

FRED PERRIMAN ELECTED GMA'S THIRD VICE PRESIDENT

City of Madison's **Mayor Fred Perriman**, who has served in municipal government for almost 40 years, was recently elected by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to serve as its third vice president. Mayor Perriman stated that he was "...honored to accept the role with the Georgia Municipal Association and was humbled to be elected by his peers." He is now slated to become GMA president in 2025. Mayor Perriman also serves as the municipal representative from Morgan County on the NEGRC's Council and as Chairperson of its Audit & Finance Committee.



The third vice president position became vacant after former Marietta Councilmember and GMA second vice president Michelle Cooper Kelly's term ended January 1, 2022. Michelle Cooper Kelly was no longer able to serve as GMA's second president because members of the GMA Board of Directors must be current municipal officeholders. Randall Walker, Mayor of Perry, assumed the role of second vice president which created a vacancy in his former position of third vice president. Mayor Perriman was elected as third vice president by GMA's membership on January 22, 2022 at the Cities United Summit in Atlanta. This four-day summit provides mayors, councilmembers, city staff and special guests access to advocacy tools, policy committee meetings along with training and networking opportunities. Eleven other city officials from Georgia were selected to hold district leadership positions, and two were chosen to hold at-large positions. The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) is a voluntary, non-profit organization that offers legislative advocacy, educational, employee benefit and consulting services to each of Georgia's 537 cities. GMA was created in 1933 and is the only state organization that represents municipal governments in Georgia. Congratulations to Mayor Perriman!

NEGRC EXPANDS LOAN PROGRAM FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The NEGRC recently expanded its partnership with CSRA Business Lending and its CSRA Direct Small Business Loan Program. In the past, SBA-504 loans were limited in amount but, with the expansion, the entire \$10.7 million Direct Loan Program can be used by Northeast Georgia's twelve counties and fifty-four cities. The loan amounts can range from \$250,000 to \$500,000.

One of the unique aspects of the new CSRA Direct Loan Program is to make loans easier and more flexible for small-business owners. This Program can also be used for a wider variety of projects as opposed to the SBA-504 program. At present, CSRA Business Lending has **available \$2,237,398** in the Direct Loan Program for use by small businesses.

The SBA-504 loan program has enjoyed success in Northeast Georgia in the past in supporting strong local businesses. For example, several NEGRC communities have accessed these loans including: **The Georgia Theater** in Athens, **Innovative Air Technologies** in Covington, **Oconee Youth School Performance** in Watkinsville, **Ace Hardware** in Crawford, **Hallie Janes Catering** in the City of Madison, and **John's Supermarket** in Monroe.

The inclusion of the NEGRC in the Direct Loan Program occurred last month with the NEGRC, the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRA), and CSRA Business Lending partnering with U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to expand into the NEGRC. EDA approved the NEGRC request for the expansion following an application and supporting information provided by **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Executive Director. Highlights on the program include the following:

- 4.75% fixed rates currently for up to 20 years with a 1% fee
- Loans can be funded as subordinate debt to a bank or other loan
- Streamlined application, approval, closing, and funding process
- As with other revolving loan programs, repayments return to the loan fund for recapitalization

At the NEGRC March 17, 2022 Council meeting, **Randy Griffin**, President of CSRA Business Lending, presented detailed information about the new program and its benefits. He also shared program materials with the NEGRC Councilmembers.

CSRA Business Lending, for its part, has a proven track record in the CSRA Regional Commission area since 1979 where over \$830 million in funding supported the creation of 9,000 job using the SBA-504 and Direct Loan Programs. This new program in the NEGRC area will undoubtedly provide new opportunities in supporting small, local businesses. For specific questions and/or inquiries from small businesses, please contact **Diane Masters**, CSRA Direct Loan Program Coordinator, at dmasters@csrardc.org or **706-564-5813**.



Randy Griffin speaking to NEGRC Councilmembers

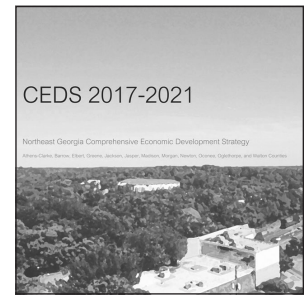
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2023 UPDATE UNDERWAY

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, which serves as the region's Economic Development District through the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), has begun the process of updating the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is intended to guide economic development and resilience-building throughout the region. In addition, the EDA and other state and federal entities refer to the CEDS when awarding grant and other funding and support to projects within the region. The 2023 CEDS update process will include a review of the 2017 CEDS, the recently completed Economic Resilience + Recovery Plan (ER+R), and input from stakeholders throughout Northeast Georgia. Two CEDS Committee meetings were held in March, with discussions centered around current economic conditions, needs and opportunities, and preliminary discussion of the new 5-year Action Plan.

A questionnaire will be distributed and additional meetings held during April and May. The draft CEDS will be available for a 30-day public comment period prior to finalization. The comment period is expected to open in July 2022.

If interested in the CEDS or if you'd like to be a part of the CEDS update process, contact **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at ekennedy@negrc.org.

The current CEDS and ER+R Plan can be found here: <https://negrc.org/planning-government-services/community-economic-development/>



DDAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC

For the first time in over two year, the annual meeting of the Development Districts Association of Appalachia (DDAA) meet in Washington, DC on March 13-16, 2022. The DDAA includes representatives from the 13 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) states that provide planning and financial support to Appalachia. In the NEGRC's Local Development District (LDD), Barrow, Elbert, Jackson, and Madison Counties are designated as ARC counties.

The conference included many informative sessions as well as the DDAA's Board meeting attended by **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Executive Director. He served last year on the DDAA Board of Directors and, at this year's meeting, was again nominated and appointed to serve for 2022-2023. During the DDAA Board meeting on Sunday, March 13, 2022, several information speakers participated and information provided. Of particular note was upcoming trainings that are available to LDD staff and local governments related to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding later this spring and fall.

At this year's DDAA Dinner Banquet, **John Carey**, Director, Ohio Governor's Office of Appalachia, was awarded the prestigious **John D. Whisman Vision Award**. Mr. Carey's career has been dedicated to higher education and workforce development in Appalachia. He has also served in the Ohio House of Representatives, Senate, and as Mayor of Wellston, Ohio.

For additional information about ARC, visit www.arc.gov or the NEGRC's website at www.negrc.org.



DDAA President Jeanette Wieszicki (left) presenting the Whisman Award to John Carey (center) with Gayle Manchin, Federal Co-chair of ARC, at right



DDAA Annual Board Meeting during a presentation on "Future of Work" by Allison Forbes

NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION REPRESENTED AT SPRING 2022 SETA CONFERENCE

Workforce Development Staff recently attended the SETA (Southeastern Employment and Training Association) Spring Conference in Miramar Beach, Fla. held March 13-16. SETA provides training and networking opportunities to professionals in the Workforce Development Industry and its partners. Speakers and presenters from across the country convened to provide workshops on: WIOA Administration and Performance, Serving Priority Populations including Veterans, Providing Services to Youth, Apprenticeships, Business Services, Financial, One-Stop System Operations and much more. In addition, attendees were able to network with other agencies and organizations, as well as interact with vendors/exhibitors to identify ways to better serve citizens of Northeast Georgia. Attendees included Workforce Development Staff: **Carol Rayburn Cofer, Kim Meadows, and Olivia Wintz**. Athens Technical College staff attending included **Diana Pierce, Lindsey Brooker, and Susan Purdue**. For information on workforce development activities in Northeast Georgia, please contact the NEGRC's Workforce Development Division at **(706) 369-5703**.



NEGRC Workforce Development staff members Kimberly Meadows, Carol Cofer and Olivia Wintz in attendance at the SETA Spring 2022 Conference

NEW NEGRC STAFF: KENDALL BURNETTE



Community Based Services or Elderly and Disabled Waiver Program.

Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging welcomes **Kendall Burnette** to its staff. She has been working as a Case Manager with the agency since January 3, 2022. As a Case Manager, she will be responsible for case management intake and care planning. She will also be making connections in an effort to rescreen individuals for services to ensure they are appropriate for the waiting list—as well as determining their need for Home and

She is eager to work directly with everyone in the aging network. While she was applying for this role, she states that she noticed the tight-knit company culture here, which made her excited to accept this job offer. She hopes that over the course of the next few months she gets the chance to meet staff from other AAAs in person.

Prior to accepting this position, Kendall has worked with individuals with physical, developmental, and intellectual disabilities. She served as a liaison between families, doctors, caregivers, individuals, and professionals that surrounded them in support. She helped them to find balance between what is important to them, and what is important for them, and how to merge the two into a meaningful life, on a daily basis. She also developed and ran teleservices programming during COVID-19 pandemic closures. She has a wealth of experience working with individuals who have mental illness, traumatic brain injury, acquired brain injury, and dementia.

Although these experiences taught her a lot and helped her get a large portfolio of work, she is looking forward to having a more collaborative work environment. The NEGRC's Area Agency on Aging is so glad she's part of its team.

NEGRC ADVERTISES PGS DIRECTOR POSITION

This month, the NEGRC advertised a job announcement to fill the position of Director of Planning & Government Services (PGS) Division. This leadership position oversees a staff of 7 employees in the administration and implementation of planning and economic and community-development activities on a regional level. It functions at the NEGRC as one of its three programmatic divisions in addition to the Area Agency on Aging and Workforce Development Divisions.

Qualified applicants are encouraged to apply. A full job announcement and instructions for applying can be found on the NEGRC's website at: www.negrc.org.





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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS **APRIL**

6 th	1:30 p.m.	UOBWA TPE Committee Meeting	NEGRC Atrium
21 st	Noon	NEGRC Council Meeting	Trumps Catering