

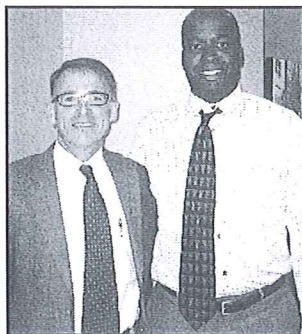
FOCUS GROUP EXAMINES APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION IMPACT

This year the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is observing its 50th anniversary. As part of this anniversary, ARC launched a research project with the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC), a nonprofit research organization based in Arlington, Virginia and West Virginia University. The research project is examining the economic impacts of ARC programming and gathering feedback from local and regional stakeholders. As to how ARC investments have impacted their communities, CREC is facilitating focus group meetings in the 13 Appalachian states to gather this input.

The focus group regarding Georgia's ARC programs and investments met on Wednesday, October 22nd and was hosted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The meeting delved into the following issues:

- **The ARC sponsored programs and other initiatives that have made a difference in local communities (and those that have been less so);**
- **How local communities' involvement with ARC has changed over time;**
- **ARC projects that have been notable or particularly successful;**
- **Ways in which ARC can strengthen programs and initiatives; and**
- **Current and emerging issues that might motivate additional, future investments to alleviate economic distress in Appalachia.**

Approximately 20 persons attended the meeting in Atlanta. Those from the Northeast Georgia region included Barrow County Chairperson **Pat Graham**, Barrow County Economic & Community Development Director **Guy Herring**, Braselton Town Manager **Jennifer Dees**, Consulting Engineer **Jerry Hood**, Elbert County Manager **Bob Thomas**, Development Authority of Elbert County, Elberton, & Bowman Executive Director **Beth Eavenson**, NEGRC Executive Director **Jim Dove**, and NEGRC Planning & Government Services Director **Burke Walker**.



Focus Group Participants

COMMUNITY PROFILE: CITY OF MADISON

At the time of the last U.S. Census, the City of Madison had a population of just under 4,000 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Demographic Profile Data (DP-1)). As the Morgan County seat containing a vibrant downtown and historic neighborhoods, the City of Madison is consistently busy with a variety of interesting projects.

The City of Madison, along with two other Northeast Georgia communities (Athens-Clarke County and the Town of Braselton), was granted the first-ever PlanFirst Community designation by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in late September 2014. Benefits of this designation include eligibility for annual applications for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding; bonus points on applications for the Employment Incentive Program (EIP), Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (DDRLF), and Redevelopment Fund (RDF); and access to a reduced interest rate on certain Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loans.

Through its FY 2015 planning contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT), the NEGRC Planning & Government Services (PGS) Division will be assisting Morgan County with the development of a non-motorized transportation (bicycle and pedestrian) plan. The City will be included in this planning process, which will result in recommendations for facilities, policies, and programs to enhance the bicycling and walking environment throughout the County.

The City of Madison applied in 2014 for inclusion in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program, and has been selected as a finalist for designation. A site visit was conducted by representatives from GICH partner organizations (DCA, Georgia Municipal Association, Georgia Power, and the University of Georgia) in late October. Should Madison be designated as a GICH community, PGS staff will participate with the City and stakeholders in the creation and implementation of a local housing plan. A major focus of the City's housing and neighborhood revitalization efforts has been the Canaan Historic Neighborhood, a working-class African-American neighborhood established in the early 20th century.

The City of Madison adopted a Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan (DURA) in spring 2011 and received Opportunity Zone designation from DCA for portions of the DURA later that same year. Several projects are currently being undertaken within the DURA.

NEGRC's PGS Division is currently assisting the City with a CDBG Redevelopment Fund application to DCA for the redevelopment of a parcel on the corner of Burney and Fifth Streets in the Canaan Historic Neighborhood. The City plans to demolish the existing blighted structure and replace it with a new building to house a corner store that will serve the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Adjacent to the corner store property is the Gilmore House, purchased by the City from Olga Gilmore Warren and transferred to the Downtown Development Authority for creation of a neighborhood hub. The Gilmore House recently held a neighborhood Open House event, where area residents were invited to see the progress and welcome new tenants. Harvest of the Heart Garden occupies a cannery and community kitchen at the Gilmore House, and runs a fresh produce distribution center for low income families every Friday morning. The organization also sponsors community education workshops in this space. In November, the downstairs business incubator unit will be occupied by My Education Express, Inc., a firm which specializes in tutoring, GED certification, and educational credit recovery. Another office and a beauty salon/barber shop are forthcoming. By the end of 2014, the upstairs will also include three affordable housing units.

The City of Madison regularly posts project updates, photos, and meeting notices on the official City website at www.madisonga.com.



Mayor Fred Perriman, Shandon Land, Olga Gilmore Warren & Family Members

HISTORIC FARMS RECOGNIZED

Each year, the Georgia Centennial Farm Program recognizes historic farms with awards made through a nomination process in coordination with Georgia's Historic Preservation Division. Awards are given for farms listed in the National Register of Historic Places and/or owned by the same family for 100 years.

Since 1993, farms from Northeast Georgia have been recognized. The program uniquely combines historic importance with agricultural legacies in coordination with numerous state agencies including: the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources; Georgia Farm Bureau Federation; Georgia Department of Agriculture; Georgia Forestry Commission; and Georgia National Fair and Agricenter; with support from Georgia EMC.

Last month, the program honored 18 farms at the 21st annual awards ceremony at the Georgia National Fair in Perry, Georgia. One of the awarded farms was in the Northeast Georgia region, known as the **Malcom Family Farm**, and located in Walton County.

For those interested in nominating a farm for next year, the deadline for applications is May 1, 2015. Nomination forms and related information can be found by visiting the website www.georgiacentennialfarms.org and downloading an application. Interested farm owners can also contact **Charlie Miller**, Centennial Farm Awards committee chair, at 404-651-5287 or by email at charlie.miller@dnr.state.ga.us. For information on the National Register of Historic Places or to find if a property is listed, contact **Burke Walker**, Director of Planning & Government Services, at email: bwalker@negrc.org or calling: (706) 369-5650.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2015 APPLICANTS' WORKSHOP FOR NON-ENTITLEMENT COMMUNITIES

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs will be conducting a CDBG Applicants' Workshop December 3rd – 5th at the Marriott Macon City Center at 240 Coliseum Drive. We anticipate an application submission deadline of April 1, 2015.

The purpose of this workshop is to inform local government officials and other interested parties of the procedures to be used in preparing CDBG applications. The workshop is designed to provide you an opportunity to learn the details involved in putting together a competitive application, to ask questions, and to share information. At the workshop, you will be provided an Applicants' Manual that describes the application process and the guidelines that will be used in evaluating applications. *Please note that in addition to learning about preparing CDBG applications, DCA will continue its training on various Fair Housing Equal Opportunity Requirements, making the workshop also appropriate for current CDBG grantees.*

In order to ensure ample workshop materials, please complete your registration at the following link no later than November 26th. This link allows you to register for the workshop, provides hotel information, and allows you to make reservations at the Marriott City Center- <http://www.dca.ga.gov/communities/CDBG/index.asp>.

The fee for attending the entire workshop is \$150. Grant writers have the option of attending Part II of the workshop for a reduced rate of \$100. A late fee of \$30 will be charged for workshop reservations made after November 26th. The deadline for reserving rooms at the conference room rate of \$83 is November 17th, so please make your reservations at the Marriott Macon City Center as soon as possible.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding the workshop, please contact **Lisa Smith** at (404) 679-5276. We look forward to seeing you at the workshop.

NEGRC WELCOMES NEW STAFF



Candice Gray joined the Area Agency on Aging staff on October 1st as a Gateway Counselor. She previously worked for Georgia Health Services Network, arranging placements and services for patients on Medicaid waiver programs. Her work will be focused in the community as a part of the Community-Based Care Transitions Program. Her experience includes providing in-home services for

families involved with DFCS and serving as Program Coordinator for Peace Place. She received a Bachelor's Degree from Valdosta State University in Sociology/Anthropology in 2002. Mrs. Gray lives with her husband and two sons in Walton County. She can be reached at **cgray@negrc.org** or **(706) 583-2546**.



Katurah Patterson also joined the NEGRC Area Agency on Aging Division on October 1st as a Gateway Counselor and Transitions Coach. She has previously worked with the aging population through Division of Aging Services as an Adult Protective Services Worker and with the disabled adult population as a Social Services Worker and Supervisor of a residential program. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social

Work and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. As a Gateway Counselor, she will assist with information and referrals, CCSP and HCBS screenings. Ms. Patterson will also work with the Community Care Transition Program as a Transitions Coach, where she will work with hospitals to prevent chronic disease readmissions. She is a native of Athens and has two sons. Please contact Ms. Patterson at **(706) 583-2546** or email: **kpatterson@negrc.org**.

NEW INITIATIVES TO ASSIST SENIORS

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging (AAA) has long-served the community as the "one-stop shop" for aging and disability resources. The Aging and Disability Resource Connection, or Gateway, provides information and referral services to older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers of the twelve surrounding counties at no cost. The Gateway also provides counseling regarding the various subsidized programs that can help older Georgians or those with disabilities remain in the community for as long as possible. The demand for this information is steadily increasing, with no sign of slowing down. By 2030 the older adult population of the United States will be twice as large as in 2000, growing from 35 million to 72 million. In Northeast Georgia, the elderly population is 90,835, which accounts for 6.1% of the residents in Georgia aged 60 years and older. To keep up with the demand, providers in aging must consider new ways to deliver services. The Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging started exploring new funding options and embracing our new tasks that will serve people of all ages, provide health-related services, and develop private pay models.

The Northeast Georgia AAA, along with four other AAAs, agreed to work with the Georgia Department of Human Services/Division of Aging Services, the Carl Vinson Institute, Fanning Institute, and X Factor Consulting to come up with a plan for long-range sustainability. The AAA chose to implement two plans for sustainability; a fee-for-service Options Counseling service and a Community-Based Care Transition services. AAA Staff participated in four learning sessions that provided instruction on how to develop and use a business plan when considering the expansion and/or extension of current services as well as exploring new service and revenue options. Staff of NEGRC's

AAA developed a business plan to guide the Gateway, our partners, the Regional Commission, and other stakeholders through establishing the two new programs.

The Options Counseling Service is a 30-day program provided by the Aging and Disability Resource Connection, also known as the AAA's Gateway. The Gateway staff, who have completed Division of Aging Services certification as Options Counselors, will work with older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers to empower them to make informed decisions that best serve their needs, interests, and values.

Options Counselors will provide clients with an overview of available options for long-term care services and assist clients with creating an individualized action plan. In addition to planning for future care, the counselors will also link clients to other services to address current needs. The counselors follow up with the clients to encourage them to make progress to achieve their ideal long-term care goal. The counselors will provide this service over the phone or face-to-face with the individual. This service will be marketed to individuals, caregivers (local and long-distance), businesses (as an addition to their employee assistance programs), and other persons or organizations that are willing to pay for services and want to plan ahead. We plan to charge \$300 per person for this service. If a client wants the staff to come to their home to work on the action plan, the cost will be \$350.

The Northeast Georgia AAA plans to implement the Options Counseling Fee-for-Service Program as a pilot program first, from January 2015 to June 2016. During this time, the cost will be \$250 per person. The Northeast Georgia AAA will be contacting individuals, local businesses, and county leaders to solicit help in marketing the program while getting the service out into the community at a discounted rate.

The Gateway's second fee-for-service program is the Community-Based Care Transitions Program. The program is a 30-day intervention which the Gateway will provide in partnership with hospitals to help them reduce their readmissions and to improve the quality of care for their patients. Currently, the Area Agency on Aging is working with four area hospitals through a CMS grant: Athens Regional Medical Center, Newton Medical Center, Clearview Regional Medical Center, and Barrow Regional Medical Center.

The Care Transitions program involves a hospital visit by a CCTP coach, a home visit, a patient experience survey, a care plan, and 3 follow-up calls starting the week after the home visit. A supportive service package is available to clients that need additional services, such as transportation and home-delivered meals. The Area Agency on Aging was approached by Landmark Hospital to bring this service to their patients to improve their overall patient experience. We will use this opportunity to expand our services, and increase our visibility in the for-profit healthcare industry. We are currently waiting on a meeting with Landmark Hospital administrative staff and will propose a price of \$500 per patient starting July 2015.

By providing these fee-for-service programs, the AAA can reach a new market and provide more Northeast Georgia residents with an improved understanding of the long-term care system. The AAA will have an additional revenue stream from consumers who have the resources to pay for services, and the increased revenues can be used to expand services to community members who do not have resources to purchase services.

If you or someone you know would like to discuss options for long-term care with a Certified Options Counselor, please call the Northeast Georgia Gateway at **(706) 583-2546**.



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Athens, GA 30605

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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS
NOVEMBER

14	10:00 a.m.	NEGRC Senior Center Directors	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	9:30 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
20	Noon	NEGRC Council	Athens Holiday Inn
20	3:30 p.m.	Firefly Trails Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room

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Sincerely & Respectfully,