

# CHAMBERCONNECT

04

2026

APR 01 | Health & Wellness Seminar  
APR 02 | Job Fair  
APR 14 | Small Business Seminar  
APR 15 | AgriBusiness Awards  
APR 16 | Business After Hours  
APR 21 | South Hall Business Coalition  
APR 24 | Hackers Holiday Golf  
APR 30 | Public Art Block pARTy

## Next Generation of Leaders



**Vision 2030's Next Gen Hall Co** is built on relationships and encourages involvement for the future of Hall County. The group recently met at Centro in Downtown Gainesville for a Meet & Mingle (L-R) **Morgan Wingler**, City of Gainesville; **Nikki Chandler**, Chamber; **Abigail Guzman**, owner, Centro, and Gainesville City Council; **Ansley Rochester**, NGHS; **Anna Hester**, Vision 2030; **Marissa Maynor**, Chamber. Join NextGen for a **Meet & Mingle at Habitat for Humanity's new community space, Habitat Hall, on Thursday, April 2 (5pm)**. Enjoy drinks, light bites, and young professional networking. This event is free to attend. Link to participate in this event: [Next Gen Meet & Mingle Registration](#).

## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Thursday, April 16

5:00-7:00 pm | NoFo Brew Co  
Midland Greenway Gainesville

**NoFo**  
BREW CO

Join us for brew, bites and fellowship at NoFo's Gainesville location, on the Midland Greenway. NoFo offers a wide variety of beer styles including IPAs, lagers, sours, pale ales, porters, stouts and more. Along with craft beer, NoFo has a host of specialty cocktails, served with live music, food trucks and great times. [nofobrew.com](http://nofobrew.com)

Door Prizes | Networking | Cash Prize Drawing

## Annual AgriBusiness Awards

Wednesday, April 15 | 7:30 am

The Shed at Jaemor Farms

The Greater Hall Chamber, Hall County Farm Bureau, and UGA Extension Hall County's Annual AgriBusiness Awards program increases recognition and appreciation of the agribusiness and agricultural community in Gainesville-Hall County. Recognition awards will be presented at the Awards Breakfast on April 15 and is free and open to the public.



2025 Award Recipients

Presented by **Jackson EMC** and sponsored by **United Community Bank, Jaemor Farms, Fieldale Farms, Cargill, Hall County Soil & Water, Mountain Fresh Creamery, Cherokee Feed & Seed, AgGeorgia Farm Credit** and **Bagwell Insurance**.

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

Info: Robin Halstead  
770-532-6206

[Email Robin](#)



**GREATER HALL**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## In This Issue

- Meetings & Events
- Program Recaps
- New Members
- Ribbon Cuttings
- Member Happenings



## HEALTHY HALL

Awards of Excellence

The Greater Hall Chamber presented its **2026 Healthy Hall Awards** at a luncheon in March at Lanier Technical College. The awards recognize outstanding healthcare professionals and spotlights those in the healthcare industry making a significant impact on our quality of life through excellence in health and wellness. Seated, L-R: **Dr. April McDonald**, Pulmonary Disease Specialist, Northeast Georgia Physicians Group; **Lynne Cox** (with Therapy Dog **Gilly**), Employee Assistance Program, Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS); **Heidi Pritchett**, Director of Operation, Longstreet Clinic; **David Smithwick**, VP of Operations & Site Head, Bend Bioscience; **Mimi Collins**, CEO, Longstreet Clinic; **LeTrell Simpson**, NGHS Board; **Abby Loggins**, Owner, Big Peach Running Co. Braselton; **Melissa Schuler, LPN**, Northside Hospital Diagnostic Clinic; **Mercedes Hall, FNP-C**, Nurse Practitioner, Longstreet Clinic. Standing, L-R: **Tim Evans**, President & CEO, Chamber; **Dr. Karen Gersch**, Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Northeast Georgia Physicians Group; **Jessica Butler**, Executive Director, Gateway Domestic Violence Center; **Dr. Robert Richard**, Bariatric Surgeon, Longstreet Clinic; **Liz Coates**, CEO, Good News Clinics; **Dr. Douglas Cleveland**, Dentist, Good News Clinics; **Lauren Darnell, ACNP-BC**, Nurse Practitioner, Northside Hospital Diagnostic Clinic; **Zach Loggins**, Owner, Big Peach Running Co. Braselton; **Dr. Clifton Hastings**, Cardiothoracic Surgeon, NGHS; Chamber Chairman **Tim McDonald**, President, Lanier Technical College. Winners not pictured: **Dr. Mathew Zimmie**, Chief Medical Informatics Officer, NGHS; **Dr. Samuel Dotson**, Northeast Georgia Physicians Group Psychiatry/NGMC Graduate Medical Education; **Dr. Matthey T. Harris**, Endocrinologist, Northside Hospital Diagnostic Clinic.

Presenting Sponsor:



6th annual  
**block PARTY**



\$60 TICKET includes: meal, 1<sup>st</sup> drink, stainless cup

**THURSDAY,  
APRIL 30, 2026  
6PM - 10PM**



**COLE GROVER**

Featured Artist:  
*Parrish Hoag*

**FOOD \* LIBATIONS \* MUSIC \* ART**

GROVE STREET STATION / 601 GROVE STREET, GAINESVILLE IN THE MIDLAND ARTS DISTRICT

Vision 2030 Public Art's **Annual Block pARTy** is **Thursday, April 30**, from 6-9pm at **Grove Street Station** in Midland Gainesville.

Tickets are \$60 per person and include: Meal, 1st drink on us, a Commemorative Stainless Steel Pint Cup, Live Music, and Art < \$100.

[Click HERE to learn more about Public Art](#) and this year's Featured Artist, **Parrish Hoag**.

6th Annual Block pARTy:  
[Click HERE for Tickets!](#)

# Ribbon Cuttings

## Chroma Early Learning Academy



**Melissa Leonard**, Director, cuts a ribbon at **Chroma Early Learning Academy's** North Hall Campus located at 5760 Wade Whelchel Road in Murrayville. Chroma Early Learning Academy offers a high-quality preschool experience right here in our community. The Chroma Team is dedicated to providing a nurturing, engaging, and enriching environment where young learners can grow, explore, and build a strong foundation for lifelong success. [chromaela.com](http://chromaela.com)

## Sanctuary on the Square



Restaurant Owners **Eduardo Moreno, Tony Janin, David Camalier** and **Eric Forgea**, and **Ben Blizzard**, Sous Chef, cut a ribbon at **Sanctuary on the Square** in Gainesville. Located in the heart of Historic Downtown Gainesville, Sanctuary on the Square is a destination where great food, craft drinks, and fun all come together. The team re-imagined familiar favorites into creative tapas-style small plates and entrees paired with seasonal cocktails you won't find anywhere else. Enjoy a comfortable dining experience, catch live music, or the monthly comedy show, then head upstairs where Blue Door transforms into an energetic club on weekends. Whether you're looking for an unforgettable meal, a perfectly crafted drink, a night of music and dancing, or bringing the Sanctuary experience to your next event with their catering services, come discover the new favorite escape on the square. [sanctuaryots.com](http://sanctuaryots.com)

### Promote your BUSINESS with a Ribbon Cutting

It's a free service if you're a member of the Greater Hall Chamber. Not a member? Join now, call Marissa Maynor at 770-532-6206. [Email Marissa](mailto:Marissa)

## APRIL 2026

Wednesday, April 1

### Health & Wellness Seminar

9:00 - 10:00 am | Chamber or via Zoom

Thursday, April 2

### Spring Job Fair

10:00 am - 2:00 pm | Gainesville Civic Center

Wednesday, April 8

### Human Resource Council

11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Tuesday, April 14

### Small Business Seminar

8:15 - 9:30 am | Chamber or via Zoom

Tuesday, April 14

### Ambassador Council

3:45 pm | Tessa Shallowford

Wednesday, April 15

### Annual AgriBusiness Awards

7:30 - 9:00 am | Jaemor Farms

Wednesday, April 15

### Issues Committee

9:00 - 10:00 am | Chamber

Thursday, April 16

### Chamber Executive Committee

12:00 pm | Chamber

Tuesday, April 16

### Business After Hours

5:00 - 7:00 pm | NoFo Brew Co. | Gainesville

Friday, April 17

### Network Over Coffee

9:00 - 10:00 am | Lake Lanier Olympic Park  
Lanier Canoe & Kayak

Tuesday, April 21

### South Hall Business Coalition

9:00 - 10:00 am | King's Hawaiian | Oakwood

Tuesday, April 21

### Vision 2030 Board of Directors

11:30 am - 1:00 pm | Chamber

Thursday, April 23

### Chamber Board Meeting

12:00 - 1:30 pm | Gainesville Civic Center

Friday, April 24

### Hackers Holiday Golf

10 am Shotgun Start | Lanier Islands Resort

Thursday, April 30

### Vision 2030 Public Art Block pARTy

6:00 pm | Grove Street Station | Gainesville

# Meetings & Events

## Health & Wellness Seminar

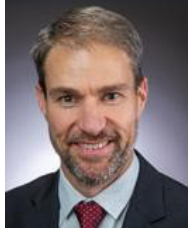
Wednesday, April 1

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

In Person at the Chamber or via Zoom

No Charge for Chamber Members  
[Register Here](#)

### Leading the Way in Neuroscience



Michael Glanzman



Zain Boghani, MD

Join **Michael Glanzman**, Executive Director of Neurosciences for **Northeast Georgia Health System**, and **Dr. Zain Boghani**, a neurosurgeon with Northeast Georgia Physicians Group, for a high-level overview of the neuroscience services, featuring

its comprehensive clinical programs and specialized teams. They will dive deep into the neurosurgery program, exploring surgical treatment options and the seamless, coordinated care that defines the patient experience. Together, they will highlight how their multidisciplinary teams work together to serve and support communities throughout the region. [nghs.com/neurosciences](https://nghs.com/neurosciences)

## Small Business Seminar

Tuesday, April 14

8:15 - 8:30 am Networking

8:30 - 9:30 am Program

In Person at the Chamber or via Zoom

No Charge for Chamber Members  
[Register Here](#)

### Future-Ready Hall County



Renee Hayes



Tai Anderson

The University of North Georgia's **Renee Hayes, MBA**, and **Tai Anderson** introduce the basics of AI and demonstrate accessible tools that can drive growth, increase efficiency, and sharpen decision-making. Executive Director of **Evergreen Learning at the**

**University of North Georgia**, Renee Hayes leads the university's newest venture into lifelong learning and brings extensive experience in program innovation and market development. Tai Anderson, an Evergreen Learning Instructor, teaches courses helping professionals capture the essence of brand storytelling and audience engagement. [ung.edu](https://ung.edu)

### Small Business Council Sponsors



## Spring Job Fair



The Chamber will host the **Spring Job Fair on Thursday, April 2** from **10am to 2pm** at the **Gainesville Civic Center**. Over 50 companies, hiring managers and HR representatives will be meeting job seekers face-to-face and taking applications on site. Free and open to the public. [Link to See Who's Hiring!](#) Details, Robin Halstead, 770-532-6206. [Email Robin](#).

## South Hall Business Coalition



The South Hall Business Coalition recently met at Eagle Ranch and gathered on buses to tour the campus.

## Coalition to meet at King's Hawaiian



The **South Hall Business Coalition** will meet and tour the **King's Hawaiian Bakery** on **Thursday, April 21** (9-10am) where their flagship product, Hawaiian bread, is produced.

See the 150,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility and learn what it takes to produce the irresistible sweet rolls from start to finish. The family-owned food company expanded its Oakwood facility, creating more than 160 new jobs. King's Hawaiian opened in Oakwood in 2010, and today provides over 800 jobs for the Hall County community. Note: Space is LIMITED. Max 3 people per organization. Reservations Required. \$8 Member; \$15 Non-Member. Info: Ellie Cardin, 770-532-6206 x 115 or [ecardin@ghcc.com](mailto:ecardin@ghcc.com). [REGISTER NOW](#)

# Member News

## Hall County Planning & Zoning



**Hall County Government** announced the promotion of **Katie Greenway Ahmed** as Director of Planning and Zoning. Ahmed formerly served as Hall County's Planning and Zoning Administrator, overseeing departmental operations and presenting land use matters and recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. She helped lead several planning initiatives, including updates to the county's Unified Development Code and Comprehensive Plan. Ahmed holds a Master of Urban & Regional Planning from the University of Florida. [hallcounty.org/planning-zoning](http://hallcounty.org/planning-zoning)

Ahmed holds a Master of Urban & Regional Planning from the University of Florida. [hallcounty.org/planning-zoning](http://hallcounty.org/planning-zoning)

## Air Force Recruiting



**U.S. Air Force Special Warfare Candidates** are pictured at North Oconee High School as part of Special Warfare Initial Fitness Test. The Air Force offers special training and certificates for scuba, freefall, sky diving, and presents opportunities to travel all over the world. The Special Warfare mission is Global Access, Precision Strike, Personnel Recovery. The recruiting office will host an event on April 14 for land and water development. For details, contact SSgt Hannant at 972-207-2534 or email [aiuna\\_arca.hannant@us.af.mil](mailto:aiuna_arca.hannant@us.af.mil).

## NGHS named Best Home Health Agency



**Northeast Georgia Health System** (NGHS) received national recognition for at-home health care. The U.S. News & World Report listed NGHS' Home Health as a **"Best Home Health Agency"** for 2026. More than 12,000 home health agencies

across the country were evaluated, with only 17% received the Best Home Health designation. The ratings are designed to help patients and families make informed decisions about care by offering an independent look at quality and patient experience. The evaluation prioritizes patient outcomes and consumer experience, using data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services including quality-of-care measures and patient satisfaction surveys. [nghs.com](http://nghs.com)

- The **Gainesville Jaycees** have proudly presented the **"Young Man and Young Woman of the Year Award"** annually for more than the past 80 years. The annual banquet honors individuals who have been stewards to the community with their unselfish volunteer efforts and civic service, all before 40 years of age. Recipients this year were **Brian Hughs**, principal and co-founder of Candler Real Estate, and **Ashley Davis**, COO, Lawson Air Conditioning & Plumbing.

- The **4th Annual Art Walk** is **Thursday, April 16** in **Historic Downtown Gainesville**. Explore our creative culture while you discover local galleries, artists, and pop-up art shows in various downtown businesses. In partnership with **The Arts Council**, this FREE event offers you the opportunity to buy original art, dine at outstanding restaurants, and shop in unique boutiques! Enjoy refreshments and live music as you walk the first 17 stops Downtown, then hop on the Gainesville Trolley to the last few stops a littler further out from the Square! Learn more at [exploregainesville.org](http://exploregainesville.org).

- The Arts Council's **2026 Summer Music Series** begins this spring. Gather a group for a concert on the lawn at the Smithgall Arts Center or buy a table up front. Preorder a meal when purchasing tickets from the featured caterer, Epting Events. A limited number of meals will be available at the concert. Order Tickets: [theartscouncil.net](http://theartscouncil.net)

- **Brenau University** and **Lanier Technical College** have finalized an agreement where eligible graduates of LTC's Associate of Science in Nursing degree will be able to seamlessly transfer credits into Brenau's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program through the university's RN-to-BSN pathway. The RN-to-BSN pathway agreement aims to support student success while addressing the state's ongoing nursing shortage. The agreement includes flexible options common to Brenau programs that make pursuing a degree more approachable for working professionals. This agreement also allows credit for demonstrated professional competencies, reducing the time required to complete the degree. [brenau.edu](http://brenau.edu)

- **North Georgia Home Show** comes to the Ramsey Conference Center at **Lanier Technical College** on **April 10-11!** This community-focused event connects homeowners with trusted local vendors and service providers. From remodeling experts and landscapers to décor specialists and home technology, the show highlights businesses from right here in our area. It's the perfect opportunity to gather ideas, meet trusted professionals, and start planning your next project. The North Georgia Home Show is powered by The Times, Forsyth County News and Dawson County News. View the full list of vendors and learn more at [northgahomeshow.com](http://northgahomeshow.com).

# Membership

## Signs By Tomorrow 25th Anniversary



Greater Hall Chamber supporters since opening 25 years ago, **Signs By Tomorrow** is owned and operated by the **Kelly Family**. Founder Jay Kelly's professional career began in 1979 in manufacturing in Gainesville-Hall County. In 2001, he left his Director of Human Resources position with Merial (formerly Select Labs and now Boehringer Ingelheim) to follow his lifelong dream of starting a family business. The Chamber has recognized Signs By Tomorrow in many ways over the years, including 'Small Business of the Year' and the 'Family Business of the Year' for its product quality, professionalism, customer service, and positive, welcoming environment. One of their six Company Values is 'humor and fun,' which is evident when you engage with their staff! Five of the 13 employees are Kelly family members, but the entire team feels like family. [signsbytomorrow.com](http://signsbytomorrow.com)

## Small Business of the Month



The **Burnette Insurance Team** (L-R) **Jacob Hansen**, *Commercial Risk Specialist*; **Jared Bostrom**, *Employee Benefits & Risk Management Advisor*; **Chase Burnette**, *Vice President*; **Ben Burnette**, *Business Risk Advisor*. Small Business of the Month, Burnette Insurance, is a third-generation, family-owned independent agency serving our community since 1971. Rather than simply selling policies, they take time to understand your unique exposures – personal or business – and provide thoughtful risk management guidance designed to prevent losses before they occur. Burnette represents a broad network of top-rated carriers, allowing the team to objectively analyze the marketplace and recommend tailored solutions that align with your goals. Burnette seeks to prevent clients from being “reactive” employers with HR and compliance issues and equips clients to be “proactive” in managing risk in the workplace. SHRM accredited compliance and HR seminars and webinars are offered at no cost. Learn more about these educational forums at [Burnette Risk Management Academy](http://Burnette Risk Management Academy).



Over 950 runners and walkers participated.



## Chamber Chase 5K & 2 Mile Wellness Walk



**Wayne Mask**, *SEAD*, was the **Fastest CEO** with a time of 25:40.



**Maria Whitson**, *Anesthesia Associates of Gainesville*, was the **Fastest Female** with a time of 20:17.



**Juan Jimenez** was the **Fastest Male** with a time of 16:14.

**Kubota Manufacturing of America** had some 129 team members participating and won the **Most Team Spirit Award** as well as the **Most Creative T-Shirt Award!**

Scan the QR Code to see Chamber Chase Finish Line Results, Photos and Highlights!



# Welcome New Members

**Apex Painting & Coatings**  
Amy Stanitzke  
(770) 289-0887  
[apexcoatings.us](http://apexcoatings.us)

**GVL Pelvic Health**  
Lydia Gailey  
(470) 252-6846  
[gvlpelvicpt.com](http://gvlpelvicpt.com)

**Restoration 1 North Atlanta**  
Kristjan Ainsworth  
(800) 358-7571  
[restoration1.com](http://restoration1.com)

**The Brightway Insurance**  
Laatz Family Agency  
Michael Laatz  
(706) 262-4294

**Lanier Custom Homes and Restoration**  
Russell Dye  
(770) 616-2154  
[lanierhomerestoration.com](http://lanierhomerestoration.com)

**Rick's Mobile RV Service**  
Sarah Blalock  
(770) 540-7462  
[ricksmobilervservice.com](http://ricksmobilervservice.com)

**Bryant Home Renovations**  
Jacob Bryant  
(404) 713-4220  
[bryanthomerenovations.com](http://bryanthomerenovations.com)

**Lash and Glow Studio**  
Rachel Watkins  
(678) 343-5492  
[lashandglow.info](http://lashandglow.info)

**Selah Studios & Events**  
Courtney Dahlsten  
(901) 268-5275  
[selahgainesville.com](http://selahgainesville.com)

**Caldwell Exteriors**  
Kaitlin Ellison  
(770) 462-8711  
[caldwellexterior.com](http://caldwellexterior.com)

**Lefty and Writey**  
Ben Nichol  
(310) 795-6054  
[bennichol.com](http://bennichol.com)

**Smoky Springs by Barclay House**  
Daphne Veitch  
(770) 535-8349  
[qslmseniorliving.com](http://qslmseniorliving.com)

**Casa Lula**  
Jacelin Sanchez  
(678) 330-0650

**North Club Real Estate**  
Todd Slaughter  
(770) 846-7965  
[NorthClubRealEstate.com](http://NorthClubRealEstate.com)

**SMS-ITC**  
Scott Self  
(470) 861-3178  
[sms-itc.com](http://sms-itc.com)

**ETI Lighting**  
Peter Lena  
(813) 325-1105  
[etissl.com](http://etissl.com)

**Qwik Pack & Ship USA**  
Christian Caldwell  
(470) 290-5339  
[qwikpackshipusa.org](http://qwikpackshipusa.org)

**Spicer Group, Inc**  
Ryan Roggie  
(770) 299-2273  
[spicergroup.com](http://spicergroup.com)

**Georgia Center for Employee Ownership**  
(GACEO) | Marie Davis  
(404) 327-2554  
[gaceo.org](http://gaceo.org)

**Red Oak Sanitation**  
Jessika Aloui  
(678) 455-7819  
[redoaksanitation.com](http://redoaksanitation.com)

**The Tabb Insurance Agency**  
Corey Plank  
(770) 483-1800 x 48  
[tabbinsurance.com](http://tabbinsurance.com)

**Gigi's Gathered Goods**  
Alisha Lacey  
(678) 693-0746  
[instagram.com](http://instagram.com)

# 118th Annual Meeting & Gala

## Thursday, May 7, 2026

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**The Boathouse**  
Lake Lanier Olympic Park



**Black Tie Optional**  
**Sunset Cocktail Reception 6:00 p.m.**  
**Dinner & Program 7:30 p.m.**  
**\$200 per person | \$1,600 Table (seats 8)**

Reservations



We invite you to a lakeside evening of celebration marking the Chamber's 118th year and honoring the leaders and businesses that shape our community. Set against the beautiful backdrop of Lake Lanier, this signature event features the presentation of Annual Business Awards, recognizing outstanding small and family-owned businesses, along with individual honors for exceptional leadership and distinguished service. The evening will also include the Passing of the Gavel, as we welcome our incoming executive leadership and usher in a new year for the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. Sponsorships available. Ellie Cardin, 770-532-6206 x 115. [Email Ellie](mailto:Ellie).

## Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

# Transportation Forum



**Wednesday, May 13**

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Lanier Technical College  
Ramsey Conference Center

Featuring  
**Commissioner Russell McMurry**  
Georgia Department of Transportation

\$30 Chamber Member | \$40 Guest | \$300 Table Sponsor (seats 8)

Includes Lunch | Reservations Required

Gerri Collins, 770-532-6206 x 106

Email: [gcollins@ghcc.com](mailto:gcollins@ghcc.com)

Link to Register: [Transportation Forum Reservations](http://Transportation Forum Reservations)

The Chamber is seeking award nominations for the annual **Small Business of the Year** and the **Family Business of the Year**. Nominees must be a member and may nominate their business or another member. Nominations must be received by Friday, April 17. Awards will be announced at the Gala on May 7.

Scan for Award Nominations



## CONTACT US

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**Ellie Cardin**  
VP, Events  
[Email Ellie](mailto:Ellie)

**Robin Halstead**  
VP, Community Dev  
[Email Robin](mailto:Robin)

**GOT NEWS?** Email Kemie West, [kwest@ghcc.com](mailto:kwest@ghcc.com)

[GREATERHALLCHAMBER.COM](http://GREATERHALLCHAMBER.COM)