



Augusta and Athens Meet Up



Athens CVB and Classic Center staff members traveled to Augusta to meet with the Augusta CVB staff on Tuesday, January 31. While there, the staff toured the Augusta CVB offices, Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center, and the city.

Pictured (L to R): Jay Markwalter (AUG), Paige Rodriguez (AUG), Jay Boling (ATH), Iman Hill (AUG), Nick Arnold (ATH), Lindsay Fruchtl (AUG), Jeremiah Cook (ATH), Jessica Russell (ATH), Khyra Walker (ATH), Marvin Nunnally (ATH), Missy Brandt Wilson (ATH), Shannon McCullough (ATH), and Michelle Brown (AUG)

Strong Economic Outlook for Athens Tourism

Members of the CVB and Classic Center staffs attended

the UGA Economic Luncheon on February 1, put on by Terry College's Selig Center for Economic Growth.

One of the 11 positive factors for Athens-Clarke County that Dr. Jeff Humphreys, Director of the Selig Center, mentioned was tourism. He also mentioned that The Classic Center's expanded exhibit hall should continue to draw more conventions, and trade shows. The leisure and business markets both look strong.

The hospitality / tourism industry is contributing more than the overall economic growth for the county, which is already outpacing the state. He spoke about Athens' being a regional entertainment center, specifically mentioning music, dining, and cultural events.



Dean of the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business Benjamin Ayers explains economic growth. Credit: *The Telegraph*

CVB's Hannah Smith to serve on Simpleview's User Group



Hannah Smith, CVB Director of Marketing & Communications, has been selected to serve on the User Group for Simpleview's CMS website software.

The User Group team is an expert panel of DMO professionals that gains insights on roadmaps and beta test features to help guide Simpleview's product and development teams. User Group members are leaders within the CMS community who are recognized as super users, trusted peers, and resources for other Simpleview CMS users both at and within Simpleview conferences, forums, and trade shows.

"I'm honored to have been selected to this team," said Smith. "I'm looking forward to helping identify new website functionality and features that will best serve our industry, and learning from industry leaders and innovators."

Athens' Hospitality Newsmakers

Creature Comforts has announced plans to build a new brewery and tasting room in the Southern Mills building off North Chase Street. The renovation of the space will enable Creature Comforts to triple its production and keep up with the rise in demand for its beer. At minimum, it plans to invest \$8 million into building a 36,000-square-foot brewery and 4,000 square feet of office space. This will allow Creature Comforts to create 25 new jobs in the Athens community over the next 5 years, as well as revitalize a property that is being underused. [READ MORE](#)



Pictured (L to R): Creature Comforts' Adam Beauchamp, Katie Beauchamp, Chris Herron, Blake Tyers, and David Stein

The Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries presented the **Georgia Museum of Art** at the University Georgia with five awards at its annual conference, held in Augusta, Georgia, Jan. 18-20. The museum received awards for: Education Program of the Year, Student Project, Exhibition of the Year, Community Service Award, and Museum Professional of the Year. [READ MORE](#)

Envision Athens taps the CVB as stakeholder

CVB Director **Chuck Jones** was invited to help shape

Envision Athens is a community-wide effort to develop a common vision for the future of the Athens-Clarke County community. The ultimate outcome of Envision Athens is a community-based vision and alignment of priorities and strategies to help the community achieve transformational change incrementally over the next 20 years. [FOR MORE INFO](#)

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Don't forget, meeting specs and floor plans can also be uploaded.

Industry Events

Georgia Small Business Week
March 13-17
Georgiawide

Travel Media Marketplace
April 20-22
Location TBA

Recent Media Coverage

- "The 15 Best Holiday Shopping Destinations in Georgia," [BestThingsGA.com](#), February 2017
- "Intimate & Awesome: 8 Film Festivals Worth the Trip" [ExploreGeorgia.org](#), January 2017

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