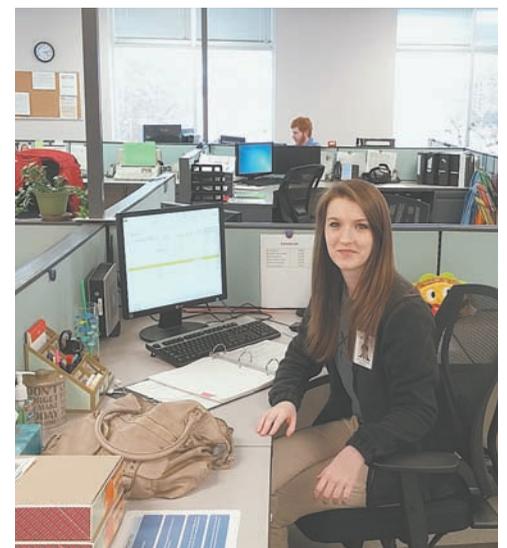




High school students have been part of a program at Kubota Manufacturing of America Co. that exposes them to manufacturing jobs in the community.



► CLOSER LOOK

The task force has helped more than double the number of manufacturers willing to hire high school students through the work-based learning program. There were three, now there are seven.

It has also more than doubled the number of manufacturers involved with workforce development and high school students in various capacities from 10 to 22.

PHOTOS/SPECIAL

Seeking work(ers)

CHAMBER SPEARHEADS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR HALL COUNTY MANUFACTURERS

BY TONYA LAYMAN
Contributing Writer

It's an issue plaguing manufacturers across the nation: Who is going to make the goods that consumers use every day as the current workforce reaches retirement age and fewer young people join the workforce?

Hall County leaders are tackling this issue locally to ensure its 300-plus manufacturing facilities can recruit and retain highly qualified workers.

The **Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce** has spearheaded a Workforce Development Task Force to bring together

local business leaders, educators and manufacturers to address the problem and come up with solutions.

"This is not just a local issue. This is a statewide and national issue, but I think it has to be addressed on the local level because every community is so different in the makeup of the students and the employers," said Shelley Davis, vice president of existing industry at the chamber.

The effort involves business and industry, high schools and **Lanier Technical College** working to address legal issues, corporate liability and educational standards.

Because chamber officials are



Shelley Davis

constantly hearing from the business community that workforce development is a huge concern, the chamber created this initiative at the end of last year. It surveyed a number of Hall County's manufacturing companies about top concerns. The results show there is a lack of applicants for positions in their facilities, those applying don't have the needed skills, and the baby

boomers who hold these jobs are retiring.

"We have an aging workforce. Those with the skills and education are rapidly retiring," Davis said, adding it is necessary to engage young people and make them aware these types of positions are available in their backyard.

The task force is working with the local schools to piggyback off the already in place work-based learning programs that allow high school juniors and seniors to work while in school.

"There are 800 students participating in that program in Hall County, yet only

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11B

MARKET REPORT

Retail following lots of rooftops in Hall

BY GARY A. WITTE
Contributing Writer

When it comes to attracting retail, it never hurts to have geography, infrastructure and a growing population on your list of positives.

The **Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce** 2015 Economic Development Report cites numerous plaudits for the county's growth and financial health during the past several years. The list of recent advancements is even longer, encompassing a new hospital, housing developments, grocery stores, restaurants, shopping centers and other new businesses.

Tim Knight, president of **Knight Commercial Real Estate**, said Gainesville and Hall County are very good markets for retail right now. He cited **Cresswind at Lake Lanier**, an age-restricted community halfway to constructing the more than 900 houses it could have at full build out, as an example of how the area is flourishing.

"They're selling houses as fast as they can build them there," Knight said. "Retail follows rooftops and the more rooftops, the better."

The **U.S. Census Bureau** identified the Gainesville-Hall County metropolitan statistical area as one of the fastest growing areas in the United States in 2014.

Brent Hoffman, a commercial agent for **Berkshire Hathaway Georgia Properties Commercial Division**, said data shows Hall County had 850,000 square feet of retail under construction in 2013-2014. During the same period, he said the



Brent Hoffman

area had about \$103 million in retail property sold.

"[Businesses] see the growth residentially and they want to come here to enjoy those sales," he said, pointing to the quality of life, the schools and that residents can buy larger homes than they could afford in Atlanta.

Hoffman said Hall also draws many of its customers from nearby communities.

"If you live in the surrounding counties ... Hall County represents your quickest and most accessible retail market," he said. "It's easier to get here than go down towards Atlanta."

Knight said the geographic benefits the county possesses includes neighboring mountains which make it difficult for those areas to attract large developments. The needed sections of flat, usable ground are rare. This means the populations of these regions often come south to Hall to shop.

"You don't have any competition when you go north for a long way," he said. "[Hall] was a good market even during the recession."

Likewise, as expansion moves outward from the metro Atlanta area, it tends to stop at the edge of those same mountains. There are other advantages the county has. Lake Lanier draws an estimated 8 million visitors each year and

nearby state parks also attract their share of people, he said.

"Growth continues to go north in this part of the world," Knight said. "Gainesville and Hall continue to benefit from that wave."

This growth isn't limited to stores and housing. The new **Northeast Georgia Medical Center** constructed in Braselton, a city on the Hall County border, has proved to be its own kind of attraction for development.



Tony Funari

The 100-bed facility, which originates from the **Northeast Georgia Health System** in Gainesville, boasts a 119-acre campus.

While the Braselton hospital just held its grand opening in April, it has already sparked adjacent growth. Funari said neighboring facilities will include a 90,000-square-foot medical building, as well as 12,000- and 24,000-square-foot buildings for doctors' offices.

Yet another 22-acre medical campus has announced it will build across the road.

"All kinds of specialties are moving in," he said. "It's an over billion-dollar economic engine for the community."

► CLOSER LOOK

- The 2013 Milken Institute Report rated the Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Statistical Area among the "Best Small Metro Areas in the U.S." for the fourth consecutive year based on job and salary growth.
- Gainesville-Hall County's population grew by 1.3 percent per year from 2012-2014. The 2015 estimated population of Gainesville-Hall County is more than 192,600 people.
- In 2014, the U.S. Census Bureau identified the Gainesville-Hall County MSA as one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States.
- In 2014, Gainesville processed 265 single-family home permits, the highest annual total in the city's history.
- The retail corridor along Highway 53 alone has more than 1.5 million square feet of retail space.
- Area Development included Gainesville-Hall County among its 2014 cities for "Year-After-Year Growth."
- Forbes Magazine has rated Gainesville as a "Best Small Places for Business and Careers" for the last three years.

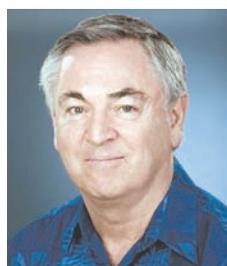
SOURCE: GREATER HALL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2015 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

King's Hawaiian expects more growth

BY LISA R. SCHOOLCRAFT
lschoolcraft@bizjournals.com

Last fall, the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce announced its Industry of the Year awards, including King's Hawaiian, known for its tasty dinner rolls, which won in the large employer category.

Other winners were Aerocom Systems Inc., which does design development



John Linehan

and manufacturing in pneumatic tube systems worldwide and has been in Hall County for 14 years, in the small employer category, and Syfan Logistics Inc., a full-scale, asset-based logistics management company and 3PL logistics management company, in the medium employer category. Based in Gainesville, Syfan was founded in 2011 and now employs 176 people.

In 2013-2014, new and expanded businesses created 1,050 new jobs and

generated \$170 million in capital investment for Gainesville-Hall County, according to the chamber, including expansions by some of the award winners.

King's Hawaiian located a new bakery to Hall County in 2011 and now employs 350 people. The company has constructed two plants, three manufacturing lines and invested over \$100 million in Hall County. In 2015, the company expects to have over 600 employed.

Here, John Linehan, executive vice president of King's Hawaiian, explains what lies ahead for the company in Hall County.



Q: King's Hawaiian has enjoyed success in Hall County. Why do you think that is? Two primary reasons. First, we have great associates

in our Oakwood Ohana. We are really very, very happy with the folks who have joined the team at our plants there. They are terrific. Second, Georgia, and particularly Hall County, is very pro business. Agencies and officials partner

with business to collaboratively make Georgia companies competitive on a global scale and to make running a business there fun.

Q: When King's Hawaiian arrived in 2011, it planned to have 350 employees, but now it has more than 600. How do you plan for that kind of growth?

Well, obviously we did not plan so well because we did not anticipate that level of growth. So maybe the question should be 'how do you react to that kind of growth?' One of the biggest – and maybe the biggest – challenge is being able to find more top-notch associates than you expected, and we've found the workforce in the area to be just terrific and plentiful. Second, the local officials have been 100 percent supportive of our need to move quickly toward growth while never compromising their duty to protect the community and environment.

Q: You announced plans to double the size of your current facility and to build a neighboring facility. When will that

be complete and will that satisfy the company's needs? It is complete. We doubled the production capacity of the 2011 building in April of 2014 and we built another, almost identical, facility that came on line in January of this year. That second facility is like the one we built in 2011. It has one line, but is ready for a second line when it's necessary.

Q: What will that expansion mean in terms of new jobs? That's really a 'to be determined,' but we do believe we will add many more jobs over the next three years or so.

Q: What do you see for King's Hawaiian in Hall County over the next five years? What I am sure of is that Georgia and Hall County will be in our future plans for the long term. In addition to plant jobs, while we will remain headquartered in California, we expect to be expanding in Hall County to the point where the majority of our employees will soon be in Hall County, including some white-collar jobs.



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MARKET REPORT

Demand triggers construction

BY MARTIN SINDERMAN
Contributing Writer

Driven primarily by rapid growth in demand from strong manufacturing and food/agribusiness sectors, quality industrial real estate facilities in Gainesville and Hall County have become a scarce commodity recently, triggering a level of new development that hasn't been seen for quite some time.

The step-up in demand for industrial space reflects the bustling economy of Gainesville-Hall as a whole, according to Tim Evans, vice president of economic development for the **Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce**.

The ravages of the Great Recession and its aftermath have given way to a new level of economic good times here.

"People are saying we're getting back to where we were in 2005, but the fact is we've gone well beyond that," Evans said.

Manufacturing/processing comprises a major part of the Gainesville-Hall County economy. According to the

► CLOSER LOOK

Speculative industrial space in Gainesville-Hall County:

- Existing - A 77,000-square-foot (expandable to 140,000 square feet) shell building in Gainesville Business Park, located near I-985 at Calvary Church and New Harvest roads. Developed by Pattillo Industrial Real Estate.
- Nearing completion - A 50,000-square-foot speculative office/warehouse building in Tanners Creek Business Park, a 150-acre master-planned park located along I-985 between exits 12 and 16. To date, 15,000 square feet has been preleased. Developed by Radial Property Group.
- Underway - A 300,000-square-foot cross-dock building just now under way in Golden Park Commerce Center, located at I-985 and Lanier Islands Parkway. Developed by Majestic Realty Co.
- Planned - A 150,000-square-foot (expandable to 300,000 square feet) building in Gateway Industrial Centre, located at Ga. Highway 365 and Cagle Rd. Developed by The Foxfield Co.; marketed by The Simpson Co.

SOURCES: GREATER HALL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; THE DEVELOPERS

Golden Park Commerce Center is expected to add a cross-dock building.



RENDERING/SPECIAL

chamber's "2015 Economic Development Report," there are 288 such firms located in the county as a whole, employing 20,156 workers, just over 20 percent of the total Hall County workforce.

The report also said the food/agribusiness sector has more impact on Hall County than any other county in Georgia, directly employing 17,642 and generating some \$5 billion in economic activity.

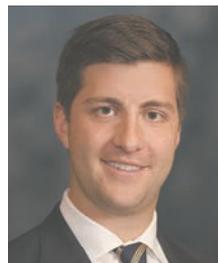
Gainesville-Hall County is proving to be an attractive location for new and expanding companies in these and other sectors. As the economic hub of northeast Georgia, businesses here can draw from a 10-county northeast Georgia workforce that totals in excess of 756,000. And in addition to manufacturing and food/agribusiness, it includes strong banking and financial services sectors, the latter anchored by **Northeast Georgia Medical Center**.

Quality of life also plays a big role in attracting manufacturers and others to Gainesville-Hall, according to Will Lombard, director of leasing and development for **Majestic Realty Co.**, which is the developer of Golden Park Commerce Center, a 60-acre industrial park at I-985 and Lanier Islands Parkway.

"Hall County is a great place to live," Lombard said. "The schools are good, there's Lake Lanier, and the demographics are great for all kinds of blue- and white-collar jobs."

The majority of the 24 major new and/or expanding businesses announced

in Hall County last year involved in some aspect of manufacturing or food processing.



Will Lombard

These were led by small-tractor/RTV/lawn mower maker **Kubota Manufacturing of America**. Already based in Gainesville Industrial Park North, Kubota acquired 180 acres in Gateway Industrial Centre, located at Georgia Highway 365 and Cagle Road in Gainesville, for a new manufacturing facility, a move that expands its employee head count in Hall from 1,300 to around 1,950.

Also during 2014, **Jinsung T.E.C.**, a South Korean manufacturer of undercarriage systems for construction equipment, opened a new North American headquarters and operations center in Oakwood South Industrial Park, located near I-985 at McEver Road and H.F. Reed Industrial Parkway.

Also at Oakwood South, **King's Hawaiian**, baker of the No. 1 branded dinner roll in the U.S., started a third production line, and will soon be starting a fourth.

Growing demand has resulted in a pronounced lack of available industrial space in Gainesville-Hall.

"We are definitely short on space in this market, from small spaces in the 5,000- to 10,000-square-foot range on

up, there is not much to choose from" said Lee Hemmer of Gainesville-based **The Simpson Co.**, a commercial real estate services firm.

The shortage has resulted in rental rate increases, according to Hemmer, that in



Lee Hemmer

many instances amount to as much as 10 to 15 percent higher than they were at this time last year.

A number of developers are looking to fill the gap between supply and demand.

The Foxfield Co. is planning a 150,000-square-foot (expandable to 300,000 square feet) building on a 30-acre site in Gateway Industrial Centre, said Hemmer, who is marketing the property on behalf of the South Carolina-based developer.

The building could accommodate one or several tenants, he said. "While it would certainly be great to have a committed tenant, we are not necessarily waiting for one before construction starts."

At Golden Park Commerce center, Majestic is just now starting work on a 300,000-square-foot cross-dock building, according to Lombard, with completion slated by the end of the year.

Given the profile of existing industries in this area, "I wouldn't be surprised to see something like an auto parts distribution center or a food-related use there," he said.

Stone Mountain-based **Pattillo Industrial Real Estate** recently completed a 77,000-square-foot speculative shell building in Gainesville Business Park, located near I-985 at Calvary Church and New Harvest roads. That building could be expanded to 140,000 square feet, if needed.

A variety of manufacturing and distribution-space users are actively looking for facilities in the Gainesville-Hall market, according to John Drake, business development representative for Pattillo.

"It's great to have the level of activity we are seeing in the market now," Drake said. "It's a lot like the market we had many years ago."

► HALL COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

POPULATION

- Hall County (2013 Estimate) **187,745**
- Gainesville (2013 Estimate) **35,533**

Gainesville-Hall County MSA Growth

- Rate (2000 - 2010)..... **29.9%**

WEALTH (2012)

- Median Family Income **\$59,198**
- Median Household Income **\$52,174**
- Per Capita Income **\$24,201**
- Occupied Housing Units **68,781**

CLIMATE

- Average Annual Temp..... **61**
- Avg. Mean Temp. (Nov.-Feb.)..... **46**
- Avg. Mean Temp. (May-Sept.) **76**
- Avg. Annual Rainfall..... **52"**
- Avg. Annual Snowfall..... **3.1"**

INDUSTRY MIX

- Goods Producing..... **27.3%**
- Services..... **59.37%**
- Health-care services:..... **14.8%**

- Retail Trade services:..... **10.6%**
- Hospitality services: **7.4%**
- Wholesale Trade services:..... **5.9%**
- Financial services: **2.8%**
- Other services:..... **18.7%**
- Government:..... **13.2%**

DEMOGRAPHICS (HALL COUNTY 2012)

- Home Ownership Rate **68.6%**
- People Under the Age of 18 **25.1%**
- People Ages 18- 65 **65.2%**

- People Over the Age of 65 **9.7%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **27.9%**
- Voter Participation in 2012 Election..... **72%**
- Unemployment Rate (June 2014)..... **6.5%**
- Number of Physicians (2010) **603**
- Hospital Bed Capacity (2010)..... **557**

SOURCE: BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Forbes Magazine

**Top 15 of “America’s Most
Fun, Affordable Cities”**
Gainesville-Hall County
Bloomberg Businessweek

**Top “5 Best Places in
Affordable Cities for
Retirement”**
Gainesville-Hall County
AARP The Magazine

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MARKET REPORT

Poultry industry diverse in Gainesville

BY DOUG DELOACH
Contributing Writer

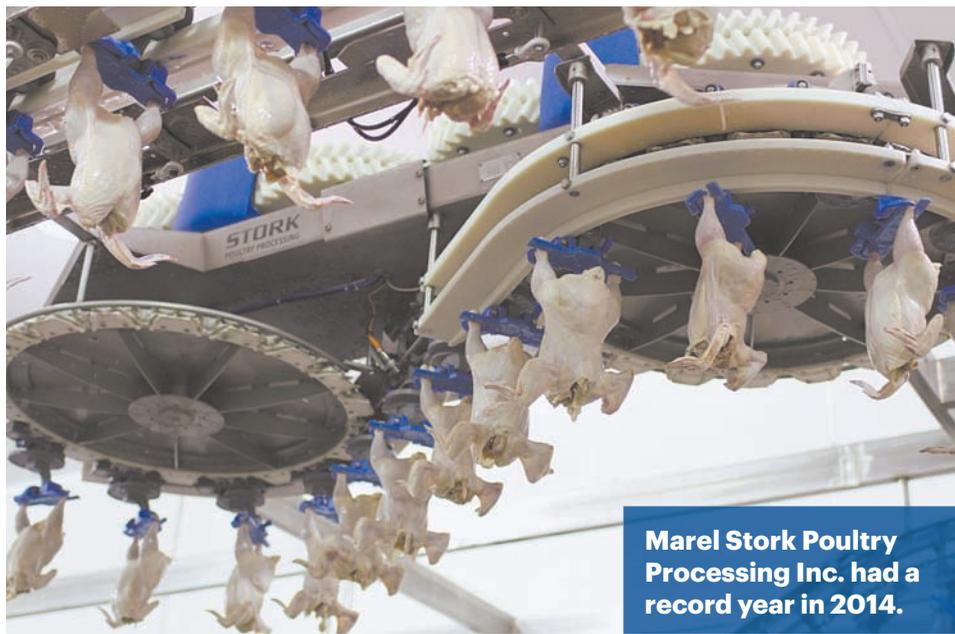
In 1977 officials from the **Georgia Poultry Federation** dedicated a monument situated in a triangular greenspace near downtown Gainesville.

The monument consists of three large marble tablets stemming from the base of a 25-foot high marble obelisk on top of which sits a three-foot tall bronze rooster. Carved into the side of one of the tablets are the words, "Poultry Capital of the World."

Thirty-eight years after the dedication ceremony in Poultry Park, poultry production is the largest segment of the agriculture business in Georgia at 47 percent, versus 44 percent crops and 9 percent dairy, according to the latest GPF figures.

Much of that poultry production transpires in and around Gainesville. Poultry's annual contribution to the state's economy from farms, processing, and allied industries amounts to \$25 billion. Directly or indirectly, some 100,000 jobs are associated with the poultry industry in the state.

"The poultry industry, like so many other agricultural products, goes through cycles, and right now financial conditions in the industry are very favorable," said



PHOTOS/SPECIAL

GPF President Mike Giles.

In 2014 Americans consumed chicken at an annual per capita rate of 83.5 pounds, outpacing all major protein categories. Beef was second at 53.8 pounds, followed by pork (45.7 pounds), turkey (17.7 pounds) and fish (15.6 pounds). On an average day, Georgia produces 29.3 million pounds of chicken, 6.9 million table eggs, and 5.5 million hatching eggs.

If Georgia was a country, it would rank seventh in world production of broiler chickens.

To meet the growing demand, production facilities in the Gainesville area have been working on improvements in two primary areas: operational efficiencies, which have led to increasing volume or number of chickens processed per plant, and increasing the average weight of each

chicken, yielding more meat per bird.

"With yields at historic highs and line speeds capped by the USDA, much of the industry is turning towards the processing of bigger birds," said Michael Otterbach, regional vice president of manufacturing for the Americas at **Marel Stork Poultry Processing Inc.**

Poultry producers are looking to increase yields wherever they can in their



The Jackson EMC commercial & industrial team on location at the new facility of client, Georgia Poultry Lab.

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MARKET REPORT

operations. Even seemingly minor gains in technical and mechanical efficiency can result in measurable profits, which translates into opportunities for companies that service the industry.

“We had a record year in 2014, about 65 percent higher than prior year, and we are on track to match those numbers this year,” said John Daley, director of sales and marketing at **Gainco Inc.**, which manufactures equipment for weighing, sizing (including deboning and trimming), sorting and distributing products on the processing line.



John Daley

Americans are also looking for convenience and variation in their chicken choices. From boneless and skinless breasts and thighs to breaded and marinated legs and wings, companies that specialize in secondary or “further processing” are striving to meet marketplace demand.

“Demand is so great, we have a processing plant that runs 13 days, with one day off to maintain the equipment,” said Tom Hensley, president of **Fieldale Farms Corp.** “At another plant, we are processing 5 to 10 percent more chickens than we did last year, including rotisserie-type



Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network was dedicated in January.

SPECIAL

deli chickens and boneless leg meat.”

In January, state officials dedicated a new **Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network (GPLN)** facility, replacing its nearly half-century-old predecessor. The GPLN, which includes smaller labs around the state, provides services including disease monitoring, chick quality assurance and hatchery inspections.

“The mission of GPLN will continue, but in an environment better for the employees, which is ideal for the tests we run, with better biosecurity and contamination control,” said Louise Dufour-Zavala, executive director of the GPLN.

The design of the \$13 million, 39,500-square-foot facility in Gainesville incorporates a mezzanine area where visitors can observe scientists and clinicians in action.



Louise Dufour-Zavala

“We’ve already had several domestic and international tour groups come through, exposing our great industry and the laboratory activities to the world,” Dufour-Zavala said.

In addition to its role in protecting domestic production from contamination by diseases, such as avian influenza, the GPLN also certifies whether health protocols required by other countries are being met. According to the **U.S. Department of Agriculture**, no cases of avian influenza have been reported in Georgia, while infections among wild birds, captive wild birds, backyard poultry and commercial poultry have been confirmed in Arkansas, California, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. No human infections have been detected and the **Centers for Disease Control and Protection** considers the infection risk to be very low.

“The lab does much more monitoring than it does diagnosis, and they are always looking for anything that might adversely affect the flocks, health-wise or production-wise,” Giles said.

The location of the GPLN facility in Gainesville is a plus for many industry-related companies. Just a few miles away, vaccines produced at **Merial Select Inc.** are used to treat about 90 percent of poultry in the United States.

“The GPLN clientele and our customer base are the same group,” said David Smith, director of veterinary services and marketing at Merial.

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MARKET REPORT

Atlanta Botanical Garden blooms in Gainesville

BY KAREN COHEN
Contributing Writer

Charles and Lessie Smithgall had always been philanthropists, land lovers and art enthusiasts. Together they worked in media and founded what was then The Gainesville Daily Times. Before Charlie passed away, he wanted to make sure there was a plan to preserve their personal land. They talked to several organizations about their property vision. And, they liked what they heard from the **Atlanta Botanical Garden**.

The Atlanta Botanical Garden board had already been looking to develop satellite locations when the Smithgalls approached them. It had an incredible 30-acre property in Midtown, but the board was looking for additional space to expand the garden's education and conservation efforts.

"The Atlanta Botanical Garden will always be our main campus. But, we are a living museum and we needed more space to grow our woody plant collections, our Monets," said Mary Pat Matheson, president and CEO of the Atlanta Botanical Garden.



SPECIAL

Atlanta Botanical Garden CEO Mary Pat Matheson: We needed more space.

It was in 2001 that Charles and Lessie Smithgall donated their 168-acre property north of Gainesville to the Atlanta Botanical Garden. And, although the Atlanta Botanical Garden now possessed the land, fundraising efforts were still needed to grow and develop the land into gardens.

John Burd was president of **Brenau University** for 19 years. He met the Smithgalls as they were generous contributors to the university. Through the years, Burd became close friends with the Smithgalls. He became involved in the Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville fundraising efforts as he wanted Lessie Smithgall, who was then 100 years young, to live



John Burd

to see her property vision come alive. She's now 104 and still living in her house nestled among the Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville.

"Charlie and Lessie gave the Gainesville community a jewel," Burd said. "And, Lessie herself is a jewel to the community."



Mildred Fockele is director of Atlanta Botanical Garden's Gainesville garden.

SPECIAL



The Gainesville garden opened in May after years of planning.

SPECIAL/LARRY GRIFFETH

And, now 14 years later after the initial land donation, the Smithgalls' dream is being realized, as the Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville opened May 2. The \$21 million initial phase includes a contemporary visitor center, 2,000-seat amphitheater, a model train garden and 5 acres of display gardens featuring nationally recognized plant collections.

Visitors will be given access to beautiful green space and cultural amenities through special events and exhibits. This includes outdoor concerts at the Ivester Amphitheater, where guests can relax and watch a great show surrounded by woodland beauty.

A Wine in the Woodlands series occurs on the last Thursday evening of every month May through October. And, just as the Atlanta location hosts special exhibitions, so will the Gainesville site. Exhibits such as Nature Connects 2, Art with LEGO Bricks by Sean Kenney, will come to Gainesville Sept. 18-Jan. 3.

"The Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville has a 5-acre garden with a mature

woodland canopy surrounding it and a diversity of plants. It is home to nearly 1,300 different types of plants," said Mildred Fockele, vice president of horticulture at the Atlanta Botanical Garden and director of its garden in Gainesville. The garden includes more than 300 hydrangea varieties, 150 magnolia varieties, 88 unusual varieties of plants, 50 witch hazel varieties and 32 maple species.

In 2010, the Atlanta Botanical Garden moved its native plant conservation nursery to Gainesville garden. This broadened the garden's plant conservation efforts with endangered species. "We were landlocked and running out of space in Atlanta. Moving the conservation nursery to Gainesville enables us to expand our conservation projects," said Fockele.

Future Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville plans call for an interactive children's garden, a native plant conservation nursery and a student training and education center.

Currently, the Atlanta Botanical Garden is actively engaged in a \$50 million capital

▶ CLOSER LOOK

TIMELINE

- ▶ **2001:** The Smithgalls donate their property north of Gainesville to the Atlanta Botanical Garden
- ▶ **2004:** A 5,000-square-foot greenhouse and 4-acre nursery are built to begin growing plants
- ▶ **2010:** Atlanta Botanical Garden moves its native plant conservation nursery to Gainesville
- ▶ **2013:** Ground broken on the initial \$21 million phase of the garden
- ▶ **2015:** The garden opens to the public

BY THE NUMBERS

Number of property acres in Gainesville: 168
The Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville, is home to a diversity of plants, including more than 1,272 different types. Among them are:

- ▶ 300+ Hydrangea varieties
- ▶ 150 Magnolia varieties
- ▶ 88 unusual varieties of plants
- ▶ 50 Witch Hazel varieties
- ▶ 32 Maple species

campaign, with \$2.5 million of that goal being earmarked for the Gainesville children's garden. Currently, they have raised \$42 million.

Hall County already has an art museum, a nature center, a history center and a kid's interactive museum.

"A botanical garden seemed to be the missing piece. We add another dimension to the cultural offerings in Gainesville," said Fockele, who started at the Atlanta Botanical Garden 28 years ago as an intern.

The Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville will be one of the largest cultural organizations in Hall County, which will bring new visitors and tourists.

"We are bringing 28,000 memberships to Gainesville and that will only grow as people there join," Matheson said. "And, with the garden's close proximity to Interstate 985, we envision travelers driving through for a visit. The Atlanta Botanical Garden will be to Gainesville what Central Park is to New York City."

And the garden will make Gainesville a premiere location for botany education.

"Students from the **University of Georgia** and Brenau University can come here for research," Burd said. "And school children can visit for learning and enjoyment."

As far as what makes the Gainesville location unique to the Atlanta Botanical Garden, "The Gainesville location is situated amongst almost 200 acres of woodland gardens. You can hike the woodlands. And, the space is very naturalized and connected to its heritage," Matheson said.

"The Atlanta garden has an urban feel, whereas the Gainesville's terrain is a woodland oasis," Fockele said. "There are beautiful views of creeks, springs and Lake Lanier that you won't find in the city."

MARKET REPORT

Health care expands in Hall County

BY RANDY SOUTHERLAND
Contributing Writer

Braselton, a city 40 miles northeast of Atlanta, has become the epicenter of health care in this fast growing metro region.

Fueled by the opening of a new **North-east Georgia Health System** (NGHS) hospital, a host of medical office construction is underway.

The newest of these is **Highpoint Medical Center**, a large medical plaza right across the street from the hospital. Developed by **The Norton Agency**, the 22-acre campus off Georgia 347 and Friendship Road is projected to include several buildings totaling more than 250,000 square feet of space. The first phase is a two-story 40,000-square-foot facility that will house physicians and support staff for **The Longstreet Clinic** and **Northwest Georgia Diagnostic Clinic**.

"We have been studying this area since the emergence of a health-care market here," said Frank Norton Jr., the development firm's CEO.

His firm also helped Northeast Georgia Health System secure the land for the hospital and medical office complex.

"**Northeast Georgia Medical Center** was looking for a second campus and they wanted to be strategic," said Norton. "They had to be in Hall County and they were looking for a location that might be medically underserved."



SPECIAL

The new Northeast Georgia Medical Center hospital in Braselton, which opened April 1, includes seven operating rooms.

The NGHS campus is also home to a 100,000-square-foot medical office building, which includes an urgent care center, imaging center, endoscopy suite, outpatient lab and physical therapy services and more than 20 physician offices

Braselton is at a convergence of four counties – Gwinnett, Jackson, Barrow and Hall – and in recent years has been attracting a growing number of new residents.

The expansion of employment, along with high-end housing, made the addition of new medical services a natural spin

off, according to Norton.

Medical office has been expanding in the area for several years as more physicians moved into the area with many affiliated with Gainesville-based NGHS.

"We began building the medical staff complement in the community working with both private groups and some of our employed physicians over the last six or seven years," said Anthony Williamson, president of **Northeast Georgia Medical Center-Braselton**. "When you look at the region surrounding the hospital we've got

probably 10 to 12 primary care offices, not only in Braselton, but in Jefferson, Flowery Branch, Winder, Dacula, Auburn, Oakwood, Buford and Hamilton Mill."

There was no emergency room in the local area and residents also had to travel long distance to see some medical specialists.

When it opened on April 1, the hospital's emergency department was treating



Anthony Williamson

its very first patient within 10 minutes. The hospital's seven operating rooms were busy with a dozen surgeries performed on the first day. Most of those cases were orthopedic procedures and that is a specialty that will

likely be a niche for the hospital, according to Williamson.

The hospital is already expanding with construction set to begin on a new floor with 12 labor delivery recovery and post-partum rooms. The new section is expected to open by January 2017.

When Highpoint Medical Center opens next year, Longstreet Clinic will move from down the street in the River Place Medical Plaza.

With more space, the physician group will be able to recruit new specialties, said Mimi Collins, Longstreet's CEO.

Health-care expansion leads to more nursing students

BY JANET JONES KENDALL
Contributing Writer

Gainesville area nursing programs are expanding in both scope of degrees offered and number of students, in part due to the expansion of **Northeast Georgia Medical Center** into Braselton and due to the medical center's overall new requirement that any new nurse practitioner who works within the hospital must have an acute care nurse practitioner degree and certification prior to working.

"That is really one of the reasons we developed our acute care nurse practitioners program so quickly – that NGMC wants to be one of the best hospitals in the nation, and they understand that more education and more qualifications by the people who work there, the easier it is realize that goal," said Troy Heidesch, Richards Chair of Graduate Nursing for **Brenau University**. "As a result, Brenau is responding to that call and we are going to deliver the type of professionals that they want."

Brenau expects an increase in nursing program enrollment of up to 20 percent by as soon as next year, thanks in part to the program's new offerings of a post-master's certificate for acute care, a new doctorate of nursing practice degree (which was introduced in 2011 and graduated its



SPECIAL

Brenau University and other campuses have expanded nursing programs.

first class in 2014) and the new doctorate of physical therapy degree that will start up this May in Brenau's new facility, the former home of the Georgia Mountain Center in Gainesville. But, Heidesch and other nursing program directors say the changes to NGMC are not the only reason their programs are expanding and ramping up degree offerings.

"We are a partner for [**North Georgia Health System**] and they have and will continue to be an important factor in any decisions we make. However, it is much broader than that," said Kim Hudson-Gallogly, nursing department head for the **University of North Georgia**, which is expanding onto the university's

Gainesville campus. "We are preparing nurses to work in any health care environment – rural, urban, community and research centers."

UNG's nursing program is expanding health care-related certificates and degree programs on its Gainesville campus. The new programs will accept between 60 to 70 students each year, Hudson-Gallogly said. "We have determined that not only are nurses in demand, health information-educated professionals are needed, as well as professionals who are prepared to work in population health, medical tourism, public health, etc."

Currently, across all of its campuses, 1,500 UNG pre-nursing students select nursing as their major. A total of 210 are accepted into the nursing program and 140 are graduated each May. That number is expected to increase by 60 beginning in December 2017 because of the program expansions.

Lanier Technical College has been seeing an increase in demand for its practical nursing program, as well, according to Gail Adam, practical nursing director at the school's main Oakwood campus. In 2008, the college expanded to Forsyth where it added an additional practical nursing program. The two programs combined enroll approximately 72 students and graduate about 68 of those annually, Adam said.

► CLOSER LOOK

► According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Projections 2012-2022 released in December 2013, Registered Nursing (RN) is listed among the top occupations in terms of job growth through 2022. The RN workforce is expected to grow from 2.71 million in 2012 to 3.24 million in 2022, an increase of 526,800 or 19 percent. The bureau also projects the need for 525,000 replacements nurses in the workforce bringing the total number of job openings for nurses due to growth and replacements to 1.05 million by 2022.

► According to the "United States Registered Nurse Workforce Report Card and Shortage Forecast" published in the January 2012 issue of the American Journal of Medical Quality, a shortage of registered nurses is projected to spread across the country between 2009 and 2030. In this state-by-state analysis, the authors forecast the shortage to be most intense in the South and the West.

"When the decline in the economy occurred, we had an increase in the number of people seeking nursing as a second career," Adam said. "The stability in the job market for nurses is definitely a drawing card."

MARKET REPORT

VIEWPOINT

Hall County improving quality of life

Gainesville-Hall County leads the region in trade, health care, education, industry, retail, recreation and cultural pursuits.

Business and industry make long term investments in Gainesville-Hall County because of its stability, skilled workforce, visionary leadership and quality of life. The area is home to 47 Fortune 500 firms, over 300 manufacturing and processing concerns and 45 international companies representing 19 countries.

In 2014, Gainesville-Hall County had 24 new and expanded businesses create over 1,300 jobs and commit \$150 million in capital investment.

Workforce development is not just a local issue. It is a state and national issue effecting all business, from manufacturers and health-care providers to construction companies and small businesses. As the area's voice for business, the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce is addressing the needs of area employers by the recent implementation of a workforce initiative.

The mission of the newly formed Gainesville-Hall County Workforce Development Task Force is to collaborate with area employers, educators and community leaders to create new programs, promote and market existing programs, remove barriers and influence perceptions. The group is chaired by Perry Barnett,



Brian Daniel is chair-elect of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce and president of Carroll Daniel Construction Co.

CPA and partner with Rushton & Co. in Gainesville.

"We are dedicated to making an impact by building on a sustainable workforce that possesses the skills needed by employers of today and tomorrow," said Barnett. "Our plan of action for 2015 is to increase high school apprenticeships, increase employer presence in schools, and investigate dual enrollment programs."

Phil Sutton, chief administrative officer, Kubota Manufacturing of America, is a proponent of the workforce development program. Kubota employs over 1,300 in Gainesville-Hall County and already has a student work program as the plant expands with a \$100 million investment and 650 additional jobs. Currently, 25

students are participating and being paid while learning. Sutton recently led a forum for area industries and unveiled results of an employer survey. The most significant issue of the survey of 58 manufacturing employers was the lack of qualified job applicants, followed by lack of applicants and an aging workforce.

Only 25 percent of industries surveyed in Gainesville-Hall County employ high school students as part of a Work Based Learning Program. "Kubota's long-term plan is for all new hires to go through an apprentice program," said Sutton.

Gainesville City Schools and Hall County Schools are leading the way in educating our future workforce.

"Business and industry play a critical role in learning by affording students the opportunity to apply their learning in real-world settings through work-based learning placements," according to Wanda Creel, superintendent of Gainesville City Schools. "The collaborative approach affords students to experience the relevancy of their learning, establish a clear connection between school and work; assess their interests, aptitudes, and abilities while learning about career possibilities; and expansion and refinement of work-related skills to include critical thinking, problem solving and working in teams to resolve issues."

The Greater Hall Chamber is

dedicated to supporting an aggressive business environment. Small business represents the heart of the economy and a dominant source of job creation. The chamber provides a wide range of service to small business owners and potential entrepreneurs, working to grow business and strengthen the economy.

Small Business Seminars, South Hall Coalition meetings, Small Business of the Month recognition, networking events and specialized forums are helping area businesses thrive.

Unparalleled facilities, such as the Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton, Georgia's newest hospital, coupled with skilled medical professionals have made Gainesville-Hall County the health-care hub of Northeast Georgia.

The Greater Hall Chamber's Healthcare Committee is a catalyst for connecting health and wellness initiatives to local business and industry. Healthcare Reform Seminars, the Chamber Chase 5K Corporate Challenge, Most Fit Company Awards, HealthSmart Community Health Screenings and Expo along with partnerships with area educational institutions are making community health a top priority.

Quality of life and community vision are making Gainesville-Hall County the best place in Georgia to live, to work, to play.

Community still working toward Vision 2030

BY LISA R. SCHOOLCRAFT
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In 2005, led by the **Greater Hall County Chamber of Commerce**, Gainesville and Hall County leaders drew up a "Vision 2030," a strategic plan of projects and goals the community



Davis White

would like to achieve.

Projects included adding lifestyle projects, such as green space initiatives, and adding better wellness and health care access, to infrastructure projects, like adding a downtown hotel and conference center, and relocating the U.S. Post office.

The community is now 10 years into the vision and Davis White, a partner at **LinkPoint Advantage LLC** and chairman of the Greater Hall Chamber's Vision 2030 committee, provides an update to the progress being made on the plan for

Gainesville and Hall County's future.



Q: Vision 2030 began in 2005 with some "big ideas" for growth in the community. Are you almost half way there, or further along

than where you thought you'd be?

Vision 2030 was started with the desire to influence and shape Hall County's future using a collection of community driven goals that were established through public interviews and forums. Some of these goals are very broad in scope while others have a more specific outcome. We have seen significant progress in almost all of our original "Big Ideas" with several initiatives being further along than the founding members expected.

Q: What are some of the top priorities for 2015 on the Vision 2030 list? We have an incredible group of volunteer committee members, all of whom have a passion for the ideas and initiatives that they are concentrating on. Some of the areas of focus for 2015

include: health and wellness, lifelong learning, workforce development, green space, and our OneHall Model for Diversity. We are also very excited about the revitalization of the Lake Lanier Olympic Venue, which will be celebrating 20 years of world-class rowing, kayak, and canoe competition by hosting the 2016 Pan American Championships.

Q: What's the one project you wish had been done already?

Because Hall County has beautiful Lake Lanier winding its way through many our communities, Vision 2030's idea for a "Harbor Town" is particularly popular with local residents. This would consist of a mixed-use community on Lake Lanier, with restaurants, an amphitheater, and commercial, retail and residential space. We hope to create a model for the creative blending of residential and commercial development.

Q: How are you working to get that project done? Like many of Vision 2030's initiatives, a Harbor Town

development will require cooperation between many different parties for it to become a reality. Investment from a private developer and land owner, public infrastructure additions, approvals from the governing bodies of both the local municipality and entities governing the lake itself are just a few of the complexities of a project of this type. It is Vision 2030's job to help bring these parties together and to communicate the opportunities and benefits of such a development.

Q: Will there be any tweaking to the Vision 2030 list? Absolutely. Vision 2030 serves as a voice for the residents of Hall County. In 2012 we evaluated the status of each of our big ideas and updated our focus areas based on community input. It is crucial that Vision 2030 is able to adapt to changes in the needs and wants of our community. We have to find the right balance of commitment to seeing a project through to completion, while being able to adjust to changing conditions such as opportunities created by economic or political conditions.

MARKET REPORT



PHOTO/SPECIAL

Kubota has about 25 high school students in part-time jobs at its area plants.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

2 percent have placements in manufacturing. In Hall County, the percentage of workers working in goods producing is 26 percent, so we are way off," Davis said.

The chamber is reaching out to students while facilitating introductions between the companies and the schools so employers can partner with educators to be part of the applied learning happening in the classroom.

"We have already added several employers that before had no relationship with the area high schools. They have now created that relationship and intend to employ students during the next school year," Davis said.

With only 30 percent of the Hall County high school graduates going on to college, community leaders know the people are there to take these positions, she said.



Perry Barnett

"We just have to show them there are opportunities here that are lucrative," she said, adding these positions can also serve as a springboard to certificate programs and even four-year college tracks.

Perry Barnett, chairman of the task force and business services partner at **Rushton & Co. LLC**, is consistently hearing from his clients and prospective clients, many in the manufacturing and construction industries, they need workers.

"The time is right to bring the educational system together formally with the chamber and members of the business community in a roundtable fashion to see what we have to work with and what the needs are," he said.

The chamber hosted a community meeting early this year about the initiative where it invited companies to come in and learn about the partnership with the schools.

"There was a capacity crowd at the meeting and it provided us an opportunity to take something that is already happening in the community and make a reintroduction to it for a lot of companies who haven't experienced it before," Barnett said.

Part of the plan is to educate both

students and parents there are good, life-long careers to be found at these manufacturing facilities. Many involve highly technical skills and factories have come a long way in recent years.

"Factories are not dirty, greasy places of the past. They are bright, highly lit technical work environments," he said. "Every time I talk to the kids who get some exposure they are highly impressed with the work that goes on in our area manufacturing facilities. We don't ever want a lack of skilled workforce to be an impairment for a company to locate in Hall County. We simply have too many bright kids here who can perform this work."

Phil Sutton, chief administrative officer of **Kubota Manufacturing of America Corp.** in Gainesville, agrees.

"I think a lot of parents fear that manufacturing jobs are tough and dirty," he said. "It is not like that anymore. We do a huge percentage of our welding by robotics so we need robot programmers. We have an automated assembly line. We are trying to produce products with the least amount of physical ability by our workers. We, like so many other manufacturers, are providing a safe, clean, good manufacturing environment."

Sutton said both Kubota's Gainesville plant and the **Kubota Industrial Equipment Corp.** plant in Jefferson accepts high school students to work for part of the day and learn about the soft skills required in the workplace as well as developing strong work skills. If the students complete the program with Kubota and complete their high school degree, Kubota guarantees them a full-time job with benefits.

Between the two plants, Kubota currently has about 25 juniors and seniors working there. Sutton said the company plan to grow that number as the business grows. The students typically work four-hour shifts and make \$10.50 an hour.

"In the past kids thought about manufacturing not as a career, but as a job. It is a career. Kubota has been here 27 years and never laid off a single employee," he said. "These kids can have hope they can make a career, be engaged in something exciting and contribute to something bigger than themselves. Some of these young folks just need a success in their life. If we can give them one success, it can make a huge difference."

TOP 20 EMPLOYERS

Company	Number of Employees	Industry Type
Northeast Georgia Medical Center (2)	7,100	Medical
Hall County School System	3,500	School System
Fieldale Farms Corp.	2,500	Processing
Hall County Government	2,300	Government
Kubota Manufacturing of America Corp.	1,600	Manufacturing
Pilgrim's	1,450	Processing
Mar-Jac Poultry Inc.	1,250	Processing
Victory Processing LLC (2)	1,250	Processing
ZF Gainesville LLC (3)	1,110	Manufacturing
Gainesville City School System	890	School System
Cottrell Inc.	850	Manufacturing
Wal-Mart Stores Inc. (4)	830	Retail
Pro View Foods	750	Processing
Wrigley Manufacturing Co. LLC	750	Manufacturing
The Longstreet Clinic	720	Medical
Gold Creek Foods	700	Processing
Gainesville City Government	620	Government
Mansfield Oil Company of Gainesville	560	Distribution
Lanier Islands	500	Resort
PFG Milton's	500	Distribution

TOP 10 INTERNATIONAL FIRMS

Company	Number of Employees	Industry Type	Country
Kubota Manufacturing of America Corp	1,600	Manufacturing - Lawn & garden tractors, sub-compact tractors, & RTVs	Japan
Pilgrim's	1,450	Poultry processing	Brazil
ZF Gainesville LLC (3)	1,110	Manufacturing - Automotive & Wind Turbine Components	Germany
KIK Gainesville	580	Contract Product Filler	Canada
Baldor Electric	350	Electric Motors	Switzerland
Sapa Extrusions NA Inc	350	Extrusions - Painted aluminum	Norway
Elringklinger USA Inc.	300	Manufacturing - Automotive	Germany
IMS Gear Georgia Inc.	300	Plastic injection gear wheels, housing & assembly	Germany
Beaulieu of America	280	Textile - Yarn division	Belgium
SKF USA Inc.	280	Anti-friction Precision Ball Bearings	Sweden

TOP 5 EXISTING INDUSTRIES

Company	Number of Employees	Industry Type
Fieldale Farms Corp.	2,500	Poultry Processing
Kubota Manufacturing of America Corp.	1,600	Manufacturing - Lawn & garden tractors, sub-compact tractors, & RTV's
Pilgrim's	1,450	Poultry processing
Mar-Jac Poultry Inc.	1,250	Poultry processing
Victory Processing LLC (2)	1,250	Poultry processing - sizing

SOURCE: GREATER HALL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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