

## TRANSPORTATION ROUNDTABLE HOLDS PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Northeast Georgia Regional Transportation Roundtable (RTR) recently completed a series of public meetings regarding a draft constrained list of projects. Meetings were held on September 8<sup>th</sup> at the Oconee County Civic Center, September 13<sup>th</sup> at the Crawford Depot in Oglethorpe County, and on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at Georgia Perimeter College in Newton County. The meetings were the “drop-in” variety, and maps of projects in each county were displayed. Those attending were given the opportunity to discuss projects with members of the RTR Executive Committee and to offer verbal and written comments. The RTR will meet on October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission to vote on a final list of projects to potentially be funded by a Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST).



## STAFFORD ADDRESSES NEGRC COUNCIL

**Saralyn Stafford**, Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Assistant Commissioner for Local Government Assistance, was guest speaker at the September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC). Ms. Stafford was elevated to her current position on January 1, 2011. She serves as Director of External Affairs for DCA and also coordinates the Department's legislative affairs. During her presentation to the NEGRC Council, Ms. Stafford focused on the ongoing Georgia Competitiveness Initiative, DCA's review of local government planning requirements, Developments of Regional Impact, solid waste reporting, the HomeSafe Georgia program, and the upcoming Celebrating Rural Georgia conference in Tifton. Following her presentation, Ms. Stafford entertained questions and comments from Council members.

*Ms. Stafford with Council Chairman Jim Joiner*



## SETA FALL 2011 CONFERENCE HELD IN SAVANNAH

The Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Fall Conference was held September 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Hotel in Savannah. There were over 435 attendees from throughout the Southeast. SETA is a professional development organization for workforce development professionals from the eight southeastern states.

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Development Division staff and Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board members attended the conference which offered over 48 different workshops on a variety of topics including board development, finance, case management, youth and dislocated worker, and special population services. USDOL Assistant Secretary Jane Oates was the opening speaker and provided attendees with an overview of the state of workforce development issues, as well as a briefing on the American Jobs Act.

In addition to assisting with the hosting of the conference, three Workforce Development staff were workshop presenters. They were provided the opportunity to share with conference attendees strategies to use in following up with clients having completed training.

For information on Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services in Northeast Georgia, please contact the Workforce Development Division at **(706) 369-5703**.

## REMINDER

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council will meet on **Thursday, October 20th at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

## WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT SPOTLIGHT

*(The following is illustrative of efforts in which our Workforce Investment Division is involved. Only the first name of the client is used to protect her anonymity.)*

Ofelia and her husband owned a drywall business in Commerce. With the downturn in the housing market forcing many of their customers to declare bankruptcy, Ofelia and her husband had to close their business. Without any source of income, Ofelia knew she was going to have to return to school to further her education. Ofelia was awarded a Hope Grant and enrolled in the Medical Assisting Program at the Lanier Technical College Winder campus. She heard about the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program from classmates and decided to give the program a call. Our Workforce Development staff enrolled Ofelia in January 2010. By assisting her with transportation, books, uniforms, equipment and certifications, Ofelia was able to complete the program, and started her new career in December 2010. Ofelia is currently a Medical Assistant at the Tri-County Internal Medical facility in Buford. The facility has three primary doctors, four physician assistants, and ten medical assistants. Ofelia said "I love what I'm doing and could never have finished if it wasn't for the support and help from the WIA program. My education is really paying off. I have told many of my friends and co-workers about the program and its benefits. I feel very lucky and fortunate to have received WIA."

In the 12-county Northeast Georgia area, the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (WIB), through the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, provides a variety of services made possible by funding through the WIA. Last year, over 3,094 Northeast Georgia residents utilized Northeast Georgia Workforce Development services for job search, career advisement, and retraining services. Many of the customers were laid-off from their jobs due to downsizing or business closures in the area. WIA program participation rates have gone up 200% in Northeast Georgia in the past two years. Over 240 different employers hired persons who had received retraining assistance utilizing WIA funds.

For additional information on the services available through the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board, contact **Carol Rayburn Cofer** at **(706) 369-5703**.

## MOBILE UNITS ROLL IN NORTHEAST GEORGIA

The Northeast Georgia region once again has computerized mobile learning labs! The Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (WIB) utilized unused funds from other parts of the state to replace its two 15-year-old units. Two units were obtained, one with 12 computer stations and the other with six computer stations. The units are equipped with satellite capability, as well as a stand-alone generator power source.

The units are currently being used to provide supplemental support to the Georgia WorkReady initiative assisting Athens Technical College in the administration of the assessment in locations that do not have access to stationary computer labs. The units can also provide career readiness activities including on-line job search, resume preparation, typing tutorials, vocational preparation, and mobile GED preparation. The units may also be available for veterans' reemployment activities, and job fairs in the region. The labs can be used as a mobile "one stop" in the event of major workforce actions including massive layoffs, plant closures or hiring events.

For information on the units, including additional uses, contact the NEGRC Workforce Development Division at **(706) 369-5703**.



*New mobile units*

## ANNUAL CAREGIVER CELEBRATION LUNCHEON

The NEGA CARE-NET is sponsoring a **FREE** Caregiver Celebration Luncheon on Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Oconee County Civic Center, 2661 Hog Mountain Road in Watkinsville. This celebration will include activities such as massages and make-overs to pamper caregivers, as well as lunch, interesting speakers, health screenings, door prizes, and informative networking

and resources. The special guest speaker will be Dr. **Leisa Easom**, Executive Director of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving. The local winners of the NEGA CARE-NET Caregivers of the Year awards will be acknowledged and honored during the celebration. This event is hosted by the Oconee Area Resource Council, the NEGA CARE-NET members, and the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging.

For further information on attending or sponsoring the event, please contact **Michele Kelley** at the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging at **(706) 369-5650** or by e-mail at **mkelley@negrc.org**.

## 2011 CDBG ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTED

On September 16<sup>th</sup> in Macon, Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner **Mike Beatty** presented Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) awards to the 2011 recipients. This presentation was preceded by a two-day "Recipient's Workshop" on administration procedures of the grant program. **Nina Kelly**, NEGRC Project Manager, and **Jim Moneyhun**, NEGRC Project Administrator, attended these trainings to better assist local governments.

Applications prepared by NEGRC staff resulted in two awards. The City of Greensboro received funding for flood, drainage, and water improvements in the Reynolds Drive neighborhood that will benefit 146 residents. Greensboro received \$482,475 in CDBG funds. Mayor **Glenn Wright** and **Larry Postell**, City Manager, were in attendance and received the award from Commissioner Beatty.

The City of Jefferson also received a CDBG Employment Incentive Program (EIP) award in the amount of \$300,000. These funds will be loaned to a local business, H. Wilson Manufacturing, to finance the acquisition of a new manufacturing facility. This project will create 10 new jobs and retain 20 others in the City of Jefferson. **Burke Walker**, Director of Planning & Government Services (PGS), and Ms. Kelly accepted the award on behalf of the City.

The CDBG program is an annual competition based on applications submitted from across Georgia. It is anticipated the next round of applications will be due on April 1, 2012. The preparation of these applications is complex and requires several months for development. Initiating the process early is a key to a successful application. A DCA applicants' workshop is expected to be announced in upcoming months that NEGRC staff will attend to obtain the latest guidance on preparing CDBG applications. For questions on the CDBG program or to discuss a potential project, contact Mr. Walker at **(706) 369-5650** or email: **bwalker@negrc.org**. Visit the NEGRC website and the PGS pages for the latest information on the CDBG program at **www.negrc.org**.

# Update

## REGIONAL MEETINGS OCTOBER

6	10:00 a.m.	Regional Transportation Roundtable	NEGRC Atrium
12	3:00 p.m.	Capitalizing on Solar Energy in NEGA	NEGRC Atrium
18	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Investment Board	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	2:00 p.m.	Aging Advisory Council	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	2:00 p.m.	UOBWA Operations Committee	Bear Creek Reservoir
19	3:30 p.m.	Bike/Pedestrian Task Force	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
20	9:00 a.m.	Firefly Trails Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
20	Noon	NEGA Regional Commission Council	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room

*Sincerely & Respectfully,*

