

# Georgia<sup>®</sup> Department of Community Affairs

October 2015

## IN THE NEWS

### Q&A with the COO

*DCA's Chief Operating Officer Brian Dill talks vision and priorities, reflects on first year at DCA*



*Community Done Right success stories are a result of local governments adopting a partnership attitude with DCA and with each other and are examples to follow for all Georgia communities.*

#### REGION 2: City of Gainesville CHIP Grant partnership with Gainesville High

The City of Gainesville Community Development Housing Division, under the leadership of Housing Division Manager Chris Davis and Housing Coordinator Theresa Dyer, partnered with the Gainesville High School (GHS) Construction Technology Department last year to rebuild two homes located on Washington Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The GHS students participated in every aspect of the project and gained both real-life experience and two college credits for their work.

The City utilized funds from a Community



*Brian Dill took the reins as DCA's chief operating officer, or COO, in January 2015 as a part of Commissioner Camila Knowles' executive team. As evidenced by his snapshots (clockwise), it's been an eventful and productive year. Whether Brian is making trade missions to Asia as DCA's representative with the Georgia Department of Economic Development*

HOME Investment Program, or CHIP, grant in the rebuilding process. These grants use a portion of DCA's HOME funds to assist local governments, nonprofit organizations, and public housing authorities to address the needs of affordable housing development in their communities.

GHS school administrators and staff collected donations of beds, linens and furniture to re-furnish the interior of the homes, which are both completely ADA-compliant, including roll-in showers. Football team members and school staff helped the families get settled in their refurbished homes by doing the heavy lifting on move-in days.



*Gainesville High School students, City employees, and grateful homeowners celebrate at the ribbon cutting event for the refurbished house on MLK Boulevard.*

Students, parents and staff from GHS, as well as City of Gainesville employees, made a positive impact on the community by helping rebuild dilapidated homes and transforming them into safe, clean and more livable homes.

The Gainesville Housing Initiative was recognized in mid-October with the Neighborhood Revitalization Award at the 2015 Georgia Housing Conference in Athens for this project and many of its other efforts.

For more information on the Gainesville CHIP grant project, contact DCA Region 2 Community Services Division Representative Kathy Papa at [kathy.papa@dca.ga.gov](mailto:kathy.papa@dca.ga.gov).

*cohort; helping the country of Japan to honor Macon's International Cherry Blossom Festival founder and DCA Board member Carolyn Crayton; joining DCA's Director of Government Relations Seth Coker in casting predictions of "boy or girl" at the Commissioner's DCA baby shower; or celebrating Colquitt County's award of a \$481,000+ Community Development Block Grant in southwest Georgia, he's wasted no time in making DCA home and in leaving his stamp on the Agency. Keep reading to get to know Brian from his own perspective.*

### **How has your background prepared you to lead alongside Commissioner Knowles as the COO at DCA?**

Spending 15 years in local economic development afforded me a unique perspective on the role that statewide partners play in growing communities throughout Georgia. This perspective prepared me to be able to take a step back and look at DCA's programs and how we administer assistance with the customer, the local community, in mind.

### **In your own words, what do you think DCA's role is in serving the state of Georgia?**

I think the DCA team shines brightest by working hand-in-hand with our community stakeholders and partners. From community planning and economic development preparation to workforce housing and financing support, we serve Georgia best by providing excellent customer service. Helping all of Georgia move the needle on job creation and capacity building projects is something I think we are all proud of.

### **You are just shy of wrapping up your first year at DCA. What are some challenges you've faced as COO, and what have you learned?**

As a local economic developer and project manager, I had the luxury of working on specific issues as it related to a very specific product offering, i.e. a single community or region. The challenge of this position is changing this mindset in order to support positive change for multiple areas of the state at once. Looking at projects and initiatives from a broader perspective and with different viewpoints in mind is a great challenge and a rewarding learning experience.

### **What do you and Commissioner Knowles see as the Agency's priorities going into Year 2?**

I think our mutual affinity for capacity building in rural Georgia will continue to drive a priority focus on developing all of Georgia and seeking ways to create opportunity in areas that have a difficult time realizing success. Team building internal to the organization and customer service delivery to our external partners will continue to be priority focus areas.

### **What is one fun fact our readers should know about you?**

I received the inaugural Soul Man Music Scholarship from Irwin County High School as a part of attending the University of Georgia and being a part of the UGA Redcoat Band. David Prater, the creator of the song "Soul Man" and member of the duo of "Sam and Dave" who made the song famous, is from Ocilla - my hometown.

## DCA Georgia Dream Program borrower brings only \$3.56 to closing table



Latoya Baker, an Atlanta public school teacher, pictured right, purchased her first home this month. When Latoya made her mortgage loan application with Southeast Mortgage Branch Manager Kim Arrington, pictured left, Kim recommended that Latoya take advantage of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Georgia Dream Homeownership Program.

This DCA program provides \$7,500 in down payment assistance to Georgia teachers through its PEN down payment option. PEN provides \$7,500 toward closing costs to eligible borrowers who are employed in the fields of protection, education and healthcare. These funds are loaned to the borrower with no interest and repaid only when the home is sold, refinanced, or no longer used as the borrower's primary residence. However, a borrower must always contribute at least \$1,000 to the purchase transaction.

Utilizing an FHA loan financed by the Georgia Dream Program, Kim carefully estimated all loan costs. Latoya paid the required earnest money to her realtor, Carla Williams of Maximum One Realty Greater Atlanta, and the traditional up-front fees to the lender for an appraisal and credit report. On closing day, Latoya only contributed an additional \$3.56 to

## More about Brian...

- Georgia Economic Developers Association Board of Directors, Incoming Secretary/Treasurer - 2016
- UGA Alumni Association Board of Directors - Executive Committee; Chair of the Bulldog 100 - Fastest Growing Bulldog Business Awards
- Deacon - First Baptist Church, Carrollton
- Volunteer - Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Husband to lovely wife Carmen, a teacher, and Dad to son Mason, an 8th grader and star punter and place kicker in Carroll County

Follow Brian on Twitter at [@BrianDill2](https://twitter.com/BrianDill2)

## Five communities graduate from Georgia Initiative for Community Housing program



DCA Deputy Commissioner of Housing Carmen Chubb, right, presented City of Dalton Housing Authority Chief Financial Officer David McKone with his community's award at the GICH retreat in Tifton recently.

Local leaders from the cities of Dalton, Greensboro, Lithonia, Pembroke and Roswell were recognized for their communities' completion of the three-year Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program at a retreat and awards presentation held Sept. 22-24 in Tifton. Ten additional Georgia communities will complete the program by 2017.

The 2015 GICH awards were presented by Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Deputy Commissioner for Housing Carmen Chubb, UGA Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach Associate

the purchase of her new home, thanks to Georgia Dream!

Georgia Dream loans are made by participating lenders across the state. A list of lenders by region can be found at [www.gadream.com](http://www.gadream.com). Georgians who dream of owning their own homes can find out how to get closer to making that dream a reality by checking out Georgia Dream in a [series of four new informational videos](#) on the website.

*Congratulations, Latoya, and thank you to Kim for providing the benefits of the Georgia Dream Homeownership Program to Georgia home buyers!*



### DCA Commissioner Knowles now "Mom" to four!



We are thrilled to announce the arrival of **Bowen McAfee Knowles** to the Commissioner's family!

Born October 16 weighing 7 lbs., 1 oz., Bowen joins brothers Winlon and Speight and sister Lola Cooper.

Vice President Steve Dempsey, Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Executive Deputy Director Bill Thornton, Georgia Power Company Community and Economic Development Senior Urban Advisor Steve Foster, and UGA Archway Partnership Operations Coordinator Sue Chapman.

Launched in 2004, GICH helps communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through the development of housing and revitalization strategies. GICH offers communities a three-year program of collaboration and technical assistance. During a community's participation, team members work to create and launch a locally-based plan to meet local housing needs. GICH grew out of Georgia's experience with the National League of Cities' Affordable Housing Program.

DCA, along with GMA and UGA's Housing and Demographics Research Center, serve as GICH's primary partners. The program is funded by Georgia Power and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development through a Rural Community Development Initiative grant. The Georgia Electric Membership Corporation serves as GICH's implementation partner.

### 10 Georgia communities pick GICH's expertise to address housing needs

Other communities throughout Georgia have also been quick to recognize GICH's value. The cities of Albany, Douglasville, Perry, Porterdale and Rincon were accepted into the program in 2013 and are scheduled to complete it in 2016.

The communities of Cedartown, Liberty County, Madison, Pine Mountain and Trion were added to the program class of 2014 and are set to satisfy the requirements in 2017.

GICH accepts applications from prospective program participants each year in early September. For additional information about GICH, contact Program Director Karen Tinsley at 706-542-4949 or [klt@uga.edu](mailto:klt@uga.edu).

### Georgia welcomes new class of 500+ AmeriCorps members as part of nationwide Opening Day



*Congratulations to Commissioner Knowles and her husband Sean on this wonderful addition, and welcome to the world and the DCA family, Bowen!*

Follow Commissioner Knowles on Twitter at [@camilamknowles](https://twitter.com/camilamknowles).

## Community Finance Division Director Joanie Perry named to COSCDA Board



Elected to a three-year, at-large position on behalf of the State of Georgia, DCA Community Finance Division Director Joanie Perry was inducted as a member of the Council of State Community Development Agencies Board of Directors at the COSCDA National Conference in early October. Georgia DCA has been represented for many years on the COSCDA board by former Deputy Commissioner Brian Williamson, who retired in June.

COSCD is the only national organization that represents the unique needs of state community development agencies and shapes national policy, offering COSCDA members a voice in Washington, access to training opportunities, and critical program information. Since 1974, the primary purpose of COSCDA has remained promoting the common goals of the states, with major emphasis on community development, housing,

*At left, new AmeriCorps members are all smiles as they represent the faces of more than 75,000 volunteers who joined the AmeriCorps service ranks across the nation during October. DCA Deputy Commissioner of Community & Economic Development Christopher Nunn, speaking at right, served on a panel discussing service and volunteerism at the Opening Day event held at Georgia Tech.*

October 16 was a big day for more than 500 of Georgia's volunteers. The Georgia Commission on Service and Volunteerism (GCSV), the Governor-appointed state service organization, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), Georgia Institute of Technology, and local AmeriCorps programs, welcomed a new class of 500-plus AmeriCorps members pledging to "Get Things Done" in their local communities as part of a nationwide Opening Day ceremony.

AmeriCorps members will provide organizations support to strengthen education, foster economic opportunity, assist veterans and military families, restore parks, provide disaster services, and expand health services. During their service, AmeriCorps members will expand opportunities for themselves, gain skills and experience to jump start their careers, and earn education scholarships for their service.

"I am proud to welcome these new AmeriCorps members into the national service family today - they are the heart of everything we do," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

"National service is an indispensable resource for nonprofits, communities, and the individuals they serve, uniting Americans of all backgrounds with a shared goal: to make a lasting impact on the toughest challenges facing our nation," added Spencer.

Georgia's Opening Day ceremony was held at the Georgia Tech GTRI Conference Center. The Atlanta event was just one of more than 20 events that took place nationwide. Throughout October, CNCS welcomed 75,000 new AmeriCorps members who will serve in U.S. communities addressing critical needs in education, health, the environment, disaster services, veteran services, and economic opportunity.

GCSV Director Linda Thompson at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs said following Georgia's Opening Day festivities, "AmeriCorps members provide services to both unserved and under-served populations. They tutor children to help them succeed in various educational disciplines. They clean and preserve our national parks. They provide assistance to help communities recover after natural disasters. They provide services to veterans and military families. These are just a few of the many services provided by AmeriCorps Members. I'm so proud of all of our AmeriCorps members and will forever be grateful to them for what they do."

Since 1994, more than 950,000 men and women have served in AmeriCorps, providing more than 1.3 billion hours of service addressing critical challenges from poverty and hunger to disasters and the dropout crisis. AmeriCorps members have earned more than \$3 billion in education scholarships to pay for college or pay back student loans.

[www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps](http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps)

homelessness, local economic development, and state-local relations.

*Congratulations to Joanie on her board election on the national stage of community development!*



## GET to KNOW DCA

*October Topic of the Month*

### The Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP):

*Public comments period open until November 3 for the 2016 QAP draft*

DCA's Multifamily Housing Finance and Development Programs administer funding to for-profit and non-profit developers for the construction and/or renovation of affordable multifamily rental housing in Georgia communities.

DCA's process for allocating funds is outlined in Georgia's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). This document describes: (1) the federal and state resources available for financing rental housing through the plan; (2) the legislative requirements for distributing

## UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

### HomeSafe Georgia events in November



Free  
Mortgage  
Payment  
Assistance

### 3rd Quarter HomeSafe Georgia Stats



HomeSafe Georgia has helped 7,231 individuals and families save their homes from foreclosure in 130 Georgia counties since 2011.



The program has provided more than \$156 million in U.S. Treasury funding to homeowners across Georgia.



Approximately \$35 million was paid to mortgage companies during the past 12 months of 2014-15 to help homeowners keep their homes — a 38% increase compared to the amount paid out over the previous 3 1/2 years.

#### Events for November 2015:

2015 Northeast Georgia Regional Career Expo, November 5; 2 - 6 PM; Piedmont College, Student Commons Building, 375 Georgia Street in Demorest

Military Job Fair, November 5; 10 AM - 2 PM; Benning Club, Building 128, Morrison Road in Fort Benning

Project Stand Down, November 14; 10 AM - 3 PM; Georgia National Guard Armory, 107 GA Hwy 49 W. in Milledgeville

#### **About HomeSafe Georgia**

*It is a free, state government program to help homeowners who are unemployed, underemployed or face other types of financial hardships save their homes from foreclosure. There is no cost to apply and no fee if approved. A homeowner who has experienced a financial hardship within the last 36 months -- such as the loss of a job, military service, death of a spouse, or medical problems -- may be eligible for assistance.*

For more information, visit [www.HomeSafeGeorgia.com](http://www.HomeSafeGeorgia.com).

these resources; (3) the State's preference for the location and type of such housing; (4) the process used for evaluating applications and awarding these resources; and (5) program compliance requirements/procedures.

Financing sources available through DCA include the Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME).

DCA published the draft of the 2016 QAP on October 2, 2015, and is accepting public comments on the draft until November 3 at close of business. The public can submit written comments electronically to [hfdround@dca.ga.gov](mailto:hfdround@dca.ga.gov)

[Access the 2016 QAP Draft here.](#)



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

### September 2015 Financial Awards

#### Region 4: Carroll County

The Carrollton Payroll Development Authority was awarded \$500,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) funds to assist in an expansion for Southwire Company LLC. The location will provide 360 new jobs as well as \$55,000,000 in new investment for the community within 48 months. The estimated project cost is \$55,500,000.

#### Region 6: Monroe County

Monroe County received a \$500,000 Redevelopment award to rehabilitate the historic Hubbard Dormitory for Women. Upon completion, this project will benefit 171 people and leverage \$882,150 of other funds.

#### Region 8: Harris County

The Development Authority of Harris County was awarded \$200,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) funds to assist in the location of a new logistics and distribution center which will serve the KIA plant in West Point. Glovis Georgia, LLC, will create 190 new jobs and invest \$16,000,000 within 48 months. The estimated project cost is \$17,208,225.

### Follow DCA and its affiliate programs on Social Media



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*Camila Knowles, Commissioner*

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