

# Rural Prosperity Summit

UGA Tifton Conference Center, Tifton, GA

November 29 - 30, 2017



## November 29, 2017

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### 1:00 p.m. Welcome Remarks

Dennis Chastain, *President & CEO, Georgia EMC*

### 1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Panel Discussion: Regionalism Lessons Learned

**Moderator:** Daryl Ingram, *Senior Vice President, External Affairs, ECG*

**Panelists:** James Chavez, *President & CEO, SC Power Team*  
Chris Clark, *President & CEO, Georgia Chamber of Commerce*

### 2:05 p.m. – 2:55 p.m. Panel Discussion: Centers of Innovation Impact in Rural Georgia

*This panel focus on two success stories of innovation in rural Georgia, Proper Pepper of Sandersville and ESCOGO of Monroe, as told by the companies and the Centers of Innovation team who worked together to bring the companies' new products to market.*

**Moderator:** Steve Justice, *Executive Director, Georgia Centers of Innovation*

**Panelists:** Deana Bibb, *Chief Batch Maker, Proper Pepper Pimento Cheese*  
Emily Butler, *Georgia Center of Innovation for Logistics*  
Chris Chammoun, *Georgia Center of Innovation for Agribusiness*  
Rick Huszagh, *Operations Manager, ESCOGO LLC*  
John Morehouse, *Georgia Center of Innovation for Manufacturing*

### 3:00 p.m. - 3:20 p.m. Break

### 3:25 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Panel Introduction

Dennis Chastain, *President & CEO, Georgia EMC*

### 3:30 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Panel Discussion: Poverty & Housing Solutions

*How can communities work together, across diverse interest sectors, to improve quality of living for residents? This panel will explore approaches to lifting residents from poverty and removing barriers to prosperity.*

**Moderator:** Rep. James Beverly (D), *143rd District, Macon, GA*

**Panelists:** Toni Brown, *Community Support Specialist, Georgia Family Connection Partnership*  
Bill Floyd, *Former Mayor, City of Decatur, GA*  
Ryan Willoughby, *Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Georgia*

### 4:25 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Introduction of Special Guest Speaker

Matt Reed, *CEO, Georgia CEO*

### 4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Special Guest Speaker

Jannine Miller, *Senior Advisor for Rural Infrastructure, Office of the Secretary, US Department of Agriculture*

### 5:00 p.m. Adjourn Day 1 sessions

### 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Reception & Dinner with Live Music – on site

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## November 30, 2017 - Morning Session

**7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Breakfast buffet**

**8:00 a.m. – 8:10 a.m. Welcome Remarks**

Dennis Chastain, *President & CEO, Georgia EMC*

**8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Georgia Chamber of Commerce update**

Chris Clark, *President & CEO, Georgia Chamber of Commerce*

**8:45 a.m. – 8:50 a.m. Panel Introduction**

Matt Reed, *CEO, Georgia CEO*

**8:50 a.m. – 9:40 a.m. Panel Discussion: Placemaking Successes in Rural Georgia**

Successful collaboration between governmental planning entities and private industry can result in enhanced sense of place for communities. Panelists will explore the concept of ‘Placemaking’ and discuss how it works in rural Georgia.

**Moderator:** Dr. Laura Meadows, *Vice President (interim) University of Georgia Public Service & Outreach*

**Panelists:** Brian Herrmann, *Planner, City of Thomasville*  
Heather Thomas, *Co-owner, The American*  
Tyler Thomas, *Co-owner, The American*

**9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Keynote Address**

Karin Van Zant, *Vice President, Life Services, Care Source*

**10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Break**

**10:35 a.m. – 10:40 a.m. Panel Introduction**

Paige Pushkin, *Executive Director, Georgia Foundation for Public Education*

**10:40 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Panel Discussion: Talent & Leadership Development**

Panelists will discuss innovative approaches to address workforce development challenges in rural GA.

**Moderator:** Dr. Richard Carvajal, *President, Valdosta State University*

**Panelists:** Matt Colvin, *States Initiatives Director, Georgia Department of Economic Development – Workforce Division*  
Chris Hatcher, *CEO, Commodore Conyers College Career Academy*  
Thomas Taylor, *Bespoke Marketing*  
David Schaefer, *Director Policy and Advocacy, Latin American Association*

**11:30 a.m. – 11:35 a.m. Panel Introduction**

Dennis Chastain, *President & CEO, Georgia EMC*

**11:35 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. Panel Discussion: Homegrown Economic Development – Makerspaces & More**

Makerspaces and Fab Labs are hot trends in economic development today but will they work in every community? Hear from a panel of makerspace directors, successful entrepreneurs, and investment partners as they discuss details of this approach to economic development.

**Moderator:** Jay Flesher, *Manager of Community Economic Development, Flint Energies*

**Panelists:** Andrew Eck, *Founder, Georgia Artisan*  
Rob Betzel, *CEO, Infinity Network Solutions*  
Brad Hardy, *Hardy Farms*

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## November 30, 2017 - Afternoon Session

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**12:25 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Networking Lunch**

**1:15 p.m. – 1:20 p.m. Panel Introduction**

**Chris Dorman**, *President & CEO, Tift Regional Health System*

**1:20 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Panel Discussion: Innovative Solutions in Rural Healthcare**

Healthcare experts from around Georgia will discuss public policy options as well as ways to leverage private and non-profit partnerships to stave off the looming healthcare crisis facing rural portions of the state.

**Moderator:** **Dr. Ninfa Saunders**, *President & CEO, Navicent Health*

**Panelists:** **Dr. Knicole Lee**, *Assistant Professor, Georgia Southern University*  
**Robin Rau**, *CEO, Miller County Hospital*

**2:20 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Closing Remarks**

**Matt Reed**, *CEO, Georgia CEO*

**2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Rural Prosperity Council Subcommittee Meetings**