



# News and events of the DEKALB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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## Message from the President

### Achieving Goals Thru Partnerships and Collaborations

Business has always been about relationships—cultivating existing ones, establishing new ones, and re-establishing old ones. The ability to partner has never been more paramount for businesses and organizations as it is today. Our economic climate continues to make us do more with less. Fewer resources and fewer people can lead to minimized opportunities. Yet, the ability

to partner enables us to grow in size, expertise, stature and capabilities.

The DeKalb Chamber could not do what it does without partnerships. In many respects our partners are typical—business, local government, non-profits, and other business groups. Just this year alone, the DeKalb Chamber has partnered with the DeKalb CEO's Office and Council for Quality for Growth on the State of the County address and the DeKalb County School System and Public Schools Foundation on the State of the System.

In the days ahead, we will partner with the Small Business Finance Institute (March 16) for a half day business finance and funding seminar and Franchise Mart of Atlanta, DeKalb Economic Development, and Commissioners **Watson** and **May** for a seminar (March 24) on starting and funding a franchise.

Simply stated, the ability to partner creates leverage. Sometimes small businesses are leary to partner and joint venture with other firms for lack of trust and fear of minimized profits. In today's environment,

I would argue one cannot afford to not partner. To share the spoils is better than no spoils at all.



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## Chamber Breakfast - March 10

# DeKalb Chamber Launches Executive Speaker Series

Each year, the DeKalb Chamber looks to refine its programs with the goal of providing more value and relevancy for its membership. This year, the DeKalb will launch its Executive Speaker Series program which is a quarterly breakfast program geared towards business owners and senior level executives. Attendees will hear from Atlanta's top business leaders on key issues facing business today. Speakers will address topics related to public policy and tax reform, healthcare, improving productivity, strategic planning, and maintaining market share just to name a few.

The first program of the 2011 calendar year will feature Atlanta Gas Light's **Suzanne Sitherwood** who will speak on tax reform in Georgia which comes on the heels of the recommendation of the Tax Reform Commission to the General Assembly. Derived from 2010 HR 1737, the Commission's sole purpose was to make recommendations and design a balanced tax system. Sitherwood was one of the 17 commission members who on December 15, 2010 began a comprehensive and exhaustive study of the tax laws and tax policy of this state. The group's goal and objective was modernize

and revitalize the state revenue structure so as to create an equitable and flexible tax system which properly balances the taxes based on fixed wealth, current expenditures, and current flow of income. The group met until January 15 after which its recommendations were disseminated to the General Assembly for review, modification, and possible passage.

The March 10 breakfast will take place at the Holiday Inn Select – Decatur/Conference Center located at 130 Clairemont Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030. The cost is \$25.00 for members and \$35.00 general admission. To register,



**Suzanne Sitherwood**

interested parties should visit <http://dcocexecspeaker.eventbrite.com/>.

### Save these important dates for March:

March 4	– Page Awards – Recognition of STAR Students	March 15	– Principal Shadow Day Luncheon
March 8	– New Members Lunch Reception Sponsored by the AJC	March 16	– Stepping Up To Business
March 10	– Executive Speaker Series – Suzanne Sitherwood, Atlanta Gas Light	March 16	– Network DeKalb Leads Group
		March 24	– FranchiseMart – Own Your Own Business

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