

J. Rachel Scott
2016 Rising Star Winner

J. Rachel Scott is a staff attorney at the Senior Citizens Law Project of Atlanta Legal Aid Society, where she represents older clients in civil legal matters such as mortgage litigation and modifications, public benefits issues, probate, financial exploitation, and consumer matters.

Rachel was nominated for her work on behalf of Ernestine Harris, an Atlanta Legal Aid client who is elderly and legally blind. Because of a HUD policy which required foreclosure after the death of reverse mortgage borrowers, Mrs. Harris faced eviction from her home of forty years after the death of her husband. "Rachel's persistence in fighting for her individual client was unwavering, but she always kept her sights set on an effective relief for the broader class of surviving spouses facing the threat of foreclosure and eviction due to HUD's policies," wrote Atlanta Aid Executive Director Steve Gottlieb.

HUD, subjected to public pressure and ongoing litigation in this case and others, changed its policies in 2015 to eliminate some of problems facing surviving spouses of reverse mortgage borrowers. Rachel continued to pursue justice for Ernestine Harris, and succeeded in obtaining a trial court decision in her client's favor, allowing her to remain in her home.

J. Rachel Scott earned her JD *cum laude* and was 2008 Valedictorian at the John Marshall Law School in Atlanta. She graduated *summa cum laude with a B.A* from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA.