

Executive Director's Report



- Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the GMRC Council Member Training last month. We had great turnout, great dialogue and discussions, great location, and of course, great food! A huge thank you to Kevin Tallant who took time from his busy schedule to be with us to discuss the statutory requirements and legislative history of the GMRC. I would also like to thank the **City of Helen** for serving as our host community.

- The management team of GMRC recently met with new City Manager of **Demorest**, Kristi Shead. A huge welcome to Kristi in her new role, and we look forward to working with the **City of Demorest**.

- The Economic Development team, John Phillips, and myself recently attended the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) in cooperation with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Annual Conference in Washington, DC. The main focus of the conference was diversification and growth in Appalachia and developing a workforce to meet the demands of a changing economy.



- After many months of diligent market analysis for a new location to house the WorkSource operations, we are extremely excited that we have entered into a lease agreement for the new WorkSource Building and One-Stop. The new home of WorkSource Georgia Mountains will be located at 1856 Thompson Bridge Road, Suites 2-4 and 1F. We anticipate a move-in date of June 1, 2017.
- Andrea Newsom and I recently attended Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) training provided by the Economic Development Administration (EDA). It was a great opportunity to learn more about the functions of the program and to hear best practices from other RLF lending entities. There are some new proposed changes that we are evaluating for the GMRC RLF Program.
- The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation is traveling to the Georgia Mountains Region to “Georgia’s Gateway to the Mountains” this spring. Retreat to the foothills of Appalachia and discover the towns architectural gems of **Gainesville**, **Toccoa**, and **Clarkesville** this April 28-30, 2017. Please contact Joe Rothwell for more information at jrothwell@gmrc.ga.gov or 770-538-2619.
- Thank you to everyone who completed a survey on the services of the GMRC. Your input is extremely valuable, and the intent is to better understand our communities’ needs and identify opportunities to allow the GMRC to better serve you and your city or county. We appreciate your business!!
- Congratulations to **Hall County** on receiving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association.
- Staff news – Congratulations to the following GMRC employees:
 - Ginger Little has recently been promoted to Case Manager for the Adult/Dislocated Worker unit within WorkSource Georgia Mountains
 - Dawn Bruce has recently been promoted to Intake Manager at WorkSource Georgia Mountains
- Several members of the WorkSource staff and Council Member/WIB Chairwoman, Andrea Gibby attended the Southeastern Employment & Training Association (SETA) Conference this month. The conference was designed to bring federal, state, and local partners together for excellence in workforce development. Topics included: Veteran employment, implementation of a One-Stop Center and procurement of a one-stop operator, and engaging business and industry in high performing sector strategies.

Sincerely,

Heather J. Feldman

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Executive Director

Economic Development

- The Economic Development team recently submitted eight (8) final Appalachian Region Commission (ARC) grant applications:
 - Hall County:** Healan's Mill Land Acquisition
 - Sautee Nacoochee:** Marketing App
 - Brasstown Bald/Cradle of Forestry:** Museum Updates
 - Rabun County:** Foxfire Mobile App
 - City of Hiawassee:** Urban Redevelopment Plan
 - City of Gainesville:** Broadband Infrastructure
 - City of Gainesville:** Airport Terminal Project
 - Joint Development Authority (JDA) (Fannin, Towns, Union):** Industrial Training Lab
- Did you know? From October 2015 – January 2017, the Appalachian Regional Commission has supported 28 projects in Georgia totaling \$4.8 million. These investments have been matched by more than \$8.2 million. They will also create or retain over 1,900 jobs. *Source: Appalachian Regional Commission*

Information Services

- GMRC has entered into contract with both the **City of Lavonia** and the **City of Dawsonville** to update their water and wastewater infrastructure maps. Final map layers will be loaded on City computers for use at the treatment plants and in City Hall.
- Brandon Carlock attended the US Census Bureau Boundary and Annexation Survey training seminar on March 2nd. He is currently submitting updates for **Lula, Dawsonville, Mt. Airy, Hartwell, Cornelia, Clermont, Alto, Maysville, Clayton, Carnesville, Gillsville, Young Harris, Hiawassee, Banks County, Towns County, and Lumpkin County.**
- GMRC staff will be performing the 2016 update to **Towns County** tax parcels.
- Faith Bryan and Brandon Carlock attended the MAP 21 project kick-off meeting in Macon. Staff will be performing verification processes on five key data elements pertaining to roads across the region. Those are: ownership, operation, number of lanes, surface type, and median. We will also be providing information on traffic control devices where local roads meet highways and all road names. We will be working closely with county and city road superintendents and GIS staff.

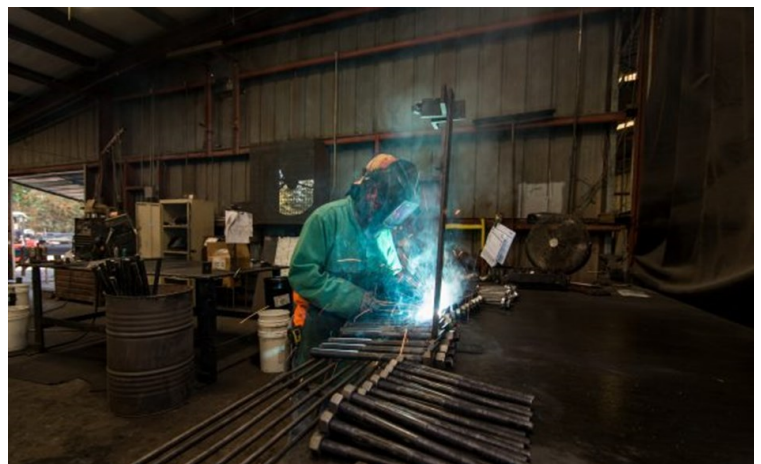
Planning

- You're invited to the 2017 Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation Spring Ramble! This April 28-30 retreat to the foothills of Appalachia and see historic houses in **Gainesville, Toccoa, Martin and Clarkesville**. For more information contact Joe Rothwell at 770-538-2619. http://www.georgiitrust.org/historic_sites/rambles/registration.php
- The **City of Clermont** has adopted their *Comprehensive Plan* update.
- The *Towns County Joint Comprehensive Plan*, including **Towns County the cities of Hiawassee and Young Harris**, has been approved by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).
- The **Lumpkin County Comprehensive Plan** update has been approved by DCA.
- The **City of Dahlonega Comprehensive Plan** update has been approved by DCA.
- The GMRC has completed a *Fire Department Assessment* for **Dawson County**.
- Hall County and Union County** submitted *grant applications* for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) *Multimodal Safety and Access* program.

Success Story



Goodwill of North Georgia was recently featured in The Gainesville Times. The Welding program was made possible by support from WorkSource Georgia Mountains, Arrendale Transitional Center, **Hall County** Transitional Center, Phillips Transitional Center, and area technical colleges, including North Georgia Technical College and Lanier Technical College. The program equips job seekers with the skills and certifications they need to forge new careers in the welding industry. Learn more about how the program even supports ex-offenders, like Vickie (below), as they pursue a second chance and a better life.





PO Box 2278
Gainesville, GA 30503

Phone: 770-538-2727
Fax: 770-538-2729

Georgia Mountains

Youth Services

- Youth staff participated in the 7th annual **Gainesville/Hall** Interagency Career Fair with approximately 400 students from **Hall County**, **Banks County**, and **Lumpkin County**. Staff also presented workshops for 200 high school students.
- Youth staff hosted a Confidentiality Training for Youth Services Providers.
- Youth staff also presented workshops/overviews for schools in **Banks County**, **Union County** and **Habersham County** meeting with approximately 200 students.
- A Youth participant completed a Medical Assisting Certification and gained full time employment only a day upon completing externship.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response's major purpose is to respond to layoffs and plant closings by coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. Rapid Response provides customized services on-site at an affected company, accommodates any work schedule, and assists companies and workers through the painful transitions associated with job loss.

Perdue Foods has announced that they will be closing a production line at their plant located in **Gainesville**. A total of 60 employees will be affected from this production line closing as of April 30, 2017.

Rapid Response has already scheduled two Employee Information Meetings for these workers on April 4, 2017 from 2:30 to 3:30 pm and from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

These Employee Information Meetings introduce employees to representatives and partners of many other programs that can help them through this transition. With the knowledge they gain at this on-site meeting, employees who attend Rapid Response orientation meetings have a quicker re-entry rate into the workforce, often with better and higher paying jobs than if they did not participate in these services.

Rapid Response has already reached out and scheduled several partners to present at the meetings.

A job fair is scheduled for April 10, 2017 from 1:00 pm-2:30 pm and will be held at the Goodwill Career Center located in **Oakwood**. Several employers have already committed to attending and recruiting at the Job Fair. Rapid Response is planning to have a minimum of nine (9) employers at this Job Fair.

Career Coaches

- The Career Coaches participated in a Resume Workshop for **Hall County** Reporting Center in which 18 participants received resume training and WIOA information.
- **Hall County** Mountain Education Charter High School and **Dawson County** High School – CTAE program both invited the Career Coaches to conduct a resume training session. There was participation from 75 students between the two events. Future dates are in the works!
- In partnership with Goodwill, the Coaches were invited to attend a Job Fair in **Dawsonville** held at the Goodwill Career Center. There were 15 individuals who utilized the services offered by the Career Coach.
- There were 22 participants assisted between the Fast Track Sessions held at **Hall County** Correctional Institute and Lee Arrendale Correctional Facility in **Habersham**.
- A total of 51 individuals registered for VOS on board the Career Coaches during the month of February. This is the largest number to date.
- Assisted at least one individual from every county in the region this month!

Adult Services

- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is continuing to increase and support companies in the Georgia Mountains area.
- King's Hawaiian in **Gainesville** is utilizing Incumbent Worker Training funding to train its Spanish speaking employees with a specialized ESL program that increases their required business English skills so as to increase production and employee advancement.
- Osborne Wood Products in **Stephens County** are currently utilizing Incumbent Worker Training with a Lean Six Sigma Workshop to greatly increase its production and profitability.
- Eaton Aerospace in **Stephens County** has just begun an Incumbent Worker Training program that will provide their employees with the required OSHA 10-hour program and an industry recognized Certification.
- The Incumbent Worker Training project manager is presently in discussion with no less than a dozen other companies who are interested in developing needed training for their employees with the help of IWT funding.
- For more information on the Incumbent Worker Training program contact Dan Thornton at 770-538-2697.

Event and Meeting Schedule

DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	LOCATION/HOST
March 30	5:00 pm	RLF Board	NGTC—Currahee Campus
	5:30 pm	Executive Committee	Stephens County/City of Toccoa
	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	
April 14	-----	GMRC Offices Closed	Good Friday Holiday
April 27	4:00 pm	WorkSource Board	Lavonia Depot—City of Lavonia
	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	
May 25	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting Legislative Appreciation	Dawson County Junior High School Dawson County/Dawson Co BOE
June 29	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	Hall County
July 27	4:00 pm	WorkSource Board	Rabun County
	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	
August 31	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	City of Gainesville
September 28	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	White County
October 26	4:00 pm	WorkSource Board	Lumpkin County/City of Dahlonega
	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	
November 16	6:00 pm	GMRC Council Meeting	City of Dawsonville
December 1	6:00 pm	GMRC Annual Meeting	Dillard House Conference Center

