



2016

Annual Report



Economic
Development



Public
Policy



Education &
Workforce
Development



Member
Services



DEKALB CHAMBER
THE POWER OF ONE VOICE

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About DeKalb Chamber

MISSION

The mission of the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce is to be the catalyst that attracts, supports, and advances business interests in DeKalb County.

VISION

DeKalb Chamber strives to be the convener of partnerships and facilitator of solutions. We equip business members with information and access to resources; advance education and workforce development, economic development and public policy; and work to enrich the quality of life in DeKalb County and the metro Atlanta region.

To support the mission of DeKalb Chamber, our work is reflected in our four core focuses:

- Economic Development
- Public Policy
- Education and Workforce Development
- Member Services

A portrait of Katerina Taylor, President & CEO of the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce. She is a Black woman with shoulder-length dark hair, wearing a teal top and a multi-strand pearl necklace. She is smiling and pointing towards the right. The background is dark with a large, stylized pink and white geometric shape resembling a mountain or a stylized 'V' overlaid on the image.

Katerina Taylor

PRESIDENT & CEO

To the DeKalb business community,

Since our founding in 1938, the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce, our members, investors, community partners and stakeholders have been committed to creating a pro-business environment for DeKalb County and the metro Atlanta region. A strong business presence contributes to the health, viability and sustainability of the community. As we continue to shape and define the future of our community, we remain well positioned to advocate and serve thanks to the trust and support from all of you.

In 2016, we welcomed 118 new members as a reflection of our work to help address business needs, create new business relationships and ultimately keep business local. Through unique programming and social platforms, we engaged more than 13,000 businesses, organizations and people helping people achieve greater connection to our work and the businesses we serve.

We ended the year with a Board Retreat, where we discussed the priorities for our strategic plan that will define our work ahead. In it we will work to advocate for a business-friendly environment, hold our appointed and elected leaders accountable to their commitment to service, increase DeKalb's asset visibility, and define the Chamber as the resource portal for business information and connection.

We thank you for your collaboration and partnership and we look forward to another year of serving the business community.

Thank you,

Katerina "Kat" Taylor
President & CEO
DeKalb Chamber of Commerce

A stylized white signature of Katerina Taylor on a dark background.

Diane McClerean

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the DeKalb Chamber Board Chair for 2016. We have seen a year of prosperity, economic growth and change across the county.

Many of you know that for the 4th consecutive year, Georgia has been named the best state in the country in which to do business. Our Chamber and the businesses in DeKalb played a part in earning that distinction, and we must capitalize on that designation and use it to our advantage as we approach 2017.

That is why the Chamber staff and the Board of Directors have focused our efforts on growing partnerships and building bridges. Over the past year, your Chamber has collaborated with a multitude of partners and key stakeholders in our community, the metro Atlanta region and across the state. We are working hard to ensure that DeKalb has a seat at the table.

Every conversation, every meeting, every membership program and initiative has supported our goals of strengthening business and economic growth, supporting our education partners and workforce development initiatives and influencing public policy for a strong pro-business environment. Of course, providing value for the time, talent and treasure each of our members has invested in the Chamber is always at the forefront.

The DeKalb Chamber supported these goals through targeted membership programming



focused on informing and educating our members as well as providing networking opportunities so that relationships are built and progress is made.

Many of our community stakeholders joined the Chamber Board of Directors at a strategic planning retreat in December. Each attendee had a voice in the conversation and we left that meeting with a consensus about priorities for the chamber in 2017. You will be hearing more about these goals as Fred Daniels assumes the role of 2017 Board Chair.

Please remain engaged with your Chamber and participate in the process as we work together to build on the momentum and ensure that DeKalb County remains a thriving business community for all who live, work and play in this great county.

It has been personally rewarding and a true pleasure to serve as your Chairman this past year. Thank you.

5 *Diane McClerean*



Four Core Focuses

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Under the Economic Development initiative DeKalb Chamber seeks to bring awareness to some of DeKalb's strongest assets; help to create a pro-business environment; and aid in the recruitment and retention of brands known across the globe. It is also our goal to grow and expose small businesses to resources that allow them to be competitive and viable.

PUBLIC POLICY

Under the Public Policy initiative our goal is to work alongside our elected officials to ensure and advocate for a pro-business environment in DeKalb County, across the Atlanta region, and state. Our commitment is to impact policy that ensures an environment that promotes progressive and appropriate infrastructure, innovative transit and development, and equitable opportunities and outcomes across all communities that make up DeKalb County and the Atlanta region.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Under the Education and Workforce Development initiative our commitment is to work with county, region, and state education leaders and organizations that affect innovative learning and our students in a results-oriented way. We identify ways the business community can play a more significant role in educational outcomes.

MEMBER SERVICES

DeKalb Chamber works with its members to identify more opportunities for industries to connect and create an environment of business success.

Economic Development

AND IMPACT

In 2016, DeKalb Chamber awarded Selig Enterprises with the inaugural Economic Development Project of the Year Award for the Suburban Plaza development. The award recognizes a major development project that contributes to the job and population growth of a community in DeKalb County.

Suburban Plaza is estimated to generate \$150 to \$250 million in annual sales and create an estimated 400 to 450 full- and part-time jobs.

Tenants include Chamber members: LA Fitness, Half Price Books, Brain Balance of Decatur, and A Smile 4 U.

DeKalb Chamber is one of the primary owners of **DeKalb Thrives**, DeKalb County's Economic Development Strategic Plan. Under DeKalb Thrives, DeKalb Chamber is responsible for:

- Strengthening talent pipeline by creating professional service programs for High School students
- Developing effective job training programs
- Developing workforce development programs for construction and related trades fields
- Expanding educational partnerships and internships with private sector
- Organizing stakeholder visits to communities that have successfully improved education outcomes

Fast Stats

Decide DeKalb Development Authority

- \$440 million in capital investments
- 4,800 new and retained jobs
- 17 Project wins

Home Chef

- \$3.35 million investment
- 1,200 new jobs by 2020

Emory Sports Medicine Complex

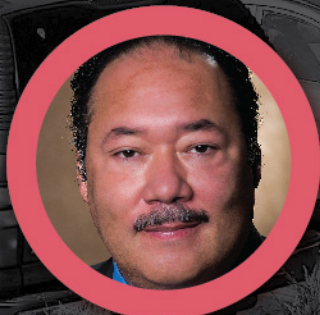
- \$50 million land purchase
- 5-acre 90,000 square-foot complex

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

- \$126 million Brookhaven expansion project
- 143 new jobs
- Accommodate 457 physicians and employees

Task Force for Global Health

- \$12 million purchase
- Accommodate 375 staff members



The DeKalb Chamber of Commerce continues to serve as a determined advocate for the business community by diligently working to improve and provide leadership to small businesses and corporations alike within our already flourishing county. The Chamber's leadership and vision continues to set DeKalb apart from all other counties in our region while making an impact in every corridor of our county.

Tyrone Rachal
CHAIR, DECIDE DEKALB



Public Advocacy

KEY BILLS IN 2016



HB 596

PASSED

Modification of DeKalb County's
Homestead Exemption Time Limitation

Extends the freeze on property taxes for DeKalb County homeowners until the year 2022. From the 2016 General Election, a majority of DeKalb residents voted "yes."



HB 515

PASSED

Incorporation of the City of Tucker

Allows for the incorporation of the City of Tucker, outlining the city's boundaries, powers and effective date. A majority of DeKalb residents voted "yes" to its incorporation in 2015 and Tucker was officially incorporated in 2016.



SB 209

PASSED

Incorporation of the
City of Stonecrest

Allows for the incorporation of the City of Stonecrest, outlining the city's boundaries, powers and effective date. From the 2016 General Election, a majority of DeKalb residents voted "yes" to incorporate the City of Stonecrest.

HB 757

VETOED

Religious Liberty Bill

Exempts religious officials from performing marriage ceremonies in violation of their legal right to free exercise of religion, and businesses from employing, or providing goods or services to those that impact their religious freedom.



HB 859

VETOED

Campus Carry Gun Bill

Authorizes licensed gun holders to carry and possess firearms in or on certain buildings or properties of public institutions. Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed the bill.



SB 133

FAILED

Opportunity School District

Allows the establishment of the Opportunity School District and authorizes district's intervention of qualified failing public elementary and secondary schools. A majority Georgians voted "no" to Opportunity School District.



Education & Workforce Development



"On behalf of the Board of Education and the students and staff of the DeKalb County School District, I welcome the great partnership and collaboration we have established with the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce. We prepare our 102,000 students for college and careers, so they become future job-creators, wage-earners, tax-payers, and responsible citizens. With our laser focus on rigorous classroom teaching and learning, we have seen improvements in graduation rates, SAT scores, and improving climate ratings. We are the state leader in STEM certified schools and programs. The DCSD is the number two employer with more than 15,000 employees in the county and a huge contributor to the economic health of the metro area. The quality of our schools plays an economic role too, attracting new residents and businesses. When Daimler Benz North American recently announced the relocation of its headquarters here, that company partly based its decision on the quality of local education."

Dr. R. Stephen Green

SUPERINTENDENT, DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

DeKalb Chamber understands the importance of a strong education system. In 2016, we executed four programs and community events to engage the business community in education. These included the Parents Pounding the Pavement Workshop and Job Fair, Seeing is Believing Bus Tour and State of the District Address.

DeKalb Chamber partnered with DeKalb County School District, Georgia Piedmont Technical College and WorkSource DeKalb to kick off the Parents Pounding the Pavement Workshop and Job Fair, a joint effort to help un-employed and under employed parents of DeKalb Students prepare for job opportunities in a changing workforce.

Parents Pounding the Pavement

- 75 Parents attended Workshop
- 35 Chamber Members and employer participants
- 100 Parents attended Job Fair

Seeing is Believing Bus Tour

- 50 leaders on tour
- 6 school tours

State of the District Address

- 8% increase of high school graduation rate
- 32,000 middle-, high school students enrolled in Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programs
- 1,100 students working towards a career credential

**Fast
Stats**

DeKalb County School District
3rd largest school district in Georgia
102,000 students
135 schools

Member Services

DeKalb Chamber was created and is guided by its members. In 2016, the Chamber continued its growth of the past several years by adding 118 members. With their investment in the Chamber, these companies gained access to networking, exposure, marketing, community engagement, and business opportunities. They, like our established members, are dedicated to growing business in DeKalb and the metro Atlanta area. We are a Chamber large enough to serve you and small enough to know you.



"As a new business owner with a niche market that specializes in childbirth, newborn care, and baby sleep, DeKalb Chamber has been a great resource. The Chamber staff has continually gone out of their way to help my company. In 2016, Intown Doula saw a 92% growth in our business thanks in part to the relationships I've formed through the Chamber."

Margaret McIntyre

Intown Doula



"Our work at Reliable Restoration puts us in front of many families suffering from devastating damages to their homes. Through DeKalb Chamber, we've been able to form a partnership with local hotels like Holiday Inn Atlanta Northlake and help our clients find temporary residence while we restore their homes."

Pete Hajjar

Reliable Restoration



"DeKalb Chamber has played an integral role in helping us work with DeKalb County Government. In 2016, we met our goal of opening two Taziki's Mediterranean Café locations in DeKalb."

Melissa Brown

Taziki's Mediterranean Café

Membership Engagement

2016 Chamber Committees

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chair: Vaughn Irons

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Chair: Trey Ragsdale

Co-Chair: Leeshu Kennedy

EDUCATION

Chair: Kelsi Robinson

Co-Chair: Brenda Reid

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Chair: David Scott

Co-Chair: Sondra Brooks

SMALL BUSINESS

Chair: Angela Graham

Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Diane McClearn
OGLETHORPE POWER CORPORATION
Chair

Frederick Daniels, Jr.
CITIZEN'S TRUST BANK
Vice-Chair

Delores Crowell
AT&T
2nd Vice-Chair

Katerina Taylor
DEKALB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Secretary

Patrick Putman
THE PRIVATE BANK OF ATLANTA
Finance

Albert Edwards
CERM
Past Chair 2014

John Shelton
DEKALB MEDICAL CENTER
Past Chair 2013

Arnie Silverman
SILVERMAN CONSTRUCTION PM
Past Chair 2012

Trey Ragsdale
KAISER PERMANENTE
Member

Board of Directors

Jeremy Berry, Dentons
Sondra Brooks, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Tom Burns, Toro Properties Rehab, LLC
Ted Cummings, OnyxMSG Group
Patrick Desamours, Edward Jones Investments
Alan Dishman, Wells Fargo
Dr. David Dude, City Schools of Decatur
Bill Floyd, DeKalb Municipal Association
John Funny, Grice Consulting Group
Dr. R. Stephen Green, DeKalb County School District
Vaughn Irons, APDSolutions
Larry Johnson, DeKalb County Board of Commissioners
Dr. Melvin Johnson, DeKalb County Board of Education
John Kelley, Georgia Power
Gregory B. Levett, Levett & Son's Funeral Homes
Andrew Lewis, Georgia Charter Schools Association
Lee May, DeKalb County Government
Cornell McBride, Jr., McBride Research Labs
Ryland McClendon, MARTA

Betsy Mercier, CDC Federal Credit Union
Jim Monacelli, Smith Gambrell & Russell LLP
Staci Parker, Gas South
Correggio Peagler, Brown & Caldwell
Trevor Quander, Southern Company Gas
Tyrone Rachal, Decide DeKalb Development Authority
Brenda Reid, Publix Super Markets
Jason Ressler, Hyatt Atlanta Regency at Villa Christina
Kelsi Robinson, EGM Services
JaKathryn Ross, Georgia-Pacific
David Scott, Integral Gude
Matthew Shepherd, Delta Community Credit Union
Dr. Jabari Simama, Georgia Piedmont Technical College
James Tsismanakis, Discover DeKalb
Laura Van Fleet Franklin, BB&T
Earl Walker, Image360 Tucker
Pat Wheeler, City of Stone Mountain
Betty Willis, Emory University
Taylor Wright, Atkins

In the Community

AND BEYOND

In 2016, DeKalb Chamber made it a priority to give back to the community. As an organization that serves, we know it is important to showcase and support the works of other local organizations. Given the opportunity, our membership answered our call and joined our efforts to make an impact. Together, we were able to show unity and collaboration in the community.



Chamber members and volunteers helped to raise funding for cancer research at the **American Cancer Society's Relay For Life.**

\$4K

125 local business owners and participants created e-commerce platforms at the **Weebly's "Like A Boss"** Bus Tour that came to DeKalb County.



389



DeKalb County police officers received free lunch sponsored by **Chick-fil-A** as the Chamber asked members to join us in hosting and serving lunch at a **Day of Appreciation for DeKalb County Police.**

200

facebook

learned how to optimize their Facebook presence and engage customers at **Facebook's "Boost Your Business"** workshop for small business owners.



DeKalb Chamber took advantage of opportunities to talk about the great resources of DeKalb County during a cross-sector, cross-country leadership exchange in the **Dallas/Fort Worth, TX Metroplex** with the Atlanta Regional Commission **LINK trip**; overseas in **China**, in discussions to bridge international business relations; and in **Cuba**, leading a DeKalb delegation to learn about their economy and culture.



50+

DeKalb County and metro Atlanta senior citizens received packaged and prepared meals and visitations from Chamber members through **Senior Connections Meals on Wheels Program** in metro Atlanta.



With supplies donated by **Keep DeKalb Beautiful** and **Reliable Restoration**, you joined over 150+ community volunteers in a **service project to beautify the grounds and property** of DeKalb County's **McNair High School.**



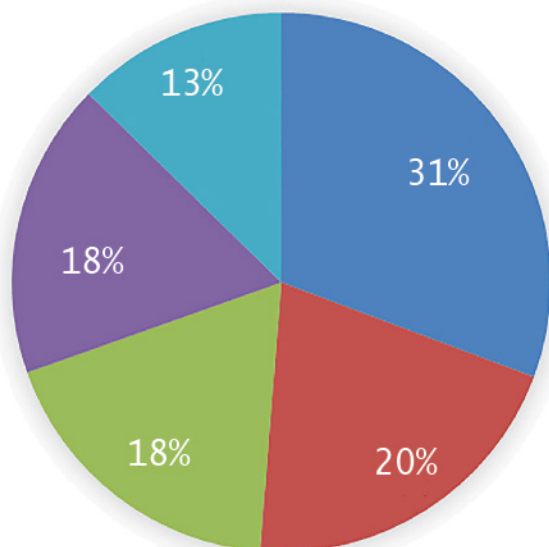
25 local children and seniors were presented with gifts from the Salvation Army's **Angel Tree** program.

Membership

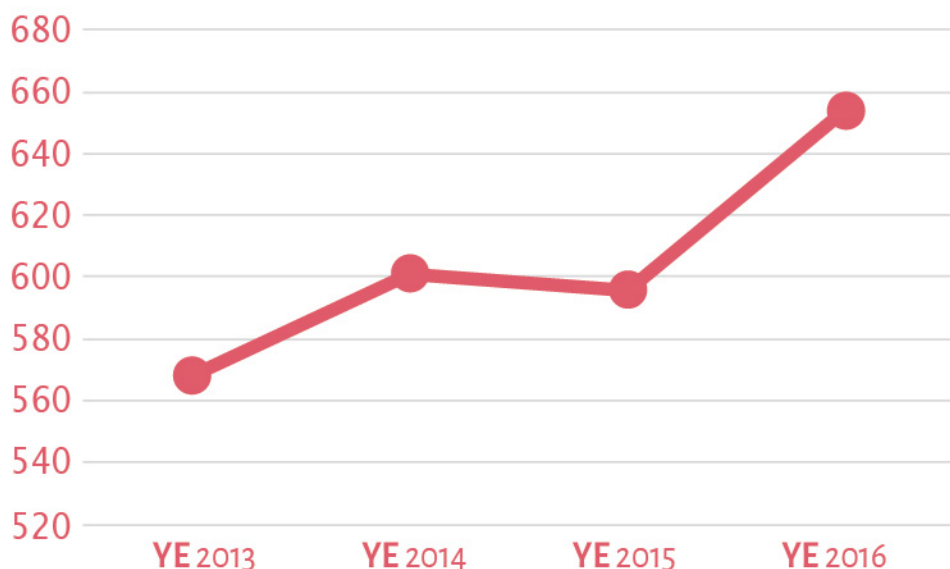
The DeKalb Chamber was created and is guided by its members. In 2016, the Chamber continued its growth of the past several years by adding 118 new members. Their investment gained them access to networking, exposure, marketing, community engagement, and business opportunities. Like members already established, these members are dedicated to growing business in DeKalb and metro Atlanta. We are happy to be a Chamber large enough to serve you and small enough to know you.

Top Five Member Sectors

- Business & Professional Services
- Finance & Insurance
- Community & Government
- Building & Engineering
- Healthcare & Wellness



Membership Growth



Navigating your DeKalb Chamber Membership

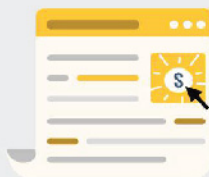


Want to Join?

Contact Rick Young
ryoung@dekalbchamber.org



Discuss Benefits
Save on services



Attend a free Event

Breakfast Club or
Business AfterHours



Create a membership
Profile

**Pay Investment &
Sign up for our
monthly newsletter**



Attend New Member
Orientation Luncheon

**Join a
committee and
start to connect**



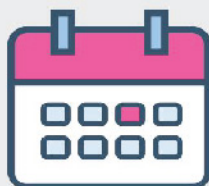
Leverage Chamber
Alliance Partners
use your benefits
to **GROW your
business**



Get Social



MARK YOUR CALENDARS
for Special Business
Programs be a SPONSOR



Stay Connected



**Watch your
Business
THRIVE**



Social Media

At DeKalb Chamber, we pride ourselves for being one of the most social media savvy chambers of commerce in the metro Atlanta region. Social media is an important form of communication we use to engage with our members. In 2016, we increased our social media presence and engaged thousands of people.



1,417

Likes

17% increase
in new likes



5,933

Followers

7% increase in
New Followers



244

Followers

210

New

Followers



555

Members

6% Increase in
New Members



2,355

Subscribers

11% Increase in
New
Subscriptions

Investors of Distinction

For many years, DeKalb Chamber has attracted major companies that are head-quartered or do business in DeKalb. These organizations are critical to our success and make up our Investors of Distinction which recognizes influential businesses that give a significant dollar investment. This collective group works together to position DeKalb Chamber as a local, regional and national leader in business.

ALSTON
+ BIRD L.L.P.



at&t



Delta
Community
CREDIT UNION

Coca-Cola



DeKalb
Medical
With You all the way.



Georgia
Power

GAS
SOUTH



KAISER PERMANENTE®



Georgia-Pacific



OglethorpePower



The
CHAMPION
Newspaper

Top Investors

AECOM Technical Services	Georgia Piedmont Technical College
Alston & Bird LLP	Georgia Power
Arcadis	Goodwill of North Georgia, Inc
Atkins Global	Google
Atlanta Evergreen Marriott Conference Resort	Greenberg Traurig LLP
Atlanta Gas Light Company	Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home
AT&T	Grice Consulting Group
Branch Banking & Trust Co. (BB&T)	Hartsfield Jackson International Airport
Brown and Caldwell	HDR, Inc.
CATMEDIA	Integral Gude
CDC Federal Credit Union	Jacobs
CH2M Hill	Kaiser Permanente
Chase Bank	MARTA
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	McBride Research Labs
Citizens Trust Bank	Mercedes Benz of Buckhead
Coca-Cola Enterprises	Morris, Manning & Martin LLP
Comcast	National Business Technologies
CERM	Oglethorpe Power
Courtyard by Marriott Atlanta Decatur Downtown	Onyx MS Group
Emory University	PRIME Business Advisors
Enterprise Holdings	Publix Super Markets Incorporated
Decide DeKalb Development Authority	SAM'S CLUB #6409
DeKalb County Government	Selig Enterprises, Inc.
DeKalb County School District	Silverman Construction PM
DeKalb Medical	Southern Company Gas (formally AGL)
Delta Community Credit Union	Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP
Discover DeKalb	State Farm Insurance Companies (Corporate)
Edward Jones Investments	Stone Mountain Park - Silver Dollar City
EGM Services, Inc.	SunTrust Bank
Emory University	Taziki's Mediterranean Cafe
Enterprise Holdings	The Champion Newspaper
Fifth Third Bank	The Private Bank
Georgia Charter Schools Association	Wells Fargo
Georgia-Pacific	Zaxby's (McDreams Enterprises, Inc.)

Welcome to DeKalb!

We are here to help your business thrive!

Meet the Chamber Staff



**Proudly serving DeKalb County businesses
and the community since 1938!**



125 Clairemont Avenue
Suite 235
Decatur, GA 30030

404-378-8000
info@dekalbchamber.org
www.dekalbchamber.org



404.378.8000

The mission of DeKalb Chamber is to be the catalyst that attracts, supports, and advances business interest in DeKalb County and the metro Atlanta region.

2017 Priority Goals for DeKalb Chamber of Commerce

With the support of the DeKalb Chamber Board of Directors and community partners, we have defined our priority goals for 2017. These goals will help us make an impact to our members and the business community, and align our work to advance our mission.

- **Increase** visibility of DeKalb Chamber's work in the community
- **Define** DeKalb Chamber as the resource portal for business information and connection
- **Advocate** for a business-friendly environment in DeKalb County and the metro Atlanta region
- **Create** an inviting environment that supports business expansion and growth of new entrepreneurs



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Become a member
- Join a committee
- Look for opportunities to sponsor
- Donate to the DeKalb Chamber Foundation

Mural depicting DeKalb County landmarks created by students from The Art Institute of Atlanta—Decatur Campus, May 2015.