suddenly returned two of his payments and demanded that he pay a ten-month arrearage, totaling more than \$6,000. They threatened to foreclose. Although Mr. Raymond was certain that he had made all of the payments, he felt powerless and had resigned himself to packing his belongings in preparation for losing his home. The Generational Poverty Law Project attorney at Legal Aid investigated Mr. Raymond's case and found that the mortgage servicer had never accepted thousands of dollars in funds. Through direct advocacy with the mortgage servicer, Mr. Raymond's loan was removed from foreclosure, and steps were taken to accept the funds and bring the loan current. The mortgage servicer also removed all fees and related charges from Mr.



Past President Deanna Anderson with members of the Atlanta Legal Aid, Georgia Heirs Property Law Center, and Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta.

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—Sarah Stein, Atlanta Legal Aid attorney

Raymond's account. Mr. Raymond spent Christmas in his home and is no longer in fear of losing it. Without the Project's help, it is likely that Mr. Raymond would have been forced into foreclosure.

Mr. Howard\* lived with his ninety-two-year-old mother in her westside Atlanta home until it was crushed by a tree during last September's tropical storm. Mr. Howard's two siblings had both passed away within the previous year, so he and his mother moved in with another relative until they could rebuild and return to the neighborhood they'd loved for over forty years. Before any progress could be made, Mrs. Howard also passed away. Mr. Howard, a niece, and two nephews became co-owners of his

mother's home. Mr. Howard was not able to show formal ownership, however, and could not complete the demolition process. When Mr. Howard could not find a private attorney willing to help him untangle the complex probate and title web, GHPLC attorneys working with the Generational Poverty Law Project stepped in to help. Mr. Howard, with GHPLC's help, is now serving as executor of his mother's estate, working with his niece and nephews to resolve title, and moving forward with the rebuilding process. GHPLC attorneys also helped Mr. Howard with an estate plan to ensure that the home can be securely passed on to the next generation. ■

\*Names and property locations have been changed to protect the clients' privacy.