



LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Executive Director Georgia Legal Services Program Atlanta, GA

"GLSP provides civil legal services for Georgians with low incomes, creating equal access to justice and opportunities out of poverty."
– GLSP mission statement

The Opportunity

For 50 years, the Georgia Legal Services Program has been leveling the playing field for Georgians with low incomes who lack access to adequate legal representation for civil law related issues. As a lifeline for people when they are most vulnerable, GLSP serves the needs of a diverse population – addressing issues that include housing, education, public benefits, health care, family law and family violence, farmworker rights and elder rights, among others. As economic disparity continues to become a more pressing issue in Georgia and throughout the U.S., GLSP is at a critical inflection point that demands inspired and capable leadership to guide it forward in the years ahead.

Recognizing the important role that GLSP plays in the lives of Georgians and grounded by a deep understanding of public interest law as an equalizing force and the critical role it plays in our legal system and democracy, the Executive Director will bring to GLSP a combination of legal acumen, vital energy and a hunger to build an even stronger and more sustainable organization. Working in partnership with a committed board and staff, the Executive Director will further enhance the organization's reach and accessibility to Georgians in need, its assets and its impact.

To reach its aspirations, GLSP seeks a leader who is driven to combat injustice, is an enthusiastic advocate and brings relevant professional experience in managing an organization of similar complexity and scope.

Key mandates for the Executive Director include:

1. Continuing a legacy of dedicated service to those in need of civil legal services and promoting GLSP as an organization that is vital to Georgia



Inside GLSP: (Click to play video)



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GLSP is the largest nonprofit law firm in the state of Georgia and provides free legal assistance in civil matters to persons with low incomes within the 154-county area outside of Metro Atlanta.



2. Broadening sources of contributed revenue and developing alternative sources of income
3. Advancing GLSP's technology and information management capabilities to help GLSP be more effective
4. A continued commitment to racial justice
5. Branding GLSP in ways that are current, progressive and compelling
6. Thoughtfully and capably balancing the legal needs of both urban and rural Georgians - further galvanizing GLSP's role as a nonprofit public interest law firm and comprehensive service provider for a broad spectrum of Georgians

The Organization

Originally launched in 1970 as Georgia Indigents Legal Services, GLSP is the largest nonprofit law firm in the state of Georgia and provides free legal assistance in civil matters to persons with low incomes within the 154-county area outside of Metro Atlanta. GLSP is headquartered in downtown Atlanta, has a budget of \$20M, a staff of 185, and serves Georgians through its Atlanta office (serving the Piedmont region) and 9 field offices in Albany, Athens, Augusta, Brunswick, Columbus, Dalton, Gainesville, Macon and Savannah. This geographic reach is an essential part of ensuring that Georgians with low incomes have access to legal services and justice. The sobering statistics bear out the need for this reach: a 2014 report by the State Bar of Georgia showed that 70 percent of Georgia's lawyers work in five metro Atlanta counties, 62 of Georgia's 159 counties have 10 or fewer lawyers and 5 counties have no lawyers at all.

GLSP has assembled an impressive track record of noteworthy achievements including:

- A 2017 Georgia Supreme Court decision affirming protections for students involved in disciplinary proceedings
- A family violence initiative to provide services to victims of family violence that has helped thousands of survivors since its inception in 1998
- Since 2018, prevented thousands of Georgians from being evicted
- Since 2019, the Farmworker Rights Division secured hundreds of thousands of dollars in unpaid wages and damages for farmworker victims of human trafficking
- Georgia Legal Services Program established a medical legal partnership in Macon Georgia in 2016. The medical legal partnership was the second medical legal partnership project that was established in the state of Georgia. There are about 350 medical legal partnership projects in the United States. The Macon GLSP medical legal partnership project provides free legal help to hospital patients who need legal assistance with public benefits, landlord tenant, domestic violence and probate and estate type issues.
- 9,054 cases closed and more than 100,000 calls handled through GLSP's statewide intake program in 2020

More than two-thirds of GLSP's revenue comes from the federal government; the remainder of organizational support includes funding from Georgia organizations, the Georgia Bar Foundation, individual and foundation contributions. GLSP is undergirded in part by the Georgia Legal Services Foundation (established in 1996 via a \$1M gift from a class action lawsuit); and current assets stand at approximately \$2M. Although GLSP has sustained itself consistently through grant support to date, the Executive



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Director will explore various approaches to broadening its revenue streams to help the organization spread risk and lessen its dependence on public sector support.

The Responsibilities

The Executive Director will be an energetic and passionate advocate for public interest law as a critically important community priority and for the specific civil legal needs of Georgians with low incomes. The next Executive Director will be a skillful connector of people and organizations and a compelling leader who will coordinate and deploy the gifts of a superlatively committed team.

More specifically, the Executive Director will:

- 1. Embrace the mission of GLSP, effectively articulate that mission to others, and lead GLSP in the accomplishment of the mission.** The leader will be a champion of public interest law and will promote GLSP as a resource critical to the achievement of justice and equity. The Executive Director will ensure that key operational and financial milestones are met.
- 2. Grow and diversify resources to support GLSP's work.** The Executive Director will be a strong and proactive resource builder and fundraiser and will find the support needed to ensure that organizational revenue goals are met. Given that more than two-thirds of GLSP's budget is supported by federal funds, comfort and proficiency in securing resources from philanthropic resources and new funding sources is critical.
- 3. Serve as the public face of GLSP and nurture effective collaborative relationships between GLSP and its clients, funders, community organizations, bar leaders, private donors, business and civic communities.** A natural facilitator of strong relationships, the Executive

Director will be a visible and active part of the community and will optimally position GLSP with key audiences and stakeholders.

4. Move GLSP forward into the future with updated technology that will allow GLSP to more effectively serve clients and utilize resources. The Executive Director will help ensure that GLSP has the technological resources necessary to effectively serve its constituencies. Additionally, given the broad organizational footprint and multiple offices that comprise GLSP, s/he will advance technologies and systems that will connect a statewide staff in current and innovative ways.

5. Effectively manage leadership development, succession and retention throughout GLSP. Building on a foundation of staff marked by a unique sense of purpose and characterized by longevity of service, the Executive Director will skillfully employ strategies for developing talent, and recruiting and retaining individuals whose work ethic, values and experiences align with GLSP and the realities of working in a public interest law firm. Will value the vast amount of institutional history and legal experience present among the staff and board, helping ensure that these assets are both shared and fully exploited to the benefit of GLSP's mission.



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The Relationships

Reports to:	GLSP Board of Directors
Direct Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Director • General Counsel • Sr. Director of Litigation and Advocacy • Sr. Director of Finance and Administration • Director of Development and Communications • Executive Assistant • Statewide Director of Georgia Clients Council
Has other key relationships including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key leaders throughout the field of public interest law • Philanthropic leaders, donors and supporters • Business leaders and public officials • Leaders and key figure in the General Assembly and public sector • The stakeholder community throughout Georgia • GLS Foundation Board of Directors • State Bar of Georgia

The Candidate

Qualities and qualifications being sought in the Executive Director include:

- Well-established legal acumen, a demonstrated passion for the mission of GLSP and an unwavering commitment to serving the legal needs of Georgians with low incomes
- A strong but calm presence, confidence and a combination of gravitas and humility
- A Juris Doctorate degree and membership in good standing with the Georgia Bar or a new membership upon employment
- Substantial management experience in a successful legal service, nonprofit or business entity
- Courage and capability in fundraising and successful prior experience in resource development
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, enabling her or him to be an engaging public speaker and an effective spokesperson for GLSP in multiple forms of media
- Strong listening skills and high emotional intelligence
- A commitment to diversity and a high degree of cultural acuity
- A commitment to transparent and collaborative leadership

Additional desired attributes:

- Experience leading an organization of significant size that is diverse in geography, program and staff
- Experience in financial oversight, development of budgets, and compliance with grant and contract requirements
- Experience in the practice of law including litigation and management of litigation, preferably representing individuals with low incomes in civil cases
- Experience operating under collective bargaining agreements/ unionized organizations
- An understanding of the political landscape in Georgia
- Familiarity with current technology systems and the ability to leverage them effectively
- Demonstrated ability to build relationships with the organized bar and governmental entities
- Facility and experience working productively with an engaged Board of Directors
- Personal attributes which include vision, open-mindedness, innovation and the ability to motivate others

The Location

Georgia Legal Services Program has a central administrative office in downtown Atlanta (where staff serving the Piedmont region are located) and regional offices in Albany, Athens, Augusta, Brunswick, Columbus, Dalton, Gainesville, Macon and Savannah.

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The Executive Director will have personal attributes which include vision, open-mindedness, innovation and the ability to motivate others.

Georgia is home to over 10 million residents, a growing film and music industry and culture, internationally respected institutions of higher learning, fifteen *Fortune 500* companies and some of the world's most visible nonprofit organizations.

For more information about the organization or region, go to www.glsp.org or www.georgia.gov



For potential consideration
or to suggest a prospect, please email

GLSP@BoardWalkConsulting.com

or call **John Sparrow** or
Michelle Hall at 404-262-7392.
