

Host Site: Georgia Legal Services Program

Topic of Project: Disaster Preparedness

Location of Fellow: Atlanta, GA

The Fellowship will be both remote & in-person. Some in-person attendance at various meetings and community education will be required.

Description of Fellow Project:

This Fellowship project will focus on assisting rural Georgians in communities of color prepare for a disaster, with a concentration on securing homeownership and preserving wealth in those communities hit hardest by natural disasters. This fellowship arises out of the efforts of “Georgia Team Ready”—a disaster relief project based out of the host site’s Pro Bono Program in partnership with the State Bar of Georgia, Troutman Pepper, Alston & Bird, and Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton.

After a natural disaster, many low-income individuals face systemic barriers in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) recovery process that have long-lasting and devastating effects on their communities. This is particularly true in historically Black, rural neighborhoods in Georgia. During Hurricane Michael in 2018, southwest Georgia sustained significant storm damage. According to FEMA, the three (3) zip codes with the most applications for housing assistance after Hurricane Michael were located in Albany, Bainbridge, and Donalsonville, Georgia.

The Fellow would take the lead in conducting a needs assessment to find targeted low-income, rural areas most often impacted by natural disasters. Following this needs assessment, the fellow would draft educational materials for those high-risk communities and training materials for volunteer lawyers to assist in the FEMA recovery process following a federally mandated disaster.

Applicant Qualifications:

- Language proficiency in Spanish and English.
- Access to reliable transportation.