

## CHAIRMAN BANES SELECTED FOR LEADERSHIP GEORGIA IN 2020

*Leadership Georgia* is a state-wide, leadership-development program that each year selects leaders from across the state. The program began in 1972 with (later) U.S. Senator Sam Nunn as one of its first charter members. Today, *Leadership Georgia* invites nominations each year and selects approximately 120 leaders to participate in a year-long development program running from January through December. Since 1972, over 3,000 individuals have participated in *Leadership Georgia*.



Last September, Chairman **Marcello Banes** (Newton County) was selected for Leadership Georgia's 2020 class by its Leadership Selection Committee. Chairman Banes joins other NEGRC Councilmembers that participated in the program, including Chairman **Kevin Little** (Walton). Chairman Little graduated from Leadership Georgia's 2004 class and also served as NEGRC Council Chairman, NEGRC Personnel Committee Chairman, and contributed to the NEGRC in many other capacities and committees. Chairman Banes currently serves on the NEGRC's Program-of-Work Committee.

Congratulations to Chairman Banes for his acceptance in Leadership Georgia!

*Marcello Banes, Chairman Newton County Board of Commissioners, and Burke Walker, NEGRC Executive Director, during a visit last month in Newton County*

## APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC) CREATES ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) recently announced plans to create an *Entrepreneurship Academy*. The purpose of the program is to engage high school students in a learning experience for entrepreneurship and developing skills in creating a business. NEGRC high school seniors in Barrow, Elbert, Jackson, and Madison Counties (ARC counties) are eligible to apply for the program. Selected applicants will participate in a program over four weeks in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in July 2020. The program includes classroom instruction, workplace experiences and exposure to successful entrepreneurs--serving as mentors. Costs for the program to selected applicants is provided by ARC.

It is expected that over the next two months, application materials will become available from ARC. The four NEGRC counties eligible for the program can begin this month getting the word out in their respective communities. It would be especially helpful for local, high school educators and officials to learn about the upcoming applications for soliciting interested students for participation.

One goal in ARC's five-year strategic plan is to invest in entrepreneurial strategies that will help strengthen Appalachia's 13-state region. This new opportunity for entrepreneurial training for young-adults will be largely based on ARC's STEM learning camp—a program that has enjoyed success for many years. For further information, visit ARC at [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov) or contact the **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at [ekennedy@negrc.org](mailto:ekennedy@negrc.org) or (706) 369-5650.

## WALTON COUNTY RESIDENT FINDS SUCCESS THROUGH WIOA

[The following is a testimonial from Claire Batson, a recent graduate of Athens Technical College's Radiology Technology Program and a beneficiary of the NEGRC's WIOA Program funding.]

At the young age of 17, I was a single mother and unable to work while attending classes and caring for my daughter. Thanks to other grants, I was able to just barely get by in my academic prerequisites. I worked hard to get into Athens Technical College's Radiology Technology program. This program only accepts 16 students per year and is highly competitive. Our program chair explained that work would be 'impossible' during this program. It was rigorous and the school hours were like a full-time job. He suggested students call the NEGRC about WIOA financial assistance. I knew I would need some kind of help since I wouldn't be able to stay with my little one. Daycare was a must in this program, like many others. After listening to a representative from the WIOA program, I gave them a call. I was delighted to hear from someone who sounded excited to talk to me and help. WIOA staff asked me a few questions over the phone and I had an answer about my application soon thereafter. I was accepted! As far as I knew, they just helped with my tuition, books, scrubs, and other expenses. After hearing more information, I found out that I was eligible for a stipend to help with my gas, childcare, and clinical hours. This was a miracle for my small family. I was also able to keep some of my other Georgia-based scholarships. WIOA was wonderful about helping me to save my other scholarship monies while they provided for tuition, books, and other expenses. This assistance helped me stretch my base grant from WIOA to last me through the program and even have some leftover at the end (which other participants can use).

With the help of my counselor, Shelby Maxwell, I was able to survive some very hard times during my time in the ATC's Radiography program. She was always just a quick email or phone call away. Having her assistance, removed many fears I had when it came to finances so that I was able to focus on my studies and my little girl. Shelby is a blessing of a woman and truly loves her job. She always encouraged me even in the hardest of times. The whole WIOA team at ATC was always there for my fellow classmates and myself. No matter what troubles we went through, they found ways to help us. A huge bonus about WIOA is they will help you find jobs when it comes to graduation time--and even help you prepare for them. For example, my job required gray scrubs and they helped me take care of that expense. If it weren't for WIOA and the NEGRC, some of my classmates and I would have had to quit the program.

I take every opportunity I have to brag on the ATC Radiography program and WIOA. For those who are like I was

and are simply looking to better their lives, there is hope. I loved this scholarship grant because during my clinicals, I felt like I was earning what I was being blessed with. After the two year program in Radiography, WIOA also helped me to further my education. They helped me to get my additional credential in MRI. Now I am a registered X-ray technologist and will soon take my registry for MRI. I am working at Piedmont Walton, Northside Gwinnett Medical Center, and Summit Spine and Joint. Piedmont Walton was my clinic site in the ATC Radiography program. Showing that facility how much I cared, helped me to get my first job. The ATC Radiography program is well known and that helped me to get the Northside Gwinnett Medical Center job. Being well educated in MRI through ATC also helped me to get my newest job at Summit Spine and Joint. Between all three, I never have to have a day off if I don't want to. Two of my jobs are PRN, so I can pick and choose what hours I accept. The final and newest job is a full-time job with benefits and wonderful hours. I have everything I have ever dreamed of in a career thanks to ATC and WIOA. Through the program I even met my fiancé. I hope hearing my story will help encourage others. It takes work to get here, but there is always a way . . .

*Claire Batson Radiological Technologist ATC Graduating Class of 2019 SA. Claire and her daughter at graduation*



## NEGRC'S AAA HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AREA PLAN

Last month, two public hearings were held by the NEGRC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) staff on the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021 Area Plan for its aging programs and services. The hearings included the NEGRC's twelve-county, planning-service area including Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton Counties. Two separate hearing were held on the following dates, times, and locations:

- Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at Oglethorpe County Senior Center, 19 Oglethorpe Drive, Crawford, GA 30630; and
- Wednesday December 4, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at Morgan County Senior Center, 991 South Main Street, Madison, GA 30650.

These hearings were held to inform Northeast Georgia's residents of Aging Services' plan(s) for State Fiscal Year 2021

and to provide citizens with an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to the Northeast Georgia Planning and Service Area. One hundred-twenty four (124) elderly persons attended the two hearings.

Service providers for the Northeast Georgia Planning and Service Area and AAA staff persons presented on the purpose of the hearings, Elder Legal Assistance, GeorgiaCares, Senior Employment, Adult Day Health, Community Care Services, Health and Wellness, Senior Center Services. The Northeast Georgia AAA staff explained the purpose and functions of the AAA, ADRC, Community Options, Nursing Home Transitions, and the AAA Financial Allocations. After the presenters' spoke about the various programs, the attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions and to give testimonials, if desired.

The Department of Human Services – Division of Aging Services is the sponsoring agent for programs or services offered in the NEGRC's AAA planning and service area. If additional information is needed, please contact **Peggy Jenkins**, NEGRC AAA Director, at (706) 583-2546 extension 101 or via e-mail at [pjenkins@negrc.org](mailto:pjenkins@negrc.org).



Seniors participating in a public hearing held at Morgan County Senior Center on Wednesday, December 4, 2019

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Historic Preservation Division (HPD) recently announced the availability of FY2020 Historic Preservation Fund grants. These grants are available to eleven (11) NEGRC communities that have achieved Certified Local Government (CLG) status by adopting a historic preservation ordinance, appointing a Historic Preservation Commission, and requiring design review in designated historic districts.

Grant applications can request funding for a range of historic-preservation related activities for CLG communities. Completed grant application must be postmarked and submitted by

**February 1, 2020.** The following NEGRC communities are eligible for this grant program:

- Athens-Clarke County
- City of Elberton
- City of Jefferson
- City of Lexington
- City of Madison
- City of Monroe
- City of Monticello
- City of Porterdale
- City of Social Circle
- City of Union Point
- City of Winder

The FY2020 applications are available on HPD's website at: [www.georgiashpo.org/hpfgiants](http://www.georgiashpo.org/hpfgiants). Questions regarding the CLG grants can be directed to HPD's Grants Coordinator, **Melanie Holthaus** at [melanie.holthaus@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:melanie.holthaus@dnr.ga.gov) or 770-389-7859. For information about historic districts and local designation, contact **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services at [ekennedy@negrc.org](mailto:ekennedy@negrc.org) or (706) 369-5650.

## WIRELESS INTERNET LAUNCHED IN BOWMAN

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, NEGRC staff attended a Rural Broadband Lunch and Learn session in the City of Bowman, hosted by the Elbert County Chamber of Commerce's **Leslie Friedman** and AT&T's **Paul Chambers**. The Lunch and Learn, which was open to elected officials, city staff, and the public discussed how the City of Bowman partnered with AT&T to deliver Fixed Wireless Internet (FWI) to residents in the City. Households that are within a two-mile radius from the cell tower in Bowman can now connect with AT&T and have access to broadband in their homes. AT&T and the City of Bowman hope that this public-private partnership will eventually cover all of the city, close the digital divide, and attract businesses to the area.

For information on broadband-related topics, contact **Monica Sagastizado**, NEGRC Project Specialist, at [msagastizado@negrc.org](mailto:msagastizado@negrc.org) or (706) 369-5650.



Leslie Friedman, Elbert County Chamber President, addressing attendees at Rural Broadband Lunch held at the Bowman Community Center

*Update*

**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**JANUARY**

9 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 a.m.	Rural Transit Roundtable	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
14 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 a.m.	Senior Hunger Coalition	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
16 <sup>th</sup>	12:00 p.m.	NEGRC Council Meeting	Athens Holiday Inn
16 <sup>th</sup>	3:30 p.m.	Firefly Trails	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
20 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	NEGRC Closed
22 <sup>nd</sup>	9:00 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority Meeting	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room

