

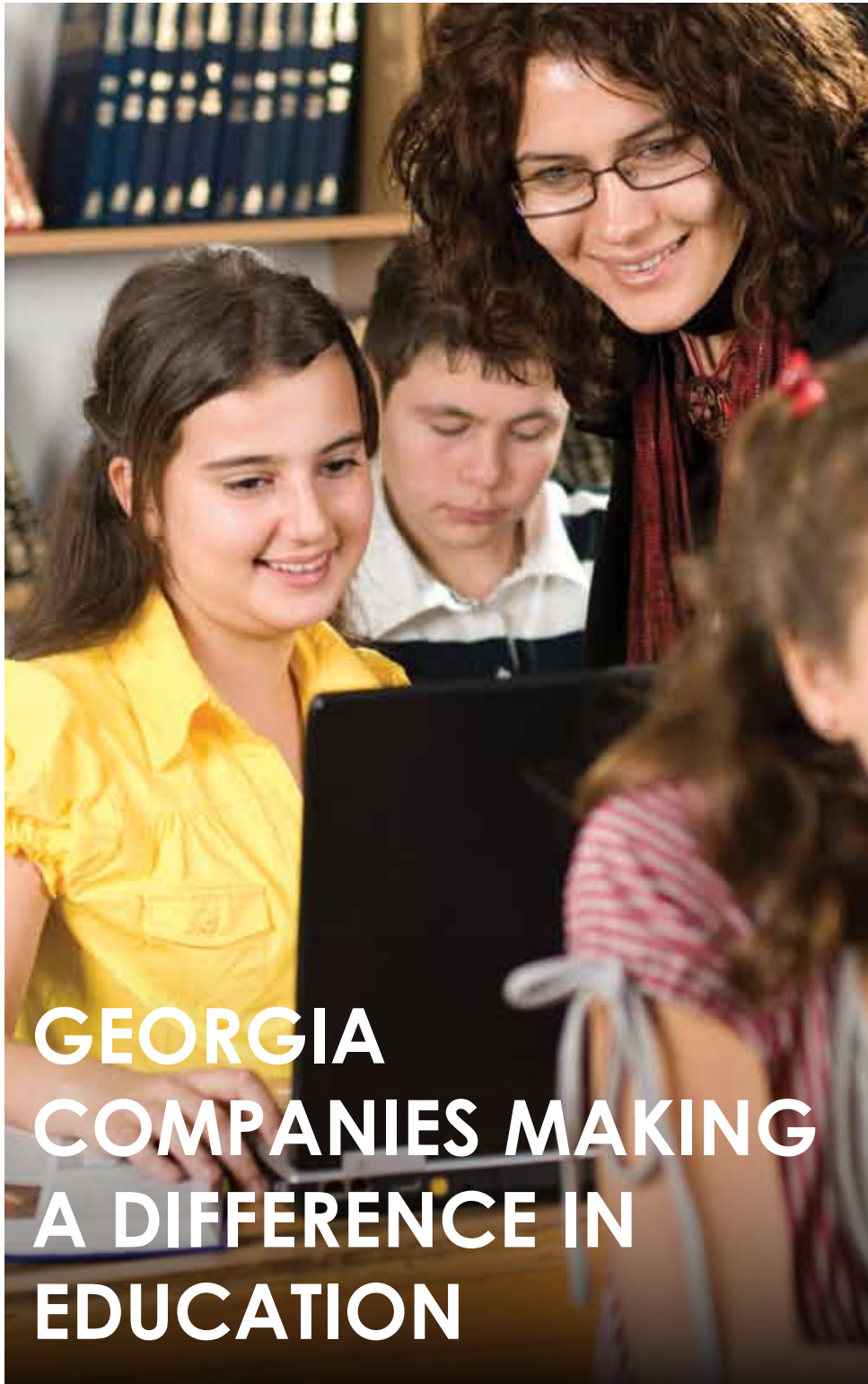
PR FILE

THE GEORGIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MAGAZINE

www.gachamber.com

SEPT/OCT 2011

Supplement to
Georgia Trend
Magazine



**GEORGIA
COMPANIES MAKING
A DIFFERENCE IN
EDUCATION**

THIS ISSUE:

HIGHER EDUCATION
AND GEORGIA'S
ECONOMY

GEORGIA'S
IMPROVED STUDENT
DATA SYSTEM

CHARTER SCHOOLS
RECOVERING FROM
COURT DECISION

2011
CONGRESSIONAL
LUNCHEON RECAP

Even the best teachers
can use a little assistance



Every child deserves to succeed academically. And every teacher deserves to have the tools necessary to make success a reality. That's why in 2011, Georgia Power awarded 40 of the best and brightest educators with New Teacher Assistance Grants of \$1,000 each for their first year in the classroom. The money goes toward purchasing additional classroom supplies, equipment and materials. Our goal is to encourage Georgia's newest teachers in their important role of educating our youth.

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Making Schools Successful a Top Priority



If your house is anything like mine, you've spent the past couple of weeks getting settled into a new school year. I've gotten reviews of the new teachers, heard both excitement and concern about this year's course work, and helped make decisions about extracurricular activities. And I can promise you that right when we get the new routine down something else will come along to make the school year even busier — but trust me, I'm not complaining. Watching

my kids do their homework, going to their sporting events and school plays, and even attending parent-teacher conferences over the years have been great reminders of how fortunate we are that our children have been able to attend some of the wonderful schools we have here in Georgia.

I've been a student of our state's school system for more years than I care to admit. My first job out of college was as a staff assistant for then-School Superintendent Werner Rogers. I learned quickly about all of the incredible work that goes into making our schools successful.

When I joined my family's real estate business, I began to understand education from a different angle. I learned how access to education — both public and private — enhances our communities and drives economic development. People want to live and companies want to locate near quality schools from K-12 through post-secondary education and training.

Having children of my own, one who attends Gainesville City Schools and one who just started at Young Harris College, certainly cemented my understanding of and commitment to excellence in education. I know that all they have learned over the years — combined with the education that still lies ahead — will be the foundation for any success they experience in their respective careers. There is an undeniable tie between knowledge and job success — just as there is between education and economic development, a topic some of Georgia's college presidents took the time to comment about for this issue of the Profile.

All of these are reasons why I am proud that the Georgia Chamber has a long history of not only supporting our state's schools, but advocating for improvements that will give students of all ages the high-quality education and training they deserve.

Through the leadership of our Education & Workforce Development policy committee, chaired this year by Charlene Sizemore, we are fighting for higher standards, improved performance, and more seamless transitions for students between education and the workplace. Fortunately, we are not alone — many of our members, including companies featured in the following pages, are working toward the same goals — and I am confident that working together we will ultimately achieve the excellence we all desire.

Doug Carter, 2011 Chair



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CONTACT THE GEORGIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

233 Peachtree Street NE
Suite 2000
Atlanta, GA 30303-1564

P: 404-223-2264 F: 404-223-2290 E: communications@gachamber.com

www.gachamber.com

Georgia Chamber: Focused on Success for All Business



It's hard to believe that summer is already over – and it certainly has been a busy one for the Georgia Chamber!

We started with a great Spring Board Retreat, rallied new members thanks to our incredible

volunteers with the Team Georgia Campaign, held our most successful Congressional Luncheon with over 1,000 friends in Perry, and traveled to every region of the state with Governor Deal's Competitiveness Initiative and our annual Power Lunch series.

These have all been great opportunities to talk with you, our investors, about what is important to your business, what you need to be successful, and what you expect from your investment in our Chamber.

What we have learned is that there are still a number of challenges ahead for our state's business community. We need a transportation system that does a better job of moving both people and freight.

We need to keep Atlanta and Washington from over-regulating business in ways that hamper economic growth. And we need to be mindful of the fact that businesses, just like families, are having to do more with less.

But the one message that we heard the loudest is that the time has come to get serious about improving education. While we have great schools throughout the state, we also have many that are simply not doing the job. And while we have an enviable post-secondary system, we need to make sure that the curriculum and training programs being offered are adequately preparing graduates for not only the jobs that exist today, but the ones we will recruit in the future. Moving forward, the Georgia Chamber will take a more aggressive and active role in the long term improvement of Georgia schools.

Fortunately, the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative provided an opportunity for business leaders, elected officials and economic development professionals to provide input regarding the kinds of improvements and changes they would like to see. As you read this issue of the *Profile*, Governor Deal and

the members of the Initiative's Steering Committee – most of whom are Georgia Chamber members – are reviewing those ideas and developing recommendations for change – not only with respect to education, but to transportation, regulation and many other issues important to your business.

You can keep posted on the efforts of the Initiative at www.georgiacompetitiveness.org and can look forward to seeing the results later this fall.

Our involvement in the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative is just one of the many ways our Chamber is proactively working to improve our state's economy and earn your continued support. I hope that when you receive our member survey in the coming weeks, you will take the time to let us know how we are doing so that we can achieve our mission of Leading Business Forward.

Thank you for all that you do for our Chamber and our state.

Chris Clark, President & CEO

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★ MEMBER NEWS

Perimeter Community Improvement District

President Yvonne Williams was awarded a scholarship from the Hansjoerg Wyss Fund for Social Enterprise to attend an executive education program at Harvard University designed to enhance the capacity and performance of nonprofit organizations.

The Association of General Contractors of America - Georgia Chapter

elected Dave Cyr as the 2011-12 chapter secretary, his second consecutive term in this role. Cyr is President of **Parrish Construction Group**, a Perry-headquartered, full-service contractor.

Len Dorminey ranked third on the Atlanta Business Chronicle's "Georgia CEOs of The Year" list. Dorminey is President and CEO of **Heritage Financial Group, Inc.**, and CEO of **HeritageBank of the South**. The ranking weighed shareholder returns, increase in revenues and increase in net income, all equally.

Larry R. Flynn of Gulfstream Aerospace

will become president of the Savannah-based corporation effective September 1. Flynn joined Gulfstream in May 1995 as vice president of aircraft services with more than 25 years of managing aircraft service facilities.



Council on Alcohol and Drugs Working for Safe, Responsible Alcohol Sales in Georgia

The Council on Alcohol and Drugs, a Georgia Chamber affiliate that assists businesses in achieving drug-free certification, is taking its show on the road this fall offering a series of Responsible Alcohol Sales & Service (RASS) training workshops for alcohol retailers. RASS offers county-specific training for sellers, managers, and licensees in their workshops across Georgia. Through RASS workshops retailers will gain information on:

- Creating or strengthening company policies regarding alcohol sales
- Disciplinary actions for abuse of such policies
- Training methods and materials for employees - including how to recognize false identifications and how to safely refuse a sale

Additionally RASS workshops are helping retailers interpret and comply with state and local rules and regulations, which can change regularly. RASS supplies retailers with the knowledge and tools needed to easily implement strategies for preventing sales to youth and intoxicated patrons.

Currently the Council is working with the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety to establish regular RASS Workshops in Fulton, Hall, Spalding and Rockdale Counties.

Under Georgia law, a licensed alcohol retailer may be liable for injuries caused by an intoxicated customer if the customer was underage or if the customer was of age but intoxicated at the time of the sale. Statistics show the grave nature of the underage drinking problem in Georgia and include the fact that motor

vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Georgians between 15 and 24 years of age. In 2007 underage drinking cost Georgia \$1.7 billion; \$278 million of that total was attributable to youth traffic crashes.

For more information please contact Leanne Mulherin at The Council at lmulherin@livedrugfree.org or (404) 223-2482.



Business Leaders Encouraged to Support Schools through Bus Trip

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education will hold its 19th Annual Bus Trip Across Georgia October 25-27 and business leaders are encouraged to participate. The theme this year is "Georgia's Public Schools: Changing Culture, Building Community, and Reaching Excellence."

The 2011 trip will focus on eight schools in the mid-eastern and southeastern regions of the state. The selected schools are: Lake Oconee Academy (Greene County); Oak Hill Middle School (Baldwin County); Langston Chapel Elementary School (Bulloch County); Claxton Middle School (Evans County); Taylors Creek Elementary School (Liberty County); Sugarmill Elementary School (Camden

County); Golden Isles Career Academy (Glynn County); and Ware County High School (Ware County).

Steve Dolinger, Georgia Partnership president, explained the selected schools have shown they are adjusting to the new economy, which is requiring the preparation of a rapidly changing workforce. "We both celebrate the achievement of these winning schools and showcase their exciting ideas to the leaders who join us from all over the state. We want participants to take what they learn back home for possible use in their own schools."

Registration for the three-day trip, which is free to all participants, will open the first week of September. Dolinger

stressed that visitors are welcome for either the whole trip or at individual sites. "I encourage the local business community to come out and support their school when we arrive. It really is a celebration." More details will be announced soon on the Georgia Partnership web site – www.gpee.org (Programs/Annual Bus Trip).



GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Cousins Properties CEO

Larry Gellerstedt had a great second quarter beginning construction on Emory Point, a mixed-use project near the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Emory University. Cousins' operating funds were \$10.9 million, up from \$7.9 million in the second quarter last year.

The Coca-Cola Foundation

gifted \$6 million to 40 organizations in the second quarter for education, fitness and nutrition programs, community recycling and access to clean water. \$1.5 million went to educational initiatives.

The WellStar Health System

Board of Trustees selected Reynold J. Jennings as the sole finalist for the position of WellStar President and CEO. Jennings, a Cobb County resident, previously served as chief operating officer of Tenet Healthcare.

SunTrust Banks Inc.

gave the United Way Worldwide a \$2.88 million grant and is now a United Way Global Corporate Leadership Partner. The bank gave the nonprofit \$8.4 million last year, including \$4 million in pledges from SunTrust employees.



Above: Georgia Chamber Education Policy Committee Chair Charlene Sizemore (left) with Michelle Rhee at the 2011 Spring Board Retreat.

Prominent Education Reform Leader Addresses Chamber Leaders

The Georgia Chamber was honored to feature Michelle Rhee, a nationally renowned leader in public education reform, as one of the keynote speakers at the Spring Board Retreat earlier this year.

Rhee has dedicated her professional life to equipping our nation's youth with the tools they will need to excel in this ever-changing world. She has taken her personal mantra for putting students first into practice on a nationwide scale in order to improve student achievement, attract quality teachers, and build school systems that are focused on delivering quality, high-level education for every student.

As the founder and CEO of StudentsFirst, Ms. Rhee has built a tremendous grassroots action network around the United States that is fighting for reform, even right here in Georgia. Parents, students, educators, administrators and citizens have been mobilized by StudentsFirst to seek meaningful solutions to improving education at the state and federal level.

Her remarks to the Georgia Chamber, titled "Education Reform: Why Business Should Care" are available to view in their entirety at the Press Room page of the Georgia Chamber website, www.gachamber.com.

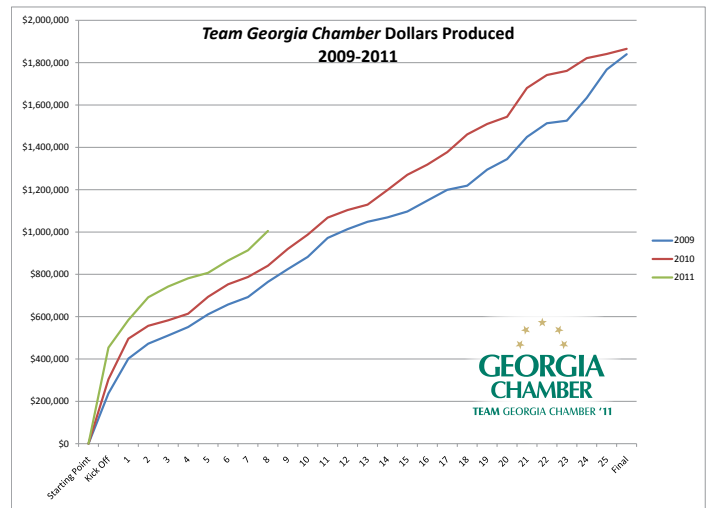
Team Georgia Chamber Breaks Million Dollar Mark in Week Eight

The 2011 Team Georgia Chamber is "Going to Bat for Georgia Business" and at week eight, the team of over four-hundred campaign volunteers had already broken the one million dollar mark. With thirteen weeks left in the campaign and \$700,000 left to goal, volunteers are on base to knock this year's campaign out of the park. Eighty-two new members have already been recruited!

Team Georgia Chamber is comprised of volunteers from across the state that work on the 21-week membership drive held annually to recruit new members, encourage renewals, and increase sponsorship and advertising revenues to support the Georgia Chamber's operating budget.

The volunteers' hard work does not go unrecognized. On August 18, over seventy-five campaign volunteers and prospects attended a Home Stretch reception hosted by Wells Fargo at Turner Field. In addition, reward trips to Las Vegas and Mexico, cash incentives, and a variety of prizes will be offered to top producers.

If you would like to get involved or learn more about the campaign, please contact Kevin Carmichael, Director - Strategic Partners, by email kcarmichael@gachamber.com, or by phone at (404) 223-2271.



★ MEMBER NEWS

EarthLink Inc. bought Columbia, S.C.-based Business Vitals for an undisclosed amount. Business Vitals provides managed information technology, security and professional services. EarthLink said the deal adds another Tier IV secure data center to its fiber network.

The **Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce** celebrated its 100th Birthday this spring. According to the Dublin Courier-Herald, the Chamber traces its roots back to March of 1911 with their first meeting of local business leaders.

Post Properties Inc. had a profitable second quarter with \$75.4 million in revenue, up 6.5 percent and net income of \$8.8 million. Post Properties has interests in over 21,000 apartment units in 57 communities. Currently, Post has five communities under development.

Verizon Wireless confirmed that a new store being built in north Columbus will be the largest of their 67 Georgia stores when it is completed this fall. The 8,500-square-foot structure should be ready by October 1.

Georgia Colleges Equipping Students, Businesses with Tools for Success

Georgia's higher education institutions offer students from across the world a quality post-secondary degree in a number

of concentrations, equipping them to make significant contributions in the global workforce. *Profile* spoke with several

college presidents on how they viewed their institutions's impact on economic development.

Emory University

"As Georgia's largest private research university, rooted in a 175-year-old liberal arts tradition, Emory University's contribution to Georgia's economy and quality of life amounts to more than \$5.1 billion per year in direct and indirect economic activity. From liberal arts intensive programs through ethically responsible professional schools, Emory seeks to instill within its students not only intellectual competency and curiosity but also values of integrity, authenticity, and trust that form the basis for responsible citizenship and leadership."

- James W. Wagner, President

Georgia Institute of Technology

"One of the best investments we can make to create jobs and strengthen our economy is higher education. Each year almost 50,000 graduates from the 35 University System of Georgia institutions, along with graduates from private colleges and universities, play a significant role in providing Georgia business and industry with a prepared workforce. We believe that universities have a special role in partnering with business, industry, and government to develop innovative solutions and promote economic growth, working with K-12 education to help make sure more young people explore careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and preparing our next generation of inventors, entrepreneurs, and leaders. At Georgia Tech, we're committed to leadership in all three of these areas."

- Dr. G.P. "Bud" Peterson, President

Georgia State University

"A talented, well-educated workforce capable of tackling even the most complex challenges is the key to the long-term economic success in Georgia – indeed, in our country and, increasingly, in the world. As Georgia State University embarks on its second century in 2013, the university recently launched a 10-year strategic plan with the goal of becoming recognized as a dynamic academic community where teaching and research combine to produce leaders and create solutions to meet the challenges of the 21st century."

- Dr. Mark P. Becker, President

Georgia Perimeter College

"Georgia's higher education system is inextricably woven into our state's economic success. Higher education builds tomorrow's workforce, responds to changing economic demands, and fosters participation in global markets. It stimulates research and attracts business investment. The role of Georgia Perimeter College is an indispensable one. We meet critical needs across the state as we prepare students for high-demand jobs, changes in careers, and transfers to four-year institutions."

- Dr. Anthony S. Tricoli, President

University of Phoenix – Georgia Campuses

"The key to securing Georgia's future economic success starts with the ability of providing accessible quality educational opportunities that meet the demands of today's student, who often balances both professional and personal obligations. Education is the foundation of Georgia's economic success and can be used as

a catalyst to ensure long-term economic growth. Educators must be willing to adapt curriculum to meet employers' changing needs in order to secure the state's economic landscape."

- Stephen Flatt, State Vice President

University of Georgia

"At UGA, we produce the producers and create the creators. We were into economic development before it had a name. The path to leadership in Georgia, we believe, runs through Athens, and our primary goal is to educate for leadership the best and brightest of our state, who comprise some 89% of this year's freshman class. Unlike some other public universities, UGA's desire is to stay true to the principle of serving the people of this state, which we believe leads to Georgia's fullest economic potential."

- Dr. Michael Adams, President

Valdosta State University

"University faculty and staff spur economic development by partnering with local, regional, and state businesses and communities to address challenges. They also provide an educated, vibrant, and productive workforce that is critical to competing in the global marketplace. Valdosta State University adds \$315 million annually and 4,000 jobs to the local economy. Further, VSU fosters entrepreneurship, professional development, small business development, and product research. Our student co-op and internship placements are mutually beneficial to our students and to the businesses they serve."

- Dr. Louis H. Levy, Interim President

Marc Dufour has been named the new President & CEO of **Club Car**. Dufour has more than 30 years experience within Ingersoll Rand, the parent company of Club Car. Dufour succeeds Gary Michel as president and CEO of Club Car.

United Parcel Service

(UPS) expanded its board to add biopharmaceutical expert, Candace Kendle, as UPS adds healthcare logistics facilities across the country. The company said it is making healthcare logistics one of its most important strategic priorities.

TELL US YOUR NEWS!

Profile is always accepting story ideas for future issue consideration. Send your ideas, member news or spotlight nominations to Matt Colvin, External Affairs Manager, at mcolvin@gachamber.com.

The 2011 Congressional Luncheon: A Conversation with Georgia's Federal Leaders

“...solutions require leadership from both parties in both chambers (of Congress)...there will not be a significant number of jobs created until Washington institutes more business-friendly policies.”

Senator Johnny Isakson, Congressman Tom Price and several other members of Georgia's Congressional delegation were featured guests at the Georgia Chamber's annual Congressional Luncheon on August 9. This year's theme was "Business in Washington: Is D.C. on Your Side?" and attendees heard comments on a range of business topics such as unemployment, the debt ceiling and government regulation. Held at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry, the Congressional Luncheon hosted approximately 1,000 guests including Georgia Chamber members, business leaders, and elected officials from throughout the state.

A reception hosted by The Coca-Cola Company for attendees led off the event before the traditional barbecue lunch. Congressmen Austin Scott, Rob Woodall and Tom Graves were in attendance and each participated in the welcoming festivities.

Senator Saxby Chambliss briefly discussed the tough times our state and nation are facing currently with the stock market, debt and deficit. He

told the crowd he intended to go back to Washington after the August recess to work for bi-partisan and bi-cameral solutions to address what he called "the most predictable economic crisis that has ever faced America." He also thanked the men and women in uniform for their service and dedication to our country before welcoming Senator Isakson and Congressman Price to the stage for a lively panel discussion.

Local political reporter Kenny Burgamy facilitated the conversation between the legislators. To begin, Isakson introduced himself and described his experience as a business leader for over twenty years in Cobb County. He stated that the government is holding back Georgia businesses by over-regulating and over-taxing, and that he intends to push for reasonable but fair regulations and work to support America's free enterprise system. Congressman Price opened by explaining his thoughts on the state of the economy and the need for more jobs. He specifically mentioned seeking tax reform and a new tax system that allows businesses to thrive. Price stated he firmly believes Washington must undergo structural change in order to stop the increase in the debt ceiling to make certain we never find our country in this situation again.

The two Congressional veterans spoke next on the recent debt ceiling agreement. Isakson explained that this is the first time in history that the debt ceiling increase is tied to cuts in spending and that going forward, there will be no increases without a cut in spending to match it. Discussing the Super Committee of Twelve, he stated failure is not an option and that the



Above: Kenny Burgamy leads the panel discussion with U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson and Congressman Tom Price at the 2011 Congressional Luncheon.





committee will be forced to find the \$2.2 trillion in cuts. Price opined that nothing from the debt ceiling debate and outcome could be considered a victory, but that it was the first step in the conversation of decreasing the spending curve and achieving a balanced budget.

Jobs and unemployment were the next topics of conversation, with Burgamy asking specifically if 10.2% unemployment was the “new normal” in America. Neither Price nor Isakson were hesitant to talk about the role of the federal government in this critical issue. Price noted that solutions require leadership from both parties in both chambers and that he believes there will not be a significant number of jobs created until Washington institutes more business-friendly policies. Isakson echoed the Congressman saying that the new normal needs to be a federal government that does not over regulate the private sector. He pointed to two separate events recently involving the National Labor Relations Board and National Mediation Board where regulations were interfering with the private sector. He added that these kinds of road blocks to free enterprise are what keep us from expanding jobs and opportunities in America today.

The panel also answered questions regarding funding cuts to the Department of Defense and illegal immigration. Isakson and Price both agreed that no cuts should be made at the expense of the military, but reminded attendees that every agency in the federal government is

combing budgets to identify opportunities for savings. On illegal immigration, both said that they believe securing the border is key to effective immigration reform. Isakson explained the most important step to encouraging a legal flow of immigration that meets the demands of business are enforcement on the border and promoting a true guest worker program.

Georgia Chamber CEO Chris Clark provided closing comments thanking the program participants and announcing the newest Chamber affiliate, the Georgia Military Coordinating Committee. He also encouraged audience members to join the Georgia Business Action Network (GBAN) to stay informed about all of the issues facing Georgia’s business community.

To view the Congressional Luncheon discussion panel in its entirety, please visit www.gagchamber.com and under the Press Room tab click on the Videos link.

For more information on GBAN, please visit www.gachamber.com/gban.

Above: Georgia Congressional delegation members join Georgia Chamber leaders in Perry.

Right: Georgia Chamber President & CEO Chris Clark welcomes over 1,000 guests to the luncheon.



Better Data, Better Student Performance

If the first step to fixing any problem is defining it, Georgia's K-12 education system may finally be on the path to improvement.

For years, accessing basic data on student achievement was a challenge for Georgia parents, educators and policymakers. The information existed, but was buried in the depths of Georgia's longitudinal student data system, making it difficult to know how an individual student, class, school or district performed over the course of a school year — much less from one year to the next.

Without that information, it was next to impossible to accurately assess teacher quality, allocate resources or implement other reforms aimed at improving Georgia schools. The state spent millions of dollars and thousands of man-hours trying to improve the system, but met with little success. Finally, in 2009, the Georgia Department of Education turned to the private sector, hiring former Georgia-Pacific executive Bob Swiggum to serve as its chief information officer.

In less than a year, Swiggum had completely revamped the system. Today, the vast majority of Georgia's 180 local school districts have a seamless, customized portal to the state's data, letting them track student performance effortlessly with just a click of a mouse. Within the next year, parents will be able to access similar information. The data is also available upon request to policymakers, who are already using it to identify trends and introduce improvements.

Swiggum was recently recognized for his work by the Data Quality Campaign, a national effort funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and others to improve the availability and use of high-quality education data to improve student achievement. For more information on the transformation of Georgia's data system, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaZk57oNLkA.

Right: Bob Swiggum, Georgia Department of Education Chief Information Officer and architect of the state's new student data system.



Charter Schools Recovering From Supreme Court Ruling

The Georgia Chamber, which filed two amicus briefs in the (charter school) case, has long supported schools like these because of their record equipping students for future success and preparing them for today's high-demand, high-skill jobs.

State leaders and charter school advocates have been working overtime to ensure that thousands of students affected by a Georgia Supreme Court ruling earlier this year can continue attending the school of their choice.

The May ruling, a 4-3 decision that declared the Georgia Charter Schools Commission unconstitutional, left the state without a clear path to approve and fund innovative public charter schools rejected by local school districts (often due to concerns about competition). As one charter advocate put it, asking a local district to approve a charter school in its own backyard can be "like asking Burger King to approve McDonald's." The case was brought against the Commission by seven local districts in 2009.

The decision also meant the possible closure of 16 schools already approved by the Commission — including three virtual schools and several top-performing institutions like Ivy Prep in Norcross and the Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts & Technology (CCAT) in Statesboro — affecting as many as 20,000 students. The

Georgia Chamber, which filed two amicus briefs in the case, has long supported schools like these because of their record equipping students for future success and preparing them for today's high-demand, high-skill jobs.

Ironically, the ruling came only a month before the start of the 2011 National Charter Schools Conference in Atlanta, an event co-sponsored by the Chamber. Thousands of charter advocates attended the conference, which featured remarks by Chamber CEO Chris Clark and keynote speeches by former President Bill Clinton, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and others.

Fortunately, the state Board of Education moved quickly to approve new charters for most of the schools, while the governor and legislative leaders promised to secure short-term operational funding. Lawmakers also pledged to push for a constitutional amendment that could restore the Commission's authority to approve and fund such schools. The Chamber is among several groups that have committed to support such an amendment.



Ensuring a Brighter Future for Georgia's Students

How Chamber members are helping our kids excel in the classroom and beyond

Georgia is home to a diverse group of businesses that contribute both to the economy and to communities through corporate citizenship. One of the more critical areas Georgia companies and organizations are making an impact in is the education of Georgia students. They understand that to successfully compete in a global economy, Georgia needs a highly skilled workforce equipped with the knowledge and tools to excel in the 21st century job market. Businesses are providing fantastic learning opportunities to students through grants, equipment, and volunteer service — truly investing in the next generation of Georgia's leaders.

The Georgia Chamber is proud to highlight several of our members who are making a significant difference in students' lives across the state.

Here in Georgia in 2010, AT&T and its employees contributed more than \$8.5 million through corporate, employee and AT&T Foundation giving programs to various groups across the state — many of those groups focused on dropout prevention and helping students complete their high school degree.



AT&T

Telecommunications powerhouse AT&T traces its beginnings back to the inventor of the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell. On March 10, 1876 when Bell uttered the first words ever over a telephone line into an adjacent room, he knew that his device would shape the future of world communications. In coming years, AT&T would pioneer much of the telecommunications technology that helped define the 20th Century's Information Age.

While Bell's inventive works garnered worldwide acclaim and spawned a global revolution in how people connect by voice, many argued that his true passion was another form of communication research: finding effective solutions to help educate the deaf community. Bell discovered multiple new techniques in oral communication and teaching speech to the hearing impaired — giving a voice to the voiceless. While his inventive focus was varied among many different projects, his desire to give to those who needed stayed constant throughout his life.

Today, AT&T provides consumers here in Georgia and around the world with multiple telecommunication solutions and constantly evolves their service portfolio with new technologies and innovations. But while their products may change with the times, like Bell they have stayed committed to the ideal of giving and providing hope to others through educational needs.

AT&T understands that today's job market requires future workers that are highly-educated and highly-skilled. With nearly one of every three public high school students not graduating with their class, many will not be prepared to face the growing demands of the global workforce. To counter high school dropouts, AT&T launched the Aspire program in 2008 — a \$100 million philanthropy program geared towards

reversing this growing crisis among students.

Here in Georgia in 2010, AT&T and its employees contributed more than \$8.5 million through corporate, employee and AT&T Foundation giving programs to various groups across the state — many of those groups focused on dropout prevention and helping students complete their high school degree. They have also partnered with Junior Achievement, giving over 5,000 students in Georgia the opportunity to shadow AT&T employees and discover what skills are needed for potential career paths.

AT&T has also fostered student interest in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields through the AT&T Foundation supporting the Georgia Youth Science & Technology Centers (GYSTC) across the state. In 2009 alone, GYSTC provided programs to over 90,000 Georgia K-8 students and serves nearly 50 percent of the state's public school systems — mostly in rural and low-income areas where many of these opportunities may not have been possible without the AT&T Foundation.

From the moment Bell spoke the first words into a telephone in March 1876, AT&T's products and services have evolved throughout the last century and beyond through further invention and innovation. While they maintain Bell's spirit of discovery for consumers around the world, they stay dedicated to a principle and cause invented long before AT&T and Bell — the spirit of giving. As Bell believed that the hearing impaired have the potential for a greater future and sought to make it happen, AT&T believes in helping young men and women here in Georgia realize their untapped potential and are providing effective solutions to give these students a better future as well.

Communities in Schools - Georgia (CISGA)

Communities in Schools (CIS) started in Georgia over 30 years ago and now holds the title of the nation's leading dropout prevention organization, serving over one million youth in 25 states and the District of Columbia. The central mission of CIS is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

CIS of Georgia was started in Atlanta in the early 70's by Bill Milliken, Neil Shorthouse and David Lewis as the Cities in Schools private/public partnership to help urban students graduate from high school and plan successful futures. Now an independent nonprofit corporation, the program spread nationwide and was renamed Communities in Schools.

CIS believes every student not only needs, but deserves "the five basics":

- A personal, one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- A safe place to learn and grow
- A healthy start and a healthy future
- A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- A chance to give back to peers and their community

With over 40 local affiliates in the state of Georgia, CIS of Georgia continues to be the leading innovator for the national Communities in Schools programming by developing and implementing the Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) Initiative. PLCs are small high schools geared toward students not succeeding in the traditional school setting. They create a business-like environment and emphasize personal support and an intense academic program anchored by an

online instructional system and project-based learning. The learning centers work to focus students not just on graduation, but life and education beyond high school. Currently, there are 21 PLCs in Georgia and the centers continue to expand to other states in the CIS network.

The Cobb County PLC, for example, has partnered with the Kennesaw State University science department to offer students the opportunity to gain knowledge and awareness of careers in the science field. With a curriculum that mirrors the state's high school science model, Cobb PLC students have the unique opportunity to partner with KSU students and professors to experience hands-on learning activities and laboratory experiments. This innovative program has led to an increase in science graduation test scores for the participating students — 80 percent passed the science test who attended the KSU program. That is compared to 50 percent from all students at Cobb PLC.

The CIS of Georgia statewide network serves more than 130,000 Georgia students in 54 school districts through the CIS model of case management, Performance Learning Centers, mentoring, parent engagement, literacy, youth leadership, tutoring, and after-school programs. Through CIS, students saw improvement in the areas of attendance, discipline, academics, and graduation rates. Over 97 percent of at-risk high school CIS participants stayed in school or graduated and 875 students received their high school diplomas through CIS of Georgia's Performance Learning Centers



Above: CISGA's Student Achievement Month contest helps students gain confidence and understand the importance of succeeding in school.

in 2010. Additionally, CIS of Georgia provided on-going intensive services to over 15,000 at risk students and direct services and support to more than 43,000 parents.



Right: Students from one of CISGA's Performance Learning Centers working with Kennesaw State University's science department (Photo by Phil Skinner/AJC)



IBM

For one-hundred years, IBM has been a pioneer and world leader in technological innovations. During that same time, IBM has also been at the forefront of corporate management and citizenship — both internally and externally.

IBM was one of the first corporations to offer its employees survivor benefits, paid vacation and group life insurance. The technology firm became known early in its existence for its employee incentives and recognition programs for its top salespersons and scientists. IBM led the way on hiring and training of disabled employees in the 1940's. And during the 1950's they instituted equal opportunity and nondiscrimination policies, 11 years before the 1964 Civil Rights Act, to ensure the best and brightest were hired — regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity.

It should come as no surprise that IBM has also boasted a diverse and far-reaching corporate citizenship program during its history, one that supplies human and technological resources to nonprofit groups and educational facilities across the globe. In 2010 alone, IBM has given nearly \$200 million in charitable donations worldwide, and this year 310,000 “IBMers” — close to three quarters of its global workforce — have volunteered



in more than 5,000 projects equating to nearly 3 million hours of volunteering in communities and schools.

Just one of IBM's many humanitarian efforts has been early education — providing schools and nonprofits with technology-based learning programs to enhance each student's classroom experience. Through mentoring and career counseling, summer camps, virtual field trips and science projects, and worldwide education reform efforts, IBM has created amazing learning opportunities for students who may not

have had the ability to encounter them otherwise.

Here in Georgia, IBM has made a significant impact in the lives of both students and teachers. Their KidSmart Early Learning Program offers pre-kindergarten teachers interactive, kid-friendly computers for their students, utilizing state-of-the-art technology and software. IBM has given 1,000 “learning stations” to Georgia childcare centers over the last decade. In 2010 alone, 100 computers were donated to the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta for use around the state. Globally, KidSmart has provided over 45,000 learning stations to 60 countries — effecting roughly 10 million children. The program also includes online support for students and their parents on a technology-based learning environment.

For Georgia to compete in the global economy, its success is largely tied to the workforce development initiatives that will prepare its next generation of leaders. IBM has sought innovative, effective solutions to achieve their goal of “building a smarter planet.” They believe building upon a child's education through technological-based learning is exactly what type of tools they need for the highly-skilled jobs of the 21st Century.

IBM's strong support of early education will certainly help in building a smarter Georgia for years to come.



Left: Students with an IBM Learning Center, donated to schools around the world as part of their KidSmart early education program. (Photo courtesy of IBM)

1QUESTIONS



Brooks A. Keel, PhD
 President
 Georgia Southern University

- Q:** How long have you been president of Georgia Southern? What were you doing before coming to Statesboro?
- A:** I started January 1, 2010. I was previously Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development at LSU for three and a half years, and before that the Associate Vice President for Research at FSU for four years.
- Q:** Summer is over – were you able to take a vacation during the break?
- A:** As a matter of fact, my wife, Tammie Schalue, and I just returned from a week of scuba diving at Grand Cayman.
- Q:** What is something that you’ve learned about Georgia Southern that others might not know?
- A:** This university has worked very hard to establish a special reputation for having a “small feel” while at the same time building a “large scale” environment for students. Students come to Georgia Southern for all the things one might expect at a major university, while at the same time feeling comfortable here as well.
- Q:** What are some of the more popular courses of study for students at Georgia Southern?
- A:** While we have more than 110 potential degree opportunities, across a wide range of studies, the majority of students graduate from Georgia Southern in either Business or Education.
- Q:** What role do you think Georgia Southern and other higher education institutions play in economic development?
- A:** All universities, especially ones as large in scope and mission as Georgia Southern, have a role and a responsibility to contribute to the economy of the region where they are located. Georgia Southern contributes nearly \$800 million annually to the economy of the southern part of the state, and that impact is increasing as we expand our research efforts.
- Q:** Do you think there are opportunities for stronger partnerships between higher education and the business community?
- A:** Absolutely, and as I mentioned above, I see this as a major role for Georgia Southern.
- Q:** How is being involved with the Georgia Chamber important to Georgia Southern?
- A:** The Georgia Chamber represents the very pulse of the business community in the state. Working with the Chamber allows Georgia Southern to position itself to better aid in meeting the future workforce needs as well as building research areas which help foster economic development.
- Q:** Students looking at today’s job market are probably concerned about getting a job – what advice do you give them?
- A:** It is a fact that the individuals with a college education are much more competitive in the job market, have more options, and achieve much higher salaries. Education, especially higher education, will provide individuals with the best hope for a productive future.
- Q:** Have you read any good books recently?
- A:** I just finished *Serpent* by Clive Cussler, and it was a good read. I started re-reading *Dune* by Frank Herbert, which has to be one of the all-time greatest science fiction books.
- Q:** Finally - how’s the football team going to do this year?
- A:** We are #1 in some of the preseason polls, and in the top five in all the other polls I have seen. But with FCS football, it is all about the playoffs and making it to the finals. We have one of the country’s leading head coaches in Jeff Monken, and a top-notch coaching staff. He will have our guys ready for an exciting season. For all Georgia Southern fans, the next year can best be summed up as GATA!!



POWER LUNCH

Upcoming Events

- September 7** - Valdosta, Rainwater Conference Center
- September 8** - Albany, Chehaw's Creekside Education Center
- September 9** - Gainesville, Chattahoochee Country Club
- September 28** - Savannah, Location TBD
- October 5** - Cartersville, Clarence Brown Conference Center
- October 7** - Dublin, Dublin Country Club
- November 2** - Douglas, Location TBD
- November 8** - Dalton, Location TBD
- Date TBD** - Gwinnett, Location TBD



For more information visit www.gachamber.com/2011powerlunches

GEORGIA CHAMBER BUSINESS CHAMPIONS CLASSIC

October 3, 2011
Golf Club of Georgia

This tournament is designed to deliver a unique golfing experience plus the opportunity to network with Georgia's business leaders in a casual, relaxed setting.

All golf foursomes will have a fore-caddy, practice facilities, range balls and food from registration through the post-round reception. Generous prizes will be awarded to the winning teams — plus, many more prizes will be raffled off during the awards reception.

Come join us! Sign up with a staff member or online at:
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**LEADING
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FORWARD**

—*from*—

**Marietta
to
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