CHAMBER CONNECT

01
2026

JAN 07 | Health & Wellness Seminar
JAN 08 | South Hall Business Coalition
JAN 16 | Network Over Coffee
JAN 21 | Marketing Workshop
JAN 27 | Economic & Political Forecast

Business After Hours

Chamber members gathered for an evening of music, food and drink at **The Hall at Bourbon Brothers**, Hall County's best live music and event center, at Business After Hours in December. **Austin Sweat**, *Refresh Property Co;* **Zach Groover**, *Capable Transpor;* **Todd Lamb**, *Atlanta Speedwerks;* **Chris Arrington**, *DoubleCakes by Chris.*

(L-R) **Lindsey Metzger**, *Insur-anceHub,* **Scott Soper**, *Straight Street Ministry,* **Marianna Soper**, *Thrive Coworking.*

Don't miss the next Business After Hours at **Brenau University on February 17** and enjoy a festive and delicious menu provided by Brenau Catering!

Economic & Political Forecast

Tuesday, January 27 8:30 am

Lanier Technical College Ramsey Conference Center

Join us for a panel discussion with local business and political leaders on the current economic and political climate and the effects on business and our community.

Matt Hanley, MD
President & CEO
NEGA Health System

Todd Donaldson Sr
VP, Preconstruction
Carroll Daniel

Frank Norton, Jr.
CEO & Chairman
The Norton Agency

Ryan Owen
VP, Administration
Kubota Manufacturing

Reservations Required

$15 Chamber Member | $25 Non-Member
$200 Table (seats 10)
Includes Light Breakfast
Ryan Jackson 770-532-6206 x 110 | Email Ryan

Scan to Register

GREATER HALL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Small Business

Jennifer Pazdzior, an individual tax specialist with **Rushton**, led the recent **Small Business Seminar** and provided a clear look at how the One Big Beautiful Bill legislation affects small businesses. (L-R) **Tim Evans**, *Chamber;* Chamber Treasurer **Nick Bruner**, *Rushton;* **Jennifer Pazdzior**, *Rushton;* **Felipe Darquea**, *Chamber;* Small Business Council Chair **Steve Naughton**, *Enterprising Solutions.*

Networking Over Coffee

Join Chamber members and friends for networking before work. Network Over Coffee meetings are held bimonthly at various member businesses and restaurants in Gainesville-Hall County.

Friday, January 16	Friday, January 30
Atlanta Speedwerks	**McAlister's Deli**
9:00 - 10:00 am	9:00 - 10:00 am
470 Woodsmill Road, Suite E	1979 Jesse Jewell Parkway
Gainesville	Gainesville

INFO: Christen Wilbanks, 770-532-6206, cwilbanks@ghcc.com

(L-R) **Miguel Betancourt**, *C21 Connect Realty;* **Brooks Turner**, *Stifel;* **Caleb Birkhimer**, *Chris Robinson State Farm;* **Akan Umoren**, *Four Willows Cleaning,* at the recent Networking Over Coffee at T-Mobile.

Small Business of the Month

Allen Jernigan and **Tim Taylor** and the **Southern Companions** team.

Southern Companions is an adult caregiving service and began operating in 2009, providing in-home care for clients who are elderly, disabled, post-operative, or unable to care for themselves. The company serves 23 counties from Buckhead North to the North Georgia mountains. They visit clients before starting service to ensure they make the best match, and then conduct unannounced visits to confirm that care is being provided properly. Services and care is available for all ages. Southern Companion employees are active in the community and serve food at Good News at Noon, have chaired the American Heart Walk, are active in Kiwanis, Beyond Dementia Coalition, Boy Scouts, Georgia Association of Community Care Providers, North Georgia Senior Resources, Toccoa Senior Resource Group, and others. southerncompanions.net

CERTIFIED
GREATER HALL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
SMALL BUSINESS PARTNER

Become a Chamber CERTIFIED Small Business Partner by participating in six (6) Small Business Seminars in a year.

CERTIFIED Partners Receive:

- Certificate of Completion
- Certified Small Business Door Decal
- Recognition at a Chamber Board Meeting
- Feature in the Business Link magazine

To learn more, contact Felipe Darquea
770-532-6206
fdarquea@ghcc.com

Meetings & Events

Eggs & Issues

Over 500 members and guests attended the **Greater Hall Chamber's 32nd Annual Eggs & Issues Breakfast** featuring a panel discussion with all members of the Hall County Legislative Delegation. (Front, L-R) **David Lee**, Jackson EMC (event sponsor); **Tim McDonald**, Lanier Technical College (event host); **Rep. Matt Dubnik**; **Rep. David Clark**; **Rep. Soo Hong**; **Rep. Emory Dunahoo, Jr.**; **Rep. Derrick McCollum**; **Tim Evans**, Greater Hall Chamber. (Back, L-R): **Senator Drew Echols**; **Senator Bo Hatchett**; **Rep. Lee Hawkins**; **Rep. Brent Cox**.

Georgia Project Managers

The Greater Hall Chamber hosted its **19th Annual Project Manager Update** on December 1st at the Georgia Experience Center in Atlanta, where more than 40 state economic development partners from the **Georgia Department of Economic Development**, **Georgia Power**, **Jackson EMC**, **Georgia EMC**, **ECG**, **GEDA**, **Norfolk Southern**, **CSX**, **Georgia Ports Authority**, and **Hall County commercial real estate developers** convened for an economic update on Gainesville-Hall County and discussion on current trends in new business development and existing industry expansions. (L-R) **Tim Evans**, *Chamber;* **Brandon Lounsbury**, *Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD)* ; **Ryan Jackson**, *Chamber;* **Cameron Barnhill**, *Jackson EMC;* **Tate O'Rouke**, *Jackson EMC;* **Taylor Worley**, *Georgia Ports Authority;* **Glennis Barnes**, *Georgia Power;* **Casey Ramsey**, *Hall County Government;* **Mellissa Takeuchi**, *GDEcD.*

January 2026

Wednesday, January 7
Health & Wellness Seminar
9:00 - 10:00 am
Chamber *or* via Zoom

Thursday, January 8
South Hall Business Coalition
8:30 am - 9:30 am
INK | Oakwood

Friday, January 9
Economic Development Council
8:30 am
Jackson EMC | Gainesville

Wednesday, January 14
Human Resource Council
11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Thursday, January 15
Chamber Executive Committee
12:00 pm | Chamber

Friday, January 16
Network Over Coffee
9:00 - 10:00 am
Atlanta Speedwerks

Tuesday, January 20
Vision 2030 Board of Directors
11:30 am - 1:00 pm | Chamber

Wednesday, January 21
Marketing Workshop
8:30 - 10:30 am
Brenau Downtown Center

Wednesday, January 21
Issues Committee
9:00 am - 10:00 am | Chamber

Tuesday, January 27
Economic & Political Forecast
8:30 - 10:30 am
Lanier Technical College

Scan for the Chamber Events Calendar

FORUM COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing Workshop
Wednesday, January 21
8:30 -10:30am | Brenau Downtown Center

Finding Your Voice
How Brands Stay Authentic in an AI World

When artificial intelligence can generate content, automate campaigns, and predict consumer behavior, what keeps your brand truly unique?

The team at Forum Communications will discuss how organizations can maintain a consistent, authentic brand presence in an AI-driven environment. They'll discuss the intersection of storytelling, digital and traditional marketing tactics, and the importance of building a voice that is unmistakably human, no matter the platform or technology.

Forum's Katie Dubnik, visionary and connector, and Nick Kastner, brand and digital director, will lead discussion on using AI in efficient and practical ways and ensuring your brand stands out as real, relatable and relevant in an ever-crowded (and noisy) marketplace.

$25 Chamber Member • $40 Non-Member • Registration Required
Info: Ellie Cardin 770-532-6206 x 115, ecardin@ghcc.com

Brenau University 1878 | Lanier Islands | Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

Greater Hall Chamber
BUSINESS SHOWCASE

Discover the heartbeat of our local economy at the Business Showcase where businesses from across the region come together to highlight their products, services and innovations.

Tuesday, February 24
2:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Gainesville Civic Center

Whether you're a business owner, a professional looking to expand your network, or a curious community member, this event is your chance to engage directly with local businesses and entrepreneurs. Browse booths, make connections, and see what makes the Greater Hall business community thrive. Stick around for the Showcase Social (5-7pm) to keep the conversations going over food and drinks!

INFO
Chamber Member Exhibit $350
Non-Member $550
No Admission Fee & Open to the Public
Ellie Cardin, 770-532-6206 x 115
ecardin@ghcc.com
GreaterHallChamber.com

Scan to Register

Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

Happenings

When Caregiving Gets Legal

Josh Nelson, JD, CEO and owner of Nelson Elder Care Law, presented the recent Health & Wellness Seminar that focused on caregiving for aging parents and legalities. (L-R) **Tim Evans**, *Chamber;* Health & Wellness Chair **Dr. Dave Westfall**, *Northeast Georgia Medical Center Graduate Medical Education (GME);* **Josh Nelson**, *Nelson Elder Care Law;* **Dr. Ghazal Becker**, *GME Resident;* **Dr. Philip Kimsey**, *Foothills Functional Medicine.*

South Hall Business Coalition

Thursday, January 8

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

INK Interactive Neighborhood for Kids

6332 Grand Hickory Drive | Braselton

Come hear from Director **Charlie Bramwell** and Associate Directors **Jenny Staley** and **Cortney Murray** of **INK**. They'll share exciting updates about the new, state-of-the-art facility and innovative programs designed to inspire and engage young minds. See firsthand how INK is creating impactful learning experiences for children and families. inkfun.org

Reservations Required | $8 Member; $15 Non-Member | REGISTER NOW
Info: Ellie Cardin, 770-532-6206 x 115 or ecardin@ghcc.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Wednesday, January 21
Marketing Workshop
8:30 am - 10:30 am
Brenau Downtown Center

Tuesday, January 27
Economic & Political Forecast
8:30 am - 10:30
Lanier Technical College

Tuesday, February 24
Business Showcase 2026
2:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Gainesville Civic Center

Wednesday, February 25
Logistics Forum
11:30 am - 1:00 pm
The Boathouse at LLOP

Health & Wellness Seminars

Wednesday, January 7

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

In Person at the Chamber or via Zoom

Putting Your Best Foot Forward

Conor Murphy, MD
Peachtree Orthopedics

Join **Dr. Conor Murphy**, a fellowship-trained Orthopedic Foot & Ankle Surgeon with **Peachtree Orthopedics** and the team from **Big Peach Running Co. Braselton** – **Abby & Zack Loggins** and **Ryan Kyranakis** – for a comprehensive exploration of foot and ankle health, focusing on the critical role of proper footwear and accessories in preventing and managing injuries. Gain insights into the importance of quality, well-fitted shoes and the specialized designs behind them, tailored to support foot and ankle health.

No Charge for Chamber Members
Register Here

Wednesday, February 4

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

In Person at the Chamber or via Zoom

Hospice & Palliative Care

Mary Keith, MD
Hospice of Northeast Georgia Medical Center

Join **Dr. Mary Keith**, Medical Director for **Hospice of Northeast Georgia Medical Center**, as she explains what hospice and palliative care truly mean, why these services matter long before the final days, and how **Hospice House** offers peace, comfort and connection for patients and families. Hospice of NGMC is changing the way our community understands end-of-life care, from home-based hospice to the region's first freestanding Hospice House, now under construction in Gainesville. nghs.com/hospice

No Charge for Chamber Members
Register Here

Logistics Forum

Wednesday, February 25

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The Boathouse
Lake Lanier Olympic Park

Join us for a panel discussion on the Blue Ridge Connector with updates on surrounding infrastructure improvements. The Blue Ridge Connector is scheduled to open in Spring 2026. REGISTER NOW

Reservations Required
$50 Member | $60 Non-Member | $500 Table
Info: Ryan Jackson, 770-532-6206 x 110 or rjackson@ghcc.com

Member News

Chamber Ambassador Council

The Chamber's Ambassadors are the face of membership, assisting with networking events, seminars, ribbon cutting ceremonies, and much more. The group recently gathered at Axe Armory for their annual Christmas Party. (Front, L-R) **Christen Wilbanks**, *Chamber;* **Beth Buffington Curry**, *EMW Inc;* **Brandi Humphrey**, *Pinnacle Bank. (Back, L-R)* **Nick Pruner**, *Edward Jones;* **Pavica Paz**, *American Cancer Society;* **Marissa Maynor**, *Chamber;* **Zach Groover**, *Capable Transport;* **Kevin Jones**, *Oconee State Bank;* **Brian Brown**, *CertaPro Painters;* **Blakely Tipton**, *Access WDUN/Jacobs Media;* **Ellie Cartwright**, *United Way of Hall County;* **Lindsey Williams**, *MyGeorgia Credit Union;* **Jared Earls**, *Collins Property Group;* **Zach Dodd**, *Collins Property Group;* **Chris Craddock**, *Craddock Insurance;* **Jeff Williams**, *Turnkey Facilities Maintenance.* To learn more about the Ambassador Council or how you can get involved, contact Christen Wilbanks, cwilbanks@ghcc.com.

Kwon Orthdontics of Flowery Branch

Dr. Samuel Kwon of **Kwon Pediatric Dentistry** in Flowery Branch announces the opening of a new partner orthodontic office led by orthodontist **Dr. Joby George**, who has over 15 years of clinical experience. **Kwon Orthodontics of Flowery Branch** offers treatment for children, teens, and adults, including braces, clear aligners and more. The new location is in the Royal Lake Kroger Plaza in Flowery Branch. The team looks forward to providing exceptional orthodontic care to the community. kwonorth.com

- **Georgia Skin Cancer & Aesthetic Dermatology** has relocated to a new facility at Limestone Ridge, tripling their square footage. The board certified providers - **Ross Campbell, MD**, **Misty Caudell, MD**, **Natalie Meeks, MD** and **Tim Orlowskim, MD** - and their professional team specialize in skin care treatment and Mohs surgery, dermatological issues, medical and cosmetic dermatology, advanced techniques for healthy skin and a full line of elite skincare products and services. georgiaderm.com

- The **Quinlan Visual Arts Center's Winter Exhibition** is now underway featuring four solo shows with **Clayton Santiago**, **Jane Ingols**, **Karen Sturm** and **Manika Gupta**. The exhibition runs through February 14. Founded in 1946, the Quinlan provides quality art education for all ages, special events for the community, such as a summer art camps for children, over a dozen fine art exhibitions featuring solo and group artists, and a special Members' Exhibition each fall. quinlanartscenter.org

- **Cindy Levi**, CEO of **Avita Community Partners**, will retire after 14 years in the role, handing over the torch to a longtime employee, Chief Operating Officer **Cathy Ganter**. Levi has since helped thousands of individuals through mental health crises and helped initiate a 24-hour walk-in crisis center. Ganter has worked for Avita for 26 years, serving in several leadership capacities. Avita Community Partners is known for its comprehensive crisis services and mental health programs across 13 counties in Northeast Georgia. The Avita Behavioral Health Crisis Center located In Gainesville. avitapartners.org

- **The Arts Council** presents its **Sip & Support Wine Tasting Fundraiser** on Thursday, February 12 (5-7pm) for an evening of fine wines, gourmet bites, and community spirit. Savor a curated selection of exquisite wines paired with culinary delights from local chefs, all while supporting the arts scene in our community. Your participation helps educate, engage, and create programming that builds community through the arts. Tickets: theartscouncil.net

- The **Jarrard Burch Foundation's 4th Annual Legacy Show** is Saturday, February 7 (7-10pm) at the Gaines-villes Chair Factory and includes a pre-show reception, dinner, wine and beer, and an "in-the-round" concert with award-winning songwriters! All proceeds benefit the Bruce Burch Experiential Learning Fund and the Jarrard Burch Foundation. Details: jarrardburchfoundation.com

- The National Association for Career and Technical Education named **Rhonda Samples**, Executive Director, **Career Technical & Agricultural Education at Hall County Schools**, as the 2025 ACTE Region II Administrator of the Year. Samples is a champion for Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) in Hall County, with over four decades dedicated to the field. hallco.org

Ribbon Cuttings

Solid Security | Technology

Annie Hoffman, COO, and **Shane Sullivan**, CEO, cut a ribbon at **Solid Security | Tech-nology**, a leading provider of cutting-edge electronic security, life-safety, and cyber security solutions for commercial environments. The company specializes in designing, implementing, and supporting systems that protect people, property, and mission-critical operations. With a strong commitment to innovation, reliability, and client-focused service, Solid Security | Technology delivers customized solutions that meet the evolving needs of today's business environments, and is a trusted source for intrusion alarm, fire alarm, video surveillance and cyber solutions. solidst.com

The Tomorrow Center & School

Tatiana Morales, *Behavioral Communication Specialist;* **Stephanie Michle**, *CEO;* **Michelle Plymel**, *BCBA & President;* **Brandon Munoz**, *Behavioral Fitness Coach,* cut a ribbon at **The Tomorrow Center & School**, a unique integrated therapy and educational program for children with autism. Founded by Stephanie Michle, a mother of two autistic children, and Michelle Plymel, a BCBA with 20 years of experience, The Tomorrow Center's relationship-based approach blends evidence-backed therapeutic tools with compassionate, personalized instruction, creating meaningful progress in communication, emotional growth, learning, and independence. Each child has an individualized plan and one-on-one compassionate, caring support all day. The Tomorrow Center offers children ages 3 to 21 ABA services, accredited educational programs, alternative and technology-based therapeutics, and coming soon, Speech and Occupational Therapy. thetomorrowcenter.com

Lenny's Grill & Subs

Lenny's Grill & Subs recently held a ribbon cutting to open its new restaurant at the Kroger shopping center. (L-R) A**ndy Gordon, Kelley Delong, April Melleski, Javier Del Aquila, Yeilly Aguilar, Johnny Kasid, Amanda Garmon, Missy White, Rich White** (cutting the ribbon), **Matt Cook, Sam Herrera and Dan Moran**. Located at 1943 Jesse Jewell Parkway in Gainesville, Lenny's is a hand-crafted deli sandwich and authentic cheesesteak restaurant. Their sandwiches are made with the highest quality ingredients on freshly baked bread. Lenny's serves great food with a great experience never skipping on quality or quantity and is a neighborhood restaurant that focuses on service and community. lennys.com

Membership

Welcome New Members

789 Nail Bar
Chau Nguyen
(770) 530-1449
789nailbarga.com

Branch House Tavern
Tim Madden
(603) 494-5974
branchhousetavern.com

Enterprise Productions Group dba **Yes Event Designs**
Cathy Taylor
(770) 945-2160
yeseventdesigns.com

Gameday Men's Health Gainesville
Charles Darwin
(770) 824-3535
gamedaymenshealth.com/gainesville-ga

Merci Grace Boutique
Maggie Brock
(229) 479-3339
mercigraceboutique.com

The Neuro Center
Daniel Cobb
(678) 961-0733
georgianeurocenter.com

Paychex
Brandon Orth
(678) 447-2511
paychex.com

Roquet North America
Ruth Martinez
(678) 617-9609
roquetgroup.com

Send Me A Pro Braselton
Jon Spangler
(678) 981-9510
braselton.sendmeapro.com

Leadership Hall County

The Leadership Hall County Industry & Economic Development Day included a visit to Syfan Logistics where the class learned about the logistics industry and Syfan's strong faith-based culture. The facility tour was especially enlightening, giving participants a clear picture of what a typical day looks like at Syfan Logistics.

Darquea joins the Chamber Team

Felipe Darquea (left), new Economic Development Marketing Manager for the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, with **William Bagwell** of Homestead Investments, Vice Chair of the Chamber's Economic Development Division.

Tim Evans, President & CEO of the Greater Hall Chamber, announces Felipe Darquea as the newest member of the Chamber Team. Felipe, a Hall County native and graduate of Chestatee High School, is a student at the University of North Georgia and most recently served as an intern assisting the Chamber's Economic Development Division. Felipe has joined the team full-time and serves as Economic Development Marketing Manager, responsible for facilitating Small Business and Health & Wellness Committees as well as coordinating the Chamber's Social Media Plan.

"Felipe's professionalism and contributions to the Chamber's work resulted in our offering him a full-time position," said Evans. "Internships lead to meaningful careers, and Felipe is the latest example of our organization finding talent within local colleges and universities through an internship. Felipe demonstrated his ability to do the job during his internship and gave us the opportunity to see that he would be a great fit in our Chamber. We are excited to have him on our team and that he can continue to grow with our organization."

CONTACT US

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