



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FY19 • YEAR IN REVIEW

We SPEAK Business

GDEcD FY19 YEAR IN REVIEW

It's been an excellent year for economic development in Georgia. Under the strong leadership of Governor Kemp, the state has been named No. 1 for business for the seventh year in a row by Site Selection magazine and the sixth year running by Area Development magazine.



This 'Year in Review' affords us the opportunity to share a small selection of the successes and achievements of the nine divisions of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD). Our team works tirelessly to bring investment and jobs to the state through an integrated approach attracting new businesses, expanding existing industries, encouraging tourism, supporting film projects, growing arts opportunities, backing innovation and providing international access to Georgia businesses. In FY19, GDEcD reaffirmed its commitment to rural initiatives, expanding efforts to locate jobs and investment in all four corners of the state.

In being named the No. 1 state for business, Georgia has ranked highly for cooperative and responsive government, and as we progress through FY20, we aim to continue serving both businesses new to Georgia and those longtime residents in the same manner, and maintain Georgia's place as a global leader.

Thank you for your support of economic development efforts in Georgia.

Stay informed on the latest economic development updates at **Georgia.org**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1ST - The Honorable Jay Neely (Chairman)
2ND - The Honorable Mark Glass
3RD - The Honorable Scott Blackstock
4TH - The Honorable Dennis Chastain
5TH - The Honorable T. Dallas Smith
6TH - The Honorable David Belle Isle
7TH - The Honorable Ron Garrard
8TH - The Honorable Larry Hanson
9TH - The Honorable Steve Syfan
10TH - The Honorable Jake Carter
11TH - The Honorable Mike Campbell
12TH - The Honorable Wayne Christian
13TH - The Honorable June Wood
14TH - The Honorable Amy Kelley

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

The Honorable Allen Hodges
The Honorable Mark Bassford
The Honorable Randall Hatcher
The Honorable Mitch Malcom
The Honorable Eric Johnson
The Honorable Pedro Cherry
The Honorable Marisa Simpson
The Honorable Jaclyn Dixon Ford
The Honorable Mat Swift

*Reflects current GDEcD Board as of December 2019

FY19 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT MAP

The FY19 impact map represents a few of the ways that GDEcD divisions support our cities, towns and counties.

STATEWIDE IMPACT MAP LEGEND



CENTERS OF INNOVATION

- Project assistance provided



FILM

- Film location
- Camera Ready community



GEORGIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

- Grant received
- Capacity building or professional development consultation
- Arts or literary learning program



GLOBAL COMMERCE

- Located project
- Georgia Small Business ROCK STAR



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Consular Corps program or presence
- International presentation



INTERNATIONAL TRADE

- Active trade client
- Export success



TOURISM

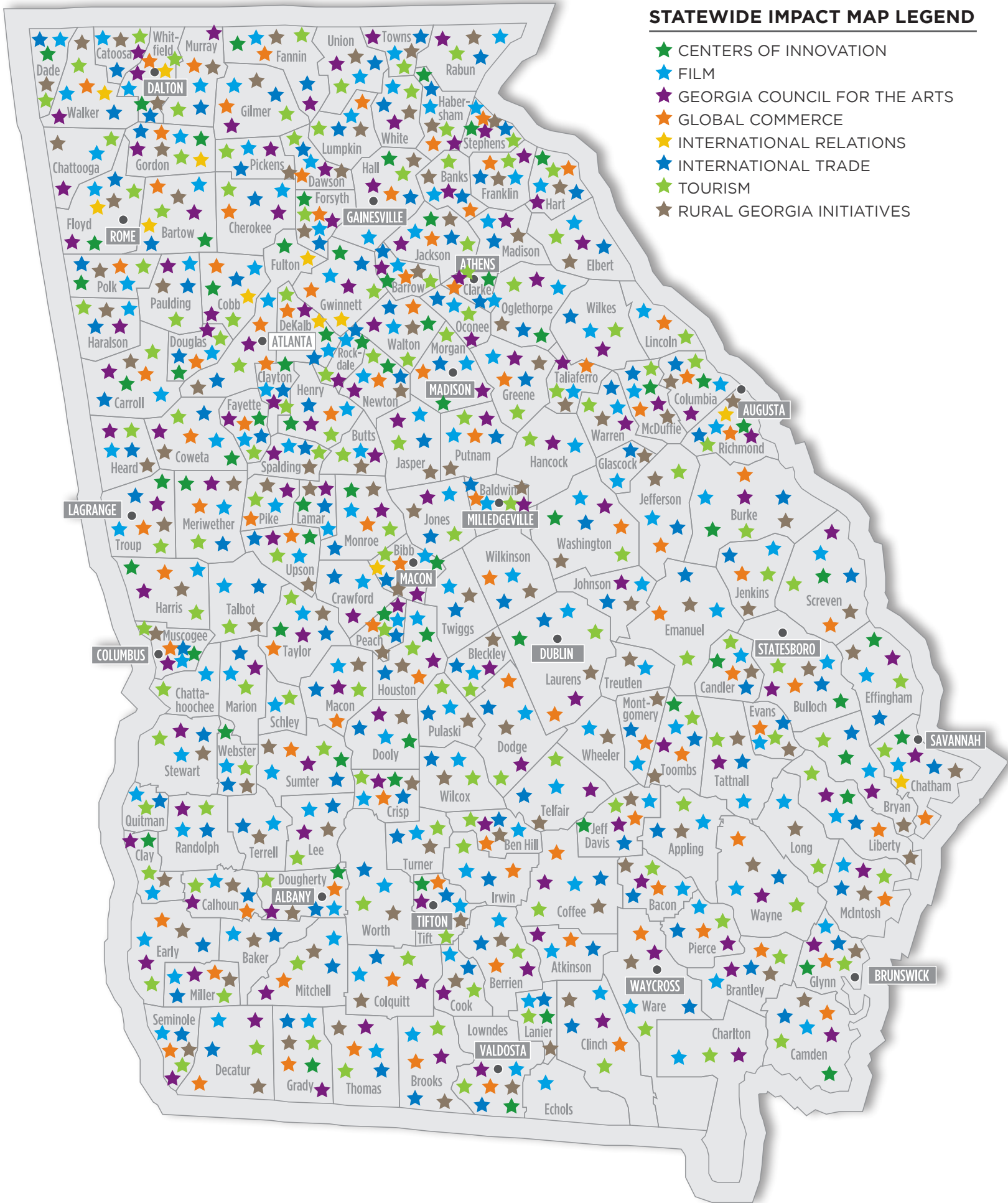
- Project assistance provided
- Site visit
- Grant received



RURAL GEORGIA INITIATIVES

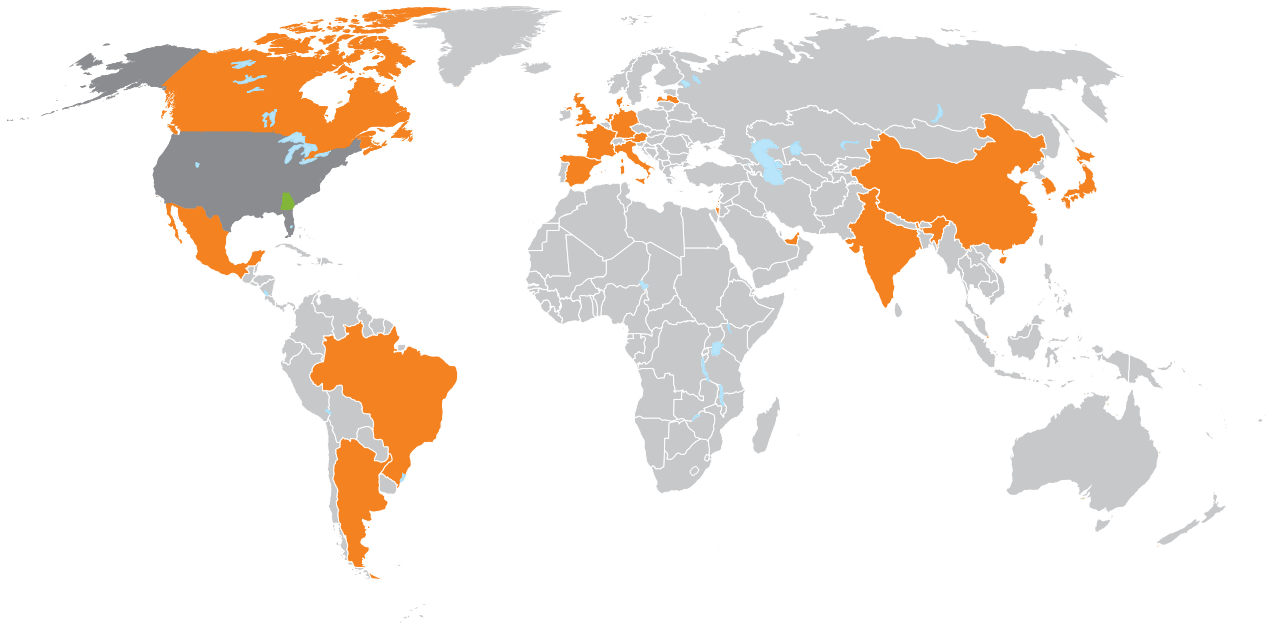
- Industry visit
- Community meeting
- Project collaboration
- Community visit

FY19 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT MAP



WE SPEAK BUSINESS AROUND THE GLOBE

To build and strengthen existing relationships, GDEcD staff and state officials traveled to these critically important international markets during FY19:



GEORGIA'S REPRESENTATION IN 12 MARKETS

Georgia has international representatives in 12 strategic world markets based on substantial investment, trade and tourism opportunities.

BRAZIL
CANADA
CHILE
CHINA

COLOMBIA
EUROPE
ISRAEL
JAPAN

KOREA
MEXICO
PERU
UK & IRELAND

BY THE NUMBERS

674

COI ENGAGEMENTS

\$4.4M

DIRECT ECONOMIC
BENEFIT FROM
COI PROJECTS

\$39M

TOTAL INVESTMENT
FROM 38 COI
SUPPORTED PROJECTS

41

ENGAGEMENTS
WITH ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
ACROSS THE STATE

The Georgia Centers of Innovation (COI) are the state's leading resource for facilitating business innovation. Through the assistance of the five centers, Georgia companies translate new ideas and technologies into commercially viable products and services to better compete in the global marketplace. This economic catalyst, in turn, promotes the continued growth of the state's economy. COI provides the leading technical industry expertise, research collaborations, and business partnerships to help the state's strategic industries connect, compete and grow.

COI Programs Lead to Opportunities to Grow Businesses

Alpharetta-based Spenergy has found tremendous benefit in using the COI Aerospace-developed Georgia Defense Exchange (GDX). Using GDX has helped them secure nearly a dozen new federal contracts resulting in about \$500,000 of new business.

COI Connects Small Businesses with Cyber Security Resources

COI Information Technology and Global Commerce's Corporate Solutions and Cyber Security team kicked off the development of a Cyber Security Resource Catalog to support recruitment, expansion and innovation efforts by GDEcD. This effort connects with the ongoing DoD Office of Economic Adjustment grant program led by COI Aerospace that assists Georgia defense contractors as new DoD cyber requirements come online in early 2020. COI Information Technology also participated in the Institute for Healthcare Information Technology (IHIT) board which recently released a white paper titled, *The State of Cybersecurity Among Georgia Hospitals* to foster more collaboration between the cyber industry, government and hospitals.

COI Project Leads to New Markets for Thomasville Business

The COI Energy grant project with the University of Georgia and Thomasville-based Sweet Grass Dairy has proven a longer shelf life for their best-selling cheese products. This increase in shelf life has opened new markets for the company and they are now able to distribute their product into West Coast markets as well as some international markets.



COI Logistics Signs MOU with Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) and Georgia Tech

Signed in July, the MOU's goal is to bring advanced research, evolving global logistics trends and analysis from the world to Savannah. By tapping into the hands-on expertise at GPA and COI Logistics — as well as the high-tech analysis and research at Georgia Tech's Supply Chain and Logistics Institute — cargo owners and third-party logistics providers will gain superior insight into everything from when and where to build infrastructure to improved efficiency in cargo routing.



COI Logistics Signs MOU with Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) and Georgia Tech.

COI Supports Recruitment of new Georgia Manufacturer

COI Manufacturing continues to support Plethora Manufacturing as they move out on an announced project which will create 250 jobs and invest more than \$17 million in a new production facility in Marietta. COI Manufacturing supported the recruitment and is now connecting Plethora to resources to help ensure the success of the project as it moves forward.

COI Regional Innovation Tours

COI began a series of visits to communities across Georgia to learn more about the local innovation ecosystems, how to expand innovation programs using a combination of local and state-wide resources, and better connect COI programs to the communities. The visits resulted in many new collaborations with local companies and opportunities for future partnerships to grow local innovation communities. The COI Regional Innovation Tours took the team to Augusta, Cartersville, Columbus, Rome, Savannah, Statesboro and Woodbury.



COI staff meeting with local companies and communities.



“As a small business owner, it's worthwhile looking at your biggest pain points and saying, ‘What is really holding us back to growing, and being more sustainable.’ And there's a good chance that Centers of Innovation can help grow your business.”

— Jessica Little, Co-owner, Sweet Grass Dairy

BY THE NUMBERS

3,040

MOTION PICTURE AND
TELEVISION INDUSTRY
BUSINESSES IN GEORGIA

\$2.9B

DIRECT PRODUCTION
SPENDING IN GEORGIA

391

FILM AND TELEVISION
PRODUCTIONS

\$9.2B

TOTAL WAGES

1.1B+ SQ FT

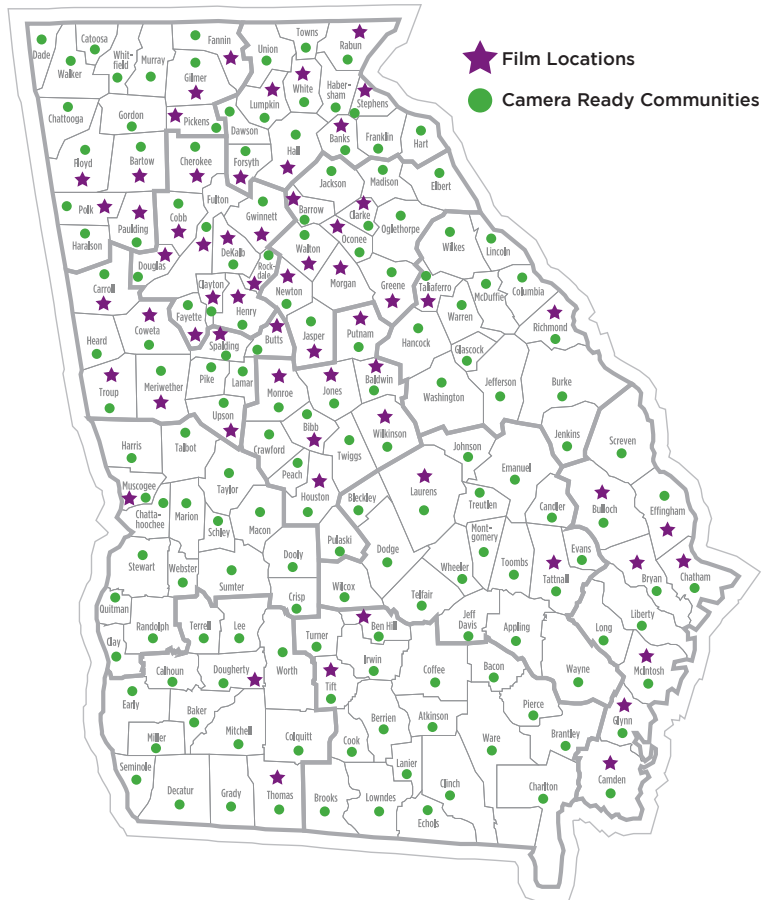
PURPOSE-BUILT
SOUNDSTAGE SPACE

2.1B+ SQ FT

RETROFITTED
SOUNDSTAGE SPACE

The Film division helps develop the state's film, television and commercial production industries by marketing the state to production companies, scouting locations and coordinating the filming needs of companies with other state agencies, local governments and citizens. The division actively works to develop the industry's infrastructure and workforce, certifies projects under the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act and oversees the Camera Ready community program to engage municipalities throughout Georgia.

Small Business Growing Through Film



REGION 1 - Lots of carpeting is needed for sets, and North Georgia companies like Myers Carpet in **Dalton** have sold more than 1 million dollars' worth of it to film companies.

REGION 2 - Call Me Crafty of **Clarksville** has provided craft services to more than 35 film and television projects statewide.

REGION 3 - Cinema Greens has a 13,000-square-foot greenhouse, six-acre nursery and 5,000-square-foot warehouse in **Hampton** dedicated solely to providing plants to the film industry.

REGION 4 – Whether a production needs a 1930 Model A Ford or a 1956 T-bird, Georgia Vintage Cars of **Newnan** can provide a picture car.

REGION 5 – Athens-based WaterMan Spring Water has delivered thousands of gallons of water to films throughout the state.

REGION 6 – Police deputies in **Macon** have worked off duty on three major productions in the past year, clocking 2,800 hours and earning more than \$130,000.

REGION 7 – The crew filming *Ghost Draft* at Graves Mountain in **Lincolnton** stayed at hotels in both **Thomson** and **Augusta**.

REGION 8 – River Market Antiques and Junque Yard Antiques in **Columbus** both provided set dressing to the indie feature *The Overcomer*.

REGION 9 – Dixon Electrical in **Hagan** provided services to feature film *Gemini Man*.

REGION 10 – Russell's Military Vehicles of **Cairo** is a nationally known military vehicle appraiser, vehicle supplier and military tech advisor. They have provided services to major Georgia-lensed feature films such as *Jumanji*, *Furious 7* and *X-Men: First Class*.

REGION 11 – Aircraft Stock in **Douglas** provides airplane mock-ups and props to Georgia movies, such as *Hunger Games: Mockingjay* and *Godzilla*.

REGION 12 – The **Savannah-Chatham County** Public School System planned to use closing Thunderbolt Elementary School for storage. Instead, the system started renting the location out to film crews, which paid for more than 75 percent of the development project evolving East Broad Street K-8 School into the Early Learning Center at Henderson E. Formey, Jr. School.

Notable Georgia-Lensed Projects Premiered in FY19



Goosebumps 2: Haunted Halloween



Nancy Drew and the Hidden Staircase



MacGyver season 3



Black Lightning season 2

BY THE NUMBERS

200,000

CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES JOBS

216

GRANTS AWARDED

\$1.4M

AWARDED IN
ARTS GRANTS

130

COUNTIES SERVED BY
GCA GRANTS, PROGRAMS
AND SERVICES

5,670,934

CITIZENS IMPACTED BY
GCA FUNDED PROJECTS
AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) empowers the arts industry in Georgia and artists around the state to cultivate healthy, vibrant communities in rich civic participation, cultural experiences and economic prosperity. As a division of GDEcD, GCA provides statewide grand funding, programs and services that support this vital industry, preserve our cultural heritage and create increased access to high-quality arts experiences.

Teaching Artists

In June 2019, Georgia Council for the Arts, in collaboration with ArtsNow, hosted a one-day Teaching Artists Training at the Center for Innovative Teaching in Winder. This training was the first of its kind in at least a decade and was an important step in the Council's efforts to rebuild Georgia's Teaching Artist Registry and support professionals in this field. GCA's current Teaching Artist Registry includes 62 qualified teaching artists from throughout Georgia who have a combination of extensive training and experience in their field, and are available to work in schools and at organizations serving K-12 students. The training held in FY19 served to better prepare teaching artists from throughout the state on topics ranging from S.T.E.A.M.; accessibility; Arts Integration and 21st Century Skills; diversity, equity and inclusion; and state policies and programs. The purpose of the training was to provide essential contexts for the important work of teaching artists in the state of Georgia and to support the advancement of each artists' craft through the development of specific knowledge and skills.



Deep Center in Savannah was one of the FY19 Arts Education Program Grant recipients.

GEORGIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

Creative Healing

In the late 1960s, Georgia Council for the Arts launched the Georgia Art Bus Program, sending a bus transformed into a traveling exhibition space to venues around the state. Though the Art Bus program ended decades ago, the intent to bring original works of art by Georgia artists to people throughout the state has endured. It is in this vein in FY19 GCA began Creative Healing, a program placing works from the State Art Collection in rural Georgia hospitals. It is our hope that patients, visitors, doctors, nurses and administrators alike might take a moment with these works of art and enjoy an introduction to some of the immense talent that our state has nurtured. Each hospital receives the loan for a 12-month period of time during which time GCA works with them to identify and connect with local artists and arts organizations to further explore opportunities for the role of the arts in health and wellness. During FY19, the exhibit traveled to Elbert Memorial Hospital in Elberton and Washington County Regional Medical Center in Sandersville.



The lobby of Elbert Memorial Hospital on the opening night of the inaugural Creative Healing exhibit.

Governor's Awards

GCA, the Office of the Governor and Georgia Humanities annually present the Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities. The award recognizes the value of the arts and humanities in the creation of a thriving economy and their contributions to education, innovation, growth and quality of life. In FY19, awards were presented to 10 outstanding individuals and organizations: Lucinda W. Bunnen of Atlanta, Common Good Atlanta, Hermina Glass-Hill of Kennesaw and Midway, Christopher Johnson of Cuthbert and Columbus, Madison-Morgan Conservancy, Jessy Norman School of the Arts in Augusta-Richmond County, Kathy Prescott and Grady Thrasher of Athens and Atlanta, Rick McKnight of Columbus, Mercer University Press in Macon, and Angelica Hairston of Atlanta.

GCA Grant Funding



A muralist paints as part of the Vibrant Communities Grant awarded to the Downtown Development Authority of Richmond Hill.

"The GCA partner grant made our programs possible. With the support of GCA the OHC has transformed from an organization that was barely surviving to thriving. It's been amazing to see our community rally around art for personal and economic development."

— Okefenokee Heritage Center, FY19 GCA Partner Grant Recipient

Visit **Gaarts.org** to learn more on how GCA helps shape the future of the arts in Georgia.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$7.4B
INVESTMENT

28,960
NEW JOBS

332
NEW PROJECTS
AND EXPANSIONS OF
CURRENT GEORGIA
BUSINESSES

68
INTERNATIONAL
PROJECTS

\$3.3B
FOREIGN DIRECT
INVESTMENT

The Global Commerce division works to recruit new companies to Georgia from around the world, help existing Georgia companies expand and assist small businesses as they grow. To read more about FY19 announcements, visit [Georgia.org/Newsroom](https://www.Georgia.org/Newsroom).

SK innovation

In November, Korean manufacturer SK innovation announced a new plant in Jackson County. A developer and manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries for hybrid electric vehicles, SK innovation is estimated to create more than 2,000 jobs and invest \$1.67 billion in the long term. This is the largest job creating project announced since Kia Motors in 2006. In January, the company signed a memorandum of understanding to donate \$60,000 to the Empower College and Career Center, a charter high school in Jackson County scheduled to begin operations in 2021.



SK innovation groundbreaking in Jackson County.

Check-Mate Industries

In December, Check-Mate Industries announced an expansion of their New York-headquartered operations into Thomasville in order to meet the growing demands for their products. The new manufacturing facility will invest more than \$16 million and create 230 jobs in South Georgia. Check-Mate Industries is a family-owned manufacturer of metal stampings, assemblies, tools and dies, and will hire throughout all levels of the organization, including management teams and administrative personnel, as well as skilled positions such as computer numeric controlled machinists and tool and die makers.

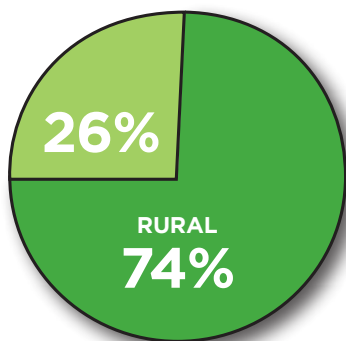


Governor Kemp speaks at the Check-Mate Industries announcement.

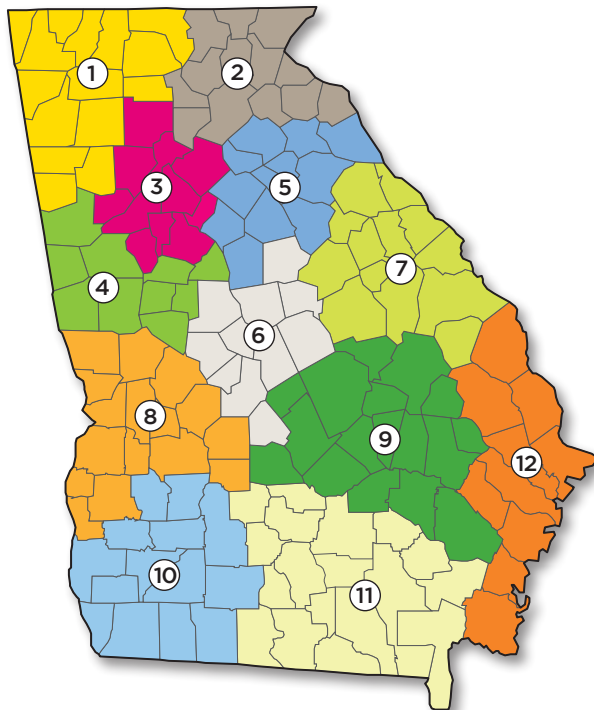
Wayfair

E-commerce retailer Wayfair announced two new Georgia facilities during FY19: a 1,164,800-square-foot facility in Savannah and a customer support facility in Athens. The Savannah location will invest approximately \$45 million over five years, and create 1,000 new jobs including supervisory, administrative and warehouse positions. The Athens location will invest more than \$8 million, and create 500 jobs. The two facilities expand Wayfair's already-established footprint in Georgia, with a warehouse and distribution center operating in McDonough.

FY19 Regional Highlights



**RURAL VS. METRO
ATLANTA PROJECTS
LOCATED IN FY19**



REGION	COMPANY	INVESTMENT	JOBS	LOCATION
1	Chick-fil-A	\$32,900,000	300	Bartow County
2	Fox Factory Holding Corp.	\$50,000,000	800	Hall County
3	Inspire Brands	\$32,000,000	1,100	Fulton County
4	Sewon America	\$160,000,000	100	Troup County
5	SK innovation	\$1,676,000,000	2,000	Jackson County
6	Five Below	\$85,500,000	131	Putnam County
7	Harrison Poultry	\$70,000,000	100	Taliaferro County
8	Global Call Center Solutions	\$4,900,000	600	Muscogee County
9	Wincore Window Company	\$6,500,000	150	Emanuel County
10	Check-Mate Industries	\$16,000,000	230	Thomas County
11	Elixir Extrusions	\$8,000,000	130	Coffee County
12	Wayfair, Inc.	\$45,000,000	1,000	Chatham County

BY THE NUMBERS

26

CONSULS GENERAL

46

HONORARY CONSULS

74

DIPLOMATIC VISITS
TO GEORGIA AND
EVENTS WITH FOREIGN
DIGNITARIES

8

GOVERNOR OR
COMMISSIONER-LED
OVERSEAS MISSIONS

The International Relations division strengthens Georgia's reputation as a welcoming location for international business and tourism by strategically cultivating and expanding Georgia's international relationships. The office oversees communications and activities with foreign governments and is the state's liaison to members of the Consular Corps. The division also manages the Governor's trade and investment missions, welcomes international delegations and dignitaries, provides community outreach and education opportunities, and coordinates international efforts among state departments and agencies.

Governor Kemp Travels to Korea

In June, Governor Brian Kemp embarked on his first overseas economic development mission as governor. He and a small team from GDEcD traveled to Seoul, South Korea, paying thank-you calls on companies with major operations in Georgia, meeting with businesses considering investing in the state, sitting down with political leaders, and connecting with importer associations interested in buying products from Georgia companies.

Korean companies announced investments of more than \$2 billion in Georgia from 2018-2019, creating nearly 3,000 jobs. GDEcD is supported by a trade and investment office in Seoul that has been continually representing Georgia since 1985.

In their four days on the ground, Governor Kemp and the delegation hosted or attended 22 meetings and events, carrying a strong message to markets across Korea that Georgia is open for business.



Governor Kemp and GDEcD staff visit SK innovation in Korea.

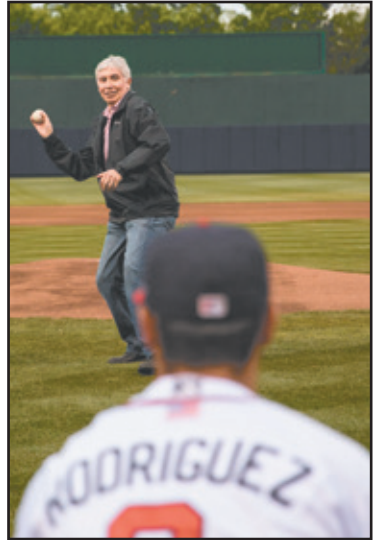


Governor Kemp and Georgia officials meet with Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon and officials of the South Korean government.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Consular Corps Tours Northwest Georgia

The 33rd annual International VIP Tour was held in April in communities across the northwest region of the state, hosting 28 members of the Consular Corps on visits highlighting the communities through industry, tourism, education, culture and innovation. Each spring since 1986, GDECD has sponsored this event to give regions across the state a unique opportunity to promote themselves to a top-level international audience. This year the VIP Tour visited Calhoun, Lookout Mountain, Dalton, Rome, Adairsville, Cartersville and Kennesaw.



The Dean of the Consular Corps, Consul General Miguel Aleman of Peru, throws out the first pitch at a Rome Braves game.



The Consular Corps visiting Phoenix Air in Cartersville during the 2019 International VIP Tour.

Georgia Welcomes the World



Governor and Mrs. Kemp welcome members of the Consular Corps to the Mansion.



Governor Kemp accepts a gift from H.E. Harsh Shringla, Ambassador of India to the United States.



Deputy Commissioner Abby Turano welcomes a group of Korean visitors.



Governor Kemp speaks on the importance of Georgia's international connections during International Day at the Capitol.

BY THE NUMBERS

145

COUNTIES SERVED

2,081

COMPANIES RECEIVED
EXPORT ASSISTANCE

56%

COMPANIES ASSISTED
WITH <20 EMPLOYEES

\$40.6B

GEORGIA-BASED
EXPORTS

212

EXPORT DESTINATIONS
FOR GEORGIA GOODS
AND SERVICES

International trade is vital to Georgia's economy, and its benefits extend to every corner of our state. Each year, thousands of companies in Georgia pursue new international customers, stay ahead of global competition and create jobs through exporting. The International Trade division helps businesses of all sizes diversify their international sales, connecting them to the resources they need to succeed in global markets. When companies succeed in exporting, their resilience and growth strengthens local communities all across Georgia.

2018 Trade Numbers

In March 2019, Governor Kemp held a press conference at the State Capitol to announce Georgia's record-breaking year for international trade. In 2018, Georgia exports surpassed \$40.6 billion for the first time ever with total trade reaching a new high of \$139.3 billion. Twelve GDECD trade clients took part in the press conference, providing testimonials on the importance of trade and export promotion services like those provided by GDECD's International Trade division.

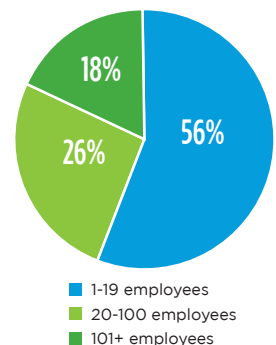


Governor Kemp announces record-breaking trade numbers.

Small Business Outreach

GDECD's International Trade division is committed to helping small businesses grow across Georgia through export outreach initiatives. In FY19, international trade managers traveled to all 12 regions of the state to meet one-on-one with companies, helping them access new international opportunities. More than 2,081 Georgia businesses spanning 145 counties received customized export assistance from GDECD and 82% of this assistance was focused on SME's with fewer than 100 employees.

Engagement by Company Size



82% of trade team export assistance went to SME's with fewer than 100 employees.

Client Recognized by U.S. Small Business Association

GDEcD trade client, Rotorcorp, was named the 2019 Exporter of the Year for Georgia, Southeast by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Rotorcorp has worked extensively with GDEcD's trade team and international representatives to achieve significant international success. The company currently supports more than 1,000 customers in 45 countries around the world with plans for increased international growth. Rotorcorp President Sean Casey was recently appointed to the Industry Trade Advisory Committee, which is jointly managed by the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Office of United States Trade Representative (USTR) to engage business leaders in formulating U.S. trade policy.



Rotorcorp receives the 2019 Exporter of the Year for Georgia, Southeast from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Helping Georgia's FinTech Entrepreneurs Go Global

Georgia is at the epicenter of technology innovation and GDEcD's International Trade division connects Georgia's tech entrepreneurs to opportunities all over the world. In FY19, GDEcD exhibited with Georgia start-ups for the first time at Money20/20 Europe to brand Georgia's FinTech ecosystem and highlight its small business innovators.



GDEcD staff and trade clients at Money20/20 Europe.

"The Department's international trade team has been instrumental in helping us make connections in many of our current growth markets. The research, connections and tradeshow opportunities provided by GDEcD's trade division have been incredibly valuable in generating new international customers in countries around the world."

— Katy Kleinmann, Vice President of Business Development, One World, Inc.

BY THE NUMBERS

489

MARKETING PROJECTS
COMPLETED

98

PRESS RELEASES

19

VIDEOS PRODUCED

815,000

GEORGIA.ORG SESSIONS

1.7M

GEORGIA.ORG
PAGE VIEWS

563,274

NEW GEORGIA.ORG
USERS

The Marketing & Communications division manages the agency's reputation and promotes Georgia's business, tourism, arts and entertainment assets. Through the integration of print, digital, social media and broadcast advertising and communications channels, the division supports the department's eight operating divisions in their efforts to attract jobs and investment to the state.

Websites Relunched

In FY19, the Marketing & Communications division took the lead on relaunching both of the department's flagship websites: Georgia.org and ExploreGeorgia.org. The team aimed to provide million dollar websites at a fraction of the price, while improving functionality both for visitors to the websites and for GDEcD staff. Through months of design work and content updates, the websites took on more modern looks and content was arranged to be easier to find. Both websites were designed to embrace ongoing development, with regular updates encouraged in order to keep the sites as modern, robust and user-friendly as possible.



Georgia.org



ExploreGeorgia.org

International Media Campaigns

Building off of two successful campaigns focusing on China, in FY19 the Marketing & Communications division developed four international media campaigns for Global Commerce in China, Germany, Japan and Korea. Each campaign promoted Georgia to business executives in the four markets through in-language PR and digital advertising efforts. For example, the Japanese campaign shared long-form articles featuring interviews with Japanese executives who have company locations in Georgia; these interviews explained how Georgia has helped those companies expand their operations here in the United States. Each campaign resulted in a notable uptick in traffic to the in-language pages on Georgia.org.



Department Videos Win Multiple Awards

Three videos produced by the Marketing & Communications division received prestigious awards in FY19. The animated short, FilmWorks, received both a Gold and Bronze Telly Award across two different categories. A Gold Telly also went to the Cyber Center video, while the Japan Investment video received a Gold Hermes Creative Award. The Telly Awards annually showcases the best video work created for all screens. Receiving over 12,000 entries from all 50 states and 5 continents, Telly Award winners represent work from some of the most respected advertising agencies, television stations, production companies and publishers from around the world. The Hermes Creative Award is an international competition for creative professionals and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals.



BY THE NUMBERS

111.7M

VISITORS

\$66.3B

TOTAL TOURISM
OUTPUT

478,000

JOBS SUPPORTED

752,832

SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS/FANS

28

TRAVEL JOURNALISTS
HOSTED

30

TOURISM PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT
(TPD) GRANTS

\$180,755.99

AWARDED IN
TPD GRANTS

With genuine hospitality, Explore Georgia, the Tourism division of GDEcD, inspires and promotes travel to and within Georgia.

Invitation to Explore

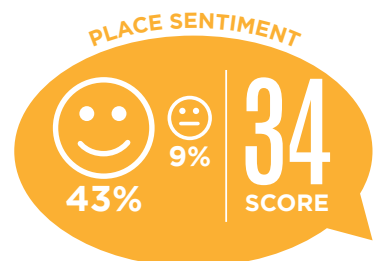
This year, Explore Georgia introduced a new campaign named "Invitation to Explore." After the previous campaign ran for nearly five years, Invitation to Explore refreshed creative and took an entirely different approach, using all UGC (user-generated content) and featuring more than 40 locations throughout the state. And, it worked. People who saw the ads were 150% more likely to gather information about travel to Georgia and 75% more likely to visit Georgia than those who did not see the ads.



Invitation to Explore billboards seen in and around Atlanta

Tourism Elevates the World's Impression of Georgia

Working with leading research group Destination Think!, Explore Georgia learned that Georgia's tourism industry raises the global perception of the state by 38%. When people talk about Georgia's tourism experiences online, 51% of the conversations are positive, while only 43% of the online conversations about the state in general are positive. This means the tourism industry is elevating the world's impression of Georgia by generating significant positive word of mouth about the state.



10th Anniversary of Tourism Product Development

The Tourism Product Development (TPD) program empowers and assists communities by helping them identify, develop and get their experiences visitor-ready. Over the past 10 years, this program has championed rural Georgia and its small business with 70 Resource Team visits across the state. In addition, nearly \$1.5 million in grants have been distributed to more than 175 projects.



Tourism product developed as a result of the TPD Resource Teams.

“As experts with deep knowledge of the Peach State’s tourism product and partners, the Explore Georgia team works across platforms to inspire, influence and connect domestic and international travelers to memorable experiences, businesses and communities statewide.”

— Lisa Love, Interim Deputy Commissioner for Tourism, GDEcD

BY THE NUMBERS

224

COLLABORATIONS
RELATED TO
RURAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

137

MEETINGS WITH
COMMUNITIES AND
INDUSTRIES IN
RURAL GEORGIA

130

COUNTIES SUPPORTED

The mission of the Rural Georgia Initiatives division is to help rural Georgia communities become more competitive for economic development projects and identify new strategies for attracting jobs and investment. This division works diligently to advance these strategies, thereby improving the quality of life for those residing in Georgia's rural communities.

Rural Georgia Initiatives (RGI) has collaborated with every other division at GDEcD to focus on the needs of Georgia's rural communities. From assisting with tourism projects in rural counties to helping regional project managers with expanding businesses, RGI has touched each corner of the state and impacted all aspects of rural economic development.

Tourism Product Development Resource Teams

RGI regularly collaborates with the Tourism Product Development (TPD) Resource Teams organized by the Tourism division to help rural communities build upon their tourism resources. In FY19, RGI played a critical role on the Perry TPD Resource Team, evaluating agritourism assets, Georgia Grown businesses and making recommendations for its downtown area. As a result of these recommendations, this town in middle Georgia has initiated projects to expand its tourism economy.



TPD Resource Team at Stripling's General Store in Perry.

RURAL GEORGIA INITIATIVES

Max Manufacturing

Alongside the Center of Innovation for Energy Technology, RGI provided grant writing assistance to secure funding for researching the Clean Green Composter by Max Manufacturing, a small agricultural equipment manufacturer in Mitchell County. Through this research project, the University of Georgia's Tifton Campus will study and evaluate the effectiveness of using the composter in the poultry industry to help reduce poultry producers' energy costs.

Harrison Poultry

RGI collaborated closely with the Global Commerce division and the Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation to help Harrison Poultry with its decision to construct a new feed mill and hatchery in Taliaferro County. The company faced many obstacles in this project and the GDECD team provided necessary assistance with state tax credits, federal grant opportunities, local grant writing assistance and rural loan opportunities to make this project a reality.

Rural Georgia Initiatives Across the State



RGI and Global Commerce staff at Flowers Baking Co in Villa Rica, Carroll County.



RGI and Global Commerce staff at Polar Beverages - Southern Bottling in Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County.



RGI staff at Piedmont Green Power in Barnesville, Lamar County.



RGI and Global Commerce staff at Georgia Printco in Lakeland, Lanier County.

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