

GREIA Annual Meeting Celebrates Industry



2015 GREIA Chairman Eric Collins, Georgia Power - Plant Hammond, passes the gavel to 2016 GREIA Chairman Cathy Kerce (LR XV), JEM MFG, LLC.



President and CEO of the Kansas Global Trade Services and Chairman of the Industry Trade Advisory Committee on Small and Minority Business Karyn Page speaks on foreign trade agreements at the GREIA annual meeting.

The Chamber's Greater Rome Existing Industries Association hosted its annual meeting on December 8th at Coosa Country Club, celebrating the more than 100 existing industries in Rome and Floyd County and highlighting their involvement in the Chamber and the community.

"Existing industries in Rome and Floyd County play crucial roles in the prosperity of Rome and Floyd County," said 2016 Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce Chairman Curtis Gardner (LR XXVII), Sonny's Real Pit Bar-B-Q. "It's extremely important that we recognize their roles in our community and thank them for their continuous support. With our manufacturers' current jobs and investments, our small businesses also benefit."

Approximately 50 individuals from different manufacturing companies in Rome and Floyd County attended this year's annual GREIA meeting. During the meeting, attendees heard from the President and CEO of the Kansas Global Trade Services and Chairman of the Industry Trade Advisory Committee on Small and Minority Business Karyn Page. Ms. Page highlighted the most promising markets to export, as well as the education and awareness of foreign trade agreements.

Additionally, outgoing 2015 GREIA Chairman Eric Collins, Georgia Power - Plant Hammond, thanked the 2015 GREIA board for their service. Mr. Collins explained that throughout the year, the Chamber's GREIA board looks at different ways to help support local industries by focusing on manufacturers' needs.

GREIA focuses monthly meetings on topics pertinent to manufacturing such as supply, safety, logistics, and workforce. Any manufacturer who is a member of the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce is automatically a member of GREIA.

Mr. Collins recognized Cathy Kerce (LR XV), JEM MFG, LLC, as the 2016 GREIA Chairman.

"I am very honored to be chosen to serve as the Chair of the Greater Rome Existing Industries Association," said Ms. Kerce. "GREIA is committed in ensuring that Rome and Floyd County's economic future is one that can be competitive in a global economy, and I look forward to continuing that goal."

Manufacturers in the Rome and Floyd County community represented by GREIA provide hundreds of primary jobs so residents can have quality occupations to support themselves and their families. This substantial manufacturing presence in Rome and Floyd County offsets property and school taxes, meaning more money can be kept in the pockets of residents to be spent in the local economy through goods and services.

"It's a ripple effect," added Mr. Gardner. "Employees of our manufacturers stimulate the local economy by living and playing in Rome and Floyd County, and that goes unnoticed. Oftentimes, it is these employees and their families who shop in our local stores and small businesses, eat at our local restaurants and use our local services. Having manufacturing in our community truly boosts each sector of the business community. Without it, economic growth would be minimal."

Special recognition was also given to Gary Downey, retiring Plant Manager of Bekaert Corporation. Mr. Downey's leadership in rebuilding the Rome facility while leading a \$45 million expansion will retain hundreds of primary jobs in our community.

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