December 2013

The Georgia Main Street Program is now on Facebook! Like us and see what's happening in downtowns from Blairsville to Brunswick.

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NEWS AND EVENTS

Happy Holidays from All of Us!

We wish you a joyous and peaceful holiday season. All of us at the Department of Community Affairs are honored to partner with you in growing Georgia's communities, and we look forward to continuing those partnerships, as well as to forging new ones, in 2014.

Commissioner Corbin: Keynote Speaker for Keep Georgia Beautiful Awards Luncheon

More than 200 Georgians attended the 35th Annual Keep Georgia Beautiful Awards Luncheon on December 11 at the Emory Conference Center Hotel. The annual program honors individuals and organizations working to improve Georgia's environment.

“Today’s program celebrates and recognizes 35 years of collaboration by individuals, schools, corporations, non-profit organizations and government agencies to keep Georgia’s environment beautiful,” said Kevin Perry, President of the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation.

The annual awards ceremony recognizes outstanding efforts in the areas of Litter Prevention, Waste Reduction & Recycling and Community Improvement. Individual awards are presented to a public works

Grassroots Coffee is one of Thomasville’s favorites places for great coffee and interesting conversation. Since 2009, this small business has been adding to the flavor of downtown. With the help of the Department’s Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund, owners Megan Young, Spencer Young and Ed Millere

Commissioner Corbin thanks and congratulates the 77 KGB affiliates for their hard work.
converted an historic building into their roasting facility and coffee shop. Beyond providing locally-roasted coffee to Thomasville, Grassroots offers music, conversation, free wi-fi, and a great place to enjoy the downtown.

Megan says, "I can't say enough good things about the DDRLF program. First of all, the staff was super friendly and helpful through the entire process. The paperwork can be quite daunting, but any question I had or roadblock I stumbled upon was handled immediately - an answer always came so quickly! We would not have been able to do this project without DCA's low interest loan. What a wonderful way for the state to show they are committed and invested in local communities. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

We at DCA thank YOU, Megan, Spencer and Ed, for investing in your hometown and helping Thomasville be one of Georgia's great places.

For more information about the DDRLF, contact Kim Carter at kim.carter@dca.ga.gov

Georgia's State Small Business Credit Initiative received its first funding from the US Treasury in December 2011. In two years, the program has:

- Been ranked ninth in the nation in loaning to small businesses
- Committed and approved $20+ million in loans to small businesses statewide
- Engaged 29 banks across Georgia to participate in its programs
- Provided loans in 39 communities
- Created 843 new jobs
- Retained 462 jobs
- Assisted 51 minority-owned businesses

For more information on the SSBCI, contact Holly Hunt at holly.hunt@dca.ga.gov

The program also honors Georgia's Keep America Beautiful Affiliates for their comprehensive environmental impact on the local community. Since its inception in 1978, Georgia's affiliate network has grown to be the nation's largest, with 77 local affiliates serving 76 percent of the state's population.

"We're proud of our partnership with the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation, and of the impact its affiliates are making in communities across the state," said Gretchen Corbin, Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, a major partner of Keep Georgia Beautiful. "They are instrumental in helping create places that attract investment and that enhance the quality of life for Georgia's citizens and existing businesses."

The Awards were made possible by the support of conference and awards partner Coca-Cola, steward level partner Georgia Department of Community Affairs and several corporate sponsors. The latter include patron level sponsors Georgia Beverage Association and Georgia Power; premiere level sponsor Georgia Pacific; and leader sponsors Chick-fil-A, Dart Container Corporation, Georgia Beer Wholesalers Association, Georgia Electric Membership Corporation and SP Recycling. Sustainer level sponsors were Caraustar Industries, MillerCoors, Mohawk, Publix Supermarket Charities, SAIC, State of Georgia Employees - Charitable Giving Program, and Waste Management. Supporting sponsors were APCO Graphics, Georgia Association of Convenience Stores and MEAG Power.

For more information about the KGB Foundation, contact Sarah Visser at sarah.visser@kgbf.org.

Five Cities Join the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing

Albany, Douglasville, Perry, Porterdale and Rincon are the newest communities to join the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH). GICH is a collaboration of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the Housing and Demographics Research Center and the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia, and the Georgia Municipal Association. The program is funded by the Georgia Power Company and additional in-kind services are provided by the University of Georgia's Archway Partnership and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The five communities will attend their first retreat in February 2014.

"Our longstanding partnership to support the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing is a great example of our philosophy here at the Department of Community Affairs," says Commissioner Gretchen Corbin. "With the University of Georgia, GMA, and Georgia Power, we've been able to provide a wealth of resources to our GICH communities that none of us have on our own. What started as a pilot project eight years ago has grown bigger each year, and we're so proud to be able to welcome these new cities into the GICH community."
Community housing teams apply annually to participate in the three-year program. Through a series of retreats, teams receive facilitation, instruction, and technical assistance as they design and implement a housing plan to improve housing and economic conditions in the community. Each community has access to technical assistance and receives continuous feedback throughout the three-year program.

For more information about the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing, visit the GICH website or contact Karen Tinsley at 706.542.4949 or email klt@uga.edu.

UPCOMING DEADLINES, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES

Save the Date!
February 24, 2014 is Leadership Day at the Capitol

Hosted by the Georgia Rural Development Council and sponsored by the Georgia Academy for Economic Development, the Fanning Institute for Leadership Development and Georgia 4-H, Leadership Day will once again be held at the Georgia Freight Depot. Full details and registration information will be available in January.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

November Financial Awards

Region Five
Development Authority of Walton County
- $350,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) funds
- Leverages $80 million in private investment
- Creates 250 jobs
- Retains 292 jobs
- Assists with the expansion of automotive Hitachi Automotive Systems Americas, Inc. manufacturing facility.

Region Eight
City of Byromville
- $35,623 in Immediate Threat and Danger (ITD) funds
- Will assist 443 people
- The funds will allow the city to repair its water filtration tank.

Georgia citizens need quick and easy access to affordable housing options and we can help! Whether you are searching by price, number of bedrooms, or even proximity to work, school or transportation, finding a home that meets your needs is easier with GeorgiaHousingSearch.org - the key to linking tenants with landlords. We offer FREE property posting, bilingual assistance, and a toll-free number (877-428-8844) available to those without internet access. Landlords can register in a five-minute process or work with DCA staff to register large-scale listings. For more information, please contact Ron Pounds at 404-327-6864 or ron.pounds@dca.ga.gov.

The Georgia Dream website provides complete information.
For previous issues of The Partner Connection, click on our logo or HERE.