



United Way
of Northeast Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way NELA expands third year of The Heirship Project

MONROE, La. – Next month, United Way of Northeast Louisiana kicks off its third year of The Heirship Project, a project aimed at educating and assisting residents who need help obtaining a clear property title.

Heir property comes about when necessary legal work isn't done after a property owner dies. Heirs who have a verbal agreement to live on the property, but no legal title could face many obstacles, including selling the property, making repairs on the property, or qualifying for government aid to fix damages to the home.

"Last year, 100% of our participants indicated the workshop was helpful and that they learned something new about protecting their property," said Michelle Saucer, Director of Community Initiatives at United Way NELA. "We're excited to expand the reach of this project in 2023, including a new partnership with The Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation, and make it as accessible as possible to our community members."

In its third year of The Heirship Project, United Way NELA plans to expand the project's reach through a new partnership with the NELA Bar Foundation. The NELA Bar Foundation is a non-profit organization which, through its Pro Bono Project, seeks to provide free legal advice and assistance to pro bono clients with pressing civil legal matters who otherwise cannot afford an attorney.

The Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation intends to advertise The Heirship Project's in person events to attorneys in Northeast Louisiana, offering CLE credits to those in attendance. Participating attorneys will obtain valuable information and training and will be encouraged to provide pro bono assistance to clients with heirship problems through the bar foundation's monthly "Ask a Lawyer" Clinic.



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Participants in The Heirship Project can get the specific consultation and follow up assistance from NELA Bar Foundation members that is needed without having to spend money on an attorney following participation in a workshop.

The Heirship Project will consist of seven events with both in-person and virtual options. All events are free and open to the public.

Date	Participants	Where	Time
Thursday, October 5 th Lunch & Learn	Attorneys	United Way NELA's Financial Health Center 1001 Desiard St., Monroe	12:00 – 1:30pm
Thursday, October 5 th Zoom/In Person	Community	United Way NELA's Financial Health Center 1001 Desiard St., Monroe	6:00 – 7:30pm
Thursday, November 9 th Lunch & Learn	Attorneys	United Way NELA's Financial Health Center 1001 Desiard St., Monroe	12:00 – 1:30pm
Thursday, November 9 th Zoom/In Person	Community	Lincoln Parish Library 910 N. Trenton Street	6:00 – 7:30pm
Thursday, March 7 th Lunch & Learn	Attorneys	United Way NELA 1201 Hudson Lane, Monroe	12:00 – 1:30pm
Thursday, March 7 th In Person Only	Community	Union Parish (TBD)	6:00 – 7:30pm
Thursday, April 4 th Zoom/In Person	Community	United Way NELA 1201 Hudson Lane, Monroe	12:00 – 1:00pm

Interested individuals who need assistance obtaining a clear property title for heir property or who want to know more information about heir property may register online at unitedwaynela.org/heirship.

Registration details are also accessible by calling 211. Simply dial 211 from any landline or mobile phone (available 24/7), or text your zip code to 898-211 (available Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm).



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“Our goal is to assist those residents who really need help clearing these property titles, but it’s also to educate the public,” said Kim Lowery, Vice President of Community & Organizational Strategy at United Way NELA. “We want to equip other local organizations so they can provide direction to their own clients.”

Wesley Eby Johnson with E & P Consulting, LLC will provide education at all workshops. She says that families will have the opportunity to learn about various options, such as transferring property ownership to one or more individuals, selling the property to a third party, or continuing to have multiple heirs as owners of the property.

“Participants will be taught how to talk about these options with one another and how to be better stewards of the legacy properties left by their parents and grandparents,” said Johnson. “The end result of the Heirship Project should be that more property transfers will take place from the estates of the deceased to the heirs, leaving less properties becoming abandoned or blighted due to maintenance and repair needs not being met.”

For updates and more information about The Heirship Project, follow United Way NELA on social media, dial 211, or text your zip code to 898-211.

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United Way of Northeast Louisiana works with volunteers, donors, and other organizations locally to create lasting community change in the areas of Education, Income, and Health – the building blocks for a good quality of life. For more information about United Way of Northeast Louisiana, visit unitedwaynela.org, dial 211 on any landline or mobile phone, a free call 24/7, or text your zip code to 898-211 (available M-F, 8am-5pm).