



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

- 6:00 – 7:00am **Optional “Walk & Talk” Session**
Start your day with fresh air and great conversation! Join fellow attendees for an optional morning Walk & Talk—an easy, informal way to connect, share ideas, and enjoy the island before the day's sessions begin!
Meet at Back of Hotel by Large Outdoor Chair
- 8:00 – 9:00am **Breakfast Buffet**
No presentation in order to give you more time to network with your peers!
Club Ballroom – Main Hotel

- 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 Meek, Wisdom Works
Sponsored by: Anthem
- 10:45am **Refreshment Break – Sponsor Display Area**
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 **HOT TOPIC ROUNDTABLE LUNCHEON**
 Join your fellow chamber peers for an interactive roundtable experience designed to spark ideas and solve real-world challenges. Tables around the room will focus on key chamber industry topics. This session is all about learning from each other—through open conversation, shared expertise, and collective problem-solving.
 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

OPEN EVENING – Dinner on Your Own or with Sponsors

Thursday, July 9, 2026

- 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
Pulitzer & Aspinwall Rooms – Main Hotel
- 8:00 – 9:00am **Breakfast Buffet**
Our normal breakfast buffet will be available for all conference attendees.
Club Ballroom – Main Hotel
- 9:00am **Morning Welcome**
Morgan Center – Main Conference Room
- 9:15 – 10:15am **SESSION 4**
Turning Thought Into Action
The Wednesday sessions will provide extraordinary ideas for self and organizational care. But...how do you do it **all**? You don't. We have to prioritize great ideas. David and Marissa will lead this audience engaging session focusing on the preceding sessions. Everyone has different skills and needs – with your participation, you should walk out of this session with a more narrowed understanding of what YOU and YOUR chamber can undertake.
David Bradley & Marissa Chastain, Athens Area Chamber
- 10:15am **Refreshment Break – Sponsor Display Area**
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 GACCE 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 Jason Mock of the Greater Dalton 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

Jason Mock, Greater Dalton Chamber

10:30am

Conference Adjourns