

UGA TO HOST LOCAL WETLANDS PROTECTION WORKSHOP IN ATHENS

Save the date for **May 7, 2024** for a Local Wetlands Protection Workshop co-hosted by the UGA River Basin Center and UGA School of Law Land Conservation Clinic. It will take place at the Delta Innovation Hub at the University of Georgia. The workshop will cover:

- Background on wetlands and the federal wetlands regulatory system,
- How the legal landscape is evolving after the US Supreme Court Sackett Decision, which sharply reduced federal wetlands protection and
- Options for local government wetlands protection, including model ordinances and conservation programs.

Registration will open in March at <https://rivercenter.uga.edu/local-wetlands-protection-workshop/>. NEGRC's Planning and Government Services Division (PGS) is helping with the event and will share registration information with our member local governments when it becomes available.

NEGRC REGIONAL TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTINUES WITH INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC), in coordination with the Georgia Department of Transportation, is creating a Regional Transit Development Plan (TDP). The Regional TDP process explores regional transit needs and opportunities, defines a long-range vision and goals for the future of the 12-county transit system in the region, and identifies implementable transit projects to advance the vision and goals.

NEGRC hosted a second virtual public meeting in the Regional TDP process on February 27th and has an online survey available for the public until March 31st. Public feedback will be essential to inform future transit system investments in our region.

*To access more information about the study, visit **RegionalTDP-GDOT.hub.arcgis.com/pages/negrc**.*

PGS DIVISION HOSTS A TABLE AT UGA'S CAREER FAIR FOR THE COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN

The NEGRC's Planning & Government Services Division hosted a table at the UGA College of Environment and Design's Career Fair on February 14th. The Fair was catered to students and employers within the fields of Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Historic Preservation. NEGRC was one of the few governmental/501c-3 organizations

that attended, and staff could talk to over a dozen students interested in learning more about what Regional Commissions do across the state.

PGS currently has two positions open: one for community and economic development and another for planning. The job announcements can be found on our website at <https://negrc.org/careers/>.



*UGA CED's Career Fair from the Tate Student Center
on February 14, 2024.*

PGS DIVISION WELCOMES NEW GIS TRANSPORTATION INTERN

The NEGRC's Planning and Government Services (PGS) Division has welcomed a new staff member, **Brianna Carrera**, in a GIS Internship position. She will focus on transportation projects related to our contract through GDOT for the Roadway Element Validation and Mapping Program (REVAMP). Brianna is a University of North Georgia senior, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Fall 2024. When asked what she is most excited about regarding work at the NEGRC, she said, "NEGRC is involved in more than what meets the eye; I am excited to explore how my GIS skills can better assist the team at NEGRC. I have always had an interest in urban planning, so being able to work alongside the PGS division is very

exciting." In her free time, Brianna enjoys grabbing a little treat like a coffee and pastry and hiking; one of her favorite trails is Preachers Rock. We are excited to have her as part of our team this year!



Brianna Carrera, GIS Intern

GEORGIA CRISIS AND ACCESS LINE PRESENTATION TO SENIOR CENTER DIRECTORS AND AGING STAFF

From 2019-2020, Georgia ranked 31st in suicide deaths in the United States. During the COVID-19 pandemic, from April 2020 to April 2021, Georgia saw a 36% increase in overdose deaths.

On February 9, 2024, **Wendell Fields**, Community Liaison for Behavior Health Link, presented on the Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL), which is a statewide resource available to those considering suicide or experiencing a mental-health crisis. Mr. Fields reminded the group that mental illness does not discriminate and can happen to anyone regardless of race or socioeconomic status. Mr. Fields challenged the group to bring awareness to mental health and help reduce the stigma associated with mental health.

GCAL is available to anyone in Georgia 24 hours, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Individuals can contact GCAL via phone, chat, and text to receive person-centered interventions. GCAL can connect the individual in crisis with necessary interventions such as community resources for follow-up, mental health inpatient facilities for voluntary admission, or dispatch of the mobile crisis unit, which is trained staff that will go to the individual experiencing a crisis for

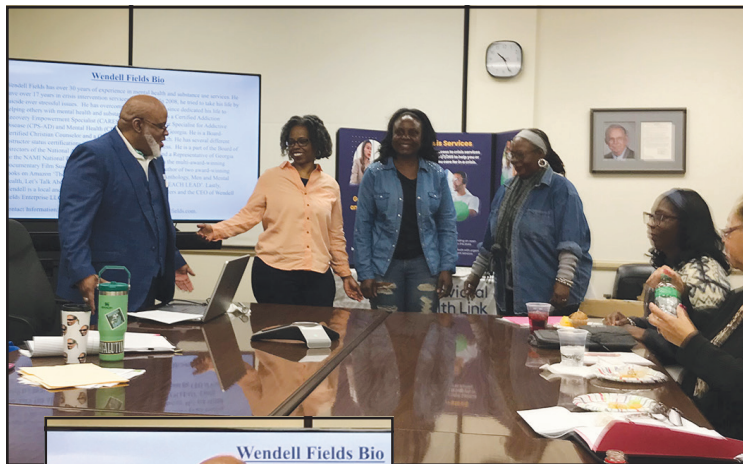
further assessment which may lead to an involuntary admission to a mental health inpatient facility.

In July 2022, 9-8-8 was launched so that there would be a dedicated line for those considering suicide or experiencing a mental health crisis. 9-8-8 is an immediate connection to a trained, mental-health professional and diverts calls from 911.

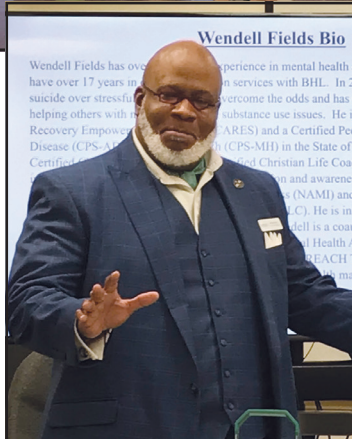
If you or someone you know is considering suicide or experiencing a mental health crisis, please call **9-8-8** or **GCAL** at **1-800-715-4225** for assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year.

Innovation and Opportunity Act). Students learned about the different programs offered through Athens Technical College's Walton County campus, including Nursing, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, and Manufacturing.

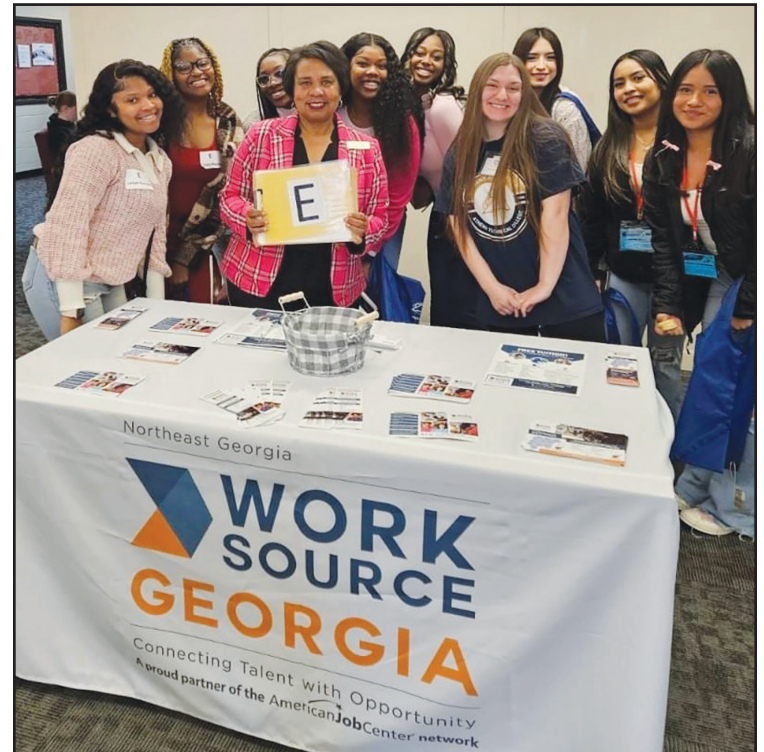
For more information on WorkSource Northeast Georgia programs, please contact **Vickie Scotland**, NEGRC Workforce Development Division, **(706) 369-5703**.



Top: Group activity with presenter Wendell Fields, and NEGRC AAA staff Katrina Ogbe, Agnes Kakaire, and Yvonne Moon



Left: Wendell Fields, presenter



WORKSOURCE NORTHEAST GEORGIA STAFF IN WALTON COUNTY

Vickie Scotland, the NEGRC's WorkSource Northeast Georgia Business Services and Outreach Representative, attended a CTAE High School Pathways event at Athens Technical College in Monroe. She shared with the Walton County High School students about the tuition-assistance program available through WIOA (Workforce





REGIONAL MEETINGS
MARCH

19 th	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board Meeting	NEGRC Atrium
20 th	4:00 p.m.	Regional Public Hearing - NEGRC Regional Plan Implementation Report	NEGRC Atrium
21 st	Noon	NEGRC Council	Trumps Catering
27 th	9:00 a.m.	UOBWA	NEGRC Atrium