



# House Rural Development Council

## **RURAL GEORGIA INITIATIVES**

Amy A. Carter, Deputy Commissioner  
Georgia Department of Economic Development

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division

## Meet our Team



**Amy Carter**, Deputy Commissioner, start date  
March 16, 2018

**Taylor Walden**, Project Manager, start date  
May 16, 2018

**Chris Chammoun**, Division Director, start  
date July 1, 2018

All Centers of Innovation fall within the division  
(Aerospace, Energy Technology, Information  
Technology, Logistics, Manufacturing)

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division

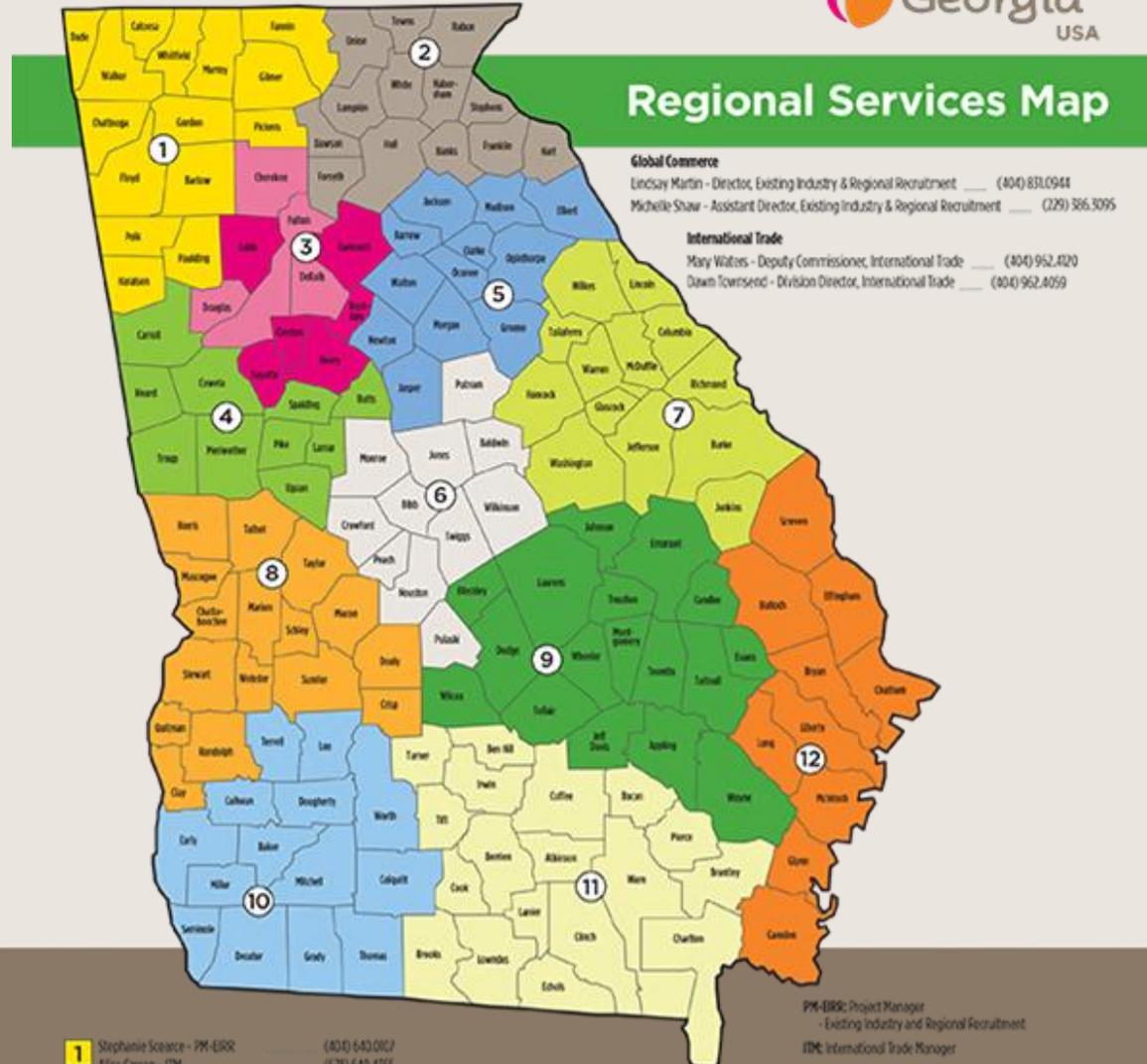
## Our Mission

- Help rural Georgia communities become more competitive for economic development projects and identify new strategies for attracting jobs and investment
- Promote collaboration and regionalism in rural areas
- Create relationships between our rural communities and the state and federal agencies that can assist in its development
- Work diligently with other rural-driven organizations to advance these strategies

**GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division –**

**How are we working  
toward our mission?**

# GDEcD Regional Map





# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division – How are we working toward our mission?

## RuralWorks

A Rural Georgia Economic Development Roundtable

Connecting Georgia's Communities to the  
Resources that Enable Economic Growth

- First Roundtable Events – Region 1 (Northwest Georgia)
  - Two Meetings – May 17, 2018, Ringgold and Rome
  - Hosted at Georgia Northwestern Technical College
- Brought together thought leaders from local communities to learn about state and federal agency opportunities/grants/loans
- Macro approach – Regional Meetings
- 14 State Agencies/Programs + 2 Federal Agencies represented

Center for Rural Prosperity  
and Innovation



# RuralWorks

A Rural Georgia Economic Development Roundtable

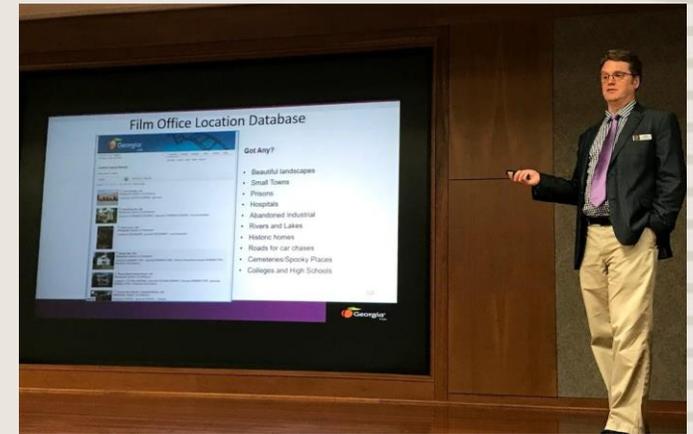
Connecting Georgia's Communities to the  
Resources that Enable Economic Growth



Public Service & Outreach  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



# GEORGIA NORTHWESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE



# RuralWorks

A Rural Georgia Economic Development Roundtable



# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division – How are we working toward our mission?

- Community Meetings
  - Economic developers
  - Chamber executives
  - Locally elected officials
  - Small and large business owners
  - Farmers
  - Bankers
  - Healthcare professionals/administrators
  - Superintendents/teachers/educators
  - Devoted Citizens



Economic Developer/  
Chamber of Commerce  
President  
Jan Hackett, Blue Ridge-  
Fannin County



Economic  
Developer Rick  
McCaskill,  
Bainbridge-  
Decatur County

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Division – How are we working toward our mission?

- Community Meetings—What are we hearing?
  - Strengths and Challenges
  - Offer resources—connect the dots
  - Bring our backgrounds to the table to offer suggestions/advice
    - Brain drain is real—ways to keep local students
    - K12/higher education systems
    - Quality of life opportunities/discussions
    - Local leadership **MUST WORK TOGETHER**
  - Some communities are content with their current situation



Strengths	Challenges
GRAD-Ready Sites (Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development); good infrastructure for development	Need funding/grants for sites/infrastructure/website/
Thriving downtowns	Limited tax base
Agribusiness	Internet access/cell phone coverage
School system and graduation rates	School system and graduation rates; apathy for education
Strong Family Connections partnership	Lack of affordable housing
Quality of life	Quality of life
Hospital/healthcare options	Hospital/healthcare options
Airport/transportation options/highway/railroad access	Interstate access/transportation
Dirt roads	Dirt roads
Local government leadership	Local government leadership
Loyal citizens who love and support their community	Recruitment of executive/high-level management
	WORKFORCE—ability and numbers—skill level is minimal; shortages of certain workers; salary range; need more college-educated workers

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Division – How are we working toward our mission?

- Industry Visits/Tours

Briggs & Stratton Tour  
and largest satsuma  
farm in Georgia visit,  
Statesboro



Hon Manufacturing  
plant, Cedartown

Pretoria Fields (Albany)—GA's only farmhouse  
brewery and one of three in the Southeastern US



# GDEcD Rural Georgia Division – How are we working toward our mission?

- Industry Visits/Tours

Sawmill  
Tour,  
Forsyth



Honda Lock  
Industry Tour,  
Bremen



Hydro Dynamics Inc Industry Tour, Rome



National Beef, Moultrie

Mount Vernon Mills Industry Tour, Summerville



# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives - Working together for the same goal



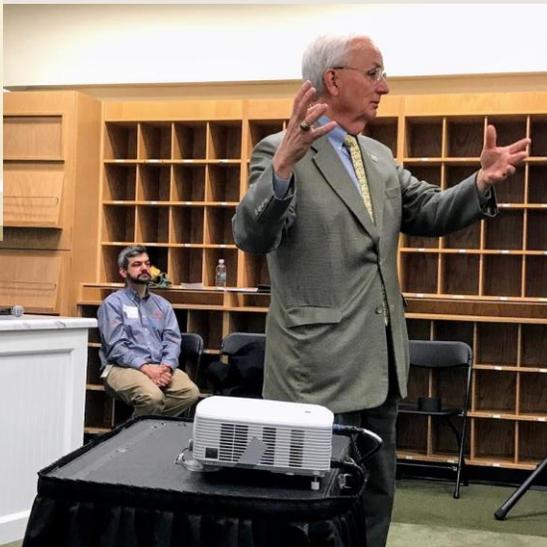
USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue  
and USDA Rural Development  
State Director Joyce White



A visit with rural Congressman  
Austin Scott



Meeting key stakeholders  
at the Locate South Georgia  
dinner in Moultrie (21 counties  
in a regional economic  
development collaborative)



Attended the Georgia  
Craft Food Makers  
Symposium with Georgia  
Department of  
Agriculture

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives - Rural Economic Development Events

Taurus International Announcement, Bainbridge



Celebrating Rural Georgia's Small Business Rock Stars, SouthLife Supply Co, Thomasville



Premium Peanut Expansion, Douglas



Valmeira Glass Expansion Ribbon Cutting, Dublin



Sumter County Fiber Connetivity Announcement



# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives – Seeing Rural Georgia



A visit to the Inland Port in progress



Tour of the Savannah Port and Portfresh Logistics in Bloomingdale— discussing the partnership between the two



Connecting with Rural Georgia economic developers and elected officials (Thomaston mayor, Forsyth Co, Peach Co IA Directors



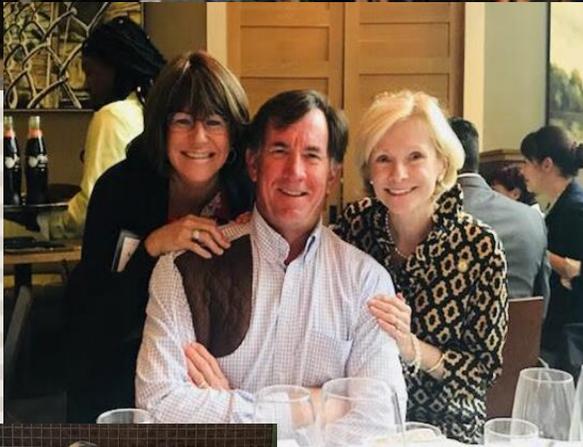
A visit to Southern Grace Farms, Enigma

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives – Connecting Rural Georgia on an international level



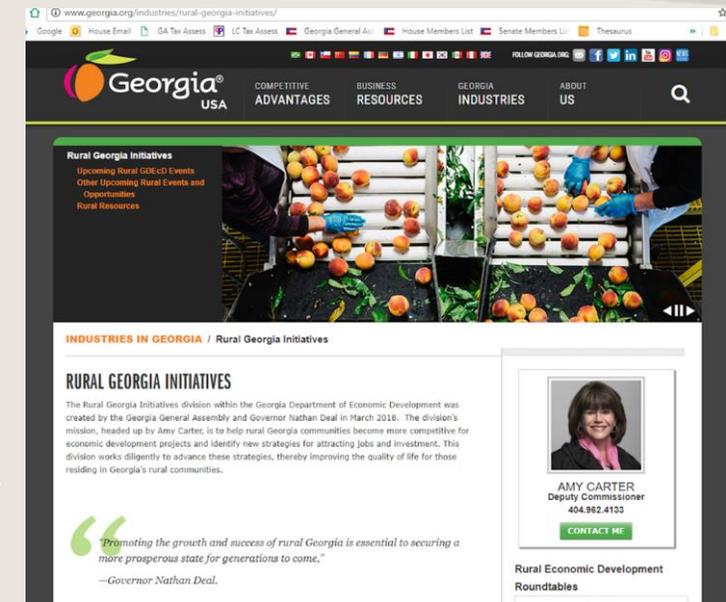
Comparing rural issues with female mayors from Moldova, Europe

# GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives – Connecting with Rural Friends



# Rural Georgia Initiatives Goals

- Define rural (“underdeveloped area”)
- Build upon our Rural Georgia Initiatives website landing page and promote it as a “go-to site”
- Set up and maintain social media marketing
- Continue to build upon the micro and macro approach to learning and building up rural communities
- Introduce our K-12 and higher education students to career opportunities within Rural Georgia and their rural communities
- Promote mentorship programs within Rural Georgia to encourage high expectations and build pride for success within communities
- Promote Quality of Life initiatives and growth of a younger workforce in Rural Georgia



# The GDEcD Rural Georgia Initiatives Team



Amy, Chris  
and Taylor—  
your Rural  
Development  
Team



Georgia Department of Economic Development State Board Meeting  
Forsyth, May 2018, Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Questions?