



## Executive Director's Report



Thank you to the GMRC Council for the opportunity to serve as your new Executive Director. I am extremely honored and humbled to have been selected to lead this great organization, and I am grateful to be trusted with this new role. It is with great pleasure that I get to work daily with our extraordinary communities, council, and staff and working together, will continue to carry out the vision and mission of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission. A HUGE thank you to each of you for your support over the years, and I look forward to our growing partnership in the many years to come.

Thank you to the council and staff who attended the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) Annual Conference this month in St. Simons. It was probably the best conference to date, and we had excellent speakers representing GDOT, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, ACCG, and GMA. We were also blessed to hear from DCA Commissioner Camila Knowles, Department of Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, and State Senator Butch Miller (District 49 – Hall County).

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, approximately 60 attended the Governor's High Demand Career Initiative Sector Partnerships Region 2 Workshop at Lanier Technical College. WorkSource Georgia Mountains has used Local Market Information from Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) and Georgia Department of Economic Development Workforce Division to determine manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics as the targeted industry markets for sector strategies within the region. Participants at the meeting included representatives from area manufacturers, core partners, economic development staff, UNG staff, K-12 staff and many more. WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff will have several planning meetings to discuss Sector Strategies within the WorkSource Georgia Mountains Region and to identify uses and needs for a \$250,000 grant to further sector strategies in the area.

Please make plans to attend the retirement reception for Becky Sievers on December 13th. The reception will be held in the JB Jones Training Room in our office from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. We thank Becky for her 13 years of service and dedication to GMRC and wish her the best in her retirement.

Please help me welcome Ms. Connie Tabor, Community Development Director for the City of Toccoa as our new Private Sector Representative for Stephens County on the GMRC Council. Connie has been a dear friend to the GMRC, and we have partnered with Connie and the City on many projects.

The District 2 Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) fall session was held in Lumpkin County on November 16<sup>th</sup>. It was a great opportunity to network and receive updates on ACCG's 2016 legislative priorities such as 911 Funding, Single County T-SPLOST, and the Georgia Agriculture Tax Exemption (GATE).

Please mark your calendar for our Annual Meeting at the Dillard House Conference Center in Rabun County on Friday, December 2, 2016. Sponsors are still needed. Please contact Peggy Lovell for more information or to reserve your tickets at 770-538-2607 or [plovell@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:plovell@gmrc.ga.gov)

The GMRC offices will be closed on Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> for the Thanksgiving holiday. Wishing everyone a very blessed and happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

*Heather Feldman*

Heather J. Feldman  
Executive Director

## Economic Development



Congratulations to Nancy Smallwood, Economic Development Representative, on celebrating five years of service with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission.

### Recreational Trails Grants Submitted

On behalf of the following communities, GMRC staff will be submitting four grant applications to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources – State Parks Division for Recreational Trails Grant funding for the below projects:

- Town of Alto** – Lee Dorsey Cook Memorial Park Trail
- City of Lula** – Nature Trails at Rafe Banks Park
- City of Toccoa** –Lake Toccoa Recreational Trail Project
- Banks County** – Hudson Valley Park Trail

### Assistance to Firefighters Grants Submitted

On behalf of the following communities, GMRC staff submitted six grants to FEMA for Assistance to Firefighters Grant funding:

- City of Cornelia** – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)
- City of Royston** - Thermal Imaging Camera
- City of Toccoa** - SCBA/Compressor
- White County** - Vehicle Replacement
- Franklin County:**
  - Bold Springs** – SCBA
  - Sandy Cross** – Vehicle Replacement

Congratulations to the new 2017 CEDS Officers:

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| Mitch Griggs | Chairman   |
| Tom O’Bryant | Vice-Chair |
| Tate O’Rouke | Secretary  |



Congrats to **Banks County** on their \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant Award!!

## Information Services

The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions signed an agreement with the Department of Transportation and UGA’s Information and Technology Outreach Services (ITOS) to conduct work in our perspective regions on the GIS-based road centerline attribution mandated by the federally-enacted surface transportation act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) project. This project will begin in January 2017.

Mark your calendars for a NextGEN 911 presentation to be held in the GMRC Training Room on December 7th. If you are interested in attending this presentation, please contact Faith Bryan at (770)538-2614 or [fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov).

## Planning

The **City of Bowersville** has had their *Comprehensive Plan* update approved by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Status of recent/current Development of Regional Impact (DRI) reviews:

- **City of Cornelia** - #2619 Wastewater treatment Plant Expansion – Complete. No potential adverse inter jurisdictional impacts found.
- **Forsyth County** - #2642 Brookwood Quarters (mixed use) – Initial forms on file; Awaiting traffic study.
- **Gainesville** -#2638 Oak Hall Companies (mixed use) – Initial form on file; Awaiting traffic study.



The **GMRC** is asking for additional nominations of properties to be considered as part of a *regional brownfield assessment* beginning in 2017. This project will help communities with vacant industrial properties with suspicion of on-site contamination develop clean up and reuse

strategies to aid in attracting private redevelopment. If you have a site you suspect to be a qualified brownfield, please contact [ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov).

## Finance and Human Resources

The GMRC Council approved the FY 2016 financial audit at the November meeting. In addition, the Personnel Policies & Procedures have been updated and approved by the GMRC Council.

Human Resources is working closely with Heather Feldman to fill the Economic Development Director position. Interviews will be conducted in early December.



Georgia Mountains

**Youth Services**

Five participants of the Youth Program Services received a GED in **White, Hart, Rabun, and Habersham Counties**.

Youth Department staff held three workshops in **Banks, Hall, and Stephens Counties**, that included resume building, team building, and career exploration.

Youth Department staff participated in two career fairs.



Six Regional Youth Detention Center GED graduates from the WorkSource Transition to Success program are now employed or are in an internship.

Previous and current youth were interviewed by the Gainesville Times and Channel 46 News regarding their participation in RYDC GED program. These youth earned their GED through the WorkSource program and are currently employed. They discussed how WorkSource helped them and the progress they have made since completing the program.

After sharing their experiences, they met with Angela Pugh, Independent Living Mentor, to discuss future plans and services with WorkSource Georgia Mountains for college.

**Other News**

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, approximately 60 attended the Governor's High Demand Career Initiative Sector Partnerships Region 2 Workshop. WorkSource Georgia Mountains has used Local Market Information from Georgia DOL and Georgia Department of Economic Development Workforce Division to determine manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics as the targeted industry markets for sector strategies within the Georgia Mountains Region. The WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff will have several planning meetings to discuss Sector Strategies within the WorkSource Georgia Mountains Region and to identify uses and needs for a \$250,000 grant to further sector strategies in the area. **The first of these meetings will be held on December 8, 2016 from 9am to 12:30pm at Goodwill of North Georgia in Cornelia.**

**Career Coaches**

The Career Coaches were invited to participate in the Three Days of Hope community outreach event in **Forsyth County** and Career Day at Davis Middle School in **Hall County**. Between the two events over 150+ people stepped aboard the Career Coach and utilized its services ranging from resume writing to career assessments. Keith Krauth was also interviewed by 21 curious and inquisitive students!

Twelve high school students from Mountain Education Charter High School in **White County** received resume training and career guidance on-board the Career Coach.

Working with continued partnerships, resume training sessions were conducted for Salvation Army of **Hall County** and **Dawson County** Treatment Court. The Career Coaches were also invited to conduct an initial resume training session for Hall County Day Reporting Center. The event was a huge success as 16 participants received individualized attention! A second appointment has already been scheduled for February of 2017.

Thirty individuals registered for Georgia Work Ready Virtual OneStop (VOS) while receiving career assistance on the Career Coaches.

| Category of Responses     | Month Total | Year Total |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Total Job Searches        | 100         | 836        |
| Total Job App             | 6           | 123        |
| Total Resumes             | 54          | 585        |
| Total Interviews          | 0           | 4          |
| Total Interest Survey     | 167         | 547        |
| Total Training Sessions   | 0           | 7          |
| Total Testing             | 0           | 3          |
| Total Typing Assessments  | 1           | 40         |
| WIOA Info                 | 87          | 986        |
| Total Unemployment Claims | 0           | 0          |
| Computer Trainings        | 0           | 0          |
| Microsoft Office Classes  | 0           | 0          |
| Public Relations          | 39          | 543        |

| RESPONSES PER COUNTY |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Banks—9              | Lumpkin—6    |
| Dawson—15            | Rabun—5      |
| Forsyth—48           | Stephens—142 |
| Franklin—11          | Towns—0      |
| Habersham—2          | Union—0      |
| Hall—295             | White—33     |
| Hart—12              | Other—0      |

## Event and Meeting Schedule

| DATE                            | TIME           | EVENT/MEETING                             | LOCATION/HOST  |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| <i>December 2nd</i>             | <i>4:45 pm</i> | <i>Reception/Cash Bar</i>                 | <i>GMRC Annual Dinner</i>  |
|                                 | <i>6:00 pm</i> | <i>Dinner</i>                             | <i>The Dillard House Conference Center</i>                       |
| <b>December 7th</b>             | 10:00 am       | NextGEN 911 Presentation                  | <b>GMRC Office, Gainesville</b><br><b>JB Jones Training Room</b> |
| <b>December 13th</b>            | 4:00 pm        | Retirement Reception for<br>Becky Sievers | <b>GMRC Office, Gainesville</b><br><b>JB Jones Training Room</b> |
| <b>December 23rd &amp; 26th</b> |                | GMRC Office Closed                        | <b>Holidays</b>  |
| <b>January 26th</b>             | 4:00 pm        | GMWD Board Meeting                        | <b>City of Cumming</b>   |
|                                 | 6:00 pm        | Council Meeting                           |  |
| <b>February 23rd</b>            | 10:00 am       | GMRC Council Training                     | <b>City of Helen</b>   |
| <b>March 30th</b>               | 6:00 pm        | Council Meeting                           | <b>City of Cornelia</b>  |
| <b>April 27th</b>               | 4:00 pm        | GMWD Board Meeting                        | <b>City of Lavonia</b>   |
|                                 | 6:00 pm        | Council Meeting                           |  |

