



GEORGIA ASYLUM AND  
IMMIGRATION NETWORK

## IMPACT REPORT

2020

# Safeguarding the Dignity of Those We Serve

During a year of tremendous uncertainty, GAIN remained a steady presence in our community. In 2020, we transitioned to a fully virtual model of legal service provision, created new opportunities for volunteers, and invested in the necessary, ongoing work of building a more inclusive workplace for our staff and a more client-informed lens for our storytelling.

We are, and will continue to be, one of Georgia's leading providers of pro bono immigration support, guiding volunteer attorneys through meaningful legal work that can help shape the trajectory of our clients' lives. At GAIN, we also believe our work should transcend basic legal services to account for the comprehensive needs of our clients and the everyday struggles that often prevent families from achieving safety and stability.

Our clients faced incredible obstacles with dignity and resilience — against the backdrop of painful incidents of violence and racial injustice as well as a pandemic that disproportionately impacted families who were already struggling. In response, we pivoted in ways that were essential to keep our clients and their needs at the center of our work, as we connected our clients with over \$200,000 in emergency relief to pay for rent, groceries, utilities, and other essentials. We also began taking steps towards a new strategic plan that will transform GAIN's work to allow for broader impact and a more comprehensive and empowering vision of client care.

Together—with the trust of our clients, the dedication of our staff and volunteers, the guidance of our board and advisory board, and the confidence of our partners, donors, and supporters—we will continue to protect and empower immigrant survivors in the coming year and beyond. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

With gratitude,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

**Alpa Amin**

Executive Director



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

**Radha S. Manthe**

GAIN Board of Directors  
Chairperson, 2020-2021



573

CLIENTS SERVED IN 2020

TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

MEXICO, VENEZUELA,  
HONDURAS, GUATEMALA,  
NIGERIA

415

LEGAL MATTERS IN 2020



TOP 5 LANGUAGES SPOKEN

¡Hola! नमस्ते  
مرحبا Olá Hi.

SPANISH  
ENGLISH  
ARABIC  
PORTUGUESE  
HINDI

\$213,079

CLIENT ASSISTANCE FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

GAIN provides  
free immigration  
legal services to  
victims of crime  
and persecution.

1,676

INDIVIDUALS TRAINED







“

With the help from GAIN, we are so blessed. Thank you for everything you guys do for all people in need. I am a fighter and survivor. I won't give up. No mountain is too high for me to climb. One day, I will give back the blessings you have given me.

- Survivor of domestic violence  
and GAIN client

”

# Since the onset of the pandemic, GAIN has connected our clients with over \$200,000 in emergency relief.

In spring 2020, mandated stay-at-home orders interrupted our traditional in-person model of client assistance and legal training. As a result, GAIN's staff pivoted to provide our programs online. Our full services are now available in the virtual space, a move which allowed us to expand access to our services in rural areas and address our clients' language, tech, and cultural barriers in order to offer relief.



GAIN staff members prepared holiday care packages for over 100 GAIN client families who were suffering from income loss. Packages included grocery store and holiday shopping gift cards, as well as warm blankets that were handmade by our friends at Junior League of Atlanta, Inc.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, GAIN clients have overwhelmingly suffered from income loss and housing insecurity, and they have largely been left out of the federal stimulus relief that is available to others. GAIN responded by retooling our Client Empowerment Fund to provide immediate financial relief for clients in crisis. Our social service navigators went to work identifying needs and providing a surge of direct relief for hundreds of our clients. By the end of 2020, GAIN had connected our clients with over \$200,000 in emergency relief.



## HOUSING SECURITY

Rent/mortgage for **58** families (many of them for three months or more)

*Thanks in large part to our partners at New Story's the Neighborhood initiative, which provided rent relief funding for over 40 GAIN families.*



## UTILITY PAYMENTS

Utility payments for over **30** families



## TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

**37** donated laptops to enable children's online learning



## FOOD SECURITY

**\$15,000** in grocery store gift cards



## LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Over **\$3,300** in legal assistance, including filing fees and related expenses

\* Data represents relief provided during the calendar year ending December 31, 2020.



*Asylum is particularly difficult to access in Georgia, and without an attorney, asylum-seekers are significantly less likely to win their case.*

# 123

TOTAL ACTIVE  
ASYLUM PROGRAM  
CASES

# 44

DIRECT  
REPRESENTATION

# 71

PLACED WITH  
VOLUNTEER  
ATTORNEYS

# 8

PENDING

(Awaiting placement as  
of 12/31/2020)

## GAIN Asylum Program

Like refugees, asylum-seekers are searching for protection from past persecution in their home country, or a well-founded fear of persecution, based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. Asylum is particularly difficult to access in Georgia, and without an attorney, asylum-seekers are significantly less likely to win their case. Through several tumultuous years of immigration law and policy changes which targeted asylum-seekers, GAIN has helped our clients and our volunteer attorneys navigate the immigration system.

### THE 5 PROTECTED GROUNDS FOR ASYLUM

- race
- religion
- nationality
- political opinion
- membership in a particular social group



Backlogs and processing times for asylum cases grew substantially throughout 2020, causing delays in adjudication. The national immigration court backlog — which had grown to over 1 million cases by the end of the year — also negatively affected asylum-seekers' ability to apply for employment authorizations, which make a critical difference in the lives of our clients.

*GAIN's Asylum program assists immigrants fleeing harm and persecution abroad.*

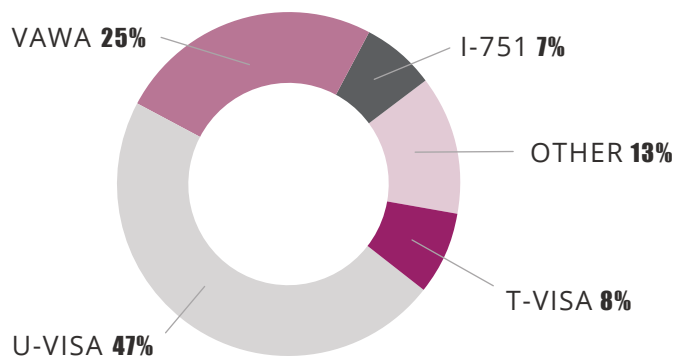
\* This data reflects any case that was open at any time during 2020, including cases that were already open and were closed during 2020.

*In 2020, the United Nations deemed global violence against women and girls during COVID-19 as a “Shadow Pandemic.”*

### GAIN Victims of Violence Program

GAIN's Victims of Violence program ensures that immigrant survivors and victims of human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes have access to quality legal representation for their immigration matters. Without immigration status, survivors are at risk of re-victimization, and GAIN's work is crucial to our clients' ability to remain safe and free from exploitation. By screening cases, placing them with trained volunteer attorneys, and providing advice and mentorship, we assist a number of Victims of Violence clients each year — providing critical access to otherwise unobtainable legal representation.

#### VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE CASES IN 2020



going unreported as stay-at-home orders made it difficult for victims to escape their abusers. In 2020, while the United Nations deemed global violence against women and girls during COVID-19 as a “Shadow Pandemic,” GAIN worked with over 137 survivors of intimate partner violence in our Victims of Violence program.

Like many organizations working with survivors, GAIN saw a sharp decline in reporting for domestic violence during the first months of the pandemic as our clients' fear of coming forward reached a peak. Yet, several national reports showed an alarming increase in domestic violence cases which were

# 114

TOTAL ACTIVE  
VICTIMS OF  
VIOLENCE CASES

# 56

DIRECT  
REPRESENTATION

# 45

PLACED WITH  
VOLUNTEER  
ATTORNEYS

# 10

PENDING

(Awaiting placement  
as of 12/31/2020)

\*This data reflects any case that was open at any time during 2020, including cases that were already open and were closed during 2020.

# PARTNERS

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Alianza Terapéutica Latina  
American Immigration Lawyers Association,  
Georgia-Alabama Chapter (AILA)  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Atlanta  
Atlanta Bar Association  
Atlanta Legal Aid Society  
Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation  
Bethany Christian Services  
Caminar Latino  
Catholic Charities Atlanta  
Center for Pan Asian Community Services (CPACS)  
Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)  
Chai Pani  
Cherokee Family Violence Center  
CHRIS 180  
Day League  
El Refugio  
Financial Planning Association of Georgia  
Friends of Refugees  
Georgia Center for Child Advocacy  
Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Inc. (GAPABA)  
Georgia Human Rights Clinic, Emory University  
School of Medicine  
Georgia Legal Services Program (GLSP)  
The GreenHouse Child Advocacy & Sexual Assault Center  
Helping Mamas  
House of Globalization  
Housing Plus, Inc.  
Innovation Law Lab  
Inspiritus  
The International Rescue Committee (IRC) Atlanta  
International Women's House  
Jewish Family & Career Services  
The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc.  
Karibu Community Legacy  
Kids In Need of Defense (KIND)  
Latin American Association (LAA)  
Latino Community Fund Georgia  
Latino Linq  
liveSAFE Resources, Inc.  
Los Vecinos de Buford Hwy  
Lost-n-Found Youth  
Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs — Welcoming Atlanta  
Mosaic Georgia  
New American Pathways  
New Sanctuary Movement of Atlanta  
New Story  
Noor Family Services Corporation  
Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV)  
Raksha Inc.  
Refugee Women's Network  
The Rho Zeta Omega Chapter  
of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.  
Ser Familia, Inc.  
Sexual Assault Victims Advocacy Center  
South Asian Bar Association (SABA-GA)  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Tahirih Justice Center, Inc.  
Tapestri, Inc.  
View Point Health, formerly known as CEPTA  
Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence  
Working Films  
youthSpark



## 2020 LABOR TRAFFICKING REPORT

Labor trafficking accounts for the largest form of human trafficking worldwide, and in 2016, it impacted nearly 24.9 million people around the world. GAIN partnered with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council's Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force for the groundbreaking 2020 Labor Trafficking Roundtable Report, which was released in the fall. The report includes recommendations and action steps to both combat labor trafficking and support survivors in Georgia, and it has already led to new initiatives in the state.



## PARTNERS

### 2020 GRANT FUNDERS

Anonymous  
AEC Trust  
Frances Hollis Brain Foundation Fund  
Getz Mitchell Family Foundation  
Henry and Constance Short Fund  
The Kinship With All Beings Fund  
The Zera Allen Fund  
The Pennera Charitable Fund  
Georgia Bar Foundation  
Greater Atlanta COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund  
National Association of Asian Americans Professionals (NAAAP) Atlanta  
New Story  
Ray Solem Foundation  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
UPS Foundation

### COALITIONS

Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV)  
Georgia Immigration Collaborative  
Georgia Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force  
Victim Legal Assistance Network (VLAN)  
Coalition to Combat Human Trafficking



### HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIPS

In 2020, GAIN made strides to strengthen our relationships with our local medical community. GAIN deepened its partnership with the Georgia Human Rights Clinic (GHRC) at Emory School of Medicine. GHRC provides free physical and psychological evaluations for GAIN asylum-seekers and victims of crime. These evaluations help identify mental health needs, draw correlations between diagnoses and past trauma, and identify gaps in memory. Most importantly, medical evaluations lend credibility to a client's voice and lived experience. Evaluations can be the first step in identifying the need for ongoing mental health services and providing clients with culturally appropriate/responsive referrals to these services.

GAIN also partnered with the Center for Victims of Torture to present about the issues immigrants face at the annual meeting of the Georgia Psychological Association, and worked with the Emory School of Public Health for a Rapid Community Health Needs Assessment. Last fall, the School of Public Health developed a screening tool to better equip our staff in detecting mental health needs for our clients.

Since 2005, GAIN and our volunteer attorneys have provided millions of dollars in free legal services.

At GAIN, our work has always been built on partnership and service. From our founding as a volunteer project to today, we depend on our partnerships to power our work. In 2020, over 200 volunteer attorneys held active cases with the immigrant survivors we serve. These dedicated attorneys become a part of their clients' lives, often going above and beyond in service of the clients they represent. We like to say that we are *inspired by our clients and powered by pro bono* because with our volunteer attorneys, we have been able to exponentially increase our impact across the state.



1,850

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DONATED PRO BONO HOURS IN 2020

\$462,500

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL EQUIVALENT OF DONATED PRO BONO SERVICES IN 2020

## HOW DOES GAIN PROVIDE IMMIGRATION RELIEF?

### FOR ASYLUM-SEEKERS

- Affirmative asylum
- Defensive Asylum
- Board of Immigration Appeals and 11th Circuit Appeals

### FOR SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- T-Visa

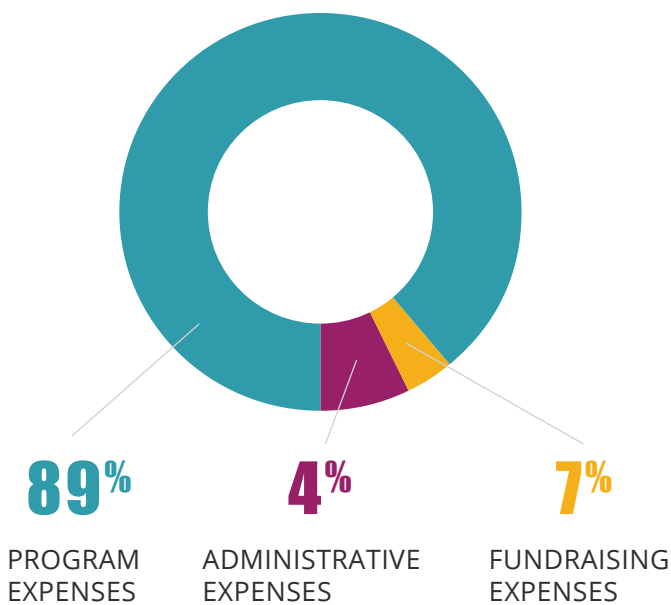
### FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

- U-visa
- VAWA self-petition
- Battered spouse waiver

### SUPPORTING SERVICES

- Applications for employment authorization
- Consular processing
- Interpretation and translation
- Legal research and writing
- Expert testimony
- Forensic evaluations
- Social service needs assessments and referrals
- Emergency financial assistance during COVID-19 pandemic

## FINANCIALS



Including the estimated equivalent of **\$462,500** in donated pro bono services, GAIN's 2020 expense and revenue are as follows:

**\$1,616,851**

\*TOTAL EXPENSE

**\$1,674,649**

\*TOTAL REVENUE

*\*Unaudited financial numbers*

At GAIN, we have always leveraged partnerships to create a big impact with limited resources. In 2020, our total cash expenses totaled \$1,154,351. We added direct financial relief to our work in order to meet a surge of need from our communities; 18% of our expenses went directly to our clients through our Client Empowerment Fund. This feat was made possible because of our partnerships with local and national nonprofit and funding organizations, whose generosity enabled us to send \$213,079 to our clients in the form of grocery gift cards, rent payments directly to their landlords, and other emergency relief. With a people-powered model like ours, GAIN keeps our operating expenses low to focus on the staff positions that make our work possible. 56% of GAIN's 2020 expenses funded personnel costs, which is down slightly from our average of 65-75% due to our increased expenses for client assistance.



Thanks to our donors and supporting organizations, our total cash revenue totaled \$1,214,149 in 2020. We enhanced our services for victims of crime through \$508,010 in federal funding. After the pandemic forced us to cancel our 2020 Go Formal for Freedom Gala, our generous donors and sponsors made it possible to retain almost all of our raised funds and save on expenses through our first-ever virtual Un-Gala. We were also proud to have the support of our corporate and law firm community, whose contributions totaled \$212,070 through event sponsorships and outright donations.



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Note: Board listings reflect the membership at the time of report publication