



**GEORGIA INTERNATIONAL AND
MARITIME TRADE CENTER AUTHORITY**
**SAVANNAH INTERNATIONAL TRADE &
CONVENTION CENTER**



ANNUAL REPORT | FY 2017



Partners

GIMTCA is proud of our partnership with the local municipalities. All cities renewed their Hotel/Motel tax agreements with the board for the next 20 years. Additionally, we have a 50 year agreement with Chatham County. These agreements indicate the strong support to our facility and mission. We appreciate each of them.



CITY OF POOLER
GEORGIA

A great place to Live, Work and Play



Local Legislative Delegation

Rep. **Carl Gilliard**
House Dist. 162

Rep. **Bill Hitchens**
House Dist. 161

Rep. **Jesse Petrea**
House Dist. 166

Rep. **Ron Stephens**
House Dist. 164

Rep. **Craig Gordon**
House Dist. 163

Sen. **Lester Jackson**
Sen. Dist. 2

Rep. **Mickey Stephens**
House Dist. 165

Sen. **Ben Watson**
Dist. 1

Mission Statement

To attract, develop and produce events of significant economic benefit to the people of Savannah, Chatham County and the State of Georgia, such as conventions, trade shows, public shows, expositions, meetings, banquets and conferences; and secondly, to facilitate local events promoting civic and community pride and quality of life within a sound financial context.

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Annual Report Presented by GIMTCA Board of Directors

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Bill Grainger
Grainger Companies

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Coastal Home Care

Ben Polote, Jr. – Vice Chairman
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Rob Hernandez
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Dennis Baxter – Treasurer
Retired

Joe Marinelli
Visit Savannah

Trip Tollison
Savannah Economic Development Authority



Chairman's Report

On behalf of the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority (GIMTCA), I express a sincere thanks to all the local cities (Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Savannah and Tybee Island) who extended their agreement with us to contribute 1 penny of the Hotel/Motel tax to support the convention center for the next 20 years. The Chatham County agreement is for 50 years. Additionally, we want to express our appreciation to Governor Nathan Deal, the Georgia State Representatives and Senators for approving \$3 million dollars to assist us in designing a much-needed expanded facility.



Mark Smith
Chairman

With this appropriation we will be able to start the design of a dynamic change to our facility which will increase our exhibit hall from 100k square feet to 200k square feet, add an additional 40k square foot ballroom, add additional meeting rooms, and add a parking deck. As stewards we are also moving forward in a partnership with a developer to support an additional 300 guest room hotel adjacent to the convention center. Both an expansion to our facility and development of a hotel adjacent to the convention center supports Governor Deal's efforts to ensure that Georgia remains the No. 1 place in the country to do business.

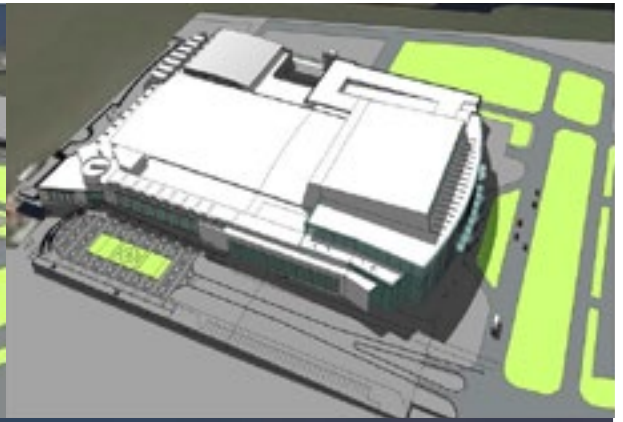
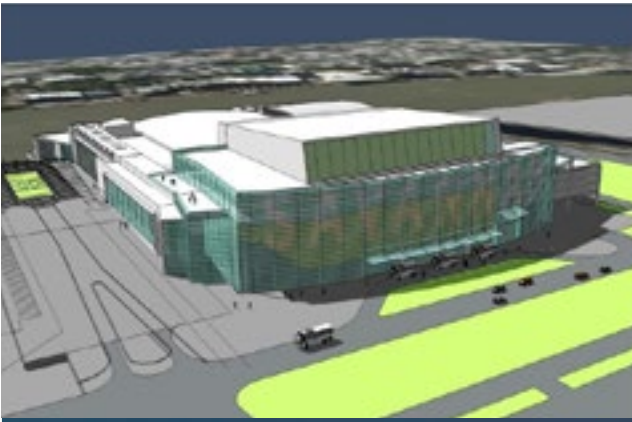
Our goal is to be ONE with our community-- to continue to be a community leader, to be a visionary, and to support and inspire future development and growth.



JULY 9 events **4,180** attendees

July began a busy summer season with the Georgia Association of Managers of Education Information Systems, Georgia Association of Water Professionals, and the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police all returning for their annual meetings. Airborne Law Enforcement Association also held their annual conference returning to the SITCC once again. Savannah College of Art and Design entertained incoming students with two separate Summer Swarm luncheons. The month ended with the 2016 Smith Drugs Customer Trade Show and CE Training.





Hotel and Convention Center Expansion

To be dynamic requires being bold. Twenty years ago the idea of building a convention center on an abandoned island was bold. Today a rigorous expansion of the original building and adding an additional 300 rooms on the same island is bold.

In the early 1990s the leadership of Chatham County, the City of Savannah, and the Chamber of Commerce developed a vision for a world class convention facility in Chatham County. They had mutually determined that this project would stimulate our economy through construction spending, visitor spending, and job growth. Ultimately a partnership was developed among our local governments, the State of Georgia, the taxpayers of Chatham County, and the hotel community. The taxpayers were promised that if they would approve a SPLOST vote designating \$37 million (\$15 million added later) for the Convention Center, the State would contribute \$18 million and the hotel community would support an increase of 1% in the hotel-motel tax to fund the operating deficit of the building.

All partners performed as agreed and the Convention Center became a

reality in 2000. The first event was a reading conference held in February that year.

There have been additional SPLOST and State appropriations since 2000. We have finished the building, acquired additional land, extended the River Walk, created a water ferry service, and renovated and maintained the building.

To date the local community has supported the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center campus in excess of \$150 million and the State has contributed more than \$41 million. Additionally we have secured Federal Grants, primarily to support the ferry system, in excess of \$11 million. Throughout the last 17 years, the Authority has fulfilled our promise that this project would not burden the local governments or taxpayers for operations and yearly capital improvements. Now we are facing an exciting challenge.

It is time to expand the building.

We have secured a self-funding hotel partner in the Songy Highroads group teamed with Omni Hotels and Resorts.

Since inception, the room base in Chatham County has grown from 8,000 rooms to 16,000 rooms. There are another 1,000 under construction and a 1,000+ in the pipeline. Several new properties are located in direct support of the Convention Center. We will soon have over 2,000 rooms either adjacent to or a short ferry ride away from the Convention Center.

It is time to expand the building.

We have many customers who need more space and many prospective customers that cannot meet here because we are too small. We have conducted feasibility studies and they all indicate

It is time to expand the building.

We have engaged the architects, looked at seven different possibilities, and have determined that the attached layout is the most efficient and economical.

We look forward to engaging our community and the State of Georgia as we pursue the funding necessary to expand our building.

It is time.



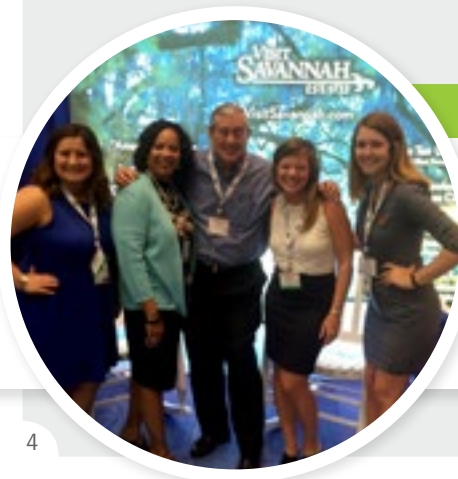
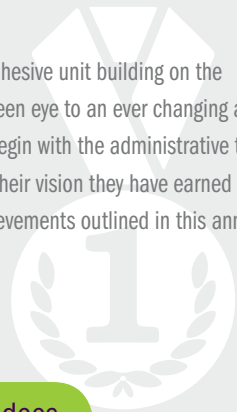
Be One, Be Honest, Be Stewards, and Be Dynamic:

these are the four core values which guide and direct every decision at The Savannah International Trade and Convention Center. Because of these specific and measurable qualities, the center has provided another year of success, growth and new opportunities.

Our direction and focus has made us an integral part of our unique city and culture.

Be One.

To Be One, is to be a team, a leader, a visionary, a cohesive unit building on the successful traditions of the past, yet looking with a keen eye to an ever changing and developing future. At the SITCC these expectations begin with the administrative team who model and practice these core values, Through their vision they have earned the support of the entire staff, which resulted in the achievements outlined in this annual report. We are a team. We are ONE.



AUGUST 11 events **4,398** attendees

August activities began with a new conference to Savannah. The Botanical Society of America 2016 Annual Conference hosted attendees from across the country and enjoyed the horticultural delights of Savannah. Also, for the first time, the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives met for their annual convention with CoC executives from across the United States. Next we hosted the Healthcare Convention and Exhibitors Association where both the Center and Visit Savannah Sales Teams were part of the Expo. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation/Georgia Crime Information Center Annual Training finished the busy month.



General Manager's Letter

Honestly, as I evaluate the growth and challenges of SITCC's 2016-17 operating year, it has been nothing but dynamic, both in challenges and successes.

Hurricane Matthew brought damage to the facility, but we still hosted the Red Cross as they provided shelter for individuals and families who had been more severely impacted. As my mother used to say, "In every storm there is a silver lining." From the storm winds of Matthew, a challenging time for Savannah, we hired 6 people who had been evacuees at the trade center. It feels good to provide neighbors temporary respite in times of emergency, but to be able to offer long term employment is a rewarding opportunity few experience.

The art community has also found a home in the Trade Center. Our vast expanses of blank walls have come to life with the artwork of local artists. Not only did we provide gallery space, we provided community events by hosting free artist showcases. Visitors to the center can enjoy the charm and uniqueness of the city as they are treated to the local cuisine and the artistic talents of our beautiful city. Savannah is known as the "Hostess City" and as dynamic stewards our mission is to establish a precedent to be a front runner in our industry.

As leaders, it is also with honest pride that as a team, we were the FIRST convention center in Georgia to obtain LEED GOLD certification. We accomplished this because we are a team, we are ONE and we care about our community and our environment.

As General Manager, I am proud of each and every milestone we have achieved and appreciate the support we received from our big sister organization, the Georgia World Congress Center Authority in Atlanta. The greatest reward is working side by side with each team and each team member, which makes us a whole - this is why we are ONE.



Sherrie Spinks
General Manager



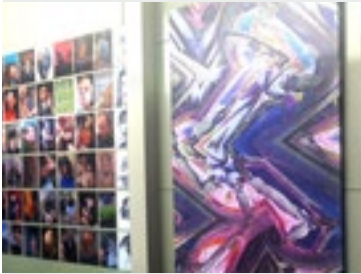
Frank Poe
Executive Director

SEPTEMBER 20 events 11,142 attendees

Craft beer aficionados kicked off the Labor Day weekend by attending The Annual Savannah Craft Brew Festival. Then General Motors rolled into town for their GM Fleet & Southeast Regional Commercial Conference attended by GM commercial representatives. The South University Anesthesiologist Hooding and the Georgia Ports Authority's State of the Port address and luncheon took place in the middle of the month. Fran Drescher (actress best known for her role in the hit TV series The Nanny) was the guest speaker at the annual St. Joseph's/Candler Foundation Smart Women's Luncheon & Expo. Closing out the month was the Farmer Insurance Group Topper Club Convention with top agents and district managers in attendance.



Be Dynamic.



Art Program

The Savannah International Trade and Convention Center is the showpiece of Hutchinson Island; it is also the showplace for local artists and their art. This year was the premier of the Local Area Artist Showcase which featured permanent exhibits in partnership between the Savannah Children’s Museum and the Carts with HeARTS program-- an outreach program of the Savannah Children’s Heart Center. Robert Morris, a well-known Savannahian and artist also developed a partnership with SITCC. He has provided a long-term exhibit of his work which celebrates the Savannah River and the beautiful low country. His paintings can be seen in the facility.

Many other local artists have also contributed to the Local Artist Exhibit-- each a unique expression of technique and medium- all showcasing the local beauty. This program will be an ongoing collaboration with artists and the community.



OCTOBER 8 events 5,085 attendees

October opened with the American Institute of Architects who attended the 2016 South Atlantic Regional Conference. October 8th, the SITCC became a temporary shelter for evacuees who returned to Savannah following Hurricane Matthew. Coincidentally and appropriate for the weather conditions at the time, the International Association of Emergency Managers met at the Center for their Annual Conference. Emergency managers from six countries attended the event. This was the first time the conference was held in Savannah, but they’ve agreed to return and host their 2019 and 2022 conference in Savannah regardless of the weather conditions. The month ended with the American Association of Cereal Chemists returning to Savannah and the Trade & Convention Center for their 2016 meeting.



LEED Gold Certification

The quality of life in any community is the responsibility of all; SITCC is a leading steward in contributing to sustainable best practices in not only the City of Savannah, but also in the State of Georgia. SITCC is the first convention center in Georgia to receive the LEED Gold (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) recognition from the U.S. Green Building Council.

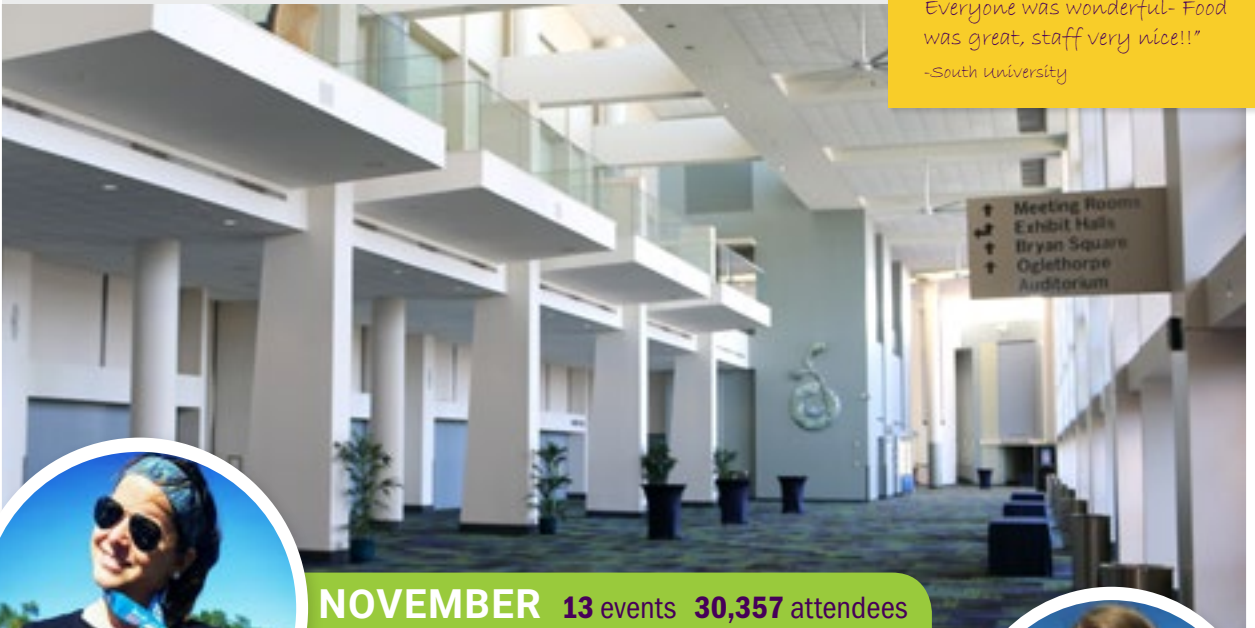
The LEED certification rating system validates best sustainable practices already in place in a facility and focuses on improvement in other areas to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. The overarching goal is a comprehensive approach to sustainability. To achieve this goal SITCC completed



an ASHRAE Level I Energy Audit to earn a building score of 60 points for an existing building; receiving Renewable Energy Certificates for 100% of energy usage from wind power offsets; 41% percent of the building occupants using alternative commuting options, and reducing water consumption in the building by 32%. "Convention centers sometimes have difficulty comparing operational efficiencies due to the unique nature of the industry--from event frequency to size or type," said Tim Trefzer, LEED Accredited Professional and Sustainability Manager. Although a daunting task as a community steward, SITCC took the challenge and once again became a local and state leader and model.

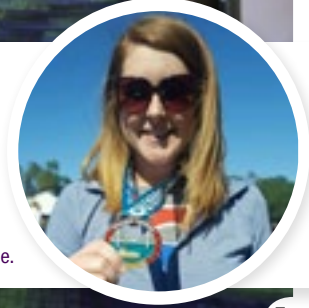
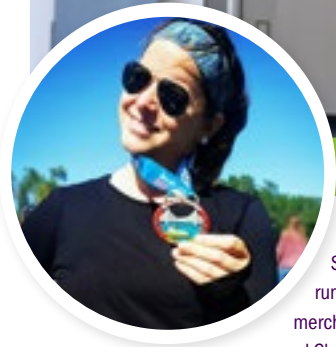


Everyone was wonderful- Food was great, staff very nice!!
-South University



NOVEMBER 13 events 30,357 attendees

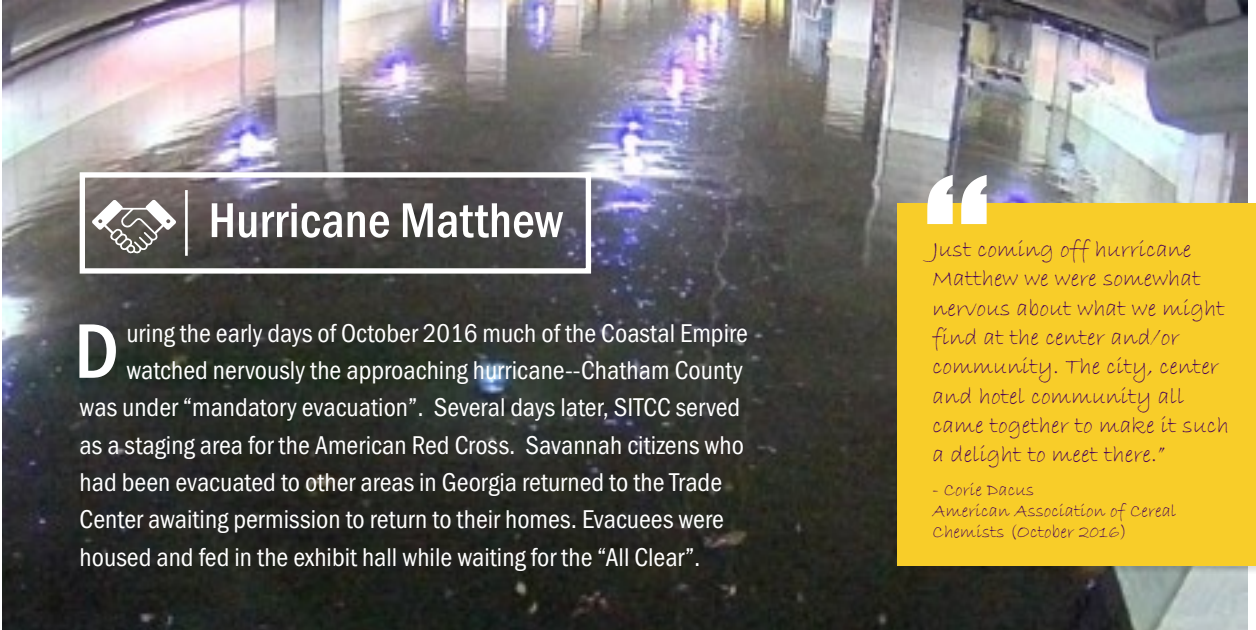
November brought cooler temperatures and runners from around the world to Savannah for the annual Rock-N-Roll Marathon. For the sixth consecutive year, runners walked through our doors to pick up their race packets and browse the new merchandise. Thousands of locals got a jump start on their Christmas shopping with the annual Christmas Made in the South Show. November also brought three new shows to the Center: the USENIX Association Symposium and Operating Systems Design, the Used Truck Association Annual Conference, and the Georgia Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Annual Conference.



Be Stewards.



To Be a Steward does not allow overseeing in only times of prosperity and good fortune, but a steward also serves in times of need and loss. Savannah is characterized by beautiful urban landscapes and progressive ideas. As hostess city of Georgia, Savannah has always considered itself a charmed city. However, last year, the city suffered the damage of Hurricane Matthew. SITCC was there and served through it all.



Hurricane Matthew

During the early days of October 2016 much of the Coastal Empire watched nervously the approaching hurricane--Chatham County was under "mandatory evacuation". Several days later, SITCC served as a staging area for the American Red Cross. Savannah citizens who had been evacuated to other areas in Georgia returned to the Trade Center awaiting permission to return to their homes. Evacuees were housed and fed in the exhibit hall while waiting for the "All Clear".



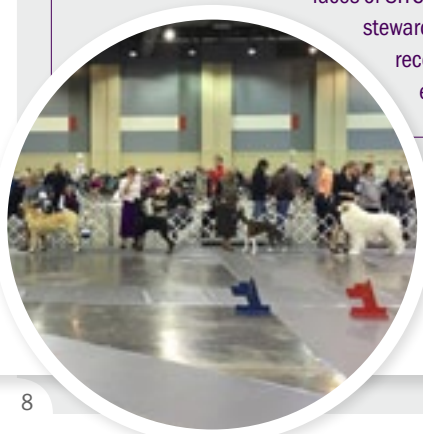
Just coming off hurricane Matthew we were somewhat nervous about what we might find at the center and/or community. The city, center and hotel community all came together to make it such a delight to meet there."

*- Corie Dacus
American Association of Cereal Chemists (October 2016)*



Babett "BB" Biggins

One of the displaced Savannah residents, she and seven of her family members had been evacuated to shelters in Augusta to escape Hurricane Matthew. Days later they returned to Savannah to await the "All Clear". While anxiously waiting to return to her home, BB Biggins observed the Red Cross Volunteers sweeping the exhibit hall floors, cleaning restrooms and other public areas. Not being one to sit by she volunteered to help. One day while cleaning, Thomas Hutchinson, Senior Operations Manager of SITCC, noticed her quality of work and asked her if she needed a job. "Yes!" She began working through a temporary staffing agency, was hired part-time in January and by June she became a full time Housekeeper. She is one of the many faces of SITCC who is an example of perseverance, stewardship, and teamwork. She was also recognized by her peers and voted as the employee of the quarter in FY16.



DECEMBER 11 events 7,660 attendees

December went to the dogs....the pups of the Savannah Kennel Club! Best in Show went to Striker, a cocker spaniel, and Jana, a dachshund, won Reserve Best in Show. The Center kicked off the holiday events hosting the Annual Reindeer Run and holiday gatherings for Winn Army Hospital, Memorial Health, Curtis B. Cooper and Gulfstream.



Employee of the Quarter / Year

Everyone is part of the team, but once a quarter the team chooses ONE that has gone above and beyond to receive Employee of the Quarter. To be recognized, their peers must nominate them for performance which exceeds the daily expectations--an employee who helps others, an employee who finds solutions, an employee who puts

guest service before personal service, an employee who is responsible, and an employee who is reliable. This year's Employees of the Quarter display all of those characteristics--they are people who are a pleasure to work with and employees who put a unique face and personality to the core values of SITCC. These outstanding employees are:

Employee of the Year

Nyosha Thomas

The highest honor an employee can earn. All four Employee of the Quarter winners are considered for the top honor which is chosen by the senior leadership.

First Quarter

James Smith

Banquet Server, a contributing member of the team since 2013.

Second Quarter

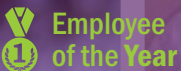
Dianna Simmons

Event Service Specialist, a contributing member of the team since 2016.

Fourth Quarter

Babett Biggins

Housekeeper; Babett is also featured in the Be Stewards section of the report and has been a contributing member of the team for 8 months.



Employee of the Year

Third Quarter

Nyosha Thomas

Steward, a contributing member of the team since 2015.

Although only four of the many employees have received public recognition, SITCC realizes every employee is essential for the professional, personal and efficient operation of the center. We celebrate these outstanding individuals and recognize their daily contributions.

JANUARY 18 events 35,673 attendees

January proved that SITCC's outlook was bright! We kicked off a new year by hosting the Savannah Economic Development Authority's breakfast and the Savannah Chamber of Commerce's lunch to discuss the future of our community, followed closely by two of our annual clients: Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and Gulfstream. Two new shows came and blew us away with their outstanding attendance. The Georgia Chapter of the National Beta Club brought their senior students to their annual conference. Jurassic Quest took us back to a pre-historic time and also set attendance records both days of their show.



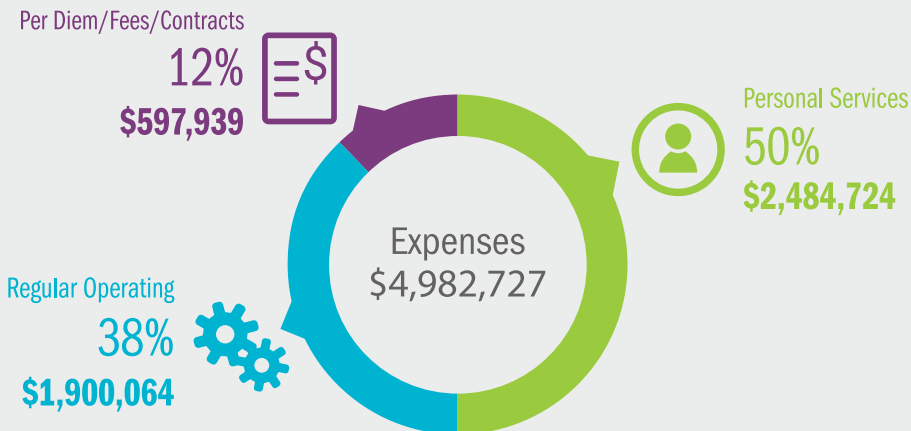
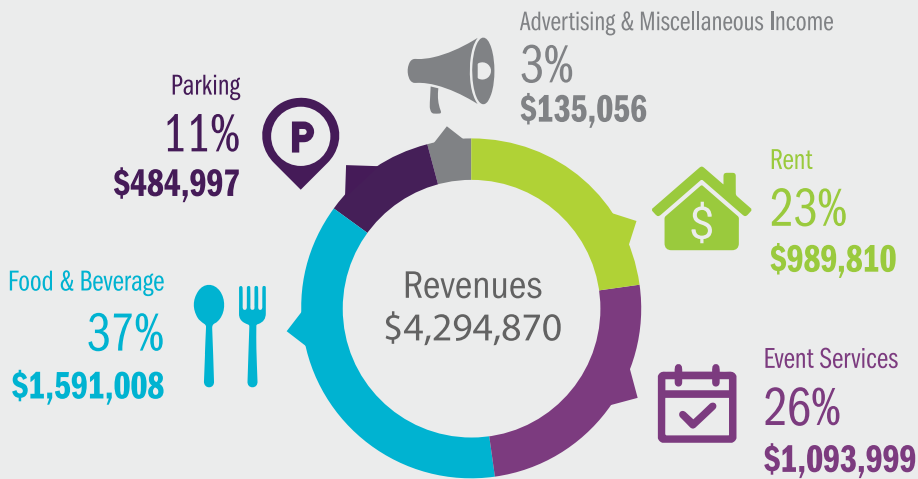
Be Honest.

To Be Honest, is to be better than good enough, it is to be fiscally responsible with the local, state and federal dollars received and to provide economic impact support to the local community and the State of Georgia. Last year the SITCC played a significant role in the economies of Chatham County and the State of Georgia. The economic impact is measured in job creation, labor income and total economic output.



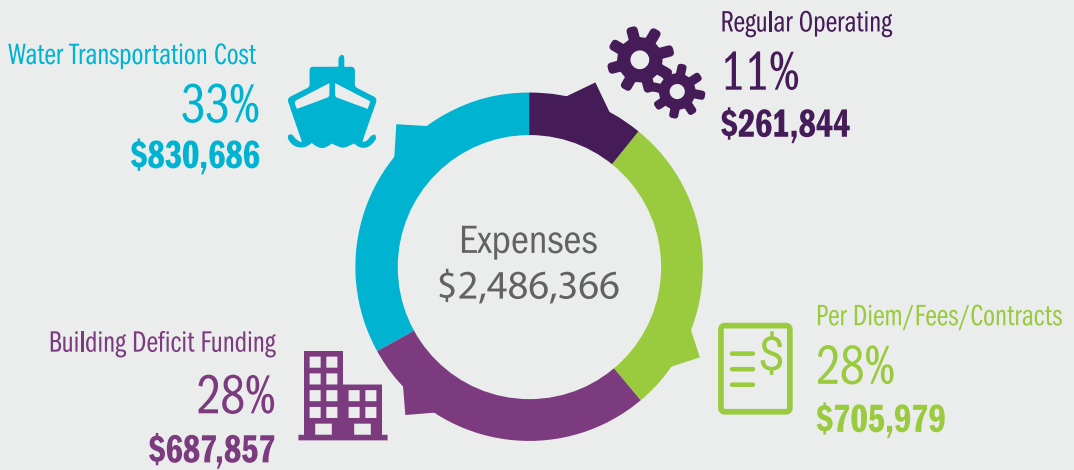
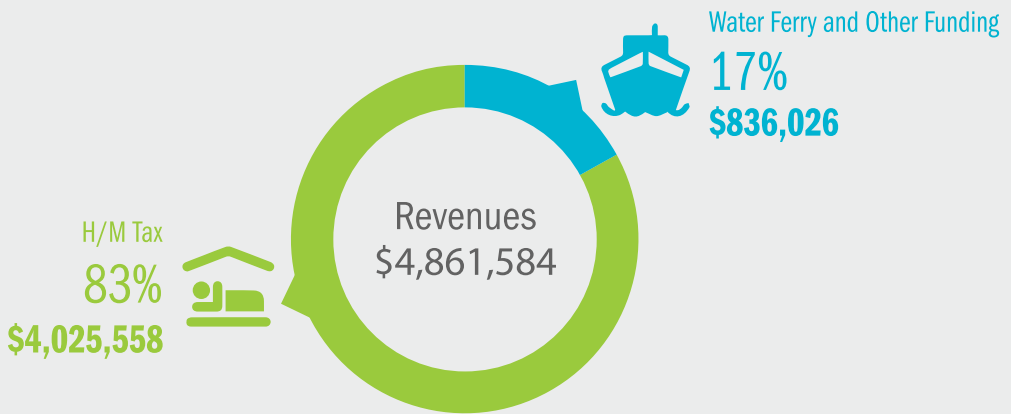
Financials

Savannah International Trade & Convention Center



Net Income (Loss): \$(687,857)

Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority



Net Before Capital & Depreciation: \$2,375,218

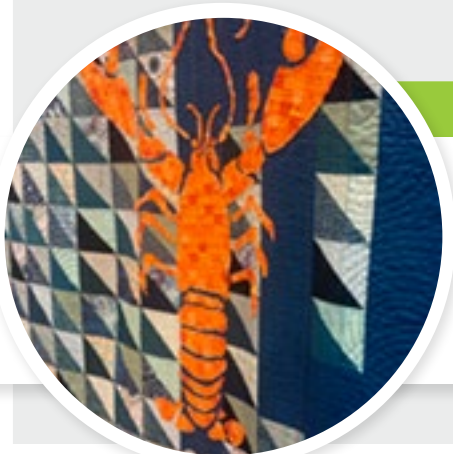
Capital: \$971,232

Reserve for Roof Replacement: \$200,000

Net Income: \$1,203,986

FEBRUARY 11 events 19,150 attendees

The Modern Quilt Guild descended upon Savannah with approximately 400 quilts in tow to display throughout SITCC. It was the debut of their new annual East Coast show, QuiltCon. The conference included workshops that demonstrated the newest sewing machines and exhibits that showcased the newest ideas in the industry. Speaking of new shows, the Association for Challenge Course Technology also came in February and brought outdoor enthusiasts to learn about cutting edge technology and advances in the outdoor park industry. ACCT even gave the SITCC staff a chance to participate in their ACCT Olympics-- our team placed fourth out of nine teams. Not bad for our first-time competitors.



Economic Impact

Prepared by:
Ken Heaghney & Peter Bluestone
Fiscal Research Center
Georgia State University



36

Trade Shows and Conventions

35,155

Attendees



23

Public/Consumer Shows

107,420

Attendees



109

Corporate Events, Meeting & Other

32,230

Attendees

Total Hosted Events: **168**

Total Attendance: **174,805**

Being Honest allowed SITCC to deliver a significant contribution to the local and state economies. It also improved the lives of local and state residents by providing meaningful job opportunities resulting in a better Georgia.



New Dollars to Chatham County

91.9 million



Total Economic Impact to Chatham County

141.7 million



Economic Impact on Labor Income to Chatham County

46.5 million



Employment to Chatham County

1,645 jobs



Great Job all Around Thanks!"

- EPA Southeastern Diesel

MARCH 22 events **27,203** attendees

March was another amazing month for the Savannah Boat & Outdoor Show, as well as for the Southern Women's Show. The Courtney Kupets Pink Gymnastics Invitational tumbled their way into their 6th annual competition. South University had their annual hooding Ceremony, and the Center hosted smaller groups that included: Vacation Rental Managers Association Eastern Regional Meeting, Best Western District Meeting, Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition Meeting, and the Nestle Purina PetCare Atlantic Region Meeting.





Modernization

Maintaining the building is also part of our approach to integrity and honesty. The ballroom restrooms underwent a complete renovation. The old tile and drywall was stripped to the studs. The newly completed restrooms are modern and elegant, which complements the style of the ballroom. Guests enjoy the state-of-the-art facilities, not only because they are visually attractive, but because they are modern and easy to maintain.

As part of the modernization and update to the facility, Phase II of the new carpet project was completed; now all of the meeting rooms also have the bold, new look that the rest of the facility has enjoyed.

A flexible parking gate system was also added this year which creates additional revenue for the facility.

Clients also have the option of using the Riverside Esplanade, the installation of a 200-amp circuit provides clients the option of offering concession stands, outside entertainment, or other amenities requiring considerable electrical amperage.



(Attendees) enjoyed the show and most come every year."

- Bob Hunt
Carolina Shows
February 2017



My attendees thought it was well organized and very good location."

- Alexandria Anwyl-Davies
Homeaway Software
March 2017



Your staff always does an amazing job and makes us feel "at home." I'm especially appreciative of Kristi's flexibility and quick response to our ever changing agenda."

- Gulfstream Aerospace
(March Customer Advisory Board)



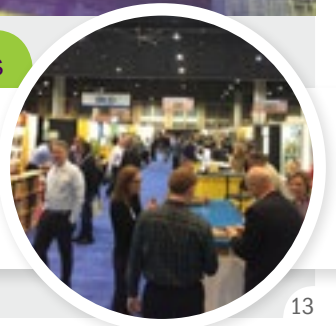
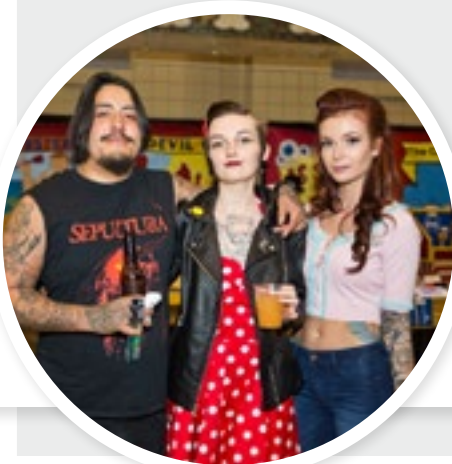
Great at providing food options and the feedback we heard was excellent. Attentive and well trained staff. Great suggestions and worked with us on reductions in the face of budget issues."

- AACC International



APRIL 14 Events, 6,255 attendees

Emergency Managers of Georgia along with Association County Commissioners of Georgia had another successful year during their annual conference. Savannah Tattoo Festival was such a success the previous year that they returned for another event.





Providing exceptional food and beverage service for every guest and event is the primary goal of Savor Savannah. As stewards, we challenged ourselves to source ingredients locally for as many recipes as possible. To help achieve this we became a member of Georgia Grown which is a statewide network of farmers and suppliers who can fulfill our needs. An added benefit of our partnership, Georgia Grown has expanded from three providers to eleven

and growing in less than a year. This partnership has increased our ability to offer local, sustainable options to our visitors from around the globe. Using locally grown and sustainable ingredients has also influenced our menus that celebrates the food of the Low Country.

As members of the service industry, Savor's leadership team is also challenged to serve and to become a part of community organizations. Jamie Parks, Food and Beverage Director, serves on the City of Savannah Tourism Advisory Committee and serves as a board member of the Tourism Leadership Council. As a department,

Savor's Leadership Team contributed 1,699 community service hours.

Savor also gives back to the community by donating food to local community groups. Some of the local charitable groups, organizations and boards who have been helped include: Old Savannah Mission, Emmaus House Soup Kitchen-United Ministries of Savannah, Second Harvest Coastal Region, Tourism Leadership Council, Ocean Exchange and many others. As stewards of the community, reflecting Savors' commitment to sustainability, 11,029 pounds of food was donated to agencies who are also committed to serving our community.

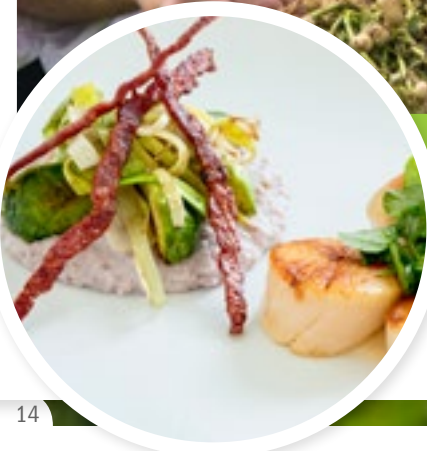


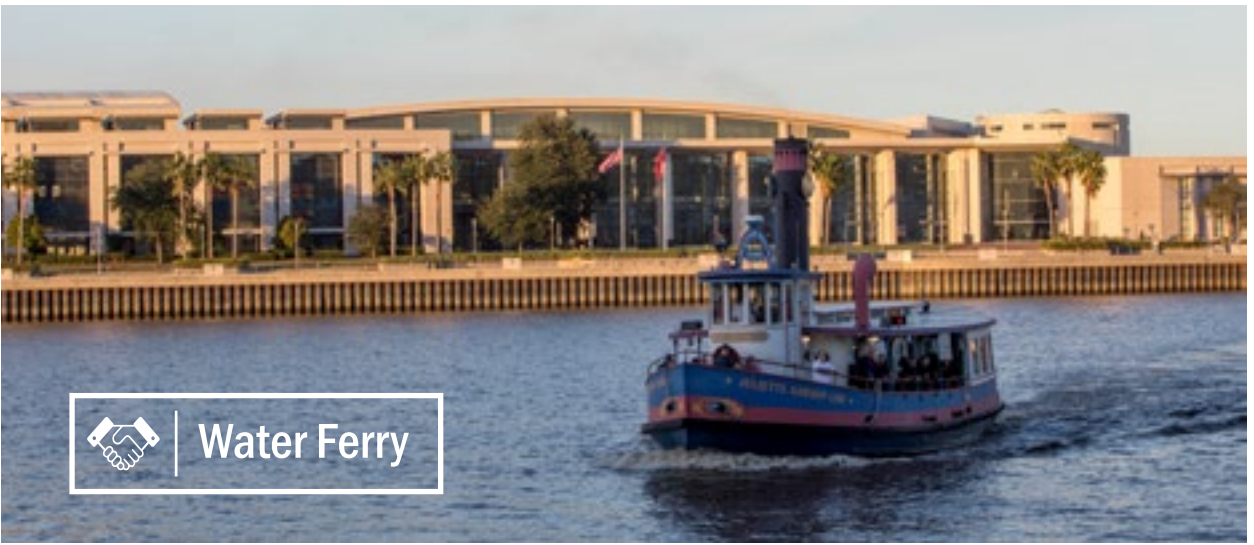
“Extremely Pleased with quality of food and staff. They also did an amazing job of flipping a general session room into a beautiful and great tasting luncheon for 500 in about 40 minutes! Kristi was fantastic to work with an I wish I had gotten the names of the service staff!”
- TN Valley Public Power Assn., Inc.

“We love SAVOR! The extra “goodies” for our exhibitors, they certainly appreciated it! Thanks!”
-Springtime Made in the South

MAY 15 events 4,794 attendees

Wedding bells were in the air for the Sima Patel- Samit Patel wedding reception. This was followed by the annual conferences for the American Society of Microbiology, the Georgia Credit Union Affiliates and the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association. Skinmedica, Holtec International, and Polote Corporation Graduation Celebration wrapped up an exciting month at the center.

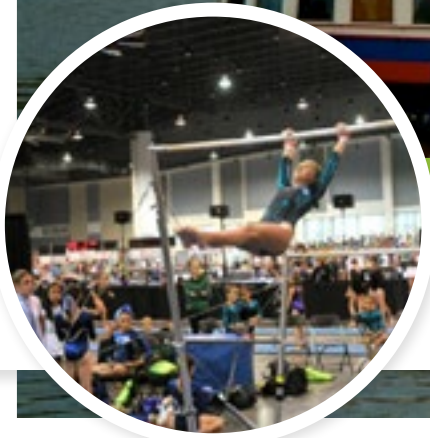




 | **Water Ferry**

The Savannah Trade and Convention Center is a unique and memorable venue; it is located on Hutchinson Island across the river from Savannah’s historic River Street. As a steward for many of the guests who attend conferences and exhibits at the SITCC, a water ferry is one of the memorable amenities offered. SITCC understands that many of the guests to Savannah lodge on the city-side of the river and often do not have access to convenient transportation; for these guests the water ferry is the solution.

With 6,700 hours of service, 40,364 trips across the Savannah River, carrying an average of 99 passengers per hour, total ridership for 2016-17 was 665,162. The Marine Department’s total budget was \$830,685 and ended the year under budget. The Marine Department was accident free and passed all Coast Guard inspections without any infractions and added a new landing dock near City Hall.



JUNE 13 events 15,695 attendees

The 2017 Fiscal year ended on a high. We kicked off the month with SCAD’s Senior Furniture Exhibition and Reception and rolled right into a brand new consumer show, Vintage Market Days. Our repeat groups included: Georgia Municipal Association, South University’s graduation and the National YMCA Gymnastics Competition.







Savannah International Trade & Convention Center

One International Drive, PO Box 248, Savannah, Georgia 31402-0248
savtcc.com