April 2026 Newsletter

ACHE OF GEORGIA
CONNECTING | LEARNING | LEADING

An Independent Chapter of
American College of Healthcare Executives
for leaders who care®

President's Message:

Dear ACHE of Georgia Members,

I am proud to congratulate and celebrate our chapter and volunteer leaders for achieving ACHE's Award of Chapter Excellence at Congress last month along with the Award for Sustained Performance. We were one of only four chapters nationally to receive this honor—a testament to the dedication of our board members, leaders, volunteers, and engaged membership. Thank you for all you do to make this chapter thrive.

On May 4, ACHE will distribute the 2026 Chapter Member Needs Survey to selected members. If you receive an email from surveys@ache.org, I encourage you to participate and share your feedback. Your input is invaluable as we continue to strengthen and grow our chapter.



ACHE of Georgia President Sanford Duke, MD, MBA, FACHE (center) is joined by board members and volunteer leadership in celebrating the chapter's Award of Chapter Excellence at the ACHE awards luncheon at Congress last month.

We remain an active and engaged organization. So far this year, we have hosted 18 educational programs and networking events, with many more planned. Highlights include ACHE of Georgia Week, which culminated in three simultaneous networking events across Atlanta, Athens, and Augusta.

We are also excited to introduce new programs this year, including Mentor Office Hours—monthly virtual sessions focused on career advancement—and our Lunch with a Healthcare Executive Series, offering in-person opportunities for students and early careerists to connect with healthcare leaders.

I encourage all eligible members to pursue advancement to Fellow this year. We offer a range of resources, including an archived prep course and a new five-week Board of Governors exam course beginning May 29.

I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event or at our Summit on the Coast, April 29–30 in Savannah.

Warm regards,

Sanford Duke, MD, MBA, FACHE
President, ACHE of Georgia

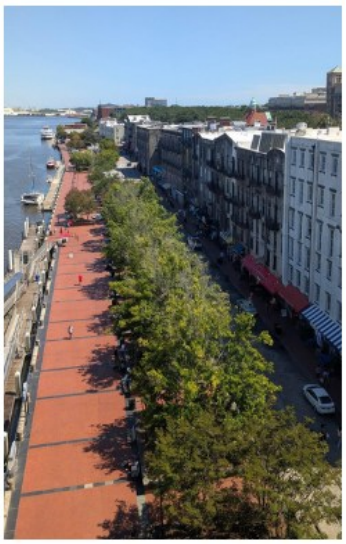
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ACHE OF GEORGIA PODCAST
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

ACHE of Georgia April 29-30 Summit on the Coast

ACHE OF GEORGIA

SUMMIT ON THE COAST



April 29–30, Fairfield Inn & Suites Savannah Downtown/Historic District

"Shaping What's Next – Leading Change with Courage and Clarity"

Events and April 29 Cocktails on the Coast at Fairfield Inn & Suites



**April 29 Hotel room block*

April 30 Keynote and ACHE Customized Learning Session:

Keynote:



Bárbara Rivera Holmes, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Labor

Customized Learning:



Jim Austin, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Brown University, MHL

CE Credits:

4.5 Hours of ACHE In-Person Education Credit

3 Hours of Continuing Education Credit

1 Hour of ACHE Qualifying Education Credit

April 29 Afternoon Panel Discussion at 3:15 PM ET:

"Implementing Strategic Plans for Successful Operations"

Moderator:



Bill Lee MHA, MBA, CEO, Evans Memorial Hospital

Panelists:



Paul W. Barkley, Sr., FACHE, CEO, Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital Savannah



Jay Dennard, FACHE, FHFMA, CPXP, President/System VP of Govt. Community Affairs, GHS Foundation/ Northside Hospital



Sarah Brownell, FACHE, Principal, National Health Market Strategist, CannonDesign

[More Information]

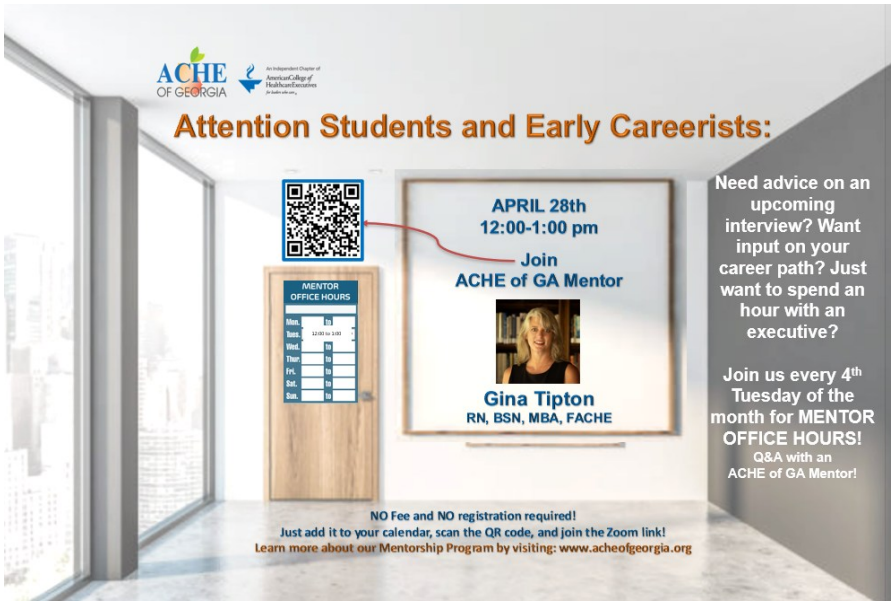
Register Now

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events:

- **April 28, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM ET** — Mentor Office Hours, free Zoom session with one of ACHE of Georgia's Mentors. This month's mentor is Gina Tipton, RN, MBA, FACHE. **Learn More**
- **April 29-30** — ACHE of Georgia Summit on the Coast: "Shaping What's Next – Leading Change with Courage and Clarity." All events—education and networking—at our headquarters hotel in downtown Savannah. 5.5 total credit hours, plus 3 hours of CEUs from collaborating organizations. **Learn More** or **Register**
- **May 8, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM** — Lunch with a Healthcare Executive, Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center, Athens. Our senior executive host is J. Michael Burnett, FACHE, CEO, Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center. Limited registration. **Learn More** or **Register**
- **May 21, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM ET** — ACHE of Georgia Virtual Interactive Webinar, "The Future of Healthcare Financing." 1.5 hours of ACHE Virtual Interactive credit. **Learn More** or **Register**
- **May 26, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM ET** — Mentor Office Hours, free Zoom session with one of ACHE of Georgia's Mentors. This month's mentor is J. Larry Tyler, LFACHE. Mark your calendar.
- **May 28, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM ET** — Webinar, "The Future of Patient Care: Using Nutrition and Lifestyle to Reduce Costs and Improve Outcomes." Mark your calendar.
- **May 29-June 26, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM Each Friday** -- 5-week virtual Board of Governors Exam Tutorial series. Mark your calendar. **Learn More** or **Register Now**
- **June 11, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM ET** — Clinician Executives Webinar, "Ethics and Professionalism," Jason Lesandrini, PhD, FACHE, LPEC, HEC-C.

Register for Events at







ACHE of Georgia News

ACHE of Georgia Fellow Spotlight in Action: Leadership Rooted in Engagement and Execution

It's an honor to spotlight Jon-Michael Williams, FACHE, Executive Director of Operations at Piedmont Newton, a healthcare leader who brings clarity, collaboration, and purpose to operational excellence.

With more than 20 years of experience across finance, strategy, and hospital operations, Jon-Michael partners with clinical and administrative teams to improve outcomes, strengthen culture, and support sustainable growth.

What stands out most is his leadership philosophy:

- Engagement fuels growth
- Excellence is built through teamwork and data
- Service and integrity shape lasting impact

A dedicated ACHE member since 2012, Jon-Michael views the FACHE credential as more than a milestone, it's a commitment to ethical leadership, continuous learning, and service to the profession.

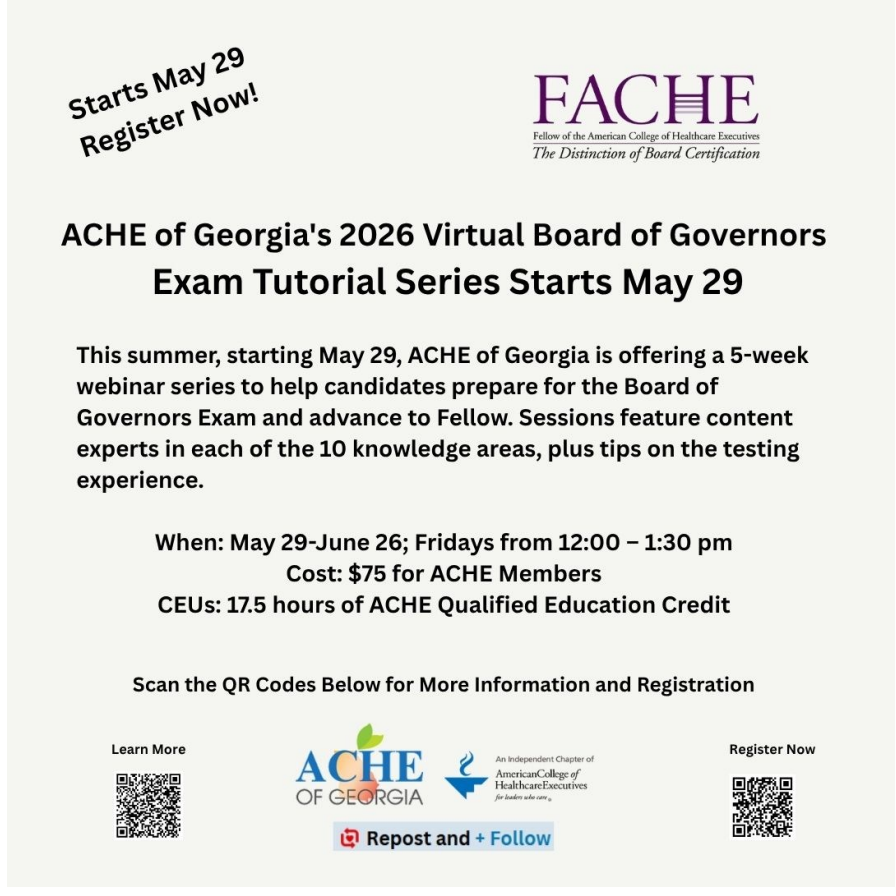
His advice: "Lean in early and stay engaged. Every opportunity shapes your leadership journey."

Do you know an ACHE Fellow or C-suite leader who deserves to be recognized?

Don't wait—submit your nomination today. **Click here** to get started.

Join us in showcasing the talent, leadership, and impact of our Fellows. We look forward to celebrating you!





ACHE of Georgia News

Chapter C-Suite Spotlight in Action:
Executive Leadership Grounded in Purpose.

This month's C-Suite spotlight is Sanford G. Duke, MD, MBA, FACHE, Chief Clinical Officer at Atrium Health and current ACHE of Georgia Chapter President — a leader who truly embodies what it means to align strategy, people, and purpose in healthcare.

With over 25 years of experience, Dr. Duke leads with clarity, transparency, and empathy—driving quality, safety, and innovation across the enterprise.

What stands out most is his leadership philosophy:

- Trust is built through listening
- Growth must be anchored in excellence
- Purpose should always translate into results

His work reminds us that strong physician partnerships, aligned teams, and a clear mission can transform care delivery at scale.

"Stay anchored in purpose and translate that purpose into results by aligning people, strategy, and execution."

Do you know an ACHE Fellow or C-suite leader who deserves to be recognized?

Don't wait—submit your nomination today. **Click here** to get started.

Join us in showcasing the talent, leadership, and impact of our Fellows. We look forward to celebrating you!



New! CNEs Available for Selected Programs

ACHE of Georgia is excited to share that selected educational programs are now offering Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) hours.

This important advancement supports our commitment to professional development for healthcare leaders across all disciplines.

We extend our sincere thanks to **City of Hope**, our accredited provider, for making this opportunity possible. Watch for upcoming events where you can earn CNE hours while engaging in meaningful learning and networking!

FACHE/Board of Governors Exam Support Scholarship — Deadline Extended to May 25

Apply now for ACHE of Georgia's new FACHE/Board of Governors Exam Support Scholarship. The scholarship provides financial assistance to ACHE of Georgia members who are planning to sit for the Board of Governors exam this year. Up to 10 scholarships, each in the amount of $750, will be awarded. Applications are due May 25. **Learn More and Apply**.

Outgoing Regent's Message

With Gratitude, ACHE of Georgia

Writing a final message is harder than I expected. Not because I can't find the words, but because there is so much I want to capture: the gratitude, the memories, and the pride in what this chapter has become.

Three years goes by fast. In 2023, I stepped into this role with enormous respect for what ACHE of Georgia represents and a genuine desire to make a difference for our members across Georgia. What I did not anticipate was how much this role would give back to me. The conversations, connections, late-night emails after a big event, celebrations of colleagues advancing to Fellow. All of these things have shaped me as a leader and as a person. I am a better healthcare executive because of this chapter and the people in it.

A Heartfelt Thank You

None of what we accomplished happened without an extraordinary group of people. I want to take this opportunity to recognize several groups who made this possible:

Our Board of Directors and Committee Leaders: Your commitment to this chapter goes far beyond what most members ever see. You showed up, you planned, you problem-solved, and you led. Every program we delivered, every scholarship we awarded, every connection we fostered was a direct result of your dedication. Thank you for saying yes and for following through.

Our volunteers: You are the heartbeat of ACHE of Georgia. Whether you helped plan a networking event, moderated a virtual program, mentored an emerging leader, or came to a networking event, your efforts created value for every member of this chapter. This work matters, and you matter.

Our members: You are the reason we do any of this. Whether you have been a member for 20 years or recently joined, your presence in this community strengthens our profession. Our growth – now nearly 2,000 members strong, including 31 new Fellows – reflects your belief in what ACHE represents.

I also want to recognize our **ACHE national team, and especially Jennifer Connelly**. Your support and partnership have been invaluable. The framework you provide allows chapters like ours to thrive, and I have been proud to carry the ACHE banner across Georgia.

What We Built Together

When I reflect back on these three years, I am proud of what this chapter has accomplished, thanks to the collective commitment to growing leaders and elevating our profession in Georgia. This year, we earned the Award of Chapter Excellence a, achieving three of our four goals. We are one of only a handful of chapters in the country to do this. We set records in our Mentorship Program, delivered summits in Savannah and Atlanta, hosted networking nights across the state, and celebrated our fifth annual ACHE of Georgia Week. We invested in students through scholarships and watched dozens of colleagues earn and recertify their Fellow credentials.



John Kueven, FACHE

But the number I am most proud of is not found in any report. It is the number of conversations I have had with members who told me that ACHE of Georgia changed the trajectory of their career. That is what this is all about.

The Baton Is Passed

One of the greatest privileges of leadership is the moment you get to step back and hand something you love to someone you trust. I am doing so today with enormous confidence and excitement. Your incoming Regent, **Lindsey Petrini, FACHE**, needs no introduction to this chapter. Lindsey served as our chapter president last year and was a co-architect of so much of what we have to celebrate. I have tremendous confidence and excitement for Lindsey's time as Regent, and I could not be prouder to pass this role to someone who has already demonstrated what it means to lead this community with excellence.

Lindsey, thank you for your partnership this past year and for your continued commitment to our members. I am excited to watch what you build next.

A Final Challenge to You

As my time in this role comes to an end, I want to leave you with the same challenge I have offered throughout my tenure: **show up.**

Show up for your patients and your teams. Show up for your colleagues who are struggling. Show up for the emerging leaders who are watching how you carry yourself. Show up for this chapter by attending events, volunteering, and mentoring the next generation. Finally, show up for yourself by investing in your growth, protect your purpose, and never stop learning.

Healthcare leadership is not just a job. As I have written before, it is a calling. This profession asks everything of us at times and then reminds us, in the most profound moments, exactly why we chose it. I hope you carry that reminder with you every day.

It has been an honor to serve as your Regent. Thank you, Georgia.

Warmest Regards,

John Kueven, FACHE

Regent – Georgia (2022–2025)

American College of Healthcare Executives

ACHE of Georgia Sponsor Spotlight

Premier Anesthesia Is Our Newest Platinum Sponsor

ACHE of Georgia welcomes **Premier Anesthesia** as our newest Platinum sponsor.

Premier Anesthesia provides a full suite of anesthesia management solutions designed to support perioperative teams and help hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers deliver safe, reliable anesthesia coverage. Its transparent, collaborative model emphasizes partnership with on-site leadership, clinical excellence, strong practice management, and responsive support for nursing and operational teams.

One of the nation's largest privately held anesthesia practice management companies, Premier Anesthesia is solely focused on building and managing high-performing anesthesia teams.

Its leadership brings extensive experience in hospital-based physician staffing, recruiting, and management, partnering with healthcare facilities nationwide to improve clinical quality, operational efficiency, and long-term stability. Premier Anesthesia is part of the Jackson Healthcare® family of companies.

Learn more at **premieranesthesia.com.**

Free Webinar on April 30

Premier Anesthesia is also hosting a live webinar with ACHE National on April 30 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM ET (11 AM-12pm CT). The session title is "Beyond the OR: Why Leading Health Systems Are Integrating Anesthesia Into Perioperative Services." There's no fee to attend, and the session has 1 hour of ACHE Qualifying Education credit.

The panelists for the program are:

- Preston Smith, JD, FACHE – President, Premier Anesthesia
- Anthony Dominic Jr., D.O. MSHA – Regional Medical Director, Premier Anesthesia; Medical Director, Mount Carmel East & Mount Carmel Grove City
- Kenneth Gillis, RN – Director of Perioperative Services, Mount Carmel East

Click here for more information and registration.

ACHE of Georgia Welcomes Trio Workforce Solutions as Our Newest Gold Sponsor

Healthcare workforce strategies are at a turning point and **Trio Workforce Solutions** is proud to support the ACHE of Georgia and our membership during this unique time. Georgia leaders are navigating ongoing labor pressures and cost challenges, and our Workforce Solutions' 2026 Workforce Reset **white paper** outlines the structural shifts redefining labor management and what forward-thinking organizations are doing now.

From evolving labor models to actionable strategies for cost containment and workforce resilience, this resource is designed for executive decision-makers. **Click here to download** your copy of the 2026 Workforce Reset white paper and position your organization for what's next.

ACHE of Georgia Event Highlights

March 26 Networking Night Across Georgia



Atlanta networking group at New Realm Brewing.



Athens networking group at Creature Comforts Brewing.



Our March 12 Career Development event featured moderated roundtable discussions with networking and professional tips from healthcare leaders.

We had a great ACHE of Georgia Week with webinars each day, building up to our March 26 Networking Night Across Georgia to celebrate our healthcare community. Events were held in Atlanta, Athens, and Augusta. Here are group pictures from each event.

ACHE OF GEORGIA WEEK
VIRTUAL | MARCH 23-26
FREE WEBINARS
12:00-12:30 PM ET EACH DAY



Augusta networking group at Fifth and Fire.



Our table moderators for the March 12 Career Development event were (from l) Matt Jernigan, FACHE, Bonnie Matthews, MSN, RN (organizer), Jon-Paul Croom, FACHE, Graham Fox, FACHE, Yanick Hicks, PharmD, and Felix Soto Izaguirre, MBA, FACHE.

ACHE of Georgia Event Highlights



Our Augusta Local Programs Council held its first lunch and learn on March 12. Speakers included (from l), Eric Crossan, Anna Adams, and Blake Corbitt, MPP.



Our April 16 lunch and learn program covered ""Leading Through Mergers and Acquisitions." Panelists were (from l) Kristen Woodrum McDermott, Heather Dexter, MSHA, MBA, Jay Dennard, FACHE, FHFMA, CPXP, and Philip Atoyebi, MD, MBA, MPH, FACHE, moderated the session.





April 16 lunch and learn panelists were *(from l) Heather Dexter, Philip Atoyebi, MD, MBA, MPH, FACHE,, Kristen Woodrum McDermott, MSHA, MBA, and Jay Dennard, FACHE, FHFMA, CPXP.*



Pictured above is a scene from our March 26 networking event at New Realm Brewing in Atlanta.

Pictured at left are Jon-Paul Croom, FACHE, Bonnie Matthews, MSN, RN, and Felix Soto Izaguirre, MBA, FACHE, at our March 12 Career Development event.

Fellows Recognition *(Since February 20)*

FACHE
Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives
The Distinction of Board Certification

New ACHE Fellows:

Congratulations to these ACHE of Georgia members who achieved their **Fellow of ACHE (FACHE)** credential since our last newsletter. Please take a moment to congratulate your colleagues for their commitment to advancing their healthcare careers:

- Chidi O. Kanu, DHA, MBA, FACHE

We recognize the following members who recently recertified their Fellow status since our last newsletter:

- J. Michael Burnett, FACHE
- Andrea P. Graham, PharmD, MHA, FACHE
- D'Andrea Morning, FACHE
- Stonish Pierce, FACHE
- J. Tyler Taylor, FACHE
- Jeani Van Someren, MBA, MS, FACHE
- Carlyle L. Walton, FACHE
- LCDR Lorraine Williams, DHSc, FACHE



ACHE of Georgia President Sanford Duke, MD, MBA, FACHE (left) recognized recent Fellow Chidi O. Kanu, DHA, MBA, FACHE, at our April 16 lunch and learn.

ACHE Board of Governors Exam Fee Waiver Until June 30 — Save $225

ACHE is offering a Board of Governor's Exam Fee waiver for applications received between March 1 and June 30 to save $225. **Visit ACHE.org** for eligibility requirements and details.

Applications Are Due May 25!

FACHE
Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives
The Distinction of Board Certification

New Scholarship to Support ACHE of Georgia Members Pursuing Fellowship

Apply now for ACHE of Georgia's new FACHE/Board of Governors Exam Support Scholarship. The scholarship provides financial assistance to ACHE of Georgia members who are planning to sit for the Board of Governors exam this year. Up to 10 scholarships, each in the amount of $750, will be awarded. Applications are due May 25.

Visit acheofgeorgia.org to apply or scan the QR code below.

Social Media

Application

ACHE OF GEORGIA

An Independent Chapter of American College of Healthcare Executives

Repost and + Follow

Membership Report *(Since February 20)*

New Chapter Members

ACHE of Georgia welcomes the following new ACHE members and members who have transferred to the chapter since our last newsletter on February 20. We hope to meet you soon.

- Joseph Addison
- Mary Alfano
- Sierra Anderson
- Peter Attwater
- Phillip Barbosa
- Quiona N. Bellamy, MHA, PMP
- Naphia Bennett
- HM1 Sienna Bias
- Elizabeth R. Christmas, MBA
- Erica S. Downs, BS
- Jada Evans
- Amy L. Fischer, MHA, BSN, RN
- Demetria Griffin
- Tondreira Hall
- Cynthia Harris
- Diana Helt
- Marnea Henderson
- Akbar Herekar, MD
- Monsur A. Ishmail, MHA, MS
- Amari C. Johnson, CHFP
- Danielle Jones
- Marilyn Keen
- Barbara J. Kelley, PhD
- Raja Khan, MD
- Jessica I. Martin
- Peter Martin
- Catherine McCullough , DNP, RN, NEA-BC
- Barbara McFarland
- Brian S. McKillop
- Avery Michaels, MPH, MHA
- Garrett Mullins
- Megan Murphy
- Christopher O'Connell
- Pamela Ograbisz
- Justin Otwell
- Lorry Perkins, DBA, MBA
- Beth Phillips
- Madison Pope
- Kanchana Raman
- Eric Remshik
- Debrah Rigg
- Mark G. Rogers
- Nichol Salvo
- Jose Riel S. Sanariz, DNAP, CRNA
- Betsy Smith
- Kari Smith
- Jeff Sondergard
- Karen R. Stewart, MD
- Toriona Stewart
- J.T. Thoms
- Michael Turner, LSSBB
- Ashley Varner, MD
- Bryan Walker
- Tesha M. Walker, MBA, BSN, RN
- Tanika Williams

Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering within the healthcare community not only strengthens our collective impact but also supports advancement toward **FACHE requirements.** Community and professional service are key components of the FACHE credential, and active engagement through chapter involvement, events, and outreach can contribute meaningfully toward those criteria.

Examples of qualifying activities include serving on a chapter committee, supporting event planning or logistics, mentoring students or early careerists, participating in community health initiatives, contributing to educational programs, or engaging in board or advisory roles.

If you are already engaged in your community, be sure to log and track your involvement in the MYACHE section of the **ACHE website** — these activities often align with and support your broader FACHE journey.

It's an opportunity to give back while continuing to grow as a leader."

Athens and Augusta Local Programs Councils

Thank you to our membership presence in the Athens and Augusta chapter hubs for your continued engagement and support of our broader mission.

ACHE OF GEORGIA ATHENS

ACHE OF GEORGIA AUGUSTA

Join Our Toastmasters Club

ACHE of Georgia has a virtual Toastmasters club and members and non-members are invited to be a part of our club. **Learn More**

Thank You to ACHE of Georgia's 2026 Sponsors

Dear ACHE of Georgia Annual Sponsors,

On behalf of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) Georgia Chapter, we want to express our sincere thanks for your generous support. Your contributions are essential in helping us advance healthcare leadership in Georgia through professional development programs, networking, and educational initiatives.

Thanks to your sponsorship, we've made significant progress, and we're excited to continue collaborating in 2026 and beyond. Your commitment plays a key role in shaping the future of healthcare leadership, and we are grateful for your partnership. Thank you once again for your support.

Warm regards,
ACHE of Georgia Board of Directors

Find Out More About ACHE of Georgia Sponsorship

If your organization is interested in becoming an ACHE of Georgia sponsor, **click here** to visit our sponsorship page.

Platinum Sponsors

EMORY HEALTHCARE

City of Hope CANCER CENTER ATLANTA

Grady

KAISER PERMANENTE

PREMIER ANESTHESIA

Wellstar

Gold Sponsors

Actalent People to Possible

Atrium Health Navicent

Encompass Health

Northeast Georgia Health System

Piedmont HEALTHCARE

trio WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

ScaleHealthTech

VIZZIA Real-Time Healthcare Visibility

Silver Sponsors

DTSPADE SPECIALIZED REAL ESTATE

GNA GEORGIA NURSES ASSOCIATION

HWL

Metro Atlanta Ambulance Service

Premier Federal

CONNECT WITH ACHE of Georgia



ACHE of Georgia Social Media:
Connect with the Georgia Healthcare Community!

ACHE of Georgia offers several ways to connect with your healthcare colleagues through social media. Options include LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and X/Twitter. To join any of our social media groups, scan the QR code or visit **www.acheofgeorgia.org/social**.

CALL FOR CONTENT

Content submissions to the ACHE of Georgia newsletter are for reviewed for appropriateness by the Communications Committee. Please send your contributions, including articles, news, member accomplishments and photos to bruce.lloyd@gmail.com, no later than close of business by the 20th day of the last month of each quarter (March, June, September, December). Approved submissions made after this date will be placed into the next newsletter.

Please note that ACHE of Georgia reserves the right to reject submissions that are not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization. Articles that endorse or appear to endorse specific products, businesses, services, and are self-promotional or advertorial will not be accepted. Subjects that are appropriate deal with healthcare industry news (national and local), career management, leadership, mentoring, diversity and other professional topics. If you are not sure, please ask.

Articles submitted for the newsletter must be relevant to professional development or healthcare administration. Please format content in a Microsoft Word document, left justified, and be 1-2 pages in length. The content of the article must include: title; name of the author; the source the article was obtained from; full URL that links to the article (if applicable). Please submit photographs as email attachments in JPG file format. Please do not embed photographs in your article text. Provide name and affiliation of any person shown in photographs along with a brief caption. When using a reprint article, please provide credit to the author and/or obtain permission to use the article before submission.

ACHE of Georgia reserves the right to edit, change or omit certain content (including photographs) because of length, style, relevance, or simply due to lack of space as deemed appropriate.