



# MIDDLE GEORGIA

## Access to Justice Council, Inc.

Newsletter #2

July 2019

**“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”**

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

### President's Page

Middle Georgia Justice continues to grow as we strive to close the justice gap in middle Georgia by operating a lawyer incubator program and a lawyer referral service. Our growth is due to the wonderful response we have gotten from the community as to donations and volunteers. Much has happened since our last newsletter. Here are some highlights:

- Mike Horner joined us on May 13 as our first ever executive director. This was a huge step for us. Mike is off to a great start and will help take our program to the next level. Check out his first Horner's Corner.
- Julia Magda, one of our original Board members, resigned from our Board to be able to devote more time to her duties with the Chamber of Commerce. We are grateful for her service. Connie Williford took Julia's position in April and brings a wealth of experience in the important areas of family law and fundraising. Welcome Connie!
- We are excited Nyonnohweah Seekie joined our incubator program on April 1st as our third participant. See her profile below.
- The Griffith Family Foundation stepped up to help us with a \$25,000 grant to allow us to proceed with hiring an executive director. They have also pledged to do another \$25,000 grant in 2020. We cannot thank enough Benjy Griffith, Tonja Khabir, and all the GFF trustees for their endorsement of our mission and this generous gift.
- We applied in April to the Georgia Bar Foundation for grants from the IOLTA Fund and the Fellows Fund. We have just learned the GBF made an IOLTA Grant to us for \$10,000 and a Fellows Grant for \$5,000. This is great news and we are thankful for the generosity of the GBF in supporting our program.
- Family law is a dominant area of need as we quickly learned doing our weekly intake interviews. We have been checking out what is being done in other counties to assist the people seeking to go to court on domestic matters without an attorney. Every county has a different approach but we have some good ideas in the works, including plans for a small scale self-help center in our office where pro se litigants can complete forms with some assistance without the need for a full-blown referral to an attorney. Stay tuned.
- Our Justice Brigade is growing which is good because we are seeing more people in need of assistance and expect the number to increase. Please consider signing up through our website to be a volunteer. We will facilitate and support you in your handling of referred cases. It is actually quite rewarding.
- Finally, we earnestly seek your financial support. Please send us a check or go to our website and donate online, including doing so on a regular monthly basis. In our view, we are providing a valuable service to our lawyers and law firms by offering a place to send folks when you don't know what to do with them and GLSP is unable to provide assistance. It is also a service to the community.

Thanks so much for your support. Please let us know if we can be of assistance to you in any way.

Bill Adams, President

[bill@mgajustice.org](mailto:bill@mgajustice.org)

## PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS



### **Meet our new Executive Director Michael G. Horner**

Mike was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1996 with a B.A. degree in philosophy, and a minor in Russian. Mike received his J.D. in 1999 at Tulane Law School in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Throughout his 20 year career as an attorney, Mike has assisted numerous clients in a wide variety of legal matters. After graduating law school, Mike started his legal career at the law firm of McGlinchey Stafford in New Orleans. His wife, Ashley, completed her PhD in Neuroscience at Tulane University in 2002, and Mike and Ashley moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. Mike practiced law at the law firm of Snell & Wilmer while in Salt Lake City, and also worked in-house as an attorney at Prime Insurance Company.

While Mike and his wife loved living out west, the pull to move back closer to home was strong. In 2007, Ashley accepted a position as a professor at Mercer School of Medicine, and Mike began work as a plaintiff's trial lawyer at the law firm of Reynolds, Horne & Survant. From 2017 to 2019, Mike practiced law in the Macon, Georgia office of Baker Donelson, where he focused on resolving business disputes. In May of 2019, Mike accepted the position of Executive Director at Middle Georgia Access to Justice Council, Inc.



### **Meet our new Incubator Attorney Nyonnohweah Seekie**

Nyonnohweah Seekie was born in Washington, D.C. and relocated to Georgia, where she graduated high school and attended Georgia Southern University. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Minored in Criminal Justice. Nyonnohweah completed her graduate studies towards her Master of Arts in Criminal Justice at Widener University, in Chester PA, and returned to Georgia for law school at Mercer University School of Law.

As a law student, she was very active in scholarly organizations, oral advocacy, and in the local community. Nyonnohweah was passionate about heartfelt causes, including education, criminal justice reform, and immigration. Prior to her legal pursuits, Ms. Seekie worked as a counselor in differing capacities, including at an alternative high school. She completed an internship with the Latin American Association (LAA), working in their Immigration Legal Services division. There she conducted consultations and researched issues in the areas of general immigration, VAWA, U-Visa, and removal. Nyonnohweah also worked at the Macon Circuit Public Defender's Office, as an Assistant Public Defender.

For over three years, Nyonnohweah has remained devoted to her clients and has helped countless individuals facing misdemeanor and felony charges; responsible for cases ranging from DUI, and Shoplifting, to Arson, Aggravated Assault and Murder. Nyonnohweah served on the treatment teams for the Family Violence Intervention Program Court and Mental Health Court, defending and advocating for alternative court participants. She understands the individuality of each client, and though everyone is not afforded the same opportunities, she believes that each person has a voice and deserves superb legal representation.

Ms. Seekie's practice in Macon focuses on criminal defense, family law and immigration. She and her husband Cecil reside in Macon, and together they enjoy serving their community, worshipping at church, and traveling with their dog.

Learn more about Nyonnohweah and her practice at

<https://www.seekielawfirm.com/>

## Welcome to Horner's Corner



SHUTTERSTOCK

Greetings!

On May 15, for the first time in my 20-year legal career, I went to work as something other than an attorney in private practice. This was the beginning of a new and exciting chapter in my legal career as the first Executive Director at Middle Georgia Justice! I am so excited to be here, and have been chomping at the bit to roll up my sleeves and get to work on helping narrow the justice gap in Middle Georgia.

I have to admit, when I told my wife, Ashley, I wanted to leave my promising career as an attorney at a prestigious law firm to work at a non-profit organization, her initial reaction was less than enthusiastic. Once I explained to her the first class leadership and incredible community resources that are behind Middle Georgia Justice, and how this job would allow me to not only help people in this community have access to legal help, but also to mentor young lawyers in our incubator program, she recognized that this job was a perfect fit for me. Ashley has always been a great “sanity check” for me on big life decisions, and once I received her enthusiastic blessing, I knew this was going to be the best decision I ever made.

I have often been asked why, after 20 successful years as a lawyer in private practice, I decided to change course. Here is where things get a little personal. My role model for a life of service has always been my mother, Jerry Horner. My mom devoted the majority of her life to helping people. She was a Sunday School teacher most of my early life, teaching children to love God. She helped immigrants learn English, and helped alcoholics recover from addiction. She helped abused women who left their husbands, and was a mentor for kids that didn't have a father. In short, my mom instilled in me the importance of helping others, particularly those less fortunate. Mom's lessons were echoed when I joined the Masons several years ago, an organization devoted to make men better, so that they can better serve and improve their community.

Unfortunately, my mom passed away in early 2018. As the weeks and months went by, the inner voice calling me to follow my mom's footsteps and devote myself full time to serving the community grew louder and louder. Judge Adams started Middle Georgia Justice not long after that, and put out the call for volunteer attorneys. I immediately answered that call, but found I didn't have enough time to volunteer and practice law full time. So when I saw that Middle Georgia Access to Justice was looking for an Executive Director, I knew the time had come to make the leap into full-time community service.

I am so honored that Judge Adams and the Board of Directors of Middle Georgia Justice had enough faith in me to make me their first ever Executive Director. I know there is no better cause to which I could devote my legal training, and I know that this organization will be helping people as a fixture in this community for years and years to come. This is only the beginning of great things for Middle Georgia!

**DONATIONS & GRANTS (01/01/2019 through 06/30/2019)**

**Up to \$249**

Debbie & Ron Aickelin  
Shelley Davidson  
Ashley Deadwyler-Heuman  
William D. Gifford  
Mary Beth Hand \*  
Honorable Jeffrey B. Hanson  
Patrick Longan \*  
W. Warren Plowden \*  
Jack L. Sammons \*  
Kay Shurden  
Simpson Mediation Services

**\$250-\$499**

Jarome E. Gautreaux  
Katherine M. Kalish  
Paul M. Knott \*  
Ashley Tyson Mackin, P.C.  
Julia Magda \*  
Rebekah Myers \*  
John Reeves \*

**\$500-\$999**

Brian P. Adams \*  
Tim & Daisy Floyd \*  
C. Brian Jarrard \*  
William Noland \*  
A. James Rockefeller  
Stuart E. Walker \*

**1000-\$4,999**

Bill & Cheryl Adams \*  
Adams, Jordan & Herrington, P.C.  
Chambless, Higdon, Richardson, Katz &  
Griggs, LLP  
Clark & Smith Law Firm, LLC  
Jones Cork, LLP  
Tracey L. Dellacona LLC  
Ed & Marcy Whitten  
Connie L. Williford \*

**\$5,000 +**

Griffith Family Foundation  
Katherine L. McArthur, LLC  
Powers Family - Community Foundation of  
Central Georgia  
Ed Sell - Peyton Anderson Foundation

**\* Monthly Donor**

**Updated Board of Directors**

**Officers**

Bill Adams, President  
Timothy W. Floyd, Vice President  
Stuart E. Walker, Secretary  
William Gifford, Treasurer

**Board Members**

Brian P. Adams	Paul M. Knott
Cathy Cox	Veronica McClendon
Tomieka Daniel	John D. Reeves
Ashley Deadwyler-Heuman	Albert Reichert
Daisy H. Floyd	Rachel Schell
C. Brian Jarrard	Connie L. Williford



Our newest Board Member

Connie L. Williford

# THE JUSTICE BRIGADE

These attorneys have signed up to accept referrals of cases to be handled on a pro bono or reduced fee basis. They are crucial to our mission, and we are most grateful for their willingness to serve our community in this way.

Bill Adams  
V. Jim Adams  
David Addleton  
Sam Alderman  
Robert Berlin  
Steven Bloodworth  
Timothy Joseph Boyd  
Ashlie Brodie  
Morris Carr  
Craig Childs  
Ronald Daniels  
Shelley Davidson  
Lauren Deal  
Michael Deal  
Robert Divis  
John Fleming  
Frank T. Gaddy  
Karen Gibson  
Emmett Goodman  
Travis Hall  
Jennifer Haskins  
Kevin B. Hicks  
Trineice Hill  
Rebekah Hogg

Mike Horner  
Eva Hutcherson  
Jordan Josey, Jr.  
Katherine Kalish  
Paula Kapiloff  
Lise Kaplan  
Michael Lemon  
Rob Matson  
Veronica McLendon  
Lori Obenauf  
John Reeves  
Amanda Richardson  
A. James Rockefeller  
Alex Sanders  
Matthew Sanders  
Nyonnohweah Seekie  
Honorable William J. Self  
Joel Sherlock  
Jenny Stansfield  
Graham Thorpe  
Anna Usry  
Connie Williford  
Martin Wilson



Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Support Middle Georgia Access to Justice Council, Inc., by starting your shopping at

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/82-3547410>

**Middle Georgia Access to Justice Council, Inc.**

241 Third Street, Suite 200

Macon, GA 31201

P.O. Box 1732, Macon, GA 31202

Phone (478)238-0224 \* Fax (478)207-5082

Find us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/mgajustice](http://www.facebook.com/mgajustice)

Visit our website at: [www.mgajustice.org](http://www.mgajustice.org)

If you do not want to receive our Newsletter in the future, please email us at: [info@mgajustice.org](mailto:info@mgajustice.org)