

October 16, 2008, Issue #29

The U.S. Economy may not be great, but odds favor the State of Georgia

During this time of economic challenge, let's take a look on the bright side for the state of Georgia! The October 2, 2008 CREW Luncheon "*Growth in Our Backyard: New Services, New Populations and New Business Opportunities*" provided us with an insight on the positive changes happening in Atlanta and our state as a whole. Our fantastic panel of speakers at this luncheon included Robin Spratlin, General Manager of Economic Development for Georgia Power; Lynn Smith, Broker at Cushman & Wakefield and Founder of the Global Diversity Summit; and Kathe Falls, Director of International Trade at the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

New Services The "hot sectors" in business are 1. Energy Services, 2. Health Management, 3. Data Centers and 4. Information Technology. Energy services are seeing an increase in demand due to many new challenges; including climate change and limited natural resources. Health Management is increasingly becoming big business with the baby boomers nearing retirement age. Although the nation as a whole is aging, Georgia ranks #2 (85.5%) for percentage of the population under the age of 65. In addition, investments in the areas of research and development have yielded advanced medical treatments for this age group, so you can expect them to not only be around but be productive a lot longer. Data Centers are a necessity in this information age. Beyond the internet boom, the newest craze is social networking including such online sites as FaceBook, MySpace, Match.com, eHarmony. These sites alone, not to mention the hundreds of others, have necessitated the need for more data storage. This craze, one of many, is fueling our constant need for IT innovation – our last named hot sector.

New Populations The state of Georgia ranks #4 in the U.S. in population growth. Not only is our population growing, but we are also benefiting by becoming a more diverse state. Of the babies born in Georgia, the "foreign-born" represent more than 27 different countries. One of the areas with the greatest growth is the Hispanic population which represented

2% in 1990 and predicted to be 11.3% in 2012. What about our strong buying power? Buying power is the value of money, as measured by the quantity and quality of products and services it can buy. In regards to the Atlanta MSA, the total buying power has increased by over 300%. The largest growth in buying power by race is Hispanic at 1926% growth.

Business Opportunities

- Going International: Already in Georgia we have 2,500 internationally-owned facilities and 610 international manufacturing plants. Seventy percent of Georgia's total international facilities are represented by the following countries: Germany; Japan; U.K.; France; Canada; Netherlands; Sweden; and Switzerland. We export to over 220 countries and 219 countries import products through Georgia ports. Capitalizing on foreign investment is one of the keys to success in Georgia. That success is a result of the many advantages that the state of Georgia promotes to increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) such as:

- The world's busiest airport with non-stop commercial flights to 65 world capitals
- The 4th fastest growing state; largest state east of the Mississippi River
- The 21st largest economy in the world if it were its own country.
- Boasts 61 countries represented by consulates, chambers of commerce and trade office.
- 80% of U.S. population is within a 2 hour flight
- The largest rail network in the Southeast.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) has ten international offices and is aggressively marketing the state of Georgia with a PR campaign that is available in nine languages (soon to be thirteen.) As a result of these efforts, the state is projected to realize a 15% increase between 2007 and 2011 in FDI, international trade and international tourism. As you can see, Georgia is doing the right things to be successful both locally and beyond during these tough times.

**Thanks to our October lunch sponsor:
Corporate Environments.**

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Monthly Luncheon: 11/6

Joint CREW/CSCMP Luncheon on Industrial Trade & the Savannah Port

Location: Cobb Galleria Centre
11:30 a.m. Registration, 12:00-1:30 p.m. Program
\$45.00 CREW Members, \$65.00 Guests

****CLICK TO REGISTER****

Dress for Success Suit Drive during the 11/6 Luncheon

Please donate your gently worn professional attire 5 years or newer. Pant suits, skirt suits, business slacks, skirts, blouses, and blazers will be accepted. No dresses or coats at this time.

Members Only Event: 11/19

Behind the Scenes: Upscale Shopping Wars!

Location: AmericasMart
11:30-1:00 p.m. Program
\$45.00 CREW Members ONLY

Silent Auction

Donate a luxury retail item (or gift certificate to a spa or upscale restaurant or luxury retailer) for a silent auction at the December CREW Luncheon. All proceeds will be donated to CREW Foundation. Please contact Karrie Westphal at execdirector@crewatlanta.org or Monetha Cobb at monethac@theshoppingcentergroup.com for more information on the items requested.

Membership Survey = \$\$\$

You should have received an email survey from our Executive Director by now. Have you completed yours yet? Please submit the survey electronically before Oct 20th. Five \$100 AMEX gift cards will be raffled at the November 6th Luncheon to survey participants. ****CLICK FOR SURVEY****

Congratulations to:

- **Kim Guenther, President/Creative Director of Plants Forever, Inc.**
Created an architectural piece in Lenox Mall (a new client).
- **Stephanie Belcher, TVS**
Selected to participate in the Fall session of Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta
- **Deborah Kalish, Morris/Hardwick/Schneider, LLC**
Recently appointed a partner of firm