

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

It is with great honor and humility that I begin this month as the new Executive Director of the NEGRC. I am extremely appreciative of the NEGRC Council for giving me this opportunity and having confidence in me to lead this organization into the future.

Over 25 years ago, I started at the NEGRC as a Governor's Intern while in graduate school at University of Georgia and assigned to the planning department working in historic preservation. Since that beginning, I advanced through other positions and learned the many roles and responsibilities of our organization. Over the years, I have been afforded the unique opportunity to work with, and get to know, so many of the dedicated people in our region committed to serving their communities. So many of these I consider colleagues, confidants, and friends.



We at the NEGRC have an excellent staff that provide a range of services and assistance to our local governments through our three programmatic divisions: Planning & Government Services; Aging; and Workforce Development. It is my intention to continue the exemplary work performed by my predecessor, Jim Dove, over his many years at the NEGRC. Best wishes to Jim and Mott for a long and well-deserved retirement!

I also look to prepare the NEGRC to meet the needs of the future as well as those of our cities and counties. It goes without saying that I welcome the opportunity to work closely with our NEGRC Council members and all of our colleagues in the region's local governments. More specifically, it will be a privilege to work with our Council's officers including incoming Chairman **Billy Pittard**, Vice Chairman **Bill Palmer** and Secretary **Linda Blechinger**. These NEGRC Council officers were officially installed at last month's NEGRC Council meeting.

This month too, we are launching our redesigned website that I hope you will find both informative and easy to use. It is the product of many months of staff work and development in conjunction with our web consultant, JH Media Group, and Project Manager, Susan Boatwright. I'm also pleased to formalize two staffing changes. The Planning & Government Services Division, effective this month, will be directed by **Eva Kennedy** whom was promoted to the position from her former NEGRC GIS Planner position. **Julie Ball** will become the NEGRC's Executive Assistant. Ms. Ball was formerly the NEGRC Program Assistant within the Planning & Government Services Division and brings a range of knowledge and experience from her 20 years at the NEGRC. She will interface directly with our Council members and serve as primary point of contact for my office. Please feel free to contact her at (706) 369-5650 or email: jball@negrc.org.

Again, I look forward to continue working with all our local governments in my new capacity. Northeast Georgia is a special place because of its strong leadership and many assets. I believe we will only grow and improve in the years ahead through our work together.

72 YEARS COMBINED SERVICE

On June 20th, friends and family gathered together for a retirement reception celebrating Executive Director Jim Dove and Executive Assistant Mott Beck. Mr Dove and Ms Beck have dedicated a combined 72 years to serving the Northeast Georgia Region and played vital roles in countless regional and statewide efforts, including creation of the Bear Creek Reservoir and the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority. During the reception, they each received Letters of Recognition from US Senators Johnny Isakson and David Perdue, as well as Letters of Commendation from Congressman Jody Hice and Governor Brian Kemp. Representative Tommy Benton was in attendance to present Georgia House of Representatives Resolutions recognizing Mr Dove's and Ms Beck's contributions and commitment.

The NEGRC Council and Staff wish Mr Dove and Ms Beck all the best in their retirement. They will be greatly missed; their amount of institutional knowledge and the relationships they've made throughout Georgia are truly exceptional.

Thank you, Jim and Mott!



Jim Dove (left) and Mott Beck (center) received commissioned prints of the NEGRC Headquarters from the NEGRC Council and Staff. The watercolor prints were made by Athens artist Jamie Calkin and presented by Burke Walker (right)



Jim Dove (center) with family members, wife Nancy (right) and daughter Jamie (left), during the retirement reception



Mott Beck (far right) with daughter Shea Landers (far left) and granddaughter Paige Landers (2nd from right) along with friends at the retirement reception

NORTHEAST GEORGIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD HOLDS RIBBON CUTTING FOR MOBILE MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING TRAILERS

The Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board's Chairman, **Joe Vogt**, and Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Elected-Official member, **Kevin Little**, were joined by members of the Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board as well as State Representatives Houston Gaines and Marcus Wiedower for the ribbon-cutting for the NEGWDB's mobile training trailers for welding instruction and industrial-mechanical instruction. Other representatives from the community also joined for the ribbon-cutting ceremonies held at Athens Technical College in Athens.

The welding-training trailer is equipped with 8 welding bays and the industrial-mechanical trailer is equipped with electrical, mechanical, pneumatics, hydraulics training stations and associated instructional software. The trailers are intended to provide short-term training (2-6 weeks) to prepare persons for

entry level positions with local employers. During that training, information will be provided on additional career path training available via certificate, diploma and/or associate degrees through the Technical College System of Georgia.

These trailers can also be used to promote local manufacturing careers at local schools' career days, summer camps and spring break camps.

For further information on programming and services available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in Northeast Georgia, please contact the NEGRC Workforce Development Division at (706) 369-5703.



2019 B.J. SMITH COMMUNITY SERVANT AWARD RECIPIENTS HONORED

The fourteenth (14th) B.J. Smith Community Servant Award Ceremony, hosted by the Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board (WDB), was held on Thursday, May 30th in Ila, Georgia. B.J. Smith served in many roles as a public servant. Prior to his active board involvement in Madison County, he served as a meteorologist with the National Weather Service (NWS) beginning in 1972. He was stationed at the Athens Ben-Epps Airport. While with the NWS, he had his first experience with the local area's summer youth, work-experience program serving as a worksite supervisor of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) summer youth participants. After retiring from the NWS in 1990, he joined the Northeast Georgia Private Industry Council (the predecessor to the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board) as the Madison County private-sector representative. He was actively involved as Chairman of the Madison County Chamber of Commerce and worked on its economic-development committee.

Mr. Smith felt that providing people with the tools necessary to ensure their own successes was much more fruitful than providing temporary handouts. After his passing in March 2005, the Workforce Development Board wanted to honor his commitment to community service as well as his memory. The B.J. Smith Community Servant Award was established in February 2006 with the first awards presented in June 2006. Including this year's winners, a total of 40 deserving youths have been awarded this scholarship in the NEGRC region over the past 14 years. The

2019 B.J. Smith Community Servant Award winners each receive a \$1000 college scholarship. This year's winners are:

Keshundra Glenn lives in Clarke County and is a 2019 graduate of Cedar Shoals High School. Keshundra will be attending Georgia Gwinnett College, where she plans on pursuing a degree and a career in Nursing. Keshundra volunteers in her community at the Athens Boys and Girls Club, where she served as Keystone President. She was recently named Youth of the Year at the Joel Smilow Boys and Girls Club. While attending High School, Keshundra was active with JROTC, volunteered for Toys for Tots, and served as a Freshman Academy mentor.

Honesty James lives in Clarke County, and is a 2019 graduate of Cedar Shoals High School. Honesty will be attending Georgia Gwinnett College, and plans on pursuing a Social Work Degree. While working at the Athens Community Council on Aging through the WIOA Summer Work Experience program, Honesty discovered that she wanted a career where she can help people better themselves. While in high school, Honesty was active in Young Life, volunteered at her church's food bank, and volunteered at Camp Timothy.

Zoe Harris is a resident of Elbert County and is a 2019 graduate of Elbert County Comprehensive High School. Zoe will be attending the University of Georgia and will be pursuing a Medical degree. Her goal is to become a Pediatrician or Physician's Assistant. While in High School, Zoe was active in a number of organizations, including National Honor Society, Beta Club, Interact, Future Business Leaders of America, and Student Council. Zoe has volunteered with the Salvation Army, Read Across America, and organized a March of Dimes fundraiser.

These scholarships are presented to WIOA students currently enrolled in the WIOA In-School Youth program within our twelve-county region. The scholarships will assist with books, fees, tuition and related expenses during the recipient's freshman year of college. These scholarships will be combined with other financial assistance these students may qualify for (e.g., Hope Grant/Scholarship).

For further information the about the WIOA In-school Youth Program, please contact **Rima Sullivan**, NEGRC/ WIOA Youth Program Coordinator, 706-369-5703.



Pictured with Mrs. Gladys Smith are two of the scholarship recipients: Honesty James and Keshundra Glenn.

EDA AWARDS TOWN OF BRASELTON \$960,000 IN FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

The Town of Braselton is set to receive \$960,000 in federal assistance through the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). In 2018, under the Stafford Act, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), a bureau within the DOC, offered a grant opportunity to provide for disaster relief and recovery in response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria—as well as wildfires and other natural disasters in calendar year 2017. The Town of Braselton recognized an opportunity to expand its sewer infrastructure to enable “green” companies to operate in a strategic location for disaster relief. More specifically, this infrastructure investment will support the construction of an electric-fleet vehicle manufacturing facility; creating the potential to deploy electric emergency vehicles to disaster areas throughout the Southeast when gasoline supply is disrupted.

As part of this grant announcement, EDA released the statement below regarding the NEGRC's role as an Economic Development District (EDD):

“This project was made possible by the regional planning efforts led by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. EDA funds Northeast Georgia Regional Commission to bring together the public and private sectors to create an economic development roadmap to strengthen the regional economy, support private capital investment and create jobs.”

- U.S. Department of Commerce News

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC), the Town of Braselton, and Engineering Management, Inc. (EMI) collaborated in developing and submitting the grant application. The successful EDA grant application itself was prepared by **Mark Beatty**, NEGRC Planner. This collaborative effort will introduce significant regional opportunities and aligns with the NEGRC's strategic goals to attract businesses and industries within new, technological sectors to Northeast Georgia. The project is expected to create 183 jobs and generate \$26 million in private investment over five years. Congratulations to the Town of Braselton!



*Have a Safe and
Happy 4th of July!*



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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS
JULY

9	10:00 a.m.	NEGA CARE-NET Meeting	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
18	3:30 p.m.	Firefly Trail Advocacy Group	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
24	9:00 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room