



SMART CITY



BOARD OF DIRECTORS | **PEACHTREE CORNERS, GEORGIA**
BRIEFING BOOK | **FEBRUARY 20, 2020**

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD BOOK

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"Breakfast at Dawn" by Sam Traina, exhibiting artist, Art of Georgia IV display at the Georgia State Capitol.

DIVISION PROFILE

Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) empowers the arts industry in Georgia and artists around the state to cultivate healthy, vibrant communities that are rich in civic participation, cultural experiences and economic prosperity. As a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Georgia Council for the Arts provides grant funding, programs and services statewide that support this vital industry, preserve our cultural heritage and create increased access to high quality arts experiences.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- 1. Vibrant Communities Grants:** In October, GCA awarded 72 arts organizations throughout Georgia with a FY20 Vibrant Communities Grant. A total of \$292,448 was awarded to support single art projects such as an art exhibit, a theatre production, a series of workshops for children, or an artist residency in counties in which no other FY20 GCA grant had been awarded.
- 2. Cultural Facilities Grants:** In November, GCA awarded seven organizations with a Cultural Facilities Grant. A total of \$280,000 was awarded to arts organizations across the state to support the construction, renovation or acquisition of a building, or the addition of equipment to support arts programs.
- 3. Art of Georgia IV:** This fall, 27 pieces of visual art by 15 artists from Northeast Georgia were selected by Governor and Mrs. Kemp to be on exhibit at the State Capitol. First Lady Marty Kemp selected an additional 12 works by nine Northeast Georgia artists to hang in the Governor's Mansion. This is the first time that the Art of Georgia program has been expanded to include an exhibit at the Governor's Mansion. Both exhibits will hang until the end of April 2020.
- 4. Governor's Awards for the Arts & Humanities:** In October, Governor Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp celebrated the recipients of the eighth annual Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities. Ten members of Georgia's arts and humanities communities were awarded with this honor following a

By the Numbers

GCA YTD Grant Numbers FY20:

Total Grant Types:

5 grant programs

Total Grant Number:

218 awards

Total Grant Dollars Awarded:

\$1.7 Million

Contact Information

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GEORGIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

competitive selection process from nominations submitted from around the state. The recipients represent a diverse group of individuals and organizations that have contributed to and supported the growth of Georgia's thriving creative industries through community involvement, pioneering programs and long-term financial commitment. The recipients are: Lucinda W. Bunnan, Common Good Atlanta, Hermina Glass-Hill, Christopher Johnson, Madison-Morgan Conservancy, Jessye Norman School of the Arts, Kathy Prescott and Grady Thrasher, Rick McKnight, Mercer University Press Macon, and Angelica Hairston.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Partner Grant, Project Grant, and Arts Education Program Grant Guidelines for FY21 grant funding are now on the GCA website, where potential applicants can also access grant specific workshops.



The COI Team visited the University of Georgia to learn more about their plans for the Innovation District, an interdisciplinary initiative that seeks to create an environment for greater innovation and economic development.

DIVISION PROFILE

Exclusive to Georgia, the Centers of Innovation provide the technical expertise, collaborative research, and partnership opportunities to help Georgia’s strategic industries connect, compete and grow.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. COI continued efforts to support the growth of local innovation ecosystems across the state:

- A team consisting of the Centers of Innovation, Rural Georgia Initiatives, and the Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) visited the City of Woodbury to discuss the city’s efforts to provide wireless broadband across the entire city. COI also connected Woodbury with the Broadband Georgia initiative with the city named a “Broadband Ready Community,” the first city to earn this designation.
- COI Manufacturing coordinated with Georgia Tech to support the Atlanta Latino Community Fund to develop and launch a digital roadmap tool for helping navigate the entrepreneurship landscape in Georgia.
- COI Aerospace is working with leaders in Fayette County on implementing Aviation Career Pathways education in local schools to support the growing local aerospace industry. COI is working with the Georgia Department of Education, Commemorative Air Force, Middle Georgia State Aviation College, and the Technical College System of Georgia on this effort.
- The COI team visited the University of Georgia to learn more about their plans for the Innovation District, an interdisciplinary initiative that seeks to create an environment for greater innovation and economic development. The COI team toured Studio 225, the University’s Center for Entrepreneurship and met with the innovation gateway team whose primary responsibility is technology transfer and research commercialization. COI Associate Director David Nuckolls was also a panelist for their Innovation District seminar series focused on the Georgia Startup Ecosystem.

By the Numbers

282

COI engagements across all 12 regions of the state so far during FY20

48%

Engagements outside of metro Atlanta

39

Supported 39 collaborations or projects with GDEcD and other EcD organizations so far during FY20

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2. COI is working with the University System of Georgia and the Georgia Research Alliance on a pilot project to begin in early 2020 to build a portal to help Georgia companies more easily connect with university research and intellectual property created by the \$2.3B in annual university research.
3. Esports continues to be a focus for COI IT including participation in the Georgia Tech Institute for People and Technology (IPaT) Think Tank on Esports and the Dreamhack Esports Conference, which featured the launch of the Atlanta Esports Alliance in collaboration with the Atlanta Sports Council. The COI IT sponsored study by Georgia Tech on Esports will be completed in early 2020.
4. In cooperation with the GDEcD Film Office, COI is working with Donatello Arm, a company located at Eagle Rock Studios in Norcross, to assist their activities in robotic photo/video systems. COI Manufacturing connected the company with the Georgia Tech Institute for Robotics and Intelligent Machines to continue the development of robotic photography and videography applications while COI Logistics and Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) are engaged to assist in other need areas.
5. COI Aerospace assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for their “Unmanned Vehicular Systems (UVS) and Advanced Technology (AT) Working Group (UVAT WG)” meeting in December.
6. COI Manufacturing has connected several local companies with manufacturing resources. Connections this year so far include: Black Mermaid Bath and Body in Snellville; assisting Premier Automation, a company expanding operations in Alpharetta; Spenergy in Cumming; Farmer Automatic in Statesboro; Huxley Medical in Atlanta; Divergent Minds, a small Atlanta-based consulting firm; and Criterion Technology, Inc. in Thomaston.
7. COI Manufacturing is working with several partners, including the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Business Center, to launch a pilot project slated for early 2020 to demonstrate the benefits of implementing Augmented Reality (AR) technology in small-medium manufacturing companies.
8. COI Logistics is actively supporting the Savannah Logistics Technology Corridor Leadership Council, which is sponsored by the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) and Georgia Southern University, to bring together stakeholders to develop a business/action plan to best utilize the \$400K allocated by the State of Georgia and \$50K contributed by SEDA to implement the Logistics Technology Corridor.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Georgia Innovates Task Force** — COI is supporting Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan’s panel of more than a dozen state leaders entrusted with helping accelerate the goal of making Georgia the “Technology Capital of the East Coast.” The task force is to be divided into four subcommittees exploring public innovation; education and training; entrepreneurship and start-ups; and rural initiatives.
- **COI Manufacturing is sponsoring and working closely with** organizers of the upcoming Institute of **Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Virtual Reality (VR) Conference** in Atlanta in March 2020, to raise awareness around advanced technologies that can benefit Georgia manufacturers.
- **Georgia Logistics Summit** — March 24, 2020, in Macon.
- **Georgia Innovation Summit** — May 14, 2020, in Atlanta.
- **COI**, along with Georgia Tech Smart Communities Challenge Team, will support the **2020 Atlanta Smart City Expo** scheduled for June 2020.



The DC Universe streaming series “Doom Patrol” is filming in locations throughout Georgia.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office develops the state’s film, television, and commercial production industries by marketing the state to production companies; location scouting; and coordinating the filming needs of companies with other state agencies, local governments, and citizens. The office actively works to develop the industry’s infrastructure and workforce, certifies projects under the *Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act*, and oversees the Camera Ready community program to engage municipalities throughout Georgia.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

In November 2019, Governor Brian P. Kemp created and named the members of a new Film, Music and Digital Entertainment Advisory Commission and on Jan. 14, 2020, State Representative Terry Rogers, R-Clarkeville-10, was named chairman of the Commission. The first meeting was held at the Capitol on Jan. 23.

Georgia is currently hosting 10 feature films and 34 television projects. Notable projects include:

- Warner Bros. is currently in production on the DC Comics pilot “DMZ.”
- Netflix has started production on the Dwayne Johnson/Ryan Reynolds/Gal Godot feature “Red Notice.”
- Disney-owned 20th Century Fox (currently being rebranded as 20th Century Studios) is in preparations on the feature film “Vacation Friends.”
- Disney/Marvel Studios LLC are in various stages of production with several new projects for their new streaming service Disney+. Projects include “Wanda Vision” and “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier.”
- “Suicide Squad,” based at Pinewood Studios in Fayetteville, has started production.

By the Numbers

Georgia is currently hosting:

10 feature films

34 television projects

Contact Information

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The film office sponsors and participates in numerous local film festivals, and typically has passes available if you would like to attend a screening. Here is a list of upcoming festivals. For further information or details – please contact Lee Thomas at 404-962-4048.

[*Atlanta Jewish Film Festival*](#), Atlanta (Feb. 10–27, 2020) – The Atlanta Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) is a multi-week cinematic exploration of Jewish life, culture and history. Seeking to use the power of film to both entertain and educate, AJFF challenges conventional perspectives on complex and challenging issues facing both the Jewish and global communities.

[*SCAD aTVfest*](#), Atlanta (Feb. 27–29, 2020) – SCAD’s aTVfest is an international festival that brings together professionals from all spheres of TV and media content production to discuss industry trends, showcase the best work in the field, and participate in master classes with students.

[*South Georgia Film Festival*](#), Valdosta (March 6–8, 2020) – The South Georgia Film Festival showcases the art and industry of filmmaking across the region. It includes feature films and shorts, with a broad educational component featuring panels and Q&A’s of visiting filmmakers. These include PBS directors, professionals from Hollywood and Atlanta, and independent filmmakers. Projects from college and high school filmmakers are also included, as they compete for potential scholarships to Valdosta State University.

[*Cinema Italy Atlanta*](#), Atlanta (March 26–29, 2020) - The Plaza Theater in Atlanta will once again serve as backdrop to the Italian Film Festival, which promotes Italian culture through cinema.



Commissioner Pat Wilson and the Georgia Department of Economic Development team joined Governor Brian P. Kemp at the Georgia Cyber Center in Augusta to announce that Georgia's business climate was named No. 1 in the nation for a record-setting seventh consecutive year on November 6.

By the Numbers

In the first half of the fiscal year, the team assisted with the location or expansion of:

205 companies, resulting in **11,569** new jobs and over **\$4B** investment.

83% of projects that closed during that time were locating or expanding outside of the 10-county Metro Atlanta region. These projects resulted in **58%** of the jobs created and **81%** of the total investment.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Global Commerce division seeks to increase jobs and investment through locating and expanding businesses, as well as growing small businesses. The Global Commerce division includes statewide and existing industry project teams, small business resources and international representatives in strategic regions around the world.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. On Nov. 6, Governor Kemp announced that Georgia's business climate has been named No. 1 in the nation for the seventh year in a row by Site Selection Magazine, an internationally circulated business publication covering corporate real estate and economic development. Georgia is the only state that has received the distinction seven consecutive times in the history of Site Selection's rankings.
2. Winners of the fourth annual GDEcD Automotive Awards were named in November. The winners were Inalfa Roof Systems (Cherokee County) – Supplier of the Year; Novelis, Inc. (Cobb County) – Innovation Award; Decostar Industries, Inc. (Carroll County) – Community Impact Award; and Rick Walker, president of Georgia Automotive Manufacturers Association (GAMA) – Leader of the Year.
3. In December, the team sponsored the Economix Conference in Charleston, S.C. The sponsorship provided team members with one-on-one interactions with some of the top site selection consultants from around the country.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Georgia USA will exhibit at the RSA Conference in San Francisco, along with representatives from local economic development agencies, educational institutions, and others. RSA is a cybersecurity conference that features over 500 sessions, over 700 speakers and over 700 exhibitors.

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Jeff Stepakoff from the Georgia Film Academy speaks to the Georgia Consular Corps about meeting the workforce needs of Georgia's film and entertainment industry.

DIVISION PROFILE

Georgia's International Relations division strengthens Georgia's reputation as a welcoming location for international business and tourism by strategically cultivating and expanding Georgia's international relationships. The office oversees communications and activities with foreign governments and is the state's liaison to members of the Consular Corps. The division also manages the Governor's trade and investment missions, welcomes international delegations and dignitaries, provides community outreach and education opportunities, and coordinates international efforts among state departments and agencies.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. In November, the Consular Corps was hosted for a lunch meeting at the Georgia Film Academy in Fayetteville. The lunch was part of a regular series of events designed to introduce members of the local diplomatic corps to a variety of Georgia's economic development strategies and players, and to learn about various industries and initiatives in Georgia. Guests were addressed by Jeff Stepakoff, executive director of the Georgia Film Academy, as well as Frank Patterson, president of Pinewood Atlanta Studios, and toured classrooms and studio space to learn how Georgia is meeting the workforce needs of our film and digital entertainment industries.
2. H. E. Francisco Santos, the Colombian Ambassador to the U.S., came to Atlanta in early November, meeting with Governor Kemp and paying visits to the Metro Atlanta Chamber and the Atlanta Council on International Relations to strengthen the connections between Georgia and Colombia. Georgia is the first state to locate a trade representative in Bogotá, and the Ambassador discussed with the Governor his priorities in high-tech entrepreneurship and agtech.
3. At the invitation of Korea's SK innovation, Commissioner Pat Wilson traveled to Hungary in December, along with a small group of representatives from the Technical College System of Georgia and Jackson County. The trip was coordinated to develop a better understanding of the technical capacity and workforce needs of the new SK battery plant to be located in Jackson County by visiting a similar facility in Budapest and meeting with the plant leadership on site.

By the Numbers

26

Consuls General in the Consular Corps

46

Honorary Consuls in the Consular Corps

18

Diplomatic visits and business meetings with dignitaries and officials from 21 countries

3

Countries visited by Commissioner Wilson and GDEcD leadership, which included 16 business meetings and marketing events across 7 cities

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4. Georgia welcomed representatives from Confindustria, the Italian National Association of Manufacturers, for an introductory visit in December. The new chapter of the Italian-American Chamber of Commerce in Atlanta was on hand to host the visitors, which included heads of a dozen different manufacturing industries in Italy, ranging from furniture to fashion to food. Their visits to Atlanta and Rome, Georgia, sparked further interest, as the Italians will return in February with a group interested in the floor covering and high-tech textile industries.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- On **February 18**, the IR Division will work with the **World Trade Center-Savannah** to host two International Protocol and Cross-Cultural Training sessions for local officials and partners.
- The 2020 **International VIP Tour** will bring members of the Consular Corps on a three-day series of community visits in **South Georgia** from **March 11-13**. The group of 30 diplomats will travel to Thomasville, Albany, and stops in between, to learn firsthand about the communities' industry, tourism, history, and people.
- **International Day at the Capitol** will be held on **March 31** as part of the annual visit of GDEcD's International trade and investment representatives.
- The annual Southeastern US-Canadian Provinces (**SEUS-Canada**) alliance meeting will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on **July 19-21**.
- The annual Southeastern US-Japan (**SEUS-Japan**) alliance meeting will be held in Tokyo, Japan, on **Oct. 8-10**.



Winners of the 2019 GLOBE Awards were recognized by Governor Brian P. Kemp at the Capitol on December 6.

DIVISION PROFILE

GDEcD's nationally recognized International Trade Division works to bolster Georgia exports and brand the state as a competitive source of quality products and services. The division includes International Representatives located in 12 strategic global markets and assists Georgia companies to expand their sales worldwide. The Trade division provides Georgia businesses with the Global Insight and Global Connections they need to successfully diversify their international customer base.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. MEDICA

GDEcD co-exhibited with eight Georgia companies at the Medica trade fair in Dusseldorf, Germany, Nov. 18-21, 2019. The event is the world's largest show for medical devices and technologies. On-site support and assistance was provided to Georgia companies by GDEcD's trade representative in Germany. As a result of show participation, Georgia exhibitors received over 300 trade leads and already reported four sales valued at over \$100,000.

2. GLOBE Awards

GDEcD joined Governor Brian P. Kemp at the Capitol on December 6 for the announcement of the 2019 GLOBE Awards' winners. Thirty-six businesses from 16 Georgia counties were honored for collectively exporting to 90 new countries in the past year. Nearly 75% of the winners were small and medium size businesses, with employment ranging from two to 500. Pain Care Labs from DeKalb County, The Seydel Companies from Jackson County, and Crider Foods from Emanuel County were recognized as small, mid-sized and large Exporter of the Year, respectively. Additionally, three winners were first time exporters. The GLOBE Award program began in 2014 as a way to recognize local businesses contributing to Georgia's economic growth through global trade. Since its inception, the GLOBE Awards have recognized more than 150 Georgia businesses from 43 counties across the state that have entered new international markets.

3. SEUS-Japan

GDEcD hosted the 42nd SEUS-Japan conference Oct. 20-23, 2019, an annual event celebrating the longstanding diplomatic and economic ties between Japan and the

By the Numbers

384

Trade leads provided to Georgia companies

504

Georgia businesses received customized export assistance

142

Key clients worked with International Trade Managers

\$11.5M

Exports supported by the trade team

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Southeast United States. The event welcomed more than 430 delegates from Japan and the Southeast to Savannah. The theme of this year's conference, "Bridging Cultures. Celebrating Success.," reflects the successful bi-lateral partnership the SEUS-Japan Alliance has cultivated over the last four decades. Mr. Virgil Miller, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Aflac, U.S.; president, Aflac Group; serves as the current SEUS chair. The conference featured keynote remarks from distinguished speakers including John Murphy, chief financial officer for The Coca-Cola Company and the Honorable Sonny Perdue, U.S. secretary of agriculture. Additionally, prominent officials from both Japan and the United States provided remarks, including Governor Kemp, His Excellency Shinsuke J. Sugiyama, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Japan to the U.S., and Mr. Kazuyuki Takeuchi, the new consul general of Japan in Atlanta.

Georgia will co-host the 43rd Annual Joint Meeting, which will be held in Tokyo, Oct. 8-10, 2020.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **International Reps Visit – March 30-April 3, 2020**

GDEcD's international representatives from 12 global markets will travel to Georgia this March to participate in client meetings, visit communities, and raise awareness of the importance of Georgia's global connections. This annual event provides the opportunity for Georgia's global team to come together to network and share best practices with one another and the state. The state's international representatives assist Georgia companies with market intelligence, customized export assistance, and identify potential partners/customers in their respective markets.

- **SIDO/OCO Trade Mission to London, UK – March 17-20, 2020**

Mary Waters, deputy commissioner for trade, will join the State International Development Organization (SIDO) trade mission to London in March. The objective of the mission is to present delegates with an overview of the U.K. market in a post-Brexit economy, discuss implications and opportunities for greater bilateral trade and investment partnerships, and explore the future trading relationship between the U.K. and U.S. with respect to a Free Trade Agreement.

- **EXPORT GEORGIA, USA - New online business matchmaking tool**

The International Trade Division has kicked off a new, free international marketing tool – Export Georgia, USA Directory (www.georgia.org/export). This new resource provides an online platform for Georgia companies interested in promoting their products/services globally to international buyers. International buyers are able to search for Georgia suppliers of products and services, and the Trade Division will facilitate business introductions with Georgia manufacturers and service providers. The Trade Division is actively recruiting Georgia exporters to be showcased in the new directory.



Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner Pat Wilson announces that Georgia's business climate has earned the No. 1 ranking for a record-breaking seventh year in a row. The Marketing and Communications division continues to promote and capitalize on this distinction.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Marketing & Communications division manages the agency's reputation and promotes Georgia's business, tourism, arts and entertainment assets throughout the state, U.S. and world. Through the creative integration of print, digital, social media, outdoor and broadcast channels, the division supports the department's eight operating divisions. This includes new advertising campaigns, the creation of sales and marketing materials, digital advertising, all internal and external communications, media outreach, more than a dozen social media platforms across multiple divisions and the growth of the department's targeted websites.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. GDEcD hosted the 42nd Annual SEUS-Japan conference in Savannah from Oct. 20 – 23, 2019. A delegation of more than 160 Georgians representing local communities, economic development organizations, government and Japanese industry connected with more than 415 delegates from across the Southeast U.S. and Japan. Governor Brian Kemp attended to address the joint delegation and the Honorable Sonny Perdue, U.S. secretary of agriculture, delivered the closing keynote address. Marketing & Communications supplied dozens of collateral pieces, public relations and digital outreach, and event support over the course of a planning year.
2. Search engine marketing (SEM) and optimization (SEO) paid off in a big way for Tourism during Q2. What is usually our lowest visitor and page view quarter turned out to be a record for the quarter. Exploregeorgia.org saw a 33% increase in page views and an impressive number of new website visitors, up 28% from the same time last year.
3. Six companies were selected to serve as success story testimonials for the Rural Georgia Initiatives video that is underway. They are: Sweet Grass Dairy in Thomasville, Canoe in Blue Ridge, National Beef in Albany, Richland Rum in Richland, Nestle Purina in Hartwell, and Optima Chemical in Douglas.

By the Numbers

Georgia.org

- Page Views up **10.25%**
- Average time on site up **17.5%**
- Visits via a smartphone increased **30%**
- Traffic from social channels increased significantly:
 - Facebook **+49%**
 - LinkedIn **+51%**
 - Twitter **+25%**
- Visits to the Start a Small Business resource page increased **50%**
- Film's help-wanted-hotline page visits increased **63%**

ExploreGeorgia.org

- New visitors increased **28%**, while total users increased **22%**
- Page views increased **33%**
- Greatest increases in international users, both Canada and Germany increased **18%**
- Domestically, web visitors from New York increased **176%**, followed by Illinois up **34%**, North Carolina **33%** and Alabama **20%**
- Web traffic via smartphones increased **28%**
- Things to Do landing page saw an increase of **103%**
- Referral visits from Facebook up **53%**, and from bi-monthly newsletters up **43%**

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4. In support of the seventh ranking of Georgia as the Number One Place to do Business in the U.S. event, which was held in Augusta, Georgia, the Marketing & Communications team developed a digital backdrop, invitations, new pull up banners, designed a multi-page advertising spread in Site Selection magazine, and issued a press announcement. More than 100 people attended the unveiling at the Georgia Cyber Center.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- January 2020: Launch of new Explore Georgia Tourism Industry Partner Portal.
- January 2020: Release of the FY19 GDEcD Year in Review.
- Feb. 12, 2020: Georgia Made event at the State Capitol.
- February 2020: Launch of new regional landing pages on Georgia.org featuring information and resources about each of the state's 12 regions.
- February 2020: Release of a new Rural Georgia Initiatives video that puts a focus on six Georgia companies across the state and how they've been successful.



The Rural Georgia Initiatives team on an industry visit at Chaparral Boats in Nashville, Georgia. Also pictured: Region 11 Project Manager Michelle Shaw and Jaclyn Dixon Ford with GDEC's Board of Directors.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Rural Georgia Initiatives (RGI) division's mission is to help rural Georgia communities become more competitive for economic development projects and identify new strategies for attracting jobs and investment. This division works diligently to advance these strategies, thereby improving the quality of life for those residing in Georgia's rural communities.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Deputy Commissioner Amy Carter participated in the Rural Economic Developers Association Annual Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, in November.
2. Deputy Commissioner Amy Carter co-chaired the National Workforce Task Force subcommittee on The Future of Work in Puerto Rico in December.
3. Division Director Chris Chammoun, in collaboration with COI and the University of Georgia, started a long-term project with Rayonier Advanced Materials in accessing the commercial viability of one of their waste streams.
4. Deputy Commissioner Amy Carter, Project Manager Taylor Walden, and GC Division Director Brittany Young met with the Tennessee Rural Economic Development team, including the statewide USDA rural development division in Nashville, Tennessee.
5. Deputy Commissioner Amy Carter met with the Florida Rural Economic Development team, including the director and the statewide Enterprise Florida agency head.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- RGI will be releasing its Rural Works video highlighting six Georgia companies located in rural Georgia.
- RGI will participate in the Georgia Chamber's Rural Prosperity Council meetings regarding the rural workforce pipeline.
- The RGI team will be working to complete meetings with the final rural counties that have not been visited.

By the Numbers

RGI has assisted in **142** total collaborations where support has been provided to rural communities and/or economic developers, statewide project managers, or regional project managers.

RGI has met with **3** rural economic development state teams to share best practices.

During this quarter, RGI has participated in **3** county/community Tourism Product Development teams (TPD) in Emanuel and Macon counties, as well as the city of Greensboro.

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Explore Georgia worked with international social media influencer Andrea David on showcasing Georgia's film tourism. Her stop in Juliette, Georgia, included a highlight from "Fried Green Tomatoes."

DIVISION PROFILE

Explore Georgia, a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, is the state's official destination marketing organization. Through its home office in Atlanta, 11 visitor information centers, and a network of representatives across the globe, Explore Georgia inspires travel to and within the state. The division works to advance Georgia's \$66.3 billion tourism industry that supports 478,000 jobs. As home to the biggest cities in the region, the most diverse population, and a geographical range from the mountains to the beach, Georgia has the South's most unexpected sights and stories. Learn more at ExploreGeorgia.org.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- From Oct. 7-12, Explore Georgia's Global Market Development Manager Amanda Peacock and Senior Communications Specialist Emily Murray conducted a tourism sales and media mission to Vienna, Austria; Zurich, Switzerland; and Hamburg, Germany.
- Explore Georgia conducted four international media familiarization tours with journalists from the UK and Germany.
 - On Oct. 2-8, UK travel journalist Claire Dodd from iNews visited Atlanta, Savannah and Jekyll Island.
 - German-based international social media influencer Andrea David (@filmtourismus) visited Georgia Oct. 3-6 to cover Georgia's many film locations. During her visit, she shared eight posts with multiple photos, as well as an Instagram story of each location. Her posts received a combined 241,062 likes.
 - Denver-based German journalist Heike Schmidt visited Georgia Oct. 10-15, for a commission with German Associated Press (GAP). Her visit took her to Atlanta, Senoia, Covington and Juliette to experience Georgia's film tourism sites.
 - UK freelance journalist Rupert Parker visited Georgia Dec. 1-8, for a commissioned story on Georgia's music heritage. During his visit, Rupert stopped in Atlanta, Athens, Savannah and Macon.

By the Numbers

November Hotel Review

- November 2019:
 - Occupancy 62%
 - Average Daily Rate \$102.72
 - Revenue Available Per Room \$63.72
- November YTD:
 - Occupancy 66.3%
 - Average Daily Rate \$108.36
 - Revenue Available Per Room \$71.82
- Total Room Revenue YTD was up 5.4%

ExploreGeorgia.org Q2 FY20 (Over Q2 FY19)

- Page views: +11.25%
- Number of unique users: +7%
- Average session duration: +10.5%
- Top increases in international traffic:
 - France +48%
 - Sweden +14%

Mobile Traffic +21%

Traffic Sources

- Organic Search +10.5%
- Paid Search +365%
- Referral from our social media +20%

Pages Visited

- Homepage traffic +38%
- Georgia-weather +130% - over 9,000 page views of the special crisis communications/resource page travel-alerts due to Hurricane Dorian.

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3. Senior Communications Specialist Emily Murray attend the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) annual conference in El Paso, Texas, on Oct. 20-24. During the conference, Emily had the opportunity to meet with more than 100 travel writers from across the U.S. to share Georgia's travel stories and conducted pre-scheduled appointments with 20 journalists.
4. Travel South International was held Dec. 2-5, in St. Louis. Director of Brand Strategy Meggan Hood participated in board-level meetings and met with 12 international journalists during the conference's first media marketing place. Global Market Development Senior Manager Lacey Cameron participated in the marketplace where she conducted 39 pre-scheduled appointments with tour operators from Europe, China and Brazil.
5. Explore Georgia awarded the Tourism Product Development Grant to seven new tourism projects. The total amount awarded was \$64,000.
6. Explore Georgia announced the recipients of the new Regional Visitor Information Center (RVIC) Grant Program. Eight entities from across the state received more than \$14,000 in financial assistance for visitor marketing.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **AAA Travel Show** in Pelham, Alabama, on Feb. 1.
- **International Inbound Travel Association Summit** in St. Pete/Clearwater, Florida, on Feb. 3-6.
- **Connect International** in Kissimmee, Florida, on Feb. 19-21.
- **Explore Georgia** will be conducting a **media blitz in New York**, Feb. 25-27. This two-day blitz will allow the team to meet freelance and travel media editors to form new relationships and begin pitching story ideas for the summer and fall travel season.
- **Travel South Domestic Showcase** will be held March 8-11, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During the event, the Explore Georgia team will hold meetings with travel writers and tour operators.
- The Global Market Development team will be going with Travel South to Copenhagen, Denmark, for their **Nordic Sales days** on March 1-2.
- The Global Market Development team will attend **ITB**, the world's leading travel and trade show, March 4-8 in Berlin.