

# COMMUNIQUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CHAIRMAN'S CLUB OF THE GWINNETT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**From the President  
Get to Know  
Gwinnett's  
Top Small  
Business  
Owners**  
*By Jim Maran*



WHO ARE Gwinnett's top small business owners? They are the lifeblood of our local and national economies that have generated 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually over the last decade. They account for almost all of the nation's employer firms and generate half of non-farm private output. More importantly, they are your customers, business partners and clients, as well as your fellow Chairman's Club members.

In support of National Small Business Week, the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and Presenting Sponsor **HavenTrust Bank** will honor Gwinnett's top small businesses of the year at the Pinnacle Small Business Awards on April 17 at the Atlanta Marriott – Gwinnett Place at 6 pm.

The list of the Top 25 Small Businesses in Gwinnett, who will be recognized at the Pinnacle Small Business Awards, reads as a *Who's Who* list of the Gwinnett Chamber Chairman's Club. They all know what it takes to succeed and being a member of the Chamber and the Chairman's Club is one of the ways that got them to where they are today.

Join me and Presenting Sponsor **HavenTrust Bank** in celebrating small businesses and get to know Gwinnett's top small business at the 2008 Pinnacle Small Business Awards.

## American Express Travel Opens New Travel Counselor Customer Call Center

AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL, one of the world's largest travel agencies, has expanded its operations in the Atlanta area and has opened a new, larger travel counselor customer call center in Lawrenceville, GA. The new facility will be staffed by approximately 350 American

and purchasing Travelers Cheques. American Express Travel has had a presence in the Atlanta area for 20 years, opening its first office, the Norcross customer call center, in February 1988.

"We are committed to the Atlanta area and delighted to be opening our new, larger facility in Gwinnett County," said Laurie Farquhar, vice president, Platinum and Centurion Travel Services, American Express Travel. "With a location in Gwinnett County, we are able to retain our existing employees and fill our new travel counselor positions with strong, qualified people in a beautiful new center."



*Pictured left to right: Shirley Lasseter, former Duluth County Mayor; Vince DeSilva, vice president of Membership, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce; Derrick DeRavariere, director of the Lawrenceville American Express Customer Travel Network Call Center; Laurie Farquhar, vice president of Customer Experience and Service Capabilities Utility at American Express Consumer Travel Network; and Lynne Biggar, senior vice president and general manager of the American Express Consumer Travel Network.*

Express travel counselors, including 250 counselors who will move from the company's previous customer call center in Norcross and 100 new counselors enhancing the company's travel service operations in the Southeast. A ribbon cutting ceremony marking the official opening of the new facility was hosted by the company earlier today.

In addition to the Lawrenceville customer call center, American Express also operates two American Express Travel Service retail office locations in the Atlanta area (Alpharetta and Lenox Square), where customers can walk in to work directly with travel counselors and utilize financial services including foreign currency exchange

key business segment that Gwinnett County is seeking to nurture through its economic development initiatives. The company's move to Lawrenceville and subsequent membership in Partnership Gwinnett, the county's economic and community development initiative, represents a great success for Gwinnett County.

"American Express is a strong, viable corporation that brings great promise of success to the Gwinnett community," stated Jim Maran, President and CEO for the Gwinnett Chamber. "We are very pleased they have chosen to remain and expand in the area, providing our citizens with great job opportunities."

## Gwinnett County Public Schools Partners With Relocation Firm to Recruit the Nation's Brightest and Best to Gwinnett

As Gwinnett County Public Schools' (GCPS) recruitment team prepares to move into the height of their recruitment season, seeking to draw the brightest and best teachers to our community, they are excited to have a new benefit to tout. Through a new innovative partnership with a full-service real estate and relocation firm in Duluth, Storey Morrow Company, GCPS recruiters can now connect candidates to a team of relocation experts to assist them in their move to our community.

Starting in March, GCPS recruiters will be on the go virtually non-stop for the next five months, working to fill more than 1,500 teaching positions for the 2008-09 school year. To meet the needs of our ever-growing system, recruiters will span



more than 22 states, telling the nation's top candidates that success lives in Gwinnett, and inviting them to be part of our system of quality schools.

Kelly Herndon, GCPS director of Recruitment & Retention supports the Storey Morrow partnership saying, "This new program will be a real boost to our recruitment efforts. Competition is fierce for the top talent. As a result, we must aggressively reach out further across the country each year to find the teachers we need. With a large percentage of our new teachers coming from outside our community, having a team of relocation experts to assist them is another benefit we can offer to attract the very best. Once again, Gwinnett is raising the bar and setting a new standard for the industry."

The partnership with Storey Morrow Company is ideal in that it does not cost Gwinnett taxpayers one penny. Joy Thomas, Storey Morrow director of Corporate Relocation Services, explains, "Teachers individually

engage us to the level that meets their personal needs and traditional industry commissions compensate us for our time. Everyone wins!" Storey Morrow's relocation team will be available to assist new employees with area orientation, existing home sales, new home purchases, searches for apartments and temporary housing, moving services, and more.

Kipley Morrow, vice president of Storey Morrow Company shares, "It's our goal to free GCPS recruiters up from having to be relocation experts, and allow them more time to do what they do best. We'll let them focus on finding the teachers and then we'll give them a welcome to this community like no other. We want new employees to know how much we value them and appreciate the gifts they bring to our community." These new relocation services are not limited to new teachers, Storey Morrow is extending their support to all 22,000+ GCPS employees that need to move around town or transfer across the system to meet their housing and lifestyle needs.

In light of Partnership Gwinnett, the economic and community development initiative led by the Chamber, Nick Masino, vice president of Economic Development for the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, applauds this effort stating, "This is a perfect example of the partnerships we seek to forge in our community. This directly addresses the Education Excellence goals we have outlined in Partnership Gwinnett. GCPS and Storey Morrow Company are setting a great example and it is our hope that additional Gwinnett companies will step forward with innovative ideas as well. When it comes to hiring new employees, bringing the best to Gwinnett will help our school system and county; and the real winners are Gwinnett's schoolchildren."

## Gwinnett Place and Gwinnett Village CIDs Complete Preliminary Redevelopment Plan

FOLLOWING MONTHS OF WORK from consultants, stakeholders and staff, the Gwinnett Village and Gwinnett Place Community Improvement Districts (CID) have completed a solid proposal to help lead the revitalization of the greater Gwinnett Place and Gwinnett Village areas.

During their regularly scheduled meetings in February, the CIDs' Boards of Directors reviewed and debated the proposed draft ordinance and design guidelines for the new mixed-use redevelopment district. The mixed-use redevelopment district ordinance is intended to offer increased flexibility, incentives and clear development standards in a new redevelopment strategy.

Joe Allen, Gwinnett Place CID Executive Director, said the proposed ordinance is intended to serve as a key economic development tool that will guide and offer sources of flexibility for potential redevelopment projects

for years to come. "We believe this ordinance is necessary to help attract and drive interest in reinvigorating the county's central business district," Allen said.

The Gwinnett Village staff developed their Redevelopment Plan in partnership with their Steering Committee, which is comprised of property and business owners, residents, planning officials and developers. Together they crafted a series of principles that stress incentivizing redevelopment, creating more transportation opportunities and promoting healthy vibrant neighborhoods.

John McHenry, Gwinnett Village CID Program Director said that input from community leaders and the public have guided the process. "Overall, what we heard at our well attended public meetings is not why are you doing this, but when can it start and can it include my

## New Chairman's Club Members



### **KART'S LANDSCAPE SERVICE**

Kart's Landscape Services was established in 1988 to provide landscape maintenance and installation to the residential market. Since then Kart's has transitioned to exclusively service the commercial market where it has built

*Gary Kart*

on the unique experiences learned in the homeowner market and flourished. For two decades Kart's Landscape Services has grown steadily because of high customer retention and outstanding customer satisfaction. Our current customers stay with us because we provide dependable landscape maintenance and offer uncompromising customer service.



### **LLOYD PROFESSIONAL GROUP**

With a unique combination of insurance, human resources, financial services, and technology expertise, Lloyd Professional Group stands out from other service providers. Our ability to provide a comprehensive range of business services, all from one vendor, lets our clients enjoy

*Brandy Swanson*

convenience without sacrificing quality. Since 1985, we've made personal attention and long-term relationships the foundation of our business. We want you to think of Lloyd Professional Group as your business partner. While we offer a broad range of solutions, we develop customized approaches for each client that let you anticipate changes and develop proactive strategies. Let us show you the difference that Lloyd Professional Group can make in your business.



### **NATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP**

As a full service financial services firm, National Financial Services Group specializes in the areas of personal and business financial services and estate planning strategies. Some of our associates are also Registered Representatives and Investment Advisor Representa-

*James Cook*

tives of Equity Services, Inc. Our associates implement their client's customized plans through the placement of various financial instruments. They have access to more than 6,000 investment companies and over 200 insurance companies, and are able to design unique financial solutions to match our clients' exacting requirements.



### **RE/MAX PROFESSIONALS DAVID FREEMAN TEAM**

The RE/MAX Professionals—David Freeman Team is a diverse group of professionals with a thorough knowledge of the northeast metro Atlanta commercial real estate market. Our associates are experienced specialists in Office, Retail,

*David Freeman*

Industrial, Land and Commercial Investment properties. We provide expert assistance, whether our client is selling, buying or leasing property. We also have dedicated team members that provide Residential services to clients that wish to buy, sell or lease a home and Property Management services for investors. Led by accomplished broker, David Freeman, and backed by the RE/MAX network of offices and agents, our team is dedicated to building long-term relationships with our clients by demonstrating a superior level of service and professionalism.



### **SIMON, INC.**

Innovative and effective training can put the sales professional a step ahead of the competition, and provide the path to attaining professional goals. Simon, Inc., an Authorized licensee of the Sandler Sales Institute, is committed to offering you that innovative and effective training through its powerful public and private

*Al Simon*

in-house training programs. From our main training facility in north metro Atlanta, we provide professional coaching and unique sales and sales management solutions to the challenges faced by salespeople, sales managers and other professionals who must build a client base for their services.

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### **CIDs Complete Preliminary Redevelopment Plan** *(continued from page 2)*

property?" McHenry said.

Pending an affirmative vote for their respective Board of Directors, the Gwinnett Place and Gwinnett Village CIDs plan to forward the proposed strategy to county and City of Norcross leaders for their consideration. An official review and adoption by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and Norcross City Council would be necessary for implementation.

The Gwinnett Place CID and Gwinnett Village CID have relied on a variety of community and business leaders to guide the mixed-use redevelopment district plan.

## Upcoming Events

**April 11**

**The Success Lives Here Business Leadership Series**  
**Featuring Tom Martin, Chairman/CEO,**  
**Gwinnett Community Bank**  
**Presenting Sponsor: Atlanta Real Estate Specialists,**  
**Mike Runyan, Broker**

Time: 7:45 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.  
 Location: Sugarloaf Country Club  
 Cost: \$45 for Chamber members; \$55 for non-members.  
 RSVP: Scott Burkholder at 678-584-2270 or  
 sburckholder@gwinnettchamber.org.

**April 15**

**Gwinnett Technology Forum**  
**Presenting Sponsor: Horizon Software International, Inc.**

Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  
 Location: Scientific Atlanta Auditorium, Busbee Center, Gwinnett Technical College  
 Cost: No charge.  
 RSVP: Melissa Britt at 678-957-4958 or  
 melissa@gwinnettchamber.org.

**April 17**

**Pinnacle Small Business Awards**  
**Featuring Gwinnett's Top Small Businesses**  
**Presenting Sponsor: HavenTrust Bank**

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 pm.  
 Location: Atlanta Marriott – Gwinnett Place.  
 Information: [www.pinnaclesmallbusinessawards.com](http://www.pinnaclesmallbusinessawards.com)

**April 24**

**The Verizon Wireless Gwinnett Chamber**  
**Government Relations "Town Hall Meeting"**  
**Featuring the Gwinnett Delegation**

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
 Location: Gwinnett Chamber.  
 Cost: \$15 for Chamber members; \$25 for non-Chamber members, free to Chairman's Club.  
 RSVP: Natalie Shore at 770-232-8812 or  
 natalie@gwinnettchamber.org.

**May 2**

**The Success Lives Here Business Leadership Series**  
**Featuring Terri Jondahl, CEO, CAB, Incorporated**  
**Presenting Sponsor: Atlanta Real Estate Specialists,**  
**Mike Runyan, Broker**

Time: 7:45 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.  
 Location: Sugarloaf Country Club  
 Cost: \$45 for Chamber members; \$55 for non-members.  
 RSVP: Scott Burkholder at 678-584-2270 or  
 sburckholder@gwinnettchamber.org.

## This 'n' That

### Horizon Software Named in Top 10 Most Innovative Technology Companies in Georgia

With nearly 150 companies applying for consideration, the Technology Association of Georgia (TAG) recently announced the 2008 Top 10 Most Innovative Technology Companies in Georgia at its Georgia Technology Summit: Innovation In Transformation yesterday at the Cobb Galleria Centre. Gwinnett's own Horizon Software International, LLC was recognized in the Top 10 category. Congratulations!

### Micromeritics Celebrates 45 Years of Chamber Membership

The Gwinnett Chamber would like to recognize Micromeritics Instrument Corporation's 45-year commitment to the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce. Founded over 45 years ago, Micromeritics Instrument Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer of automated analytical laboratory instruments exclusively dedicated to particle characterization of powders and solids.

Micromeritics is moving to a new location in Summer 2008 near the intersection of Beaver Ruin Road and Park Drive. The facility will provide nearly 140,000 square feet of manufacturing and office space.

### Anderson Honored at Recent Luncheon

Tom Andersen was honored by his staff on Thursday, February 28, at a luncheon held at Sugarloaf Country Club. The luncheon was a surprise for Tom, and a great way to honor him and celebrate the firm's 20th anniversary. Andersen, Tate and Carr is the largest law firm in Gwinnett County and Mr. Andersen and his team have been strong advocates for the Gwinnett Chamber.

### McGarity Named "SUPER LAWYER"

Congratulations to Mike McGarity who was named a Georgia "SUPER LAWYER" for 2008 by *Atlanta Magazine* and *Law & Politics* in the practice area of General Litigation. McGarity is no stranger to this coveted distinction; he was also named in 2005 and 2006. Super Lawyers is a listing of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement.



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GWINNETT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAIRMAN'S CLUB