

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



MARKETING | RECRUITING | EDUCATING

Rediscover what you
VALUE *most.*



Georgia Quail Hunt | Albany, Ga. | Photo: Kaila Bruner

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From the
CHAIRMAN



Grant Buckley has served as executive director of the Cordele-Crisp County Industrial Development Council since 2015. His career includes nearly 20 years of state and local level economic development, 13 years as a corporate defense lawyer, 5 years in manufacturing, and 4 years in the Georgia Air National Guard. He holds degrees from both Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia.

Rediscover what you value most.

These five powerful words succinctly capture the message of Locate South Georgia to the world's business leaders. They convey the idea that first-class industries can thrive and profit in a region which is devoid of time-consuming congestion, metropolitan distractions, and other impediments to production and distribution.

Welcome to Locate South Georgia. I'm honored to serve as Chairman of this great association. Our membership is composed of economic development professionals from 22 communities spread across South Georgia, USA, as well as associated partners in education, government, and the utilities. Our geography exceeds 10,000 square miles — an area larger than nine U.S. states — and our population is over 665,000.

Thank you for your interest in Locate South Georgia. I and my fellow professionals stand ready to assist you in any way possible as we strive to continually increase the economic vitality of our region. Enjoy this report, note our successes over the past year, and feel free to use our website resources. Locate South Georgia is your guide to rediscovery.

Grant

MISSION

Locate South Georgia aims to market and brand South Georgia as a globally-competitive location for business and industry, to work toward the recruitment of new jobs and capital investment through the region, and to educate and foster local leaders.

22 COUNTIES

665K+
REGIONAL POPULATION

1 MISSION

2023 RESULTS

COMPANY	INDUSTRY	JOBS	INVESTMENT
ANOVION	MANUFACTURING	412	\$800,000,000
WALMART DISTRIBUTION	DISTRIBUTION CENTER	TBD	\$400,000,000
WALMART MANUFACTURING	DAIRY PROCESSING	390	\$350,000,000
PILGRIM'S	POULTRY PROCESSING	75	\$125,000,000
TROY ACOUSTICS	FIREARMS	166	\$60,000,000
PRINSCO	MANUFACTURING	40	\$30,000,000
1915 SOUTH ASHLEY	DISTRIBUTION CENTER	105	\$20,000,000
SOUTHWIRE	MANUFACTURING	33	\$8,000,000
ECRIMESA	FIREARMS	50	\$7,000,000
CARPORT CENTRAL, INC.	MANUFACTURING	25	\$6,000,000
CJB	CHEMICAL	25	\$5,000,000
HARRELL AG PRODUCTS	MANUFACTURING	100	\$2,200,000

\$2.065 BILLION
INVESTMENT

1,607
JOBS

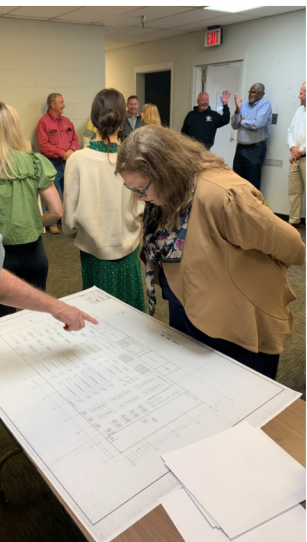


SOUTH GEORGIA *on tour*

Project managers and economic development professionals from the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Georgia Power, Georgia EMC, and Electric Cities of Georgia joined the 22 counties of Locate South Georgia for a two-day tour of the northeast side of the region.

On day one, the tour started in Crisp County and moved through Turner County and into the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill area, before stopping for dinner and hospitality in Douglas. On day two, guests hit the road again in Coffee County, returning to Cordele to complete the loop.

Thank you to all the industries that hosted us and helped showcase our member communities and our region as a whole as a place where business and industry thrive!





"The Pilgrim's story represents the need for, and the benefits of, regionalism. While Douglas felt the impact of the Pilgrim's Pride 2009 closure most severely, each of the seven counties that Coffee County touches felt it in some way, as well. When the plant reopened, the surrounding areas breathed a sigh of relief, too."

Matt Seale, CEO
Douglas-Coffee
Chamber of Commerce
& Economic Development Authority



Pilgrim's PROGRESS

In 2009, the residents of Coffee County faced a devastating blow when Pilgrim's Pride Corporation, a cornerstone of the community, decided to shut down its chicken processing plant. The closure rippled through the region, resulting in the loss of 2,200 jobs, a surge in the unemployment rate to 19.4%, and a community grappling with economic uncertainty.

JoAnne Lewis, at that time the president of the Douglas-Coffee County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Authority, vividly recalls the heart-wrenching moment when she received the news from Pilgrim's Pride. The impact was not only felt by the 900 workers directly employed by the company but also resonated through the farms and small businesses that relied on the poultry industry.

In response to the crisis, the community rallied together, refusing to be defined by the economic downturn. Local community banks, faced with the challenge of supporting farmers burdened by the corporation's closure, chose a compassionate approach. Instead of foreclosing on loans, the banks allowed them to sit on their books, showing a commitment to the well-being of local farmers.

The Coffee County Commission, recognizing the urgency of finding a new tenant for the vacant plant,



increased the mileage rate that supported the Development Authority, resulting in an \$250,000 increase in annual tax revenue for economic development. This lifeline was crucial to the search for a new chicken processor and played a significant role in keeping hope alive for the restoration of jobs.

In 2010, the community's perseverance paid off when Brazil JBS, the world's largest beef producer, stepped in to acquire the majority of stock in the Pilgrim's Pride plant. The plant was reopened under new ownership, with the name shortened to Pilgrim's. In addition to the main processing plant, Pilgrim's also restarted operations at a hatchery and feed mill, both in Coffee County.

Today, the combined facilities employ over 1,000 workers. Chicken-growers are back in business, and not just in Coffee County, but in several surrounding communities. With some chicken farms as far as 50 miles away from the Douglas facility, it's a truly regional ecosystem with far-reaching economic impacts.

Fast forward to 2022 — Pilgrim's announces a major expansion in Douglas. The city and county

officials, including Mayor Tony Paulk and Economic Development Authority Board President Stuart Smith, express their excitement for the continued investment in the community. The expansion, focused on producing pet food ingredients from chicken byproducts, represents a \$125 million investment and is set to create 75 new permanent jobs and numerous construction opportunities.

The groundbreaking ceremony on May 3, 2022 marked a new chapter in the community's economic development. Pilgrim's, already a significant employer in Georgia, pledges further support through initiatives like Hometown Strong, contributing over \$3.4 million to better Georgia communities.

The story of Pilgrim's in Douglas is a testament to the community's resilience, determination, and faith. From the brink of economic despair in 2009 to reopening and re-employing in 2010, and now a \$125 million expansion that will start operations in 2024, the journey reflects the unwavering spirit of a community that refused to be defined by challenges, ultimately transforming adversity into opportunity.



Regional SHOWCASE

1 Within the Locate South Georgia region, both the City of Albany and the Douglas-Coffee County Industrial Authority were award recipients in the first round of Governor Brian Kemp's Rural Workforce Housing Initiative.



2 The largest project announcement in the Locate South Georgia region in 2023 was Anovion Technologies with its flagship location, the first large-scale facility of its size in all of North America at 1.5M sqft in Bainbridge. The facility will produce synthetic graphite battery material.

Why did Anovion choose Bainbridge?

1) skilled workforce, dedication to training, and strong work ethic; 2) availability of necessary power requirements; 3) logistics and connectivity; and 4) community support!



3 Locate South Georgia board members, affiliate members, and partners united in early 2023 to build upon the organization's ongoing Strategic Plan. The resulting priorities will guide the team forward in upholding the organization's mission of marketing South Georgia for industry recruitment and building a network of economic development leaders.



4 In June, 1915 South | ASHLEY held a ribbon-cutting at the Red Hills Business Park in Thomas County. An anchor in the business park, ASHLEY's new distribution center integrates technology with advanced logistics, serving 11 stores in three states.

Several South Georgia communities attended the January 2023 Shot Show in Las Vegas. Pictured here is Shelley Zorn and Andy Goodwin (Thomas Co.) spending time with Bill Bergiadis of Troy Acoustics. Troy Acoustics formally announced Thomasville as the home to their new manufacturing facility during the show.

5



In June, the new peanut processing facility in Seminole County, operated by American Peanut Ingredients / American Peanut Growers Group, LLC, had a ribbon-cutting and grand opening. Representatives from APGG, members of the economic development team in Donalsonville-Seminole County, regional reps, and Locate South Georgia board members were in attendance for the celebration.

6



Locate South Georgia hosted the 3rd annual regional bus tour for project managers from across the state in November. Stops included South Georgia Technical College, Polar Beverages, Paulk Vineyards, Sunbelt Greenhouses, and Optima Chemical.

7



In May, Jason Dunn and Andrea Schruijer represented Locate South Georgia alongside the Georgia Department of Economic Development in the state's booth at SelectUSA in National Harbor, Maryland. SelectUSA is the top event in the United States for connecting investors, companies, economic development organizations, and industry experts.

8



“We started FLEX because we saw a need for innovation in developing the workforce pipeline in rural communities like Fitzgerald. Now with FLEX partner schools in ten South Georgia communities and growing, we’re watching this program create systemic change in the way we do economic development.”



Jason Dunn, Executive Director
Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County
Development Authority

FLEX

FOUNDATIONAL LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEUR X-PERIENCE

Started in Ben Hill County, Foundational Leadership and Entrepreneurship Experience (FLEX) is now a statewide entrepreneurship program for high school students that engages youth in the business world through experiences and mentorships. Students create real businesses, provide real products and services, and make real money. Local business partners, along with community leaders and teachers help to make this program a success, investing in the program through teaching workshops and mentoring student entrepreneurs. FLEX students compete in three rounds of local competition and a state-wide competition.

STUDENTS

- Exposure and permission
- Impressive for resumes
- Builds confidence

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

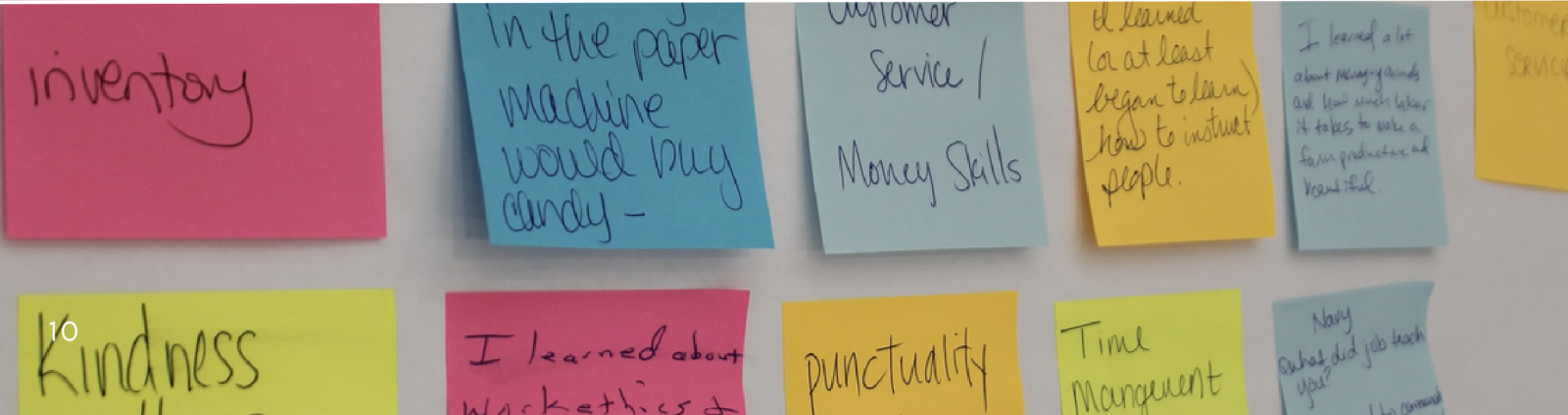
- Homegrown businesses
- Entrepreneurship
- Workforce development

COMMUNITY

- Optimism for future
- Action gives sense of control
- Feel-good stories

LOCAL BUSINESS

- Involvement in school
- Workforce pipeline
- Sponsorship opportunities



NEXT GENERATION AGRICULTURE

partner

Locate South Georgia is proud to be a Next Generation Agriculture (NextGA) partner.

“The University of Georgia has been awarded \$1 million from the National Science Foundation’s Regional Innovation Engines program for the Next Generation Agriculture project, a broad collaboration intended to help Georgia farmers move toward ‘Ag 4.0’ — the fourth agricultural revolution — in their practices.

Next Generation Agriculture, or NextGA, will leverage the strengths of more than 30 public and private organizations to work with farmers in a 20-county region of South Georgia to build an infrastructure for integrative agricultural innovation ‘in place.’ Some 650,000 residents call the area home, and NextGA is intended to empower them with the support and expertise needed to build farming systems that are environmentally, economically, socially and intergenerationally sustainable.”

The NextGA program hub is situated in Locate South Georgia member community of Colquitt County.

Excerpted from UGA Today

“Colquitt County and our surrounding counties are consistently rated as the top producing agricultural counties in the state of Georgia. We are looking forward to partnering with NextGA to drive economic development and improve prosperity for the citizens of rural South Georgia so that we can continue to remain in that position.”



Rep. Chas Cannon | House District 172
Colquitt County Administrator

NEXTGA PARTNERS

- University of Georgia
- Fort Valley State University
- Center on Rural Innovation
- VentureWell
- American Association for the Advancement of Science
- AGCO Corporation
- Breedr, Inc.
- Colquitt County Board of Commissioners
- Colquitt Regional Medical Center
- Council on Competitiveness
- Cox Automotive Mobility
- Dalan Animal Health
- Enko Chem, Inc.
- Farmwave, Inc.
- Georgia Farm Bureau Federation
- Georgia DBHDD
- Georgia Intellectual Property Alliance
- Lemelson-MIT Program
- Local Bounti
- LOCATE SOUTH GEORGIA**
- Moultrie Colquitt County Development Authority
- National Academy of Inventors
- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Rural Innovation Strategies, Inc.
- SCORE South Georgia
- SK Battery America
- Smithsonian Environmental Research Center
- Southern Regional Technical College
- Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition
- Technical College System of Georgia
- Trimble, Inc.
- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- United States Intellectual Property Alliance
- Valley, a Valmont Company

BOARD DIRECTORY

COUNTY	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	REPRESENTATIVE
BEN HILL	FITZGERALD-BEN HILL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	JASON DUNN
BERRIEN	BERRIEN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	LISA SMART
BROOKS	BROOKS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	STEPHANIE WILLIAMS
COFFEE	DOUGLAS-COFFEE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	MATT SEALE
COLQUITT	MOULTRIE-COLQUITT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	AMY JOHNSON
COOK	COOK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION	LISA COLLINS
CRISP	CORDELE-CRISP COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	GRANT BUCKLEY
DECATUR	DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF BAINBRIDGE & DECATUR COUNTY	RICK MCCASKILL
DOUGHERTY	ALBANY-DOUGHERTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION	JANA DYKE
EARLY	DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF EARLY COUNTY	SUSANNE REYNOLDS
GRADY	GRADY COUNTY JOINT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	CHRIS ADDLETON
IRWIN	OCILLA-IRWIN INDUSTRIAL AUTHORITY	SCOTT CARVER
LEE	LEE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	LISA DAVIS
LOWNDES	VALDOSTA-LOWNDES COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	ANDREA SCHRUIJER
MITCHELL	MITCHELL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	JAMES EUBANKS
RANDOLPH	RANDOLPH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	MANDY WHITE
SEMINOLE	DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SEMINOLE CO. & DONALSONVILLE	SARAH AVERY
TERRELL	TERRELL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	CHERYL CANNON
THOMAS	THOMASVILLE & THOMAS CO. PAYROLL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	SHELLEY ZORN
TIFT	TIFTON-TIFT COUNTY CHAMBER & DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	DALE ATKINS
TURNER	TURNER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	SAM MCCARD
WORTH	WORTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	KAREN RACKLEY



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AFFILIATE MEMBERS

AT&T

Colin Martin
External Affairs Manager

ELECTRIC CITIES OF GEORGIA

Daryl Ingram
Senior Vice President of External Affairs

GEORGIA EMC

Pat Merritt
Vice President of Community & Economic Development

GEORGIA POWER

Scott Purvis
Community & Economic Development Manager

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Darrell Moore
Executive Director
Center for South Georgia Regional Impact

PARTNERS

Georgia Department of Economic Development
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Georgia Chamber of Commerce



Locate South Georgia is a proud founding partner and sponsor of South GeorgiaLEADS!

CLASS OF 2023

Brittany Bryant
Amy Carter
Mary Crawford
Mike Davis
Josh Drew
Cicily Florence
Jennifer Floyd
LaVenice Grace
Jessica Griner
Kimberly Hobbs
Brent James
Jennifer Jarvis
Rachel Jenson
Tonya Jones
Anna Kinchen
Jodie Kretzer
Adrian Martinez
Shannon McGee
Travis Moss
Chanel Randolph
Dale Rickett
Cheryl Vinson
Jimmy Whaley
Donica Williams
Brandon Winns
Christy Wray

LOCATE *online*

Visit our website for real-time data applications and property search tools.

LOCATESOUTHGEORGIA.COM



What do you **VALUE** most?

