



# Executive Leadership Conference

July 7 – 10, 2026

Jekyll Island Club Hotel | Jekyll Island, GA

## EVENT AGENDA

### Tuesday, July 7, 2026

- 8:30 – 11:30am **GACCE Board Retreat**  
Club Ballroom – Main Hotel
- 1:00 – 4:00pm **Sponsor Display Set Up**  
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room
- 4:00 – 6:00pm **Registration Opens and Hotel Check-In**  
GACCE Registration – Morgan Center Foyer  
Hotel Check-In – Main Hotel Lobby
- 4:30 – 5:30pm **BONUS SESSION – Chamber Executive Issue Session**  
Let's kick things off with a chance to get to know each other! This session is all about connecting with fellow Chamber execs, swapping stories, and sharing what's on your mind. We'll start with quick introductions, then hear a few updates from our GACCE Executive Committee. After that, it's your turn—ask questions, bring up any challenges you're facing, and tap into the group's collective know-how. It's a relaxed, open space to talk shop and support each other.  
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room
- 6:00 – 6:30pm **FIRST TIME ATTENDEE RECEPTION**  
Opportunity for our first-time attendees to meet our GACCE Board and sponsors.  
Pulitzer & Aspinwall Rooms – Main Hotel
- 6:30pm **WELCOME RECEPTION & DINNER**  
Grand Dining Room – Main Hotel  
**Bar Sponsored by: Novi AMS**
- 9:00 – 11:00pm **THE ATHENS LOUNGE**  
Come kick back with your chamber peers for some adult beverages and relaxation.  
Sans Souci – First Floor  
**Sponsored by: Athens Area Chamber**

### Wednesday, July 8, 2026

- 6:45am **Hike With Heath - Optional "Walk & Talk" Session**  
Skip the snooze button and join Heath for a morning walk with fellow conference attendees. Before the coffee fully kicks in, take advantage of this fun opportunity to stretch your legs, swap ideas, and make new connections in a relaxed, informal setting. Whether you're there for the networking, the fresh air, or to justify an extra pastry later in the day, everyone is welcome.  
Meet at Front of Hotel – Registration Circle

- 8:00 – 9:00am **Breakfast Buffet**  
 No presentation in order to give you more time to network with your peers!  
 Club Ballroom – Main Hotel  
**Sponsored by: POWER 10 Capital Campaigns**
- 9:00 – 9:15am **Official Conference Welcome & Sponsor Introductions**  
*David Bradley, Athens Area Chamber – 2026-27 GACCE Chair*  
*Ralph Staffins, Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber*  
 Morgan Center – Main Conference Room
- 9:15 – 10:45am **SESSION 1**  
**The Inner Advantage: A Thriving YOU**  
 Leadership is not meant to be lived in survival mode. In this reflective and practical session, leaders are introduced to a holistic framework for flourishing—one that integrates well-being, integrity, purpose, and compassion. Rather than pushing harder or operating on empty, participants learn how thriving leadership begins within.  
*Dr. Rosaria Mangiavillano Meek, The Oracle of Style*  
**Sponsored by: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield**
- 10:45am **Refreshment Break – Sponsor Display Area**  
**Sponsored by: Premier World Discovery**  
**Water Dispenser Sponsored by: Starfish Partnerships**
- 11:00am – Noon **SPOTLIGHT OUR SPONSORS SESSION**  
 Speed networking session with our sponsors. You must be present to win prizes!
- Noon **TABLE TALK LUNCHEON**  
 Pull up a chair with fellow Chamber presidents for a roundtable where the conversation is just as important as the food. Real talk. Real ideas. The Educate Committee will help you dig into the real challenges and opportunities facing our chambers and communities—no formal presentations, just honest peer-to-peer exchange. Move around, jump into different conversations, or stay put where the discussion is good. A few tables will also be designated as “hangout tables” for networking, hanging out with friends or just enjoying your lunch.  
 Morgan Center
- 1:00 – 2:30pm **SESSION 2**  
**Winning the Member Loyalty Game**  
 Engaged members are the lifeblood of every thriving chamber. In this interactive session, John will help our Chamber Executives shift how you think and what you do to win the most important game every Chamber of Commerce plays – The Member Loyalty Game. Whether your chamber’s focus is creating connections or planning events, John’s presentation will help you rethink how you invest and focus your time every day to create stronger member connections that turn transactional members into loyal members who tell your chamber’s story to others in the community creating a pipeline of loyal members that keep your chamber thriving for years.  
*John Brantley, The Auxin Leader*  
**Sponsored by: Oglethorpe Power Corporation**
- 2:30pm **Enhanced Refreshment Break – Sponsor Display Area**  
**Sponsored by: Georgia Chamber of Commerce**

3:00 – 4:00pm

### **SESSION 3**

#### **Powerfully Different: Find and Speak Your Chamber's Unique Impact**

What does your Chamber do that's unique in your community? Between dedicated networking groups, non-profits, and local government agencies, folks outside the Chamber often do not recognize exactly what your Chamber offers that no one else does. In this session, Zach will demonstrate the process of finding your Chamber's brand differentiators: the parts of your organization's identity that are powerfully different from any of the peers in your community.

*Zach Armstrong, Rooster High*

***Sponsored by: Georgia Center for Employee Ownership***

### **OPEN EVENING – Dinner on Your Own or with Sponsors**

#### **Thursday, July 9, 2026**

6:45am

#### **Hike With Heath - Optional "Walk & Talk" Session**

Skip the snooze button and join Heath for a morning walk with fellow conference attendees. Before the coffee fully kicks in, take advantage of this fun opportunity to stretch your legs, swap ideas, and make new connections in a relaxed, informal setting. Whether you're there for the networking, the fresh air, or to justify an extra pastry later in the day, everyone is welcome.

Meet at Front of Hotel – Registration Circle

8:00 – 9:00am

#### **GACCE Past Chairs & Board Member Breakfast**

This is a special breakfast for our GACCE Past Chairs and current Board Members. This informal gathering is an opportunity to reconnect, share insights, and celebrate the leadership that continues to shape our organization.

Lanier Room – Main Hotel

8:00 – 9:00am

#### **Breakfast Buffet**

Our normal breakfast buffet will be available for all conference attendees.

Club Ballroom – Main Hotel

***Sponsored by: Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education***

9:00am

#### **Morning Welcome**

Morgan Center – Main Conference Room

9:15 – 10:15am

### **SESSION 4**

#### **Reframing the Economic Development Conversation: How Local Leaders Can Build Support for Growth**

Recent research led by the Georgia Chamber reveals changing attitudes toward growth and economic development. Join Georgia Chamber President & CEO Chris Clark for a discussion on how local leaders can effectively communicate the value of economic development and build support for investment, jobs, and opportunity in their communities.

*Chris Clark, Georgia Chamber*

***Sponsored by: SOAR Nonprofit Solutions, LLC***

10:15am

#### **Refreshment Break – Sponsor Display Area**

***Sponsored by: Premier World Discovery***

***Water Dispenser Sponsored by: Starfish Partnerships***

- 10:30 – 11:30am      **SESSION 5**  
**AFFECTING CHANGE – Through Workforce Strategies**  
Multi-generational workforce strategies support children, working adults, and families and together can strengthen workforce participation, talent pipelines, and local economic vitality. Designed to align with Chambers of varying size and capacity, the session will combine statewide insights and research with facilitated peer discussion. Chamber leaders will reflect on opportunities in their communities, share examples, and explore practical partnership strategies.  
*Kathleen Da Silva, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education*
- Noon                      **Free Afternoon – Golf / Pool / Beach**
- 6:30pm                   **GACCE AWARDS DINNER**  
Join us as we recognize our new GCCE designees and our 2026 award winners.  
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room  
**Bar Sponsored by: Novi AMS**  
**Dinner Sponsored by: Living For Monday, LLC**
- 8:00 – 10:00pm      **HOSPITALITY HOUR & SINGO NIGHT**  
Keep the party going with SINGO (*think bingo, but with music*) and an extra drink ticket provided by our friends Eli and Kenny. We will also conduct our Bourbon Pull with a live auction for the best bottles and finalize our Silent Auction for scholarships.  
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room  
**Sponsored by: PSP Group**

**Friday, July 10, 2026**

- 8:00 – 9:00am        **Breakfast Buffet**  
Make sure you check out of your room by 11:00am.  
Club Ballroom – Main Hotel
- 9:00am                 **Morning Welcome**  
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room
- 9:15 – 10:30am      **CLOSING SESSION**  
**AFFECTING CHANGE – Through Political Engagement**  
Join us for a candid fireside chat on what it truly means to be the “Voice of Business” in today’s evolving public policy landscape. Brunswick Mayor Cosby Johnson—who uniquely serves in a dual role as Mayor and Senior Director of Governmental Affairs for the Georgia Chamber—will share real-world insights alongside Christie Moore of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber. Through an engaging, conversational format, they’ll explore the importance of “having a seat at the table,” how chambers can effectively navigate political engagement, and what it takes to build meaningful relationships that drive impact. Attendees will walk away with practical perspectives and fresh ideas to strengthen their chamber’s role in advocacy—no matter the size of their community.  
*Brunswick Mayor Cosby Johnson*  
*Christie Moore, Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber*  
**Sponsored by: Lumin Strategies**
- 10:30am                **Conference Adjourns**