



**BULLOCH COUNTY LEADERS GRADUATE FROM THE  
GEORGIA ACADEMY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

***November 29, 2018***

The Board of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development announces Bulloch County graduates from the 2018 Region 12 Multi-Day Training Program. Class participants represented a number of professional and non-professional economic development fields, including elected officials, public servants, business leaders, educators, and social service providers from 10 counties in Coastal Georgia. The Academy provided each of the graduates an opportunity to gain a unique understanding of the complexities of economic and community development on the local, regional, and state levels.

***Bulloch County graduates at the November 28, 2018 ceremony included:***

***Kathryn Bryant, Conference Services Coordinator, Georgia Southern University***

***Allen Davis, Producer, Glenn/Davis and Associates***

***Becky Davis, Executive Director, Statesboro Convention and Visitors Bureau***

***Olympia Gaines, Clerk of the Board, Bulloch County Board of Commissioners***

***Kathleen Kosmoski, Director for Continuing Education & Industry Training, Ogeechee Technical College***

***Matt Mathews, Attorney, Edenfield, Cox, Bruce, and Edenfield***

***Justin Samples, Marketing Manager, Statesboro Convention and Visitors Bureau***

***Chris Wiggins, Retail Market Manager, Synovus***

Created in 1993, the Academy assembles a cross section of economic development professionals and resources to provide this training in all twelve service delivery regions in Georgia. The Board of Directors of the Academy represent public and private economic development organizations and agencies from across Georgia. Since its organization, the Academy has provided training for thousands of professional and non-professional economic developers around the state, and since 1998 the Academy has been offered annually in all twelve regions of the state. Georgia EMC and Georgia Power provide facilitators for the program, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs provides staff support to this important program.

Georgia EMC's Vice President, Community and Economic Development (CED), Pat B. Merritt, CEcD says, "Our Community Development team is proud to partner with and provide facilitation and presentation

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services on behalf of Georgia’s electric membership cooperatives. Involved since its inception, the team’s work with the Academy graduates has enhanced levels of leadership capacity and community development preparedness for continued economic development progress throughout the Region.” In Region 12, CED cooperative members are Canoochee EMC, Coastal EMC, Excelsior EMC, Okefenoke EMC, and Planters EMC.

“Georgia Power continues to play a major role in the State’s economic development. The Academy participants build relationships, share best practices, and learn about important issues and challenges facing our communities. We’re proud to be a partner in this important effort, preparing our leaders for continued economic growth throughout the state,” says Georgia Power Company Community Development Manager Kristy Rachal.

“One of the goals for the multi-day regional Academies is to encourage multi-county cooperation,” says Corinne Thornton, Director of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development. “Many times the participants discover the issues facing their community are the same as those facing other communities in their region, and can then combine limited resources to address the issue.”

The Academy’s multi-day program, taught one day a month over a four-month period, includes training in the basics of economic and community development, plus specialized segments on business recruitment and retention, tourism product development, downtown development, planning, and other essentials for community success. In addition, the curriculum features specific leadership skills such as consensus building, ethics in public service, collaborative leadership and other segments needed for effective community leadership in economic development. Local elected officials may receive certification training credits through the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association for completion of this program.

The next Region 12 Georgia Academy for Economic Development will begin in August 2019. For more information on this, please contact Jennifer Fordham at (912) 531-1746 or by email at [jennifer.fordham@dca.ga.gov](mailto:jennifer.fordham@dca.ga.gov).

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