



## Industrial park

Development of the East Winthrop Avenue entrance to Entrepreneur Park is continuing. Funds for the project were provided through a \$99,000 USDA Rural Development grant received by the Jenkins County Development Authority (JCDA) in March 2009. The industrial park is a 97 acre site purchased by the JCDA with the assistance of OneGeorgia funds and is located off Georgia Hwy. 21. (Staff photo by Deborah Bennett)

## GSU releases economic impact numbers

Georgia Southern University (GSU) had a total economic impact of \$795.3 million on nine counties in southeast Georgia during the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

The University's Economic Impact Report shows GSU brought an increased amount of revenue and jobs to the region, growing its economic impact by more than 13.5 percent over the previous year.

"We are proud that even during these very difficult economic times, GSU can have such a positive financial impact on our community," said Brooks Keel, president of GSU. "This is the fourth year in a row that the University has contributed more than \$700 million to the local economy totaling nearly \$3 billion in just four years. The growth of the University has led to continued growth in the region and it translates into

a positive bottom line for businesses throughout the region."

The report, compiled by the University's Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development, analyzes Georgia Southern's economic impact on Statesboro and Bulloch County, as well as Chatham, Effingham, Bryan, Candler, Emanuel, Evans, Jenkins and Screven counties. The report shows the largest increase during the last year was in student spending. The University's enrollment increased to more than 19-thousand students and those students spent an estimated \$301.8 million in fiscal year 2009-2010, which was a seven percent increase over last year.

Student spending accounted for approximately 41.3 percent of the University's direct economic impact on the region. The study

showed students spent \$65.5 million on off-campus housing, \$36.6 million on food services and \$49.9 million on entertainment.

The number of jobs impacted by the University also increased. According to the Georgia Department of Labor, GSU is the largest employer in Statesboro and Bulloch County and among the top five employers in the state's coastal region. But the employment impact reached beyond University employees. It includes those who have a job at other businesses because of the University's economic activities and student and employee spending. The report says the University's total impact on employment was 9,206 jobs during the fiscal year.

Researchers point out that the study is a conservative estimate

of the University's overall economic impact because it does not take into account money spent by people traveling to the area for athletic events, student orientation, or conferences held at the University. It also does not factor in the growing number of research dollars flowing through the University.

GSU, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University, offers 114 degree programs serving more than 19,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. The University, one of Georgia's largest, is a top choice of Georgia's HOPE scholars and is recognized for its student-centered approach to education. Visit: [www.georgiasouthern.edu](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu).

## Georgia receives Race to Top education grant

Governor Sonny Perdue recently announced that Georgia was selected as a winner by the U.S. Department of Education for the second round of "Race to the Top" grants. The state is projected to receive \$400 million over four years to implement its plan.

"While this has seemed more like a marathon at times, now the real race begins," said Governor Perdue. "I want to thank our Race to the Top teams, including teachers, principals, superintendents and other education professionals, for their hard work in preparing a great application. This is truly a unique opportunity to implement a Georgia-created plan that will accelerate our work in improving student achievement."

Several weeks ago, a team of five Georgia education professionals traveled to Washington, D.C. to present Georgia's application to a five-person panel of evaluators. State Board of Education Chair Wanda Barrs, State Superintendent of Schools Brad Bryant, Gwinnett County Public Schools Superintendent Alvin Wilbanks, Governor Perdue's Director of Policy Erin Hames and Governor's Office of Student Achievement Executive Director Kathleen Mathers made up the Georgia team.

The Race to the Top fund is a \$4 billion grant opportunity provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) to support new approaches to improve schools. The fund is available in the form of competitive grants to encourage and reward states that are creating conditions for education innovation and reform, specifically implementing ambitious plans in four education reform areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and

principals about how they can improve instruction;

- Recruiting, preparing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

"I am so pleased that Georgia has been named a winner of Race to the Top," said Superintendent Bryant. "Going for Race to the Top has never been about just the money, but more about further development of our foundation to drive increased student achievement. But now that we have the additional resources, we can put an even greater focus on implementing that foundation for the benefit of Georgia's students."

Georgia's application was prepared through a partnership between the Governor's Office, the Office of Student Achievement, the Georgia Department of Education and education stakeholders. Four working groups and a fifth critical feedback team consisting of teachers, principals, superintendents, higher education faculty, non-profit and informal education organizations, state policy makers, and members of the business and philanthropic communities developed the ideas for inclusion in the state's application.

Recommendations focus on strengthening traditional and alternative preparation programs for teachers and leaders, supporting teachers more effectively in the classroom, evaluat-

ing teachers and leaders with consistent and objective criteria that inform instruction, and rewarding great teachers and leaders with performance-based salary increases.

The application also calls for Georgia to adopt and implement common curricular standards and internationally-benchmarked assessments that indicate Georgia's ability to compete within a globally-connected economy. The State Board of Education adopted these standards in July.

Twenty-six local school districts have signed on to partner with the state in implementing Georgia's Race to the Top plan. These districts, which make up 41 percent of public school students in Georgia, include: Atlanta, Ben Hill, Bibb, Burke, Carrolton, Chatham, Cherokee, Clayton, Dade, DeKalb, Dougherty, Gainesville, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Jones, Meriwether, Muscogee, Peach, Pulaski, Rabun, Richmond, Rockdale, Spalding, Valdosta and White. The participating districts include 46 percent of Georgia's students in poverty, 53 percent of Georgia's African American students, 48 percent of Hispanics and 68 percent of the state's lowest achieving schools.

Georgia added three school districts, Dade, Peach and Pulaski, to the 23 districts that applied in the first round as part of its Phase II application. The three new districts were chosen to align federal School Improve-

ment Grants with Race to the Top.

The state will work closely with these systems to implement the ideas contained in the application. Fifty percent of the funds awarded to Georgia will be distributed to the local partners to meaningfully enact the Race to the Top reforms. The state will study the effectiveness of these practices to identify and scale up those that prove to be effective.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation selected 15 states, including Georgia, to benefit from technical assistance for Race to the Top application development. The states were selected based on how well poised they are to win Race to the Top based on progress in education policy and reform. Georgia partnered with The Parthenon Group, a consulting firm based in Boston, which specializes in part in education reform.

## Job Fair to be held Sept. 22

The Georgia Department of Labor will sponsor a Job Fair 10 a.m. until noon, Wednesday, Sept. 22, at the Jenkins County Agriculture Center, 434 Barney Avenue.

Those attending should bring resumes, picture ID, Social Security Card, pen/pencil, smiles and professional attire.

Employers will be accepting applications.

All job seekers are welcome to attend. Remember, your appearance is important!

## PRAY THE GOSPEL By Praying The Rosary

Seeking people in Millen or surrounding area interested in starting a group to Pray The Rosary Together or anyone who would care to learn how to Pray The Rosary.

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### NURSERY CARE SPECIALIST NEEDED

The Millen United Methodist Church is seeking qualified person to fill the part-time position of Nursery Care Specialist on Sunday mornings and other specified times. If interested, please contact Rich Odom, PPR Chair @ 478-299-5494 to set up interview. Background check required.

Over 50 Attractions!

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SEPT. 18 THRU NOV. 7

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**OPENING WEEKEND**  
Military and Service Personnel weekend,  
Live broadcast from HD98.3 from 11 AM-1 PM  
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