

January 2018



Two Weeks In... By Talley Wells GA Appleseed Executive Director



Dear friends,

I celebrated my two-week anniversary as the new Executive Director of Georgia Appleseed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with our [Young Professionals Council \(YPC\)](#). We joined a diverse group of adults and children at a newly opened western section of the Atlanta Beltline. We dug out trash, including tires, old Kroger shopping carts, and television sets that had been abandoned in the overgrown woods next to the Beltline. As we carried our loads through the thorns and bushes, I got to know the team of YPC professionals who had come to serve.

That day was like every day of my brief tenure. Each day, I am amazed by the extraordinary people who work with Georgia Appleseed and by the extraordinary work that we do.

I left the [Atlanta Legal Aid Society](#) on the evening of November 29th after 17 years advocating for low-income children and adults. For much of that time, I led the Disability Integration Project in its [Olmstead](#) work fighting for Georgians with significant disabilities to obtain the supports they needed to live in their own homes rather than in nursing facilities and institutions. I was able to be part of major policy and systemic reform in Georgia. We were transforming from a 19th century system of institutions for people with disabilities to a 21st century infrastructure that is enabling citizens to live at home, to work, and to be part of their communities.

My time at Atlanta Legal Aid taught me the need for law and policy reform that is done well. Many children and low-income individuals face deep injustices. The difficulty is often not in identifying the problems they face but it is in determining workable and sustainable solutions.

That is what attracted me to Georgia Appleseed. It has an [exceptional record](#) of confronting difficult issues, working with all of the relevant stakeholders, researching the data and the law to understand what changes are needed, reporting on what reforms should take place, and advocating to make the changes that are needed.

So, after a restful one-night vacation on the 29th, I started at Georgia Appleseed on November 30th. I had a month to shadow our founding Executive Director, Sharon Hill. She and our board did a wonderful job planning and carrying out the transition. She downloaded as much information into me and our team as is possible. And she has promised to answer our calls when questions arise.

So, what is next for Georgia Appleseed?

We will continue to work on our [current initiatives](#), grow them, and expand into new areas. Sharon Hill, Rob Rhodes, Teddy Reese, and hundreds of others planted seeds throughout Georgia. Orchards of justice grow in Atlanta, Columbus, Macon, Albany, Savannah, and throughout our state that were not there before. We will build on this work. Our team has fresh apple seeds and lots of ideas. We are planting and growing. I will write about this work each month. So stay tuned . . .

And, mark your calendars! We will be celebrating the impact and work of Sharon Hill on April 18th at our [Good Apple Event](#). We can't wait to see you there.

Sincerely,
Talley

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

[GOOD APPLE 2018 | 4.48.18](#)

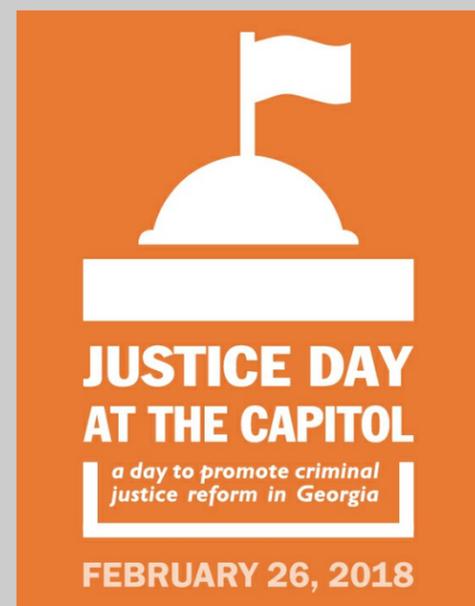
This year, we honor founding GA Appleseed Executive Director, [Sharon N. Hill](#). [Sponsorship opportunities are still available.](#)



[Join the Facebook event here.](#)

[Justice Day 2018 | 2.26.18](#)

Georgia Appleseed is proud to be a sponsor of Justice Day at the Capitol 2018. Justice Day is a day to promote criminal and juvenile justice reform in Georgia.



[Join us by registering online here](#)

[Spellbound For Justice | This Summer](#)

YPC's signature event returns this summer! Check your monthly AppleBytes for regular updates. If your firm hosts summer associates and would like to sponsor this event, contact Abi Gross at agross@gaappleseed.org.

SPELLBOUND
A JUSTICE

MLK Day of Service, a success!

For this year's YPC MLK Day of Service, our YPC-ers, friends, and family joined forces with Park Pride and the Atlanta Beltline to clean up and prepare Atlanta's Westside Enota park for an overhaul later this year. Thanks to everyone who braved the cold to [#GrowJustice!](#)

Inspired by what we do? Share the good work of Georgia Appleseed and inspire your family, friends, and colleges to join the fight for justice by using our hashtag #SeedsOfJustice on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



Follow us:



Georgia Appleseed seeks justice through law and policy reform to find workable solutions that improve the lives of Georgians throughout the state. Contribute to the mission by donating.

[Donate Now](#)



YPC Executive Committee members, Micah Moon & Cam Ellis show off their clean up skills.



A group shot of YPC members, GAA Staff, family, and friends.



Bundled up YPCers, braving the cold in the name of service!



Executive Director, Talley Wells and YPC Executive Committee Member, Cam Ellis.