



---

---

**Clarence Brown Conference Center**  
**January 28-31, 2024**

---

---



## Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

- 8:00 – 12:00 pm     **[GA Sports, Inc. Annual Meeting](#)** (Concurrent GACVB Pre-Conf Event)  
We are excited to welcome industry partners from GA Sports as they host their annual meeting in conjunction with GACVB Annual Conference. Georgia Sports is a membership-based marketing and tourism initiative comprised of Georgia's CVBs, sports councils and alliances representing sports-friendly destinations, each offering a full menu of management services to the event owner.
- 8:30 – 10 am     **Pre-Conference Leadership Development Session (LEC Course 1)**  
**Room: Stilesboro Hall III**  
**Walk the Talk - Communicating Vision, Purpose, & Values**  
**Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC credits)**  
**Course 1**  
A successful organization has a carefully crafted vision, a clearly articulated core purpose, and a code of values that are non-negotiable. The leader must systematically communicate vision, purpose, and values in a way that will inspire, motivate and align the team.  
  
*Sponsored by: Pick Ellijay (Gilmer Chamber & Welcome Center)*  
Presented by: The Leadership Institute at Columbus State University
- 9 am – 5 pm     **Conference Registration Open**
- 9 am – 1pm     **Sponsor & Exhibitor Setup**
- 9:00 – 10:30 am     **GACVB Board of Directors Meeting | Room: Connesene Room**
- 10 – 10:30 am     **Leadership Sessions Break**
- 10:30 – 11:45     **Pre-Conference Leadership Development Session (LEC Course 2)**  
**Room: Stilesboro Hall III**  
**What Got You Here Won't Get You There - Developing the Leader Within**  
**Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC credits)**  
**Course 2**  
A personal commitment to individual leadership development is essential for growth and advancement. Your present have are unlikely to be enough for the challenges in the future. The bottom line is, those who are personally committed to grow and adapt will be the most successful and have a greater sense of well-being. Participants will gain a renewed personal commitment to actively and continuously work at leadership development; an understanding that different situations and levels of responsibilities will call for different skills and approaches; create an ACTION strategic developmental plan that enhances strengths and compensates for weaknesses and establish a system of feedback and accountability.



*Sponsored by: Pick Ellijay (Gilmer Chamber & Welcome Center)*  
*Presented by: The Leadership Institute at Columbus State University*

12:00 pm

**Lunch on your own**  
[Enjoy unique dining in Cartersville](#)

1:30 – 2:45 pm

**Welcome & Opening General Session**

**General Opening Session**

**GACVB Advocacy Pillar Overview & Legislative Update**

With the 2024 Legislative Session in full swing, New GACVB Executive Director Amanda Dyson-Thornton will present a fireside chat with GACVB public affairs staff Lee Hughes, Hughes Public Affairs to share priorities and policy goals, offer legislative outlook for the session, and share best practices in advocacy dos and don'ts.

2:45

**Afternoon Break | Exhibit Hall: Etowah I & II**

3:15 – 4:30 pm

**Breakout Sessions (3) Three**

**Breakout I | Room: Stilesboro Hall I**

**Structured for Success: Content Publishing Best Practices**

In this session, our content experts will share how to properly structure content within the architecture of your website for major SEO impact, while also covering if your content should be a page or a blog, and other digital content best practices.

*Session Partner: Tempest*

-----

**Breakout II | Room: Stilesboro Hall II**

**Video is Queen**

In this session, you will learn the plethora of video distribution options out in the digital space. We will discuss best practices, KPIs, and how to create an omni-channel video distribution campaign to increase visibility of your destination or attraction.

*Session Partner: Advance Travel & Tourism*

-----

**Breakout III | Room: Carter Hall**

**Sports Tourism in Georgia: Best Practices and Event Updates**

In this session you will hear from representatives in the sports tourism industry as they provide updates on the landscape of sports in Georgia and describe ways in which you and your organization can become involved in the sports market.

*Session Partner: Georgia Sports, Inc*



5:30 pm

## Evening Transportation Departure from CBCC

- **5:15 pm** - Shuttle from Holiday Inn Express & Suites to evening bus transportation at CBCC

5:45 – 7:15 pm

## Opening Reception Event

### **Drowned Valley Brewing Co. & Game of Throws (Urban Axe Throwing)**

4 S Tennessee St, Cartersville, GA 30120

*Sponsored by the Cartersville-Bartow County Convention & Visitors Bureau*

- 7:00 pm - Optional shuttle begins from Drowned Valley Brewing return to conference hotels

7:30

## Dine Around on your own

Following the opening reception at Drowned Valley Brewing Co.,

See why Cartersville's eclectic culinary scene is hitting its stride with 14 chef-owned & operated restaurants ranging from casual family eateries to white tablecloth dining. Tasting rooms and a craft brewery with live music are also available.

During this GACVB conference Monday evening enjoy a few of our local restaurant partners with options such as Table 20, Main Street Coastal, Jefferson's, Mellow Mushroom, and The City Cellar & Loft.

- 7:30 – 10:00 pm - Bus transportation will be offering a 30-minute rotating loop returning to conference hotels. The Downtown Cartersville pick up location is **The Grand Theatre**, 7 N Wall St, Cartersville, GA 30120.

## Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

7 – 8:15 am

## Breakfast / Networking | Exhibit Hall: Etowah I & II

8 am

## Registration Open

8:30 - 10 am

## General Session | Room: Carter Hall

### **Careers & Coffee (or Cocktails!)**

### **Tourism-Economic Development Executives**

This annual CEOs panel series interviews destination leaders / DMO executives to share their career paths of successes and obstacles as well as tackling current issues in Georgia's tourism industry.

*Session Partners: Atlanta Magazine Custom Media*

**Moderator: Shana Young**, Executive Director  
Leadership Institute at Columbus State University

### **Panel Guests:**

**Lisa Smith**, Georgia's Rome Office of Tourism

**Bennish Brown**, Destination Augusta

**Jennifer Cruce**, Visit Sandy Springs

**Maggie Milner**, Visit Eatonton/Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce



10:00 am	<b>Morning Break</b>
10:30 am	<b>General Session   Room: Carter Hall</b>  <b>Searching Hi &amp; Lo for the Resilience in Rural Georgia</b>  <b>Mary Charles Howard</b> , Founder & Executive Director of Georgia Hi-Lo Trail Mary Charles will help us discover our power of bringing resilience in the places that need it the most. She'll share how she's pouring her power of resilience into rural Georgia and how we all may harness our positive energy to build better teams & communities.
10:00 am	<b>Morning Break</b>
10:30 am	<b>General Session   Room: Carter Hall</b>  <b>Searching Hi &amp; Lo for the Resilience in Rural Georgia</b>  <b>Mary Charles Howard</b> , Founder & Executive Director of Georgia Hi-Lo Trail
11:30 – 12:30	<b>General Session   Room: Carter Hall</b>  <b>Bring your A-game</b> (continued destination leadership development)  Four proven strategies that have stood the test of time that can be applied to yourself and help move your organization forward - John Maxwell once said, "Everything rises or falls on leadership". History has proven that battles are won, companies are saved, and organizations thrive due to great leaders.  <b>Mike Robertson</b> , VP Brand Partnerships, Director of Culture  <i>Session Partner: MediaOne Digital</i>
12:30 – 1:45 pm	<b>Leadership Luncheon   Room: Etowah Banquet Hall III &amp; IV</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Excellence Certification (LEC) Graduation</li> <li>• Special Membership Presentation</li> <li>• <i>Travelblazers</i> Recognition</li> </ul> <i>Sponsors: Pineapple Public Relations, 365 Total Marketing &amp; Georgia Trend</i>
2:00 – 4:15 pm	<b>Immersion Excursions</b> <b>Breakout Sessions – in the field</b>  <b>TOURS – Cartersville Tourism Product Assets and Current Projects</b>  <b>Excursion Group A:</b> LakePoint Sports complex / LakePoint Station <b>Excursion Group B:</b> Etowah Indian Mounds & Rose Lawn Museum <b>Excursion Group C:</b> Downtown Cartersville Bartow History Museum, Booth Western Art Museum



- 5:30 pm      **Evening Bus Transportation from CBCC**
- **5:15 pm** - Shuttle from Holiday Inn Express & Suites to evening bus transportation at CBCC
- 5:45 – 9:00 pm      **Evening Reception & Georgia Tourism Awards | Room: Tellus Museum**  
Progressive Experience
- Savoy Automobile Museum – Reception (5:45 – 6:45 pm)
  - Tellus Science Museum – Georgia Tourism Awards Program (7:15)
- Award Sponsored By: AJC/Access Atlanta*
- 9:30 pm      **Awards After Party / Hospitality**  
Continue the celebration and drop in for Live Music by *The C.A.R.D.S.*, all-star GACVB band.  
Conference Center rooms Stilesboro 2 & 3  
*Sponsored By: Accent Creative Group & Cartersville Bartow CVB*

## Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

- 7 – 8:15 am      **Breakfast / Networking | Exhibit Hall: Etowah I & II**
- **local coffee vendor (Noble & Main) to come in from 7am-1030am**
- 8:30 - 9:15 am      **GACVB General Membership Report & Annual Business Meeting**
- 9:15 - 10:00 am      **A Georgia Department of Economic Development Tourism Update**  
**Room: Stilesboro Hall II**
- 10:00 – 10:30 am      **Morning Break**
- 10:30 – 11:30 am      **Breakout Sessions (3) Three**
- Breakout I | Room: Stilesboro Hall I**
- The Tourism Ecosystem: Stakeholders, Segments, Viability & Tools**  
**Andy Williams**, Executive Director, Visit Roswell
- 
- Breakout II | Room: Carter Hall**
- Stretching the Dollars**  
Learn how some destinations are managing local tourism grants to provide stakeholder support and community partnerships in marketing, product development, cultural arts and more to maximize promotional dollars.
- Miriam Lewis**, Executive Director, Visit Dublin Georgia  
**Beth Bailey**, Finance & Administration Manager, Clayton County CVB  
**Ron Cheslock**, Tourism Director, Gilmer Chamber
- 



### **Breakout III | Room: Carter Hall (Same as GS)**

**Lodging Tax Rapid Fire – myth busting management of hotel motel tax:** an interactive session with Kennesaw State University's **Tyler Reinagel**, Associate Vice President of Economic Development.

11:30 – 12:30 pm **Closing General Session**

11:30 – 12:30 pm **Closing General Session | Room: Carter Hall**

#### **Destination Development | Tourism Beyond Lodging Taxes**

Join a dynamic discussion with Georgia's tourism leaders as we explore innovative, locally-driven strategies for community development. This session focuses on the integration of unique tourism products and experiences, balancing the needs and contributions of both residents and visitors. We'll delve into effect practices for managing visitor impact while fostering community growth and examine case studies where tourism has been a catalyst for sustainable economic and cultural enrichment.

#### **Featuring:**

**Billy Peppers**, City Manager, City of Canton

**Kyle Bennett**, Tourism Manager, Visit Woodstock GA

**Christie Gribble**, President, Fannin County Chamber of Commerce/Georgia's Blue Ridge

*Facilitated by Emily Hopkins, President, Georgia Downtown Association*

*Session Sponsor: Laurie Rowe & Company*



---

## **Exhibitors**

---

11Alive/Premion  
365 Degree Total Marketing  
Advertising Unlimited  
Alabama Living Magazine  
Accent Creative Group  
Advance Travel & Tourism  
Atlanta Magazine Custom Media  
Blue Elephant DMO Solutions, LLC  
Comcast Spotlight  
Compass Media  
CVB Digital  
DNR/Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites

Effectv  
Encore  
Georgia Magazine  
MediaOne Digital  
Phoenix Printing Group  
Pineapple Public Relations  
Response Marketing Group  
Rhyme and Reason Design  
Sojern  
The Atlanta Journal Constitution  
Zartico

---

**GACVB.com**

A decorative horizontal bar with multiple colors: yellow, orange, red, purple, blue, green, and yellow.

# Thank You to Our Partners!

## Our Host



## Annual Legacy Partners



## Annual Sustainer Partners



## Georgia Tourism Awards



## Awards After Party



## State Marketing Partner



## Leadership & Awards Luncheon Partners



## Travelblazers Awards



## Destination Partners



## Coffee Partners



## Conference Notebook Partners



706-886-6622 888-690-6622

## Conference Bag Partners



## Session Partners

