

DECEMBER 2021

contents

Chairman's Column
page 2

Business Beautification Awards
page 3

Meetings & Events
page 7

Member News
page 10

Small Business of the Month
page 11

Industry of the Year Awards
pages 12-13

Ribbon Cuttings
page 14

New Members
page 15

save the date

Tuesday, December 7
Business After Hours
Gainesville Civic Center

Wednesday, December 9
Eggs & Issues Breakfast
Lanier Technical College
Ramsey Conference Center

Tuesday, December 14
Small Business Seminar
In Person & via Zoom



Industry of the Year Awards
Lanier Technical College
See highlights on pages 12-13



We reached out to our municipalities to see what's going on around Hall County. See highlights of local projects and developments on page 4.

featured member





Buy Local and give the best gift of all



Phil Sutton
Kubota Manufacturing of America, Chairman, Greater Hall Chamber

With the Christmas Season upon us, I am reminded of how fortunate we are to live in this dynamic community. Even through four surges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we enjoy a healthy business climate, strong leadership and unparalleled quality of life. Our Chamber is considered one of the most progressive in Georgia, and I am honored to be a part of such a successful organization.

As a primary trade area serving a population of over 500,000 Northeast Georgia residents, Gainesville-Hall County is the region's major retail center. Our community offers the unique opportunity to shop at a variety of independent, small businesses as well as large retailers. This Holiday Season, take advantage of the diverse shopping alternatives here at home and keep our tax dollars local.

When you shop, dine and purchase services locally, you give our community the best gift of all – your sales tax

dollars. Your local buying generates sales tax dollars that work throughout the year to improve our community in many different ways.

I am mindful of our members consisting mainly of small businesses. In fact, some 90% of Chamber members are small businesses, and many of these are retail establishments. I encourage you to continue to support these shops and services scattered throughout Gainesville-Hall County, and boost sales to keep our locals thriving. I hope you'll make a special effort to visit and support our businesses that have been adversely affected by the street closures as Gainesville goes through this growth period.

Consider a gift of original art from one of our many unique galleries. Pick up a gift certificate at one of our restaurants – from Downtown Flowery Branch to Midtown Gainesville – and throughout our community. Honor a friend or make a donation in memory of someone to a charitable organization.

Remember the true meaning of Christmas as we rush to purchase gifts for family and friends. Shop HERE, in our community, and remember our LOCAL merchants. Happy Holidays!

Mars Wrigley celebrates 50th Anniversary

(L-R) **Kit Dunlap**, President & CEO, Greater Hall Chamber; Chamber VP Economic Development **Glenn Barnes**, Georgia Power; **Anton Vincent**, President, Mars Wrigley North America; **Janice Bryans**, 50 year employee with Mars Wrigley Gainesville Plant; **Matt Arends**, Facility Director, Mars Wrigley Gainesville. Mars Wrigley Gainesville celebrated its 50th Anniversary with the dedication of a new employee pavilion – the Janice Bryans Pavillion. The plant opened in 1971 and employs 950 associates that produce 75% of all the gum in North America. The Mars-Wrigley Gainesville facility is the largest vertically integrated chewing gum facility in the Universe! mars.com



BUSINESS LINK

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 6

McKemie West, Editor • Email: kwest@ghcc.com
230 E.E. Butler Pkwy • Gainesville GA 30501 • 770-532-6206 • GreaterHallChamber.com

Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce 2021-2022 Executive Committee

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2021-2022 Board of Directors

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Michie Clarke , AccessWDUN	Michele Pucci , Peach State Bank & Trust
Sean Couch , Northeast Georgia Health System	Col. Stas Preczewski , Riverside Military Academy
Shanna Cronin , Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic	Chris Purvis , First Citizens Bank
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Beth Downs , Northeast Georgia Health System	Vanesa Sarazua , Hispanic Alliance Georgia
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Jim Grier , Mayor, City of Lula	John Simpson , Lakeview Academy
Emily Hayes , Milton Martin Toyota	Dr. Anne Skleder , Brenau University
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Sam Hulsey , United Community Bank	Terry Spicer , King's Hawaiian Bakery
Rick Humphrey , Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta	Ahna Still , Halski Systems
Brooke Kalinauskas , Conditioned Air Systems	Kevin Strada , The Atlanta Falcons
Jay Kelly , Signs by Tomorrow	John Turner , Northeast Georgia Health System
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Ashton Meeks , Starke Family Office	Nancy Jo Zimmer , JP Morgan Chase Bank

Greater Hall Chamber Staff

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Government Affairs Kit Dunlap, President & CEO	Marketing & Communications Kemie West, Business Link Editor/Consultant
	Greater Hall Chamber Welcome Center Robin Halstead, Manager

The mission of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce is to improve the overall business climate for member growth, promote community development, facilitate political action, and enhance the quality of life.

community development

Business Beautification Awards 2021

The Chamber's 2021 Business Beautification Awards of Excellence were presented to **Peach State Bank** and the **City of Flowery Branch**. The awards program was initiated 27 years ago and promotes well maintained areas by publicly recognizing those who have made beautification efforts to property.



City of Flowery Branch Officials (L-R) **Donald Bowers**, Building Official; **Rich Atkinson**, Director of Planning & Community Development; **Shelia Cooper**, Assistant City Clerk; **Patty Hurt**, Permit Clerk; **Vickie Short**, City Manager; **Alisha Gamble**, Finance Director; **Renee Carden**, Downtown Events Director & Public Information Officer; **Nancy Rodriguez**, Billing Clerk; **Chere Rucker**, Accounts Payable. Completion of the new City Hall building in 2018 was the first phase of the redevelopment of Downtown Flowery Branch. Phase 2 is new retail and apartment complex on Main Street with the addition of a new Market Pavilion, street scaping and amphitheater. Plans for phase 3 is on the horizon. flowerybranchga.org



Peach State Bank Team (L-R) **Ron Quinn**, **Yemeli Marin**, **Mickey Hyder**, **Chase Hyder**, **Carl Blackburn**, **Michelle Blackmon** and **Sada Wheeler**.

Peach State's Mortgage Department, led by VP Carl Blackburn, moved to their new office at 320 Spring Street in Downtown Gainesville in fall 2020, at the former site of North Georgia Auto Glass and the Sinclair gas station. The bank worked with the City of Gainesville and its Tax Allocation District Committee to improve the site with a major renovation while maintaining its architectural and historic character. peachstate.bank



Farm City Breakfast

FFA Students from North Hall High School and Middle School and East Hall High School and Middle School at the **26th Annual Farm City Breakfast** with **Will Schofield**, Superintendent, Hall County Schools, and keynote speaker **Nick Place**, Dean/Director, University of Georgia College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences. The Greater Hall Chamber, UGA Extension Hall County and the Hall County Farm Bureau hosted the event at the North Hall Community Center. Presented by **Jackson EMC**, the Annual Farm City Breakfast is held in observance of National Farm City Week to recognize local farmers, along with those working in agriculture and agribusiness. FFA prepares students for careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.

economic development

What's Happening Around Hall County?

We reached out to our municipalities to see what's going on around Hall County, and here's some highlights of local projects and developments.

Developments underway in Oakwood



B.R. White
Oakwood City Manager

Oakwood City Manager B.R. White announced the recent approval of **over 1.8 million square feet of industrial building and office/warehouse space** with projects on West White Road, Falcons Parkway, Chamblee Road and Thurmon Tanner Parkway. Staff is currently working with several groups looking to potentially purchase property and building additional distribution and warehousing space in Oakwood along the 985 corridor. **Interactive Neighborhood for Kids** (inkfun.org), a hands-on children's museum in Gainesville, will relocate to Oakwood. The relocation is part of **Oakwood's 2030 Plan**. Other elements of the 2030 plan include a farmers market, small start-up shops, and old-style downtown store fronts. Oakwood 2030 supports the Greater Hall Chamber's

Vision 2030 goals for Hall County to become a "community of towns" with "connectedness among residents, workers and visitors." In addition, Oakwood 2030 falls in line with Vision 2030's promotion of community wellness and protection of green space throughout the county. cityofoakwood.net



Lula addresses growing demand

Lula City Council recently approved the addition of downtown parking to meet growing demand and support downtown businesses. The property, located at the corner of Athens Street and GA Hwy 51, will allow more downtown parking and benefit the Lula Community Center Depot facility.



Money for the purchase will come from Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds. **Lula Cares** is a city-wide initiative to provide the community with a one-stop location for resources to help families with job placement, housing, and more. cityoflula.com

King's Hawaiian expands in Oakwood

In 2010, King's Hawaiian located to Hall County to better serve customers on the East Coast. In the last two years, King's Hawaiian has invested over \$30 million to expand the Oakwood operations, growing to 700 employees. King's Hawaiian makes the #1 branded dinner roll in the U.S., along with hamburger buns, hot dog buns, sandwich bread, and more. King's Hawaiian's Chief Operations Officer, Dan Raatjes said, "We absolutely love doing business in the great state of Georgia. Over the years, we have discovered that the values and behaviors of 'Southern Hospitality' are perfectly aligned with the Aloha values and behaviors we hold dear to us. The majority of all King's Hawaiian products are produced in Oakwood, and we are blessed to be part of the thriving economy and local community." King's Hawaiian is a workforce development leader through work-based learning with high school students and a growing number of apprenticeships through Lanier Technical College. Job seekers can apply at kingshawaiian.com/careers or text "Aloha" to 770-965-4481 career information.

Flowery Branch is under construction

Flowery Branch is under construction with the new **Market Pavilion** to open in February.

After 10 years of relocating around the area, the **Flowery Branch Farmer's Market** will finally have a permanent home. The City has several projects in Downtown Flowery Branch and a new Market Pavilion is one of them. The pavilion will not only house the



Market but also serve as a venue for festivals and events. A new park and amphitheater are also a part of the City's current downtown development plan. Great retail space is available on Main Street. There's a lot of exciting things happening in Flowery Branch. Everyone is invited to **Flowery Branch's Annual Christmas Market Block Party on December 18** (2pm – 8pm) at the Flowery Branch Train Depot. Enjoy photos with Santa, holiday music, specialty food and gift vendors and fun family activities. flowerybranchga.org

South Hall Business Coalition



Chamber Vice President Tim Evans reported on economic development projects in the region at the recent South Hall Business Coalition meeting in Braselton sponsored by Tony Funari and Funari Realty. (L-R) **Davis Myers**, Choate Construction; **Tony Funari**, Funari Realty; **Kit Dunlap**, Chamber; Chamber South Hall Council Chair **Mike Zeiler**, Bitzer US; **Greg Waters**, Investors Asset Management of Georgia; **Tim Evans**, Chamber; **Tony Funari**, Funari Realty.

Mark your calendar for a **South Hall Medical Update** at the South Hall Business Coalition meeting on **January 25 (9-10am) at The Venue at Friendship Springs**. Enjoy a light breakfast and hear all the latest from **Anthony Williamson**, President, Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton, and **Mimi Collins**, CEO, Longstreet Clinic. Get details, and register online: GHCC.com/EVENTS.

economic development

Tim Evans recognized by GEDA

Chamber VP of Economic Development **Tim Evans** (left) receives the **Georgia Economic Developers Association's (GEDA) Rip Wiley Award** for Professional Excellence from **Jim Steed**, his mentor and former boss at the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDECd). The award is the highest honor bestowed by GEDA on a professional economic developer, and recognizes professionalism, integrity, leadership, commitment and contributions to the profession. A native of Jackson County, Tim has been in the Economic Development field for over 27 years and has served the Greater Hall Chamber since 2005. He served previously at the GDECd in a number of roles, including Assistant Deputy Commissioner. Tim is a Certified Economic Developer (CEd) by the International Economic Development Council, a graduate of the Oglethorpe University, and has an MBA from the University of Georgia.



Eagle Ranch opens the Wings Center



Thank you **Eagle Ranch** for hosting the Greater Hall Chamber Board of Directors in October. (L-R) **Kit Dunlap**, Chamber President & CEO; **Eddie Staub**, Founder & CEO, Eagle Ranch; **John Shackleford**, Executive Director, Eagle Ranch; Chamber Chairman **Phil Sutton**, Kubota Manufacturing. Eagle Ranch is a community uniquely designed to help make life better for children and families going through a crisis. Since 1985, Eagle Ranch has served as Georgia's foremost family reunification program. The James W. Webb Wings Center opened this fall and offers outpatient counseling, retreats and training for the Northeast Georgia and metro Atlanta communities. eagleranch.org



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Leadership Hall County



Leadership Hall's education program began at Lakeview Academy with presentations by **Dr. Kirsty Montgomery**, *Head of School*, and **John Simpson**, *Assistant Head of School*. At Gainesville High School, **Dr. Jeremy Williams**, *Superintendent, Gainesville City Schools*, and **Jamie Green**, *GHS Principal*, discussed the city school system. Lunch was held at the **Bistro at The Oaks at Lanier College & Career Academy** where **Rhonda Samples** and **Deana Harper** of the Hall County School System gave an overview of Work Based Learning initiatives. At the University of North Georgia Gainesville Campus, **Dr. Richard Oates**, *VP Gainesville Campus*, spoke about the university followed by tours of the nursing and film/digital media departments. Thank you sponsors: **Hall County School System**, **Lakeview Academy** and **the University of North Georgia**.

Applications open for Youth Leadership Hall



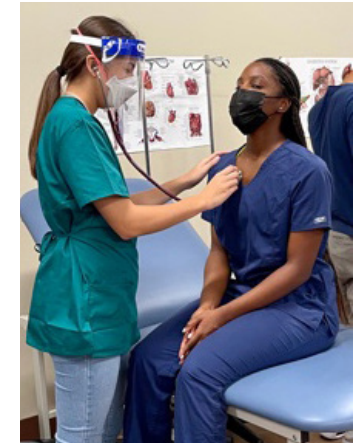
Founded in 2006, Youth Leadership Hall (YLH) seeks to build individual leadership skills, foster positive group dynamics and increase civic and community involvement. Over 1,000 high school students have successfully completed the program

through a series of sessions combining lectures and tours on such topics as the Judicial System, Economic Development, Social Services and Career Development.

Applications are now open for the Class of 2022-2023 for high school juniors and seniors from Gainesville-Hall County public and private schools as well as homeschoolers. Potential participants are asked to complete an application and provide a letter of reference from a community leader. A cross-section of students are chosen by their own merits based upon their application.

For details and to apply, visit [GHCC.com/education/youth-leadership-hall](https://ghcc.com/education/youth-leadership-hall) or contact Andi Tippens, Chamber Vice President of Education, 770-532-6206 x 113 or email andi@ghcc.com.

Medical Scholars visit Brenau University



Medical Scholars is a joint project of the Greater Hall Chamber, Brenau University and Foothills Area Health Education Center. The program gives rising high school juniors the opportunity to explore possibilities for university level studies and rewarding careers in healthcare professions. This year's class includes 68 students from nine private and public Hall County high schools and Dawson County High. The group recently visited Brenau University's Physical Therapy (PT) Department where they learned from PT students how to test range of motion, reflexes, and practice using different assistive devices and equipment. They visited the new Physician's Assistant program where they learned how to take vitals and complete patient workups. The program ended at the Human Donor Lab where people have donated their bodies to science. The lab is a critical component of teaching all health science students at Brenau University. Details: Andi Tippens, 678-971-6331. Email: andi@ghcc.com

Partners in Education

Raymond James Investment Banking | Gainesville Exploration Academy

Raymond James Investment Banking is a new Partner in Education with **Gainesville Exploration Academy** this year.

The company recently donated two bikes, a hoverboard and a Razor Scooter to the school's Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports (PBIS) incentive program. Part of a district wide implementation of PBIS (Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports), students at the school are able to earn Super Stomp



Raymond James' **Kristian Martin** with donations to the Gainesville Exploration Academy Super Stomp Store.

Bucks by showing the 4 R's (Ready, Responsible, Respectful, Role Model). Bucks can be spent in the Super Stomp Store. "Students are taught our school expectations throughout the year and are rewarded for showing these expectations by their teachers, other teachers and staff, and Administration," said Michelle Masters, *Ed.S., Assistant Principal, Gainesville Exploration Academy*. "This helps create a positive school climate and culture within our school."

Coordinated by the Greater Hall Chamber, the Partners in Education (PIE) program supports regional education partnerships, including all 44 public city and county elementary, middle and high schools and over 350 partnering organizations. Info: Andi Tippens, 678-971-6331, or email andi@ghcc.com.

meetings & events



Networking | Food & Drink | Door Prizes | Cash Prize Drawing

Get in the holiday spirit at **Business After Hours on December 7th** at the **newly renovated Gainesville Civic Center**. Operated by Gainesville Parks & Rec, the facility now offers a variety space perfect for your next social, business or commercial event. Gainesville.org/recreation
Info: Mandy Lathem, 770-532-6206 x115. Email: mlathem@ghcc.com

Marketing Workshop

New Trends in Digital & Social Media Marketing

Wednesday, January 26

8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Brenau University

John Burd Center | Hosch Theatre

If there's one thing you can count on in social media and digital marketing, it's that the landscape is ALWAYS changing. Join **Liz Webber**, founder of **Webber + Co.**, a boutique marketing agency, as she shares her experience directing PR campaigns, leading social, and managing partnerships in-house and brand visibility. A **panel of local marketing professionals** will share tips and walk us through all the newest changes going on in the world of digital and social media. This lively, engaging, action-oriented workshop is one you won't want to miss!



A program of the Chamber's Small Business Council

Reservations Required • Includes Light Breakfast.

\$20 Chamber Members • \$30 Non-Members

Ellie Parker, 770-532-6206 x111 • eparker@ghcc.com • Online: GHCC.com/EVENTS

calendar

December

Tuesday, December 7

Business After Hours
Gainesville Civic Center

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
830 Green Street | Gainesville

Wednesday, December 8

Healthcare & Issues Committees

"Transforming Possibilities. One Community. One Goal" panel featuring **Jessica Dudley**, *United Way of Hall County*; **Dr. Monica Newton**, *NEGA Physicians Group*; **Maria Calkins**, *Gainesville Housing Authority*
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Chamber

Thursday, December 9

Eggs & Issues Breakfast

"Featuring the Hall County Legislative Delegation"
7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Lanier Technical College
Ramsey Conference Center

Friday, December 10

Network Over Coffee

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Lake Lanier Nutrition
1062 Thompson Bridge Road | Suite B10

Tuesday, December 14

Small Business Seminar

"Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Community" presented by **Jai Rogers**, *Delta Community Credit Union*
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Chamber

Thursday, December 16

Chamber Executive Committee

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

NOTE: No Chamber Board meeting in December. Chamber office is closed December 23-24 for Christmas.

January

Wednesday, January 5
Healthcare Committee

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Chamber

Tuesday, January 11

Small Business Seminar

"Stay true to your business identity and strengthen your workforce" presented by **Stacey Reece**, *Spherion Staffing*; **Robbie Parks**, *UGA SBDC*; **Tim McDonald**, *Lanier Technical College*
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. | Chamber

Friday, January 14

Network Over Coffee

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Carniceria Tapatia
1500 Browns Bridge Road | Gainesville

Thursday, January 20

Business After Hours

Sponsored by **Pro-GeneX**
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
669 Lanier Park Drive | Gainesville

Tuesday, January 25

South Hall Business Coalition

"South Hall Medical Update"
Presented by **Anthony Williamson**, *Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton*, and **Mimi Collins**, *Longstreet Clinic*
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | The Venue at Friendship Springs in Flowery Branch

Wednesday, January 26

Marketing Workshop

"Trends in Digital & Social Media Marketing"
Sponsored by **Brenau University**
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Brenau University | John Burd Center

Up-to-date INFO:
GHCC.com/events

Sponsor an upcoming event!

Business Expo 2022

Thursday, February 17, 2022

11:00am - 4:00pm

Lanier Technical College | Lanier Islands

Healthy Hall Awards Luncheon

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lanier Technical College | Lanier Islands

Chamber Chase 5K & 2 Mile Walk

Thursday, March 24, 2022

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Lanier Islands

Hackers Holiday Golf Tournament

Friday, April 22, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Legacy on Lanier Golf Club | Lanier Islands

WHY TWO IS BETTER THAN ONE WHEN IT COMES TO CANCER CARE

When you're facing cancer, you want a winning team on your side. Even better, two. That's why Northeast Georgia Medical Center is a proud network affiliate of Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University – Georgia's only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center.



"The importance of this affiliation between NGMC and Emory is invaluable for this community," says Maria McDaniel, who was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in January 2019.

"To have access to all the specialties, all the research that's going on at Emory – and to be able to receive that level of care here in our own backyard – means so much for cancer patients [at NGMC]."

"The way that I feel now in my cancer journey is so very thankful and so very blessed. The level of care that I received at Northeast Georgia Medical Center and Emory was premium and it was the greatest blessing that my family could have received following the worst news we could have ever received."

Hear more of Maria's heartfelt story at nghs.com/more

BENEFITS OF NGMC'S NETWORK AFFILIATION WITH WINSHIP CANCER INSTITUTE:

MORE EXPERTISE

At NGMC, we treat almost 3,000 new patients each year. Our cancer specialists trained at some of the most prestigious institutions in the nation. Add in the expertise and collaboration of Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, and we've got a wealth of experience our patients can trust.

MORE CLINICAL COLLABORATION

As an affiliate of Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, our patients at NGMC can benefit from multi-specialty collaboration and tumor boards, second opinions and access to clinical trials only available at National Cancer Institute-designed centers.

MORE LEADING CANCER RESEARCH & CLINICAL TRIALS

NGMC has been participating in leading clinical trials since 1996 to give you access to the latest research advances in cancer treatment. Our collaboration with Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University allows patients even more access to promising clinical trials.

To learn more about NGMC's affiliation with Winship, visit nghs.com/more

more voices, more victories.



When you're facing cancer, you want a strong team on your side. Even better, two. That's why Northeast Georgia Medical Center is now a network affiliate of Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University – Georgia's only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center. Together, we deliver some of the most effective treatments and promising clinical trials, right here at home. It all starts with more voices – and leads to more victories.

Northeast Georgia Medical Center

Learn about the collaboration, and choose your cancer doctor at nghs.com/more

Emory Winship Cancer Institute Network Affiliates collaborate with Emory on quality and safety initiatives to improve care locally.



Winter festivities open at Lanier Islands



License to Chill Snow Island is open at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands®, and visitors can take part in Georgia's one and only SNOW celebration – complete with the 8-story high, 575-foot Blizzard Mountain slide, one of the longest and steepest snow tube hills in The South! The newly expanded interactive holiday lights walking tour includes dining on seasonal

favorites, roast marshmallows over a firepit, visit with Santa, hop aboard an amusement ride, gliding around an ice-skating rink and so much more. The lakeside resort plays host to several imaginative accommodation packages. Deluxe overnight stays include accommodations at the incomparable Legacy Lodge, Legacy Villas and LakeHouses at Legacy. The newly opened Camp Margaritaville RV Resort will also be accepting guests. Consider a staycation at Lanier Islands with a winter wonderland right here at home! lanierislands.com

Anna Hester joins Chamber Team



Anna Hester
Project Manager
Greater Hall Chamber

Hall County native Anna Hester previously worked for the State of Georgia, serving in various economic development roles. She worked at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as Executive Director of the OneGeorgia Authority and as a CDBG Disaster Recovery Project Specialist, assisting with economic development programs for Southwest Georgia in recovery from Hurricane Michael. Anna also served in various roles in Governor Nathan Deal's administration office in Atlanta. She is a graduate of Gainesville High School and the University of Georgia. As Chamber Project Manager for Economic Development and Government Affairs, Anna is responsible for the work of the Issues Committee as well as

Economic Development and Government Affairs projects. She and her husband, Ford, reside in Gainesville with their daughter and family dog. Anna states she's excited to return to Gainesville and serve the business community in her hometown.

HEALTHY HALL Awards of Excellence

The Greater Hall Chamber's Healthcare Awards Program spotlights those in the healthcare industry making a significant impact on our quality of life through excellence in health and wellness. 2022 awards will be presented at the **5th Annual Healthy Hall Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, March 2 (11:30 am - 1:00 pm)** at **Lanier Technical College**, Ramsey

Conference Center. Nominate an individual, business or organization for a Healthy Hall Award of Excellence at surveymonkey.com/r/HealthyHallAwards. Event Sponsorships available. Info: Ellie Parker, 770-532-6206 x 111. Email: eparker@ghcc.com

- **WDUN** (AM550 and FM 102.9) and **AccessWDUN.com**, divisions of Gainesville-based **Jacobs Media**, won top honors in the three categories at the Georgia Association of Broadcasters' 59th annual GABBY Awards. The station was honored for best team news coverage, best reporter (Lauren Hunter) and best sports play-by-play (Caleb Hutchins, Gene Anderson, Avery Bryson). The awards celebrate broadcasting excellence at radio and TV stations in Georgia. accesswdun.com
- Make a difference in a child's life this Christmas by participating in the **Salvation Army's Angel Tree program** by donating NEW toys and clothes through the **Oakwood Walmart Registry**. All items gifted to local families. Info: [Facebook.com/TSAGainesville](https://www.facebook.com/TSAGainesville).
- **Northeast Georgia Health System** (NGHS) continues to expand its access to care for people in the region and recently broke ground on its **newest medical plaza in Jefferson**. Easily accessible from U.S. 129, the facility is expected to accommodate over 50,000 visits per year after it opens in Fall 2022 and will be home to a new Northeast Georgia Physicians Group (NGPG) Urgent Care location, a Georgia Heart Institute location and NGPG services including family medicine, sports medicine, orthopedic surgery and general surgery. nghs.com
- Owner **Jeff Hylton** and staff at the **Ark on Lake Lanier** invite all Chamber members to a **Mingle & Jingle Open House on December 9th** (5-9pm) and **December 10th** (11am-2pm). Visit the Ark retreat and enjoy fellowship, great food, music and all of the festivities. They're accepting toy donations to benefit children in our community. Bring gifts unwrapped. 6205 Old Dawsonville Road in Gainesville. RSVP to Jackie Page, jackie@arkonlakelanier.com
- The **UGA SBDC Gainesville** will host the **North Georgia Business Conference on Tuesday, December 7** (9:30am-5:00pm) at **Brenau University's Thurmond McRae Lecture Hall**. Whether you are struggling to find access to capital, available tax credits, qualified employees, cybersecurity or avenues for finding new customers, or suppliers internationally, this conference is for you. Fee: \$129. Info: Nathaly Loaiza at Nloaiza@georgiasbdc.org or call 770-531-5681. georgiasbdc.org
- Join the Holiday fun at **Flowery Branch's Annual Christmas Market Block Party on December 18** (2pm – 8pm) at the Flowery Branch Train Depot. Enjoy photos with Santa, holiday music, specialty food and gift vendors and of course lots of fun family activities. Info: Renee Carden 770-967-6371 or email: Renee@flowerybranchga.org
- With a 140-year legacy of educating and empowering women, **Brenau University** presents the **Executive Women's Master of Business Administration**, designed to catapult talented women to the next level of their careers. This program equips uniquely driven women who are currently successful in the workplace but looking to advance to the C-suite with a flexible platform that combines cohort and independent learning through online classroom experiences. The next cohort begins in January. For info or to apply: Dr. Juli Clay at jclay1@brenau.edu or 770-538-4713. ewmba.brenau.edu
- Community leaders broke ground on two highly anticipated projects in Gainesville: **a new park in Hall County's District 4 on Athens Street** and the continued restoration of **The Butler Center**. The National Park Service approved a \$500,000 grant for park construction. Gainesville City School System (GCSS) will receive federal funding via the American Rescue Plan Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund to serve at-risk student populations. The proposed service center for students includes the reopening of The Butler Center with a renovated gym, classrooms, office areas, and more. The work will be an extension of GCSS and Hall County Family Connection Network.
- Looking for a place to host your Christmas dinner or party? Check out **Mack's Training & Development Center in Midtown Gainesville**, a 6,000 square foot venue with a variety of options and space for up to 80 guests. They partner with great local caterers, decorators, and DJ's. Call Ken Armstrong, 678-793-9081 or karmstrong@macksafety.com. Mention you saw us in *BusinessLink* and receive 20% off your booking until 1/5/22. macksafety.com

Got news?

Email: kwest@ghcc.com

small business development

Small Business of the Month Gypsy Threads



Gypsy Threads is a women's boutique inspired by bohemian and bold trends! The clothing store and trendy online boutique opened in 2015, and was purchased by **Taylor Wilson** in 2019. Taylor moved the store in April 2020 to its new location, right off the Gainesville Square. Taylor's goal for Gypsy is not just to be a place where you can come in and find a cute, trendy outfit – but also to come in and feel like a friend. She enjoys helping customers find that perfect addition to their closet, but also loves seeing familiar faces and getting to know her customers! 210 Bradford Street in Gainesville. 678-971-4679. mygypsythreads.com

Taylor Wilson, owner of Gypsy Threads in Downtown Gainesville.



The November Small Business Seminar – **Cyber Security: Protecting Your Business** – was presented by **John Madigan, CEO, ATS Tech Solutions**. (Front, L-R) **Stacey Reece**, Spherion Staffing; **Susan Kitchel**, Universal Resources; **John Madigan**, ATS Tech Solutions; Ellie Parker, Chamber. (Back L-R) **Jeremy Foster**, ATS Tech Solutions; **Barbara McKay**, Gainesville Milling Company; **Steve Naughton**, Enterprising Solutions; **Cameron Gordon**, Universal Resources; **Kodie Maxwell**, Maxwell Mentors; **Dianne Hicks**, EXP Realty; **Justine Palmer**, Engineered Openings.

Small Business Success Seminar Tuesday, December 14

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | In Person *or* via Zoom
Chamber (230 EE Butler Pkwy in Gainesville)

"Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Community"



Presented by
Jai Rogers, Delta Community Credit Union
Initiatives that foster Diversity and Inclusion are increasingly important in our communities and our workplaces. Now more than ever, businesses have great opportunities to assess and understand the diverse needs of the local communities they serve and to make a positive impact in residents' lives. Join **Jai Rogers**, VP Business & Community Development, **Delta Community Credit Union**, for a discussion of strategies for defining your business' impact and why doing good is good for business.



Upcoming Seminar

Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Small Business Seminar

"How to stay true to your business identity and strengthen your workforce"

8:30-9:30 am | Chamber In Person **OR** via Zoom

Learn tips on how to stay true to your business identity and strengthen your workforce from **Stacey Reece**, owner of Spherion Staffing, who has been advising businesses and employees in the Gainesville area for 25 years. **Robbie Parks**, Business Consultant at the UGA SBDC, brings over 20 years of experience focusing on marketing, communication and brand management. **Tim McDonald**, President of Lanier Technical College, has built his career of nearly 40 years on helping people find their passions and strive for success in their occupations and lives.

Info

Small Business Seminars are held monthly on topics of interest to small business. Check the Chamber's online calendar at **GHCC.com/EVENTS** for up-to-date info or contact Ellie Parker, 770-532-6206 x 111. eparker@ghcc.com

Become a Chamber 2022 **CERTIFIED** Small Business Partner by participating in six (6) Small Business Seminars this year.

CERTIFIED Partners Receive

- Certificate of Completion
- Certified Small Business Door Decal
- Recognition at a Chamber Board Meeting
- Announcement in the Business Link

Small Business Seminars are sponsored by **AccessWDUN**, **Caldwell Electrical Contractors**, **Gainesville Mechanical** and **The Times**.

2021 Industry of the Year Awards

Congratulations to the Industry of the Year Award Recipients announced at the 13th Annual Industry Appreciation Awards Luncheon presented by the Chamber and Lanier Technical College in November.



LaserCraft Technologies, Inc. (Industry of the Year / 51-200 Employees)

(L-R) **Tim Evans**, *Chamber*; **Scott Coleman** and **Angel Sharp Ledford**, *LaserCraft*; **Nikki Chandler**, *Chamber*; **Tim McDonald**, *Lanier Technical College*. Founded in 1996, LaserCraft Technologies was initially known for laser cutting. Today their capabilities include forming, punching, MIG and TIG welding, robotic welding, machining and manufacturing. The company outgrew its original location in Lilburn and relocated to Gainesville in 1999. This year, LaserCraft added 50 positions for a total of 153 employees at the company's 120,000 square foot headquarters and production facility in Gainesville Industrial Park South. Over 25% of the LaserCraft team has been employed for 10 years or more, and several have been with the company for over 20 years. The company is ISO 9001 certified and recertified under the new ISO standard, the 2015 Quality Management System. Community involvement is key to the company, and since 2013, employees have volunteered and supported the Georgia Mountain Food Bank. The company is a proud sponsor and supporter of the Annual Empty Bowl Luncheon to raise awareness of the need and donations for the cause. laser-craft.com



VDL Industries Gainesville (Industry of the Year / 1-50 Employees)

Rick Van Haren, *Managing Director* (center) accepted the award for **VDL Industries Gainesville**, a subsidiary of the VDLGroep, headquartered in the Netherlands. The Hall County subsidiary located to Oakwood South Industrial Park in 2018 and focuses primarily on subcontract manufacturing in metal fabrication and assembly. Manufacturing capabilities include robotic welding, sheet metal fabrication, press brakes and CNC Machining. VDL takes pride in investing in employee development through in-house training, promotion programs, and supervisory and managerial training. They also invest heavily in automation and robotics, and to date, have invested over \$15 million in their Hall County location. With a nod to the future, VDL encourages enthusiasm for technology in young people and our future workforce. VDL hosts tour groups for high school students and hopes to offer Work Based Learning and apprenticeship programs in the near future. vdlindustriesga.com



Bitzer US (Industry of the Year / 201+ Employees)

(L-R) **Tim Evans**, *Chamber*; **Mike Zeiler**, *Director of Operations*, *Bitzer US*; **Nikki Chandler**, *Chamber*; **Tim McDonald**, *Lanier Technical College*. Since 2004, Bitzer US has put Hall County on the map for industrial and commercial refrigeration and air conditioning compressor technology. The company's Green compressors are known throughout the industry for their quality and high reliability. At the company's US headquarters and production operation in South Hall County, over 200 employees manufacture and service compressors. The company is committed to workforce development and has made its imprint on growing apprenticeship programs. Bitzer is a partner in Work Based Learning (WBL) programs at Flowery Branch and Cherokee Bluff High schools. Several WBL students have joined Bitzer full time after graduation. During the COVID 19 Pandemic, the company donated Personal Protective Equipment for all students in the welding programs so they could continue their hands-on education. Bitzer offers 100% tuition reimbursement for performing employees that want to develop both professionally and academically. Bitzer also supports the Greater Hall Chamber's Leadership Hall, Youth Leadership Hall and the South Hall Business Council. bitzerus.com

economic development

Elizabeth and John Moon, owners of **Green Box Mushrooms**, accept the **Environmental Responsibility Recognition Award**. The Moon's grow hundreds of pounds of Oyster Mushrooms daily using bottle cultivation instead of the old methodology of growing mushrooms in plastic bags. Bottles are less labor intensive than bags and very ecologically sustainable. After their product is harvested, the used substrates are put towards compost to fertilize and rejuvenate farmlands. greenboxmushrooms.com



Keith Collier, Director of Engineering, and **Rob Hathy**, Plant Director, accept the **Corporate Responsibility Recognition Award** for **King's Hawaiian**. With 700 employees at the Oakwood bakery, King's Hawaiian continues to grow their Manufacturing Technician Apprenticeship Program and provide training for staff. By offering in-house English as a Second Language courses, they're making a long-term investment in the education and lives of employees. The team help develop the Lanier Tech Quality Control Technician Apprenticeship program and is a partner of Work Based Learning and Youth Apprenticeships. kingshawaiian.com

(L-R) **Bobby Smith**, Maintenance Manager, **Ritchie Robinson**, Portion Control Plant Manager, **Ryan Reeves**, Corporate PSM Coordinator, and **Gale Dale**, HR Manager, accepted the **Workforce Development**



Recognition Award for **John Soules Foods**. As the #1 producer of beef and chicken fajitas in the U.S., John Soules Foods provides great tasting products. They believe in developing a strong workforce and hired all five graduates of Lanier Tech's 2020 Electro-mechanical/Ammonia Refrigeration Academy. Two of these employees have already moved up to managerial positions. They also hired graduates from this year's class. johnsoulesfoods.com

2021 Industry of the Year Awards

- **VDL USA** (Small Employer Category / 1-50 Employees)
- **LaserCraft Technologies, Inc.** (Medium Employer Category / 51-200 Employees)
- **Bitzer US** (Large Employer Category / 201+ Employees)
- **John Soules Foods** (Workforce Development Recognition)
- **Kubota Manufacturing Corporation** (Safety Performance Recognition)
- **King's Hawaiian** (Corporate Responsibility Recognition)
- **Green Box Mushrooms, Inc.** (Environmental Responsibility Recognition)



(L-R) **Phil Sutton**, Vice President; **Paul Cowart**, Safety Manager; **Brian Arnold**, VP & Chief Manufacturing Officer; and **Chuck Hardigree**, Senior Purchasing Manager, accepted the **Safety Performance Recognition Award** for **Kubota Manufacturing**. Following the values established by the company over 120 years ago, Kubota began production in Gainesville 25 years ago and spends hours extensively training both new hires and existing employees to excel in productivity and safety. With ongoing commitment to their 2,532 employees, Kubota leadership believes that no work should be carried out without serious consideration of safety and health. This year, as well as in years past, the company achieved Total Recordable Incident Rates that are well below the industry average. kubota-kma.com

Senator Butch Miller was the keynote speaker at the **13th Annual Industry Appreciation Luncheon** with over 250 attending. Thank you **Lanier Technical College** - presenting sponsor. Gold Sponsors: **Carroll Daniel Construction, Jackson EMC, King's Hawaiian** and **Wilheit Packaging**. Silver Sponsors: AT&T, Coca-Cola United Gainesville, Corporate Storage, Georgia Power, Liberty, Pattillo Industrial Real Estate, Rochester & Associates, Rushton, Specialty Orthopaedics and Workforce Strategies Group.



Thank You Chamber Sponsors!

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Gainesville Civic Center
Gainesville Mechanical
Hall County School System

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Lakeview Academy
Lanier Technical College
Milton Martin Honda
NGMC Braselton
Signs by Tomorrow

South Hall Rotary
Store More Self Storage
The Times
University of North Georgia
Gainesville

ribbon cuttings

Chris Robinson State Farm Agency



Alex Coley, Chris Robinson, Sydney Robinson, Janelle Sanders and Cameron Spinks cut a ribbon at **Chris Robinson State Farm** in Buford. "Our mission is to have lasting relationships with our customers while providing exceptional and professional service," said Chris Robinson. "We want to be the first and preferred choice for customers' insurance and financial services." The agency offers auto, home, business and life insurance. Stop by the office to experience their friendly and professional service. 5370 Lanier Islands Pkwy, Suite 5, Buford GA 30518. 678-889-8423. AgentChrisRobinson.com

Firestone Complete Auto Care



Store Manager **Chaz Bentley** cuts a ribbon at the new **Firestone Complete Auto Care** in Flowery Branch. Since 1926, Firestone Complete Auto Care has served as one of the world's largest tire and auto services providers. Come out and visit the new location in Flowery Branch, and take advantage of great savings and discounts. 3466 Winder Highway, Flowery Branch, GA. 678-235-9640. FirestoneCompleteAutoCare.com

Watermark Senior Living



Owners **Julie Kern**, Vice-President, and **Dean Rappa**, President, cut a ribbon at **Watermark Senior Living, Inc.**, a boutique-style personal care home community for seniors. Situated on 10 picturesque acres in Flowery Branch, Watermark provides a beautiful, safe, loving home in a family-like setting where seniors get help with their daily needs. The company's mission is to show the love of Christ to resident families by helping each individual live out their purpose. Watermark offers delicious scratch-cooked meals, assistance with managing medications and help with dressing, bathing and grooming so that families get the rest and peace of mind they deserve. 5761 Conner Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542. 770-965-0961. WatermarkSeniors.com

Fish Window Cleaning



Julie and Jim Worsham cut a ribbon at **Fish Window Cleaning**. Best at window cleaning for two reasons – expertise and reliability – the Fish team shows up and gets the job done right using the latest window cleaning tools and techniques. The licensed, bonded and insured staff is dedicated to serving you year-round. They serve both commercial and residential customers throughout Gainesville-Hall County, Sugar Hill, Dacula, Suwanee, Duluth, Johns Creek and Cumming with pressure washing, gutter/awnings cleaning and high cleaning/dusting. 678-981-6385. 3001 McEver Road, Suites A&B, Buford GA 30518. fishwindowcleaning.com/3058

Promote your company with a FREE Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

It's a free service if you're a member of the Chamber. Not a member? Join now, call 770-532-6206.

welcome new members

Amedisys Home Health

Bob Ditaranto
2565 Thompson Bridge Road
Suites 204 & 205
Gainesville, GA 30506
(678) 780-1079
- Home Health
amedisys.com

Camille Viera Services Inc.

Camille Viera
175 John W Morrow Pkwy
Gainesville, GA 30501
(770) 287-7745
- Business Services
camillevieraservices.com

Ecker Construction, Inc.

Melody Pullara
2980 Gravel Springs Road
Buford, GA 30519
(770) 922-5726
- Construction
eckerconstruction.com

Georgia Skin Cancer & Aesthetic Dermatology

Clay Kirkland
1498 Jesse Jewell Pkwy, Suite D
Gainesville, GA 30501
(706) 543-5858
- Dermatology
georgiaderm.com

Georgia United Credit Union

Steve Overcash
6705 Sugarloaf Parkway
Duluth, GA 30096
(770) 846-2799
- Financial Institution
gucu.org

Mountain Valley Community Bank

Jennifer Loggins
955 Riverside Drive
Gainesville, GA 30501
(470) 824-3001
- Financial Institution
mvcbank.com

MTD Benefits

J. Kevin Heath
3368 Thompson Bridge Road
Gainesville, GA 30506
(678) 928-3920
- Insurance
mtdbenefits.com

Mugshotz

Shannan Mahnken
150 Pearl Nix Pkwy, Suite C7
Gainesville, GA 30501
(706) 300-4440
- Entertainment
instagram.com/mugshotz

Oakwood Training & Fitness

Colby Callahan
3615 Explorer Trail
Oakwood, GA 30566
(678) 617-6999
- Fitness Center
oakwoodtrainingandfitness.com

Panera Bread

Shannon Taylor
625 Dawsonville Hwy
Gainesville, GA 30501
(678) 389-4848
- Restaurant
panerabread.com

Reeves Young

Mike Rhinehart
45 Peachtree Industrial Blvd
Sugar Hill, GA 30518
(770) 271-1159
- Construction
reevesyoung.com

SMI Services

Kathy Richards
2699 Buford Hwy
Buford, GA 30518
(678) 232-4221
- Business Services

The Norton Agency

Miranda Brooks
434 Green Street
Gainesville, GA 30501
(706) 781-9410
- Real Estate

Woodmen Life

Chris Barnes
P.O. Box 159
(770) 654-1256
- Insurance
woodmen.org

Business After Hours



Business After Hours at **Smith Hulsey Law** and **Skyline Contracting** on Green Street in Gainesville. (L-R) **Wes Hall**, *Skyline Contracting*; **Rustin Smith & Ronny Hulsey**, *Smith Hulsey Law*; **Brad Gooch**, *Lawson Air Conditioning & Plumbing* - winner of the Big Green Egg Doorprize!

new year NEW YOU expo



January 14, 2022
The Chair Factory
908 Grove Street • Gainesville, GA 30501
9:00 AM – NOON

The Times
gainesvilletimes.com
Honestly local.

For more information or to become a vendor
please email Megan Lewis at
mlewis@gainesvilltimes.com or call 770-535-6371

Business EXPO 2022

Thursday, February 17

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Lanier Technical College

Ramsey Conference Center

*Business Expo is FREE and
Open to the Public!*

Annual Small Business Luncheon

12:00 am - 1:00 pm

Lunch Meeting to Celebrate Small Business & Entrepreneurs

Business EXPO 2022

11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Northeast Georgia's Largest Trade Show with 60+ Exhibitors

60+ Exhibitors

FREE & Open to the Public

Networking & Leads Development

Prize Drawings All Day



Promote Your Business!

Exhibit SPACE Available – Sign up as a SPONSOR

Mandy Lathem, 770-532-6206 x115. Email: mlathem@ghcc.com

Business After Hours 2022

– Save the Date –

January 20 – Pro-GeneX

February 15 – Brenau University

March 29 – Lakeview Academy

April 14 – The Norton Agency

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, December 7

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Sponsored by the **Gainesville Civic Center**

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

830 Green Street in Gainesville

Networking · Cash Prize Drawing

Thursday, December 9

EGGS & ISSUES BREAKFAST

7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Lanier Technical College

Ramsey Conference Center

In Person · Open to the Public

Tuesday, December 14

SMALL BUSINESS SEMINAR

"Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Community"

Presented by **Jai Rogers**, Delta Community

Credit Union

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

In Person at the Chamber OR via Zoom

Wednesday, January 26

MARKETING WORKSHOP

8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Brenau University

John Burd Center | Hosch Theatre

In Person!



Eggs & Issues Breakfast 2021
Thursday, December 9

7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Lanier Technical College

Ramsey Conference Center

Presented by



Senator Butch Miller
49th GA Senate District



Rep. Lee Hawkins
27th GA House District



Rep. Emory Dunahoo
30th GA House District



Rep. Matt Dubnik
29th GA House District



Rep. Timothy Barr
103rd GA House District

SPACE LIMITED

Registration Required

Breakfast Included

Chamber Member: \$40

Non-Member: \$50

Table: \$400 (seats 6)

RESERVATIONS:

Gerri Collins

770-532-6206 x 106

Register Online: [GHCC.com/events](https://ghcc.com/events)

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