



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Juli Yoder, AICP

Juli is an Associate Planner for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Planning and Research. She received her undergraduate degree from Columbus State University in May 2014, majoring in History and minoring in Geography (GIS). That summer, she began working for the Columbus Consolidated Government in the Engineering Department providing GIS assistance. Juli was accepted into the University of Florida's Master of Urban and Regional Planning online program in fall 2014. That fall, she also began working as a Planner for the Columbus Consolidated Government's Planning Department. During the summer of 2016 Juli accepted an offer to work as a Planner for Henry County, Georgia. She completed her master's degree Fall 2017 while working full time and specialized in sustainability with a focus on historic preservation.

Jon West, AICP

Jon West works for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs where he is the Principal Planner overseeing Georgia's community and regional planning programs. Mr. West is the State's primary liaison when coordinating with local governments on issues of community planning, growth management, and development regulation. Additionally, Jon manages Georgia's Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) program, the State's mechanism for assessing/mitigating adverse consequences of developments whose impacts are anticipated to extend beyond the boundaries of individual jurisdictions. He coordinates the Department's processes for review of comprehensive plans, capital improvement plans, and service delivery plans from every local government in the state. He has designed training and made presentations on a variety of topics to groups including the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Carl Vinson Institute for Government, the Georgia Academy for Economic Development, the Georgia Planning Association, the International Council of Shopping Centers, the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions, and local governments throughout Georgia.

Prior to working with the Department, Mr. West co-founded a small consultancy which specialized in providing community planning and development services to small, rural communities throughout the South. More recently, he has consulted on a number of post-Katrina planning and redevelopment projects on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Mr. West is Vice-Chair of the DeKalb County Planning Commission and volunteers with the Disaster Services Division of the American Red Cross.



Allison Slocum

Allison Slocum has a Bachelor of Arts in History from North Georgia College and a Masters of Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia. She has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 2005 and a Historic Preservation Planner with the River Valley Regional Commission since 2000. She works with local governments to insure conformance of projects to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. She assists in writing and administering grant projects, administers historic preservation ordinances and zoning ordinances for communities, and writes and helps communities implement comprehensive plans.

Brittney Hickom

Brittney Hickom, Broadband Program Coordinator, assists with developing and implementing the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (GBDI). Her work focuses on: coordinating with various partners, both public and private, to accomplish the goals of this program; supporting planning and coordination of GBDI and its activities; ensuring implementation of policies and practices; and assisting with the development and implementation processes for designating local communities and sites as Broadband Ready.

Adam Kennedy

After serving 35 years in the field of Juvenile Justice with both the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice and Chatham County Juvenile Court, Adam currently serves as the Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority of Claxton & Evans County. He is actively involved in his community and his church. He currently is serving his second term on the Board for the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice after being reappointed by Governor Kemp.

Adam has over 40 years' experience in working with local and state pageants. He served as a part of the Miss Georgia Pageant Organization until this past year. He served as a local pageant Executive Director and spent 27 years with the organization as a Field Director, assisting preliminary pageants in the area. He was proud to be a part of assisting Vicki Sherrod with the organization of the Miss East Georgia State College pageant as a preliminary to the Miss Georgia Pageant.

He is honored to return to Swainsboro and EGSC to participate as a judge of the April 2021 pageant.

Noah Covington

Noah Covington has been an employee of Pembroke Telephone Company for 31 years serving in construction, Installation & Repair, Central Office and Engineering before becoming the outside plant manager. Currently Noah serves as Director of Operations for Pembroke Advanced Communication. Noah also serves the community as a Bryan County Commissioner and is Vice



Chairman of the Development Authority of Bryan County. Was named the 2020 volunteer of the year by the Georgia Economic Developers Association.

Will Johnson

Will Johnson is the Planning Division Manager for the Columbus Consolidated Government. He has been in this role for 19 years. He has served the Columbus Consolidated Government's Planning Division a total of 21 years.

Will has a BA, in History (1994) and a BA in Political Science (1997) from Auburn University. In 1999, he received a Master of Public Administration from Jacksonville State University, and in 2006 he received a Master of Education from the University of Georgia. Currently, Will is working on his Doctorate of Public Administration from Valdosta State University.

Kate Hogan

Kate Hogan has a BA in Political Science from Georgia College and State University and a MA of Public Administration from Georgia State University. Kate began working as the Director of Economic Development for the City of Centerville in 2016. In this capacity she facilitates business retention and recruitment efforts on the commercial level with the Houston County Galleria and other spaces around the City. Kate spearheaded the Center Park at Centerville project as the cornerstone for the Town Center Master Plan. In addition to Economic Development, Kate facilitates the long range planning and community development projects for the City of Centerville. This includes programs like Georgia Initiative for Community Housing and PlanFirst.

Paul Forgey, AICP

Paul Forgey became Director of Planning, Development Services and Code Enforcement in the fall of 2012. His prior experience includes 17 years as Planning Director for the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission in Camilla and a year as Planning Manager with Glynn County. Forgey received a BFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design where he studied architecture and historic preservation. He spent 5 years as a preservation craftsman with the Jekyll Island Museum where he became skilled in many aspects of construction and restoration. From there he relocated to southwest Georgia where he went on to receive a Master's of Public Administration from Valdosta State University. Forgey became a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) in 1998 and a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) in 2015. He previously served on the boards of the Georgia Planning Association and the Georgia Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions. He is currently on the board of the Georgia Planning Memorial Foundation. Paul lives in an 1858 antebellum cottage which he completely restored in a local historic district he helped create.



Ebony Simpson, AICP

Ebony Simpson is the Planning Outreach and Training Coordinator for the Office of Planning at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. She began her second iteration with DCA seven years ago. She oversees the PlanFirst program, the Community Planning Institute and any training and outreach opportunities for DCA's Office of Planning.

Ebony is a trained facilitator and has an extensive background in community and economic development. She began her career as a Historic Preservation Planner for the Middle Flint Regional Development Center. She was a Program Manager for the Savannah Development & Renewal Authority, and a Micro-Enterprise Trainer/Coordinator for Savannah State University. Ebony holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Historic Preservation from the Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD). She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Environmental Design. In 2018 she asked to participate and serve as a presenter in SCAD's 2018 Savannah Women of Vision Honoree Program. Ebony is also serves as the Georgia Planning Association's Region 9 Director. She is very active in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Jack and Jill of America, and the Georgia Army National Guard Family Readiness Program.