



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BRIEFING BOOK**

August 18, 2021

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD BOOK

FISCAL YEAR 2021, QUARTER 4

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GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FISCAL YEAR 2021 FOURTH QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS

Georgia's economic development momentum is accelerating, with positive trends across a variety of indicators. The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) continues to harness state assets and apply our knowledge of changing trends and expertise across the Department to provide services to communities across the state, while supporting businesses and attracting new industries.

From international engagement to creative industries to tourism and trade, the Department's seamless and innovative services are making a positive difference in the lives of Georgians.

Georgia set new records for jobs and investments through economic development projects in the state during fiscal year 2021. Investments increased by 46%, while job creation increased 5% above prior state economic development records. New investments totaled \$10.97 billion, and 33,439 jobs were created in the state through 379 projects supported by GDEcD's Global Commerce division between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.

Georgia Council for the Arts continues to support organizations and artists of all ages. The Poet Laureate's Prize was announced for Georgia students, while a total of 266 grants totaling \$2 million were announced for Bridge, Project, and Arts Education grants to provide funding to a variety of organizations and educational programs across the state. The grants will also serve to bring more Georgians back to work as they aid our economy and contribute to the vibrancy of our state.

The six specialized **Center of Innovation** teams continue to help Georgia businesses "clear the path" to innovation and growth through expert advice and navigation to the right resources. In addition to developing ecosystems from energy to vertical farming, this division is a critical part of our relationship approach to economic development. Throughout the year, GDEcD participates in the international Regional Leaders Summit (RLS), and in June, COI represented Georgia during meetings of the RLS-Sciences Network. Center of Innovation's Aerospace team has also continued working closely with state partners to provide resources and support to companies working towards Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC), which is now required for U.S. Department of Defense contractors.

The **Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office** is celebrating a record-breaking 2021 fiscal year, with more than \$4 billion in direct spending by productions in the state. This comes in more than \$1 billion higher than the previous record year in 2019. Available stage space continues to grow, along with education opportunities for Georgians seeking to work in the industry.

Our **Global Commerce** division remains extremely busy with high interest from companies in Georgia seeking to locate or grow in the state. The electric vehicle and mobility industry is a growing sector in the state as automotive companies continue their rapid shift toward electric. In addition to automotive, growth continues statewide in data centers; manufacturing and food processing; software/technology and health IT; and logistics and distribution.

The **International Trade** team and 12 international offices are supporting Georgia business in reaching new markets despite the global pandemic. The team participated in their first in-person international trade show during the quarter, co-exhibiting with five Georgia companies. Further, Deputy Commissioner for International Trade Mary Waters is the new President of State International Development Organizations (SIDO), the premier U.S. organization dedicated to supporting state international trade agencies focused exclusively on state international trade development.

As the state's marketing organization and connection to the Georgia-based Consular Corps, the **Marketing, Communications, & International Engagement** division is telling Georgia's success stories to state and global audiences. The entire team supported projects and messaging for the department and partners, including Georgia Made manufacturers and more. Our team of two graphic designers creates the visual identity for the Georgia Department of Economic Development, showing off a smooth, professional design that reflects the Department's collaborative and resourceful culture. In addition to brochures, logos, images for websites and social media, graphics for trade show booths, and creative ideas and direction for dozens of print each week, the team incorporates subtle cues around company culture and mission into RFP responses for the Global Commerce team.

To further restore and bolster our economy, the **Explore Georgia** team continues to position Georgia as a tourist destination for travelers from Georgia and beyond. The August Board meeting in Blue Ridge, Georgia, will demonstrate tourism success during the pandemic and highlight state and local efforts that have helped the industry's recovery in the state.

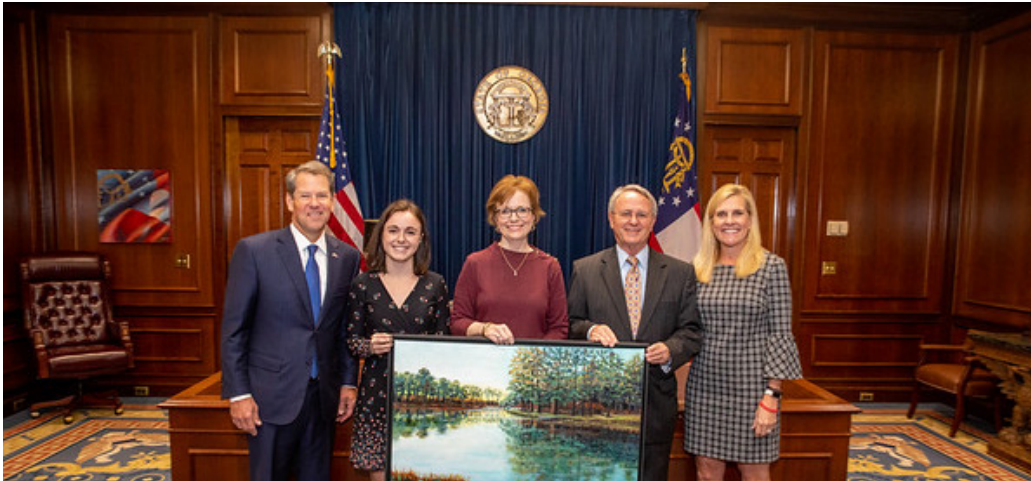
Looking ahead, as global projections increase almost daily for the electric mobility transition, Governor Brian P. Kemp announced a statewide initiative in July to position Georgia as a leader of industry acceleration and create jobs of the future. Driven by GDEcD, the **Electric Mobility and Innovation Alliance (EMIA)** includes partners from the private and public sectors ranging from government, industry, electric utilities, education, nonprofits, and other stakeholders focused on advancing Georgia's role in developing the electric mobility industry and its supply chain. In conjunction with the initiative, GDEcD has launched new website assets at: georgia.org/mobility.

In addition, Georgia maintains the following top rankings:

- [Eighteen companies in Fortune 500/1000 Rankings](#), with Georgia-based Global Payments entering for first time. Thirty-three companies are ranked in the Fortune 1000.
- [No. 1 Business Climate](#) for a record-setting eighth year by Site Selection
- ["Top State for Doing Business"](#) for the seventh consecutive year by Area Development
- Ranked among ["Top Ten" Exporting States](#) in 2020, according to U.S. Census Bureau
- ["E Star Award" for Export Services](#) for an unprecedented fourth year from U.S. Department of Commerce
- [No. 1 State for Aerospace Manufacturing Attractiveness](#) by Pricewaterhouse (PwC)
- [No. 1 Tech Hub](#), Atlanta

Georgia begins fiscal year 2022 with a diverse mix of elements for continued success, and the highlights in the next pages provide more snapshots into the work of each division of GDEcD.

To follow GDEcD's work between board meetings, the Department maintains a comprehensive list of digital resources with links to our divisions' social media channels, key web pages, and e-newsletters at: georgia.org/online-resources.



Governor and First Lady Kemp congratulate Pam Thompson and family of Augusta, whose oil on canvas, "Sutton's Pond House, Irwin County," was featured in the northeast Georgia collection previously on display as part of the "Art of Georgia" collection. GCA is in the process of selecting new art for the program, featuring artists from southwest Georgia.

DIVISION PROFILE

Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) empowers the arts industry in Georgia and artists around the state to cultivate healthy, vibrant communities that are rich in civic participation, cultural experiences, and economic prosperity. As a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Georgia Council for the Arts provides grant funding, programs and services statewide that support this vital industry, preserve our cultural heritage, and create increased access to high quality arts experiences.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Poet Laureate's Prize

The Poet Laureate's Prize is an original poetry contest for high school students. The poems are adjudicated by the Georgia Poet Laureate Chelsea Rathburn, who selected a winner and four finalists. The winner is Aanika Eragam, who is in 11th grade at Milton High School in Milton, Georgia.

2. New staff member

Katie Domurat will serve as Grants and Programs Manager, and she will manage the Project, Arts Education, and Vibrant Communities Grants while also taking on the Art of Georgia, State Art Collection, and Arts Education programs. Katie is originally from Richmond, Virginia, but has called Atlanta home for nearly five years. She studied Art History and Arts Management for her undergraduate work at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, and received her MA in History of the Decorative Arts from the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. She has previously worked in art and cultural institutions in Washington, D.C.; Karlsruhe, Germany; Richmond, Virginia; and Atlanta.

By the Numbers

Grants:

274 grant applications

76 panelists reviewed through

14 panels

Poet Laureate's Prize:

336 Georgia high school students submitted entries for the 2021 Poet Laureate's Prize, representing

80 high schools in

42 counties

American Rescue Plan (ARP):

\$904,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts as part of ARP allocations. The funds were used to distribute to arts organizations who applied to GCA for general operating support. The money can be used to support salaries as well as facility expenses for the many organizations that have been closed for more than a year.

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3. Art of Georgia

GCA has opened up another round of the Art of Georgia after pausing for more than a year due to COVID-19. The Art of Georgia program features work by working Georgia artists and is displayed in the Governor's Office at the Capitol as well as in the Governor's Mansion. This round will feature artists from southwest Georgia. The deadline to submit applications was July 9.

4. Grant panel reviews completed

GCA completed the grant panel review process for fiscal year 2022. Bridge, Project, and Arts Education Grants. A total of 266 grants were [announced on July 7](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Governor's Awards**

Nominations opened in July for the Governor's Awards in the Arts and Humanities. These annual awards are presented along with the Governor's Office and Georgia Humanities. Those selected will be honored in a ceremony at the Capitol in the fall.

- **Vibrant Communities & Cultural Facilities Grants**

The guidelines for these grant programs will be available in July, with a deadline at the end of August. Vibrant Communities Grants support arts programs in counties in which no organization received a Bridge, Project, or Arts Education Grant for fiscal year 2022. Cultural Facilities Grants support the renovation, restoration, preservation, or acquisition of an arts facility.

- **Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Annual Conference**

Executive Director Tina Lilly is presenting a session on the Arts and Tourism at the GMA Annual Conference in August.



Center of Innovation first introduced Pete's, an indoor agriculture/vertical farming grower, to Georgia in 2017. The state announced its location in Peach County, and a groundbreaking was held for the new Georgia Grown company during the fourth quarter of FY21.

By the Numbers

773

COI engagements with clients across all 12 regions of the state

517

Engagements with industry partners

112

Engagements linked to economic development recruitment, expansion, or other activity within the state

DIVISION PROFILE

Exclusive to Georgia, the Center of Innovation help Georgia businesses “clear the path” to innovation and growth through expert advice and navigation to the right resources.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Regional Leaders Summit Sciences Virtual Conference

Members of the Center of Innovation team represented the State of Georgia and presented in the Regional Leaders Summit Sciences Virtual Conference in June. The Regional Leaders Summit – Sciences Network is made up of industry and research experts across the regions of Québec, Canada; São Paulo, Brazil; Bavaria, Germany; Upper Austria, Austria; Western Cape, South Africa; and Shandong, China. Georgia was well represented throughout the five-day conference with speaker presentations including the Center of Innovation’s Costas Simoglou, director of energy technology, and Glen Whitley, director of information technology. In addition, representatives from Georgia Tech and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided updates on initiatives and projects in the state.

2. CMMC Summit

The Center of Innovation’s Aerospace team in partnership with the Technology Association of Georgia hosted the CMMC Summit, which provided Georgia companies resources and support as they work toward the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) that is now required for U.S. Department of Defense contractors. In total, close to 150 registered for the event, which featured speakers from Georgia companies Win-Tech, Top Flight, and Collins Manufacturing, who shared their own business experiences. In addition, the University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center provided a training session to prepare companies for certification.

3. Limited-time Cybersecurity Grant

To further support Georgia’s defense contractors, the Center of Innovation’s Aerospace team announced in June a limited-time cybersecurity grant opportunity available for small and mid-sized defense contractors in the state. The grant will assist companies with meeting new cybersecurity compliance measures now required by the U.S. Department of Defense.

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4. Indoor agriculture/vertical farming

The Center of Innovation continues to support the state's indoor agriculture/vertical farming industry. In April, Pete's Indoor Greens announced a new \$18 million facility in Peach County that will grow fresh greens to satisfy their retail and foodservice partners' needs. The Center of Innovation first introduced Pete's to Georgia in 2017.

5. German virtual trade mission

The Center of Innovation's Manufacturing team alongside GDEC's Europe office and the Existing Industry and Regional Recruitment team participated in a virtual trade mission hosted by the German government in late June. This mission focused on helping German companies from the textile industry find business partners in the fields of smart, technical, and home textiles. The Center team was instrumental in supporting Georgia's participation in the event, providing connections to Takedown Sportswear and faculty from the University of Georgia's Advanced Functional Fabrics of America group.

6. PPE production support & coverage

Many Georgia companies pivoted to producing PPE during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Center of Innovation's Manufacturing team was one of the key resources to help these businesses. Online publication [Hypepotamus](#) chronicled some of these companies and their latest updates in an article posted in May. Additionally, the Center's support for PPE production was also highlighted in an article from [Industry Today](#), which credited the Center of Innovation and the state's Georgia Made program in the success of Georgia manufacturers pivoting to PPE.



Marvel Studios' "The Falcon and The Winter Soldier" was one of the many Georgia-lensed productions to earn a 2021 Emmy® Award nomination. Filming occurred in multiple locations around metro Atlanta.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office develops the state's film, television, & commercial production industries by marketing the state to production companies; location scouting; and coordinating the filming needs of companies with other state agencies, local governments, and citizens. The office actively works to develop the industry's infrastructure and workforce, certifies projects under the *Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act*, and oversees the Camera Ready community program to engage municipalities throughout Georgia.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Record-breaking investment

In mid-July, Governor Kemp announced record-breaking fiscal year 2021 film numbers, with more than \$4 billion in direct spending in the state, compared to \$2.2 billion in FY20. These numbers are a result of Georgia being the first to offer set safety protocols ([The COVID-19 Best Practices for Film & Television](#)), and by allowing productions to determine how to get back to work quickly and safely. Because other markets were closed during the pandemic, Georgia was able to attract additional projects, and budgets were higher than normal due to the need for a larger footprint, more personnel, additional cleaning, and COVID safety precautions.

2. SCAD developments

On the heels of Variety naming the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) as one of the top film schools in the world in April, SCAD also announced an expansion of the university's film and digital media studios. The expansion of the 10.9-acre Savannah Film Studios will include a Hollywood-style film backlot, an XR stage, new soundstages and more. Phase one of the expansion is expected to be complete in fall 2021, and two other phases will be complete by 2023.

3. Upcoming releases

Numerous Georgia-lensed projects have recently been released or are on their way to release. Amazon Prime released the Chris Pratt feature "The Tomorrow War" July 2, the Netflix film trilogy "Fear Street" has been released, and on July 30, the

By the Numbers

\$4 billion in direct spend during FY21

366 productions included:

21 feature films

45 independent films

222 TV and episodic productions

57 commercials, and
21 music videos.

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Dwayne Johnson/Emily Blunt project “Jungle Cruise” was released by Disney. On August 6, Suicide Squad makes its debut, and the Broadway hit “Dear Evan Hansen” will be out on September 24.

4. Emmy Awards

Nominations for the 73rd Emmy® Awards were announced in mid-July, with multiple nominations for Georgia-lensed shows including “WandaVision” (23), “Lovecraft Country” (18), “The Underground Railroad,” (7) and “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” (5). Highlights include “Lovecraft Country” for Outstanding Drama Series, “Cobra Kai” for Outstanding Comedy Series, “The Underground Railroad” for Outstanding Limited or Anthology Series, and “Dolly Parton’s Christmas on the Square” for Outstanding Television Movie. Among those in contention for acting awards are Jurnee Smollett, Jonathan Majors, Aunjanue Ellis, Michael K. Williams and Courtney B. Vance (“Lovecraft Country”), Cynthia Erivo (“Genius: Aretha”), Elizabeth Olsen, Paul Bettany and Kathryn Hahn (“WandaVision”), and Don Cheadle (“The Falcon and the Winter Soldier”).

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Emmy® Awards**

The 73rd Emmy Awards will include 62 nominations for Georgia-lensed features. The Emmys will air live on CBS Sunday, September 19, at 8 p.m. EST.



As the automotive industry rapidly shifts to electric vehicles, Georgia is focused on growing the electric mobility ecosystem in the state and strengthening Georgia's position in electrification-related manufacturing and innovation.

DIVISION PROFILE

The Global Commerce division seeks to increase jobs and investment through locating and expanding businesses, as well as growing small businesses. The Global Commerce division includes statewide and existing industry project teams, small business, and international representatives in strategic regions around the world.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. New megasite

On May 25, Governor Kemp announced the authorization of the purchase of the [Bryan County Megasite](#), a 2,284-acre economic development site. The investment will occur in partnership between the State of Georgia and the Savannah Harbor-Interstate 16 Corridor Joint Development Authority (JDA). The strategic purchase of the Bryan County Megasite is the largest in state history. The Bryan County Megasite is adjacent to Interstate 16, with immediate access from I-95 and I-16 to 250 major metro areas, including Atlanta, Birmingham, Charlotte, Memphis, and Orlando. It is also less than 30 miles from the Port of Savannah, the single-largest and fastest-growing container terminal in the U.S., with two Class I rail facilities on-site.

2. Mobility developments

As Georgia's electric mobility ecosystem grows, two more projects were announced. [Plug Energy](#), a leading global provider of hydrogen solutions, will invest \$84 million in opening a green hydrogen fuel production plant in Camden County. [Heliox](#), a global leader in producing e-mobility charging systems, will establish their North American headquarters in Atlanta, creating more than 70 clean-energy jobs. SK Innovation supplier [Duckyang](#), an electric mobility parts supplier of automotive battery modules and energy storage systems to SK Battery America (SKBA), will invest \$10 million and create 285 jobs in opening its first U.S. manufacturing facility in Jackson County.

By the Numbers

During Q4:

118 companies expanded or created new operations
9,000 new jobs
\$2.1 billion in investment.

Existing industry expansions:

\$1.5 billion investment and almost

4,300 jobs.

New locations:

\$659 million investment
4,700 new jobs

25% of jobs created were in manufacturing, the state's top job-creation sector.

18% of jobs created were in logistics and distribution projects, the second-highest job creating sector.

12% of jobs were created in the growing sector of food processing.

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3. Small Business ROCK STARS

Six winners of the 2021 class of [Small Business ROCK STARS](#) were announced on May 3 as part of the state's Small Business Week. Winners included: Mama Geraldine's (Jasper), Wander North Georgia (Clayton), Skyfire Consulting (Marietta), Callaway Blue (Hamilton), Vidalia Apicultural Services & Bee Co. (Lyons), and Pretoria Fields (Albany). Each of these companies was highlighted with a press release, success stories, social media posts, and other accompanying materials. They also received a trophy for display.

4. Project Announcements

During the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021, west Georgia state-announced project locations or expansions included Troup and Coweta counties. In middle Georgia, a new location was welcomed in Peach County, while Houston County announced the expansion of Interfor's sawmill business. Across southern and southeast Georgia, the state announced projects in Lowndes, Bacon, Wayne, Toombs, and Lee counties. On the coast, economic development projects were announced in Chatham and Camden counties. In the northern portion of the state, Bartow, Hall, and Jackson counties welcomed new and expanding locations, in addition to the projects locating in or expanding throughout metro Atlanta in Fulton, Clayton, Gwinnett counties and others. These included Georgia Made-certified comfort technology company [Purple Innovation](#) in Henry County, who, on the heels of their initial decision in 2020 to open a Georgia manufacturing facility, has now announced additional new jobs across production, fulfillment, customer care, and other areas of the business. When the expansion is complete, the company will employ more than 800 Georgians.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Electric Cities of Georgia Bus Tour**

Electric Cities of Georgia (ECG) is hosting a bus tour for project managers on August 18-19. The ECG team will highlight seven of their communities during this tour, including Barnesville, Fort Valley, Forsyth, Hampton, Griffin, Jackson, and Thomaston.

- **GEDA Annual Conference**

The Georgia Economic Developers Association (GEDA) Annual Conference will take place September 15-17 in Savannah. Before the conference, a group of project managers will visit Toombs County for a community tour.

- **Small Business Webinar**

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's small business team will be hosting the third in a series of informational webinars with state and business partners at 10:00 a.m. on August 31. During this meeting, participants will hear from three business owners about starting and running a successful women-owned business. Registration is available [online](#).



Georgia co-exhibited at Arab Health 2021, in Dubai, UAE. This was the first in-person international trade show for GDEcD since the onset of the pandemic.

By the Numbers

5,191
Trade leads developed

880
Work orders completed

204
Export successes supported

221
Georgia businesses assisted by International Reps

DIVISION PROFILE

GDEcD’s nationally recognized International Trade Division works to bolster Georgia exports and brand the state as a competitive source of quality products and services. The division includes International Representatives located in 12 strategic global markets and assists Georgia companies expand their sales worldwide. The Trade division provides Georgia businesses with the Global Insight and Global Connections they need to successfully diversify their international customer base.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Arab Health

GDEcD’s Trade Division coordinated and co-exhibited with five Georgia companies at the 2021 Arab Health show in Dubai, UAE. This was the first in-person international trade show for GDEcD since the onset of the pandemic. As the largest healthcare exposition in the Middle East, Arab Health serves as a key entry point for Georgia health care and life science companies looking to grow their sales in the region. Companies that exhibited in the GDEcD booth reported more than 130 qualified leads developed at the show with anticipated deals valued at more than \$3 million. GDEcD has plans to coordinate a booth in January 2022, when Arab Health will return to its normal schedule.

2. SEUS CP

On May 11, 2021, GDEcD’s International Trade division hosted the Southeastern U.S. and Canadian Provinces Alliance (SEUS CP) procurement webinar featuring Chief Procurement officers from Delta Air Lines, Southern Company/Georgia Power, NCR, and the Georgia Ports Authority. The goal of the event was to encourage procurement and supplier opportunities for small businesses from throughout the SEUS-CP Alliance. More than 150 participants from across six southeastern U.S. states and six Canadian provinces joined the virtual event to learn about opportunities and the distinct processes to become a supplier to Georgia’s participating corporations. The Southeast U.S.-Canadian Provinces (SEUS-CP) Alliance, established in 2007, enhances commercial ties, promotes two-way trade, and encourages technological exchanges between the member states and Canadian provinces. Georgia is currently making plans to host the annual in-person conference in Savannah in June 2022.

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3. Go Global Georgia

Approximately \$146K of Georgia's \$162K U.S. Small Business Administration award has been earmarked for grants to Georgia small business exporters. Out of 115 applications received, 47 businesses have been approved for trade activities that include trade show costs, international travel expenses, design and translation of marketing materials and website globalization. The diverse pool of grant recipients from across the state includes rural, veteran-owned, women-owned and minority-owned awardees. The division's effort to promote and recruit grant applicants is ongoing and includes a LinkedIn awareness campaign targeting C-Suite executives of small business manufacturers; blogs; personal outreach by Georgia's international trade managers; and partnering with other state and federal partners. With the activity and success of the current grant initiative, the trade division submitted a second federal grant application at the end of May to ensure that Georgia companies receive available federal funds allowing them to accelerate their market expansion, grow their business, and remain competitive.

4. Mary Waters named SIDO President

GDEcD is proud to announce that [Mary Waters](#) was named the new President of [State International Development Organizations \(SIDO\)](#), the premier U.S. organization dedicated to supporting state international trade agencies focused exclusively on state international trade development. SIDO members contribute specialized expertise, information, and resources to support the overall goal of promoting state international trade programs to support U.S. exporters and increase U.S. exports.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Money20/20 Europe**

The trade division is coordinating and co-exhibiting at Money20/20 Europe conference September 21-23, 2021, marking the return of Europe's leading show for the FinTech industry after nearly two years. Money20/20 Europe serves as the key venue for Georgia's financial services companies to seize international business opportunities and access the world's FinTech ecosystem all in one place. Georgia's presence at Money20/20 builds upon Georgia's robust financial services industry that exported more than \$3.3 billion in 2020 and is an opportunity to connect innovative Georgia companies with the latest developments and top FinTech industry players.

- **Anuga 2021**

Georgia is planning to participate at Anuga 2021, one of the world's leading food and beverage industry events, to be held in Cologne, Germany, from October 9-13, 2021. During the COVID-19 pandemic, agricultural exports have remained comparatively strong, and Georgia exporters have been particularly resilient with Georgia ranking No. 9 in the nation for agricultural exports in 2020. At Anuga (as with other international trade shows), the Trade division helps companies navigate the new COVID related policies and protocol (such as compliant walk-up stations with plexi-screens replacing traditional booths, allowing for requisite distancing while maintaining face-to-face interaction). There has been a great deal of interest in the show, and recruitment for company participation in the Georgia, USA booth is currently underway.

- **International Representative Spotlights**

Over the next year, the Trade division will be spotlighting Georgia's international trade representatives who support Georgia exporters located in 12 strategic markets around the world (Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Peru, and the United Kingdom) in its monthly newsletter this year that has a distribution of more than 5,000 contacts. From language barriers to different cultural and customer expectations, doing business in a new country can be challenging. This series promises to introduce and personalize Georgia exporters to "their" international trade reps to learn about their experiences, and the unique ways they can support Georgia exporters in international markets. To learn more about Korea's trade representatives, Peter Underwood and Jacob Lee, [click here](#).



An updated brochure demonstrating the strength of the food processing industry was printed in May, highlighting the traditions, innovation, and logistics that contribute to the industry's success in Georgia.

By the Numbers

#1 video: "Film/Production Changes Lives in Georgia"

12% overall increase in time spent on website.

Website visits:

23% increase from Germany

23% increase from Brazil

25% increase from Japan

Web page increases:

266% small business federal grants/loans

193% life sciences

152% film/TV cast & crew jobs & classes

Additional communications

21 e-newsletters distributed with news about GDEC divisions, initiatives

31 press releases circulated

12 blog posts on Georgia.org

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DIVISION PROFILE

The Marketing, Communications & International Engagement division manages the agency's reputation and promotes Georgia's business, tourism, arts and entertainment assets throughout the state, U.S., and world. Through the creative integration of print, digital, social media, outdoor, and broadcast channels, the division supports the department's seven operating divisions. This includes new advertising campaigns, leveraging international relations and events, the creation of sales and marketing materials, digital advertising, all internal and external communications, media outreach, overseas missions, more than a dozen social media platforms across multiple divisions, and the growth of the department's targeted websites.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. "We're Proud to be Georgia Made"

This spring, GDEC ran a small promotional campaign on LinkedIn and Facebook featuring a half-dozen Georgia Made executives. The campaign targeted owners of small- and medium-sized Georgia-based companies across six industries, including Aerospace, Automotive, Defense, Life Sciences, Manufacturing, and IT. The ads featured testimonials and photos of executives from Bridgestone Golf, Hurst Boiler, Kubota, YKK, Takeda, Faircloth, and Kia, and they articulated the value of being a Georgia Made company, while reinforcing the message that Georgia is the No. 1 state for business. The campaign garnered 3.7 million total impressions and led to 16,000 page views on Georgia.org/Georgia-made. During this period, the Georgia Made program added 16 certified companies, with many more applications submitted.

2. Drones, Honey, and IPAs: This Year's Small Business Rock Stars

In May, the marketing team supported Global Commerce as they recognized six 2021 Small Business ROCK STARS, some of the most outstanding small businesses in the state. The team created [a series of videos](#) featuring Deputy Commissioner Scott McMurray introducing and congratulating the winners, with beautiful footage from each location. The video series highlights the companies' unique and impactful contributions and demonstrate the quality and breadth of the small business community.

3. Emergency preparedness briefing for the Consular Corps

In June, the International Relations team gathered members of the Consular Corps for their first in-person meeting since the beginning of the pandemic. The team shared a brief snapshot of the state's economic development efforts, followed by an in-depth briefing by Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security on emergency and hurricane response in Georgia, as well as GEMA/HS's role in the COVID-19 mass vaccination sites. Especially as travel resumes and the 2021 hurricane season begins, emergency preparedness is a critical part of the consulates' responsibility to their communities, and this briefing provided important information and resources.

4. New industry-specific brochures

New brochures were developed for the [automotive](#) and [food processing](#) industries to keep pace with these strategic and ever-evolving industries in Georgia. These resources are available via GDEcD's website and provided to business prospects. They feature an updated layout and verbiage, as well as new statistics, partner logos, and explanations of assets to provide a concise snapshot of industry benefits in Georgia.

5. GDEcD blog highlights

During the fourth quarter, twelve blog posts were developed for the website to spotlight the diverse array of assets at GDEcD and in Georgia. A blog post focused on development in [life sciences](#) supported the annual BIO conference; monthly "Exporter Spotlights" from our International Trade division shared the stories of Georgia exporting companies and provided lessons learned, tips, and other best practices; a published column from Center of Innovation Executive Director David Nuckolls laid out Georgia's role as a hub for [artificial intelligence development](#); and another post provided an update on the 18 Georgia companies that placed on this year's annual [Fortune 500 list](#).



On May 3, Explore Georgia unveiled the 2021 Explore Georgia Official State Travel Guide and launched a new marketing campaign, *Ready. Set. Georgia.*

DIVISION PROFILE

Explore Georgia, the tourism division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, is the state's official destination marketing organization. Through its home office in Atlanta, nine visitor information centers across Georgia, and a network of tourism representatives across the globe, Explore Georgia inspires travel to and within the state through marketing programs developed and executed in partnership with the state's travel industry. The division works to grow Georgia's tourism industry that represented \$68.82 billion and supported 484,000 jobs in 2019.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Tourism recovery initiatives

Governor Brian P. Kemp, in conjunction with the state's tourism office within the Georgia Department of Economic Development, announced several new initiatives to increase visitation and support tourism recovery in the state on May 3. During a virtual event held at the Georgia Aquarium, Explore Georgia launched a new marketing campaign, "Ready. Set. Georgia.," unveiled the latest "2021 Explore Georgia Official State Travel Guide," and highlighted \$1 million in new grant and co-op opportunities for the tourism industry made possible by Governor Kemp's amended FY21 budget.

2. Tourism recovery marketing grants

Governor Kemp and Explore Georgia announced the recipients of a special round of Tourism Recovery Marketing Grants supporting marketing efforts to bolster the recovery of Georgia's tourism industry from the COVID-19 pandemic on June 2. Thirty-four destination marketing organizations in 27 counties received a combined total of nearly \$1.5 million in recovery marketing funding as part of this program. The program also includes \$500,000 in co-op matching funds, for a total of \$2 million in recovery support.

3. Record-setting website traffic continues

Explore Georgia set a new all-time record for website traffic to its official tourism website ExploreGeorgia.org in June, with more than 1.1 million sessions. This achievement marks 13 months of consecutive record-breaking website traffic for the tourism division.

By the Numbers

- Georgia gained market share in 2020 for both overnight and day domestic visitation.
 - In 2020, Georgia rose from **No. 7** to **No. 5** for domestic overnight trips volume and from **No. 8** the prior year to **No. 7** for domestic day trips volume.
- **\$2.5 billion** in Georgia travel expenditures in May, up **157%** from prior year. The highest monthly expenditure total the state had seen since the pandemic began.
- **17%** increase in Georgia's June road travel volume compared to 2020; down **6%** compared to 2019. Georgia's shutdown was not as steep or long as the nation's, so our YoY gains will likely be less substantial.

Exploregeorgia.org

- **47%** increase in page views
- **41%** increase in users
- **54%** increase in Travel Guide orders and e-views
- **841%** increase in newsletter sign-ups
- **63%** increase in out of state web traffic
- **103%** increase in web traffic from organic social posts
- **207%** increase in Things to Do in Georgia page
- **Top 5** Out of State markets:
 - Orlando
 - Tampa/St.Pete
 - Chicago
 - Charlotte
 - Miami/Ft. Lauderdale
- **2.1+M** June page views

Contact Information

- For further information or details – please contact:

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **U.S. Travel Association's ETSO:** Los Angeles, California; August 15-17
- **Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference:** Lanier Islands, Buford; August 30-September 1
- **U.S. Travel Association's IPW:** Las Vegas, Nevada; September 18-22
- **Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2021:** London, England; October 25-28
- **Travel South International Showcase:** New Orleans, Louisiana; November 30-December 3