



## Summer 2010

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### Welcome Back to InvestAtlanta

InvestAtlanta Summer 2010 highlights how busy this year has been for the Commerce & Entrepreneurship department of the Atlanta Development Authority. We recently welcomed our newest team member, Amanda Shailendra (she has provided a modest bio in this issue). We are excited to add Amanda's skills and experience and know that you will appreciate working with her.

We also welcome Sony Ericsson, Novelis, Corinthian Colleges and Equinix as they arrive and expand operations in Atlanta. We look forward to working with the city's newest corporate citizens. As usual, Gregg Simon and Danielle Fernandes have been traveling in order to attract business to the city of Atlanta. Trips to Boston, San Francisco, New Orleans and India kept our team on the road this spring and summer.

In this issue Danielle Fernandes writes about her trip to India with the Innovation Crescent Regional Partnership. ADA, along with its partners, met with Indian life sciences companies. Gregg Simon writes about his business engagement efforts in Boston, New Orleans, and Chicago. Amanda has an update on the State of Georgia's Entertainment Tax Credit.



ADA's Commerce & Entrepreneurship team:  
Gregg Simon, Amanda Shailendra, Danielle Fernandes, and Charles Whatley

Thank you for subscribing to InvestAtlanta. We are dedicated to providing useful information and news about commerce and industry in Atlanta. Please let us know how we are doing. We welcome your suggestions.

Charles Whatley  
Director of Commerce and Entrepreneurship

## New Employee Spotlight: Amanda Shailendra



Amanda Shailendra recently joined the Commerce and Entrepreneurship team as our newest project manager for business engagement at Atlanta Development Authority. She is responsible for marketing the city of Atlanta to potential new businesses as well as assisting existing companies with new investment and growth opportunities.

Prior to joining ADA, Amanda worked more than four years for the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD). While at GDEcD, she was promoted four times, beginning as an associate project manager and eventually becoming director of special projects. Amanda worked with domestic and international companies investing in Georgia throughout her time at GDEcD. Some of these include: KIA Motors, Petco, Beko Technologies, Premium Waters, and Mitsubishi Power Systems. She also represented the department on interagency committees for the State of Georgia including water, stimulus implementation, and incentives and bond financing. Amanda is an alumna of LEAD Atlanta (class of 2007-2008) and is currently co-chair of the LEAD class of 2010-2011. She sits on the board of trustees for Atlanta Ballet and recently served on the Executive Director Search Committee. She is a former member of the NAIOP Future Leaders Program and serves on the organization's government affairs committee. Amanda has been a member of Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW), Atlanta Sister Cities Commission, and the Junior League of Atlanta.

A native of Augusta, Ga., Amanda earned her bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University and a master of Science in International Affairs from Georgia Tech. She and her husband Paul live in the Collier Hills neighborhood of Atlanta.

## ADA on the International Scene

The Atlanta Development Authority has seen an increase in international activity in 2010. Despite the general slowdown in the nation's economy, Atlanta has experienced strong interest from foreign investors.

The year started with an ADA led mission to India. Danielle Fernandes led members of the Innovation Crescent Regional Partnership to India in February to meet with life science companies interested in expanding into the United States. Since the mission, three life science companies have visited Atlanta to seek real estate and business development opportunities. ADA will be returning to India early next year as interest from that region grows.

In April, Danielle traveled to Israel to participate in a seminar with Project Interchange, an institute of the American Jewish Committee. This in-depth educational travel seminar provided participants with an overview of contemporary Israel and a better understanding of Israel-India-U.S. relations, national politics and economy, history and religion, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Participants were introduced to differing points of view on issues in Israeli politics and society, and had the opportunity to meet with leading Israeli and Palestinian academics, policymakers and hi-tech industry leaders.



Project Interchange delegates, Gisela Ghani, Alesig Consulting, and Danielle Fernandes, Atlanta Development, in Israel on the American Jewish Community's Project Interchange



Representatives from the Innovation Crescent Regional Partnership at Hanging Gardens in Mumbai.

ADA has also hosted a number of trade delegations so far this year. ADA and the City of Atlanta recently hosted the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB). Shaikh Mohammed and the Bahrain delegation, which included senior dignitaries, were in Atlanta for several days visiting the local business community, from small businesses to business leaders. Mayor of Atlanta Kasim Reed signed an agreement with the EDB to facilitate strong commercial and economic ties between the city of Atlanta and the Persian Gulf nation.

International economic development has picked up even more since the resurgence of the EB-5 visa program. The EB-5 visa for immigrant investors is a U.S. visa that provides a method of obtaining a green card for foreign nationals who invest money in the U.S. To obtain the visa, individuals must invest at least \$1 million, creating at least 10 jobs. If investing in certain qualified investments or regional centers with high unemployment rates, the required investment amount is \$500,000. Atlanta is a regional center, which makes the required investment amount \$500,000. ADA is now working with several regional centers and projects to use this program for alternate project financing.

For more information on ADA's upcoming international business recruiting efforts or the EB-5 program contact Danielle Fernandes at [dfernandes@atlantada.com](mailto:dfernandes@atlantada.com)

## ADA Domestic Business Recruitment Trips

Spring and early summer have been busy for the Commerce and Entrepreneurship business engagement team. Our department travels outside of Georgia to market the city of Atlanta to businesses and their consultants for their consideration for future projects. Some trips are tied to a trade show or conference and others are to a targeted city to call on businesses. The team traveled to Boston in March, CoreNet New Orleans in April, BIO 2010 Chicago in May and Area Development Consultants Forum in San Francisco in June.

"We utilize a variety of strategies to promote the City of Atlanta as a business location. Many of our project leads come from partners such as the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Georgia Department of Economic Development and Georgia Power," says Gregg Simon, manager of business engagement. "We also want to be proactive and generate our own leads, making sure that the city of Atlanta is on the radar screen of businesses as they plan their future real estate needs."

The Boston trip was the third annual trip for ADA. The team met with five businesses headquartered in Massachusetts, three real estate developers, five real estate firms, one incentives consultant, two urban planning firms, and one construction company. Some of the businesses we met already have operations in Georgia and others do not. The businesses included life science companies, retail operations and manufacturers. One of the businesses we met, Legal Sea Foods, opened a restaurant in Atlanta two years ago after we met with them in 2007 during a previous trip. Our trip also resulted in a favorable article in the Boston Globe, generating excellent attention for the city of Atlanta in Boston.

The CoreNet conference in New Orleans is a semi-annual conference attracting roughly 2,000 corporate real estate executives from all over the country. The three-day event featured seminars of different topics such as locating life science facilities and provided excellent networking opportunities.



Gregg Simon outside of office supply retailer Staples' corporate center in Framingham, MA



The Innovation Crescent Regional Partnership booth at BIO 2010 Chicago. Pictured left to right are: Molly Taylor (Metro Atlanta Chamber), Gregg Simon (Atlanta Development Authority), Michael Hughes (Cobb County Office of Economic Development) and Nick Masino (Partnership Gwinnett)

BIO 2010 in Chicago was ADA's fourth trip to this annual conference that attracts more than 15,000 life science executives annually. ADA exhibited inside of the Georgia Pavilion as a part of the Innovation Crescent Regional Partnership (ICRP), a regional marketing initiative from Atlanta to Athens promoting this region to life science businesses. The Georgia presence was coordinated by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, which did a fantastic job. This effort is an example of the wonderful regional cooperation and how we collaborate to stretch our marketing funds. While at this show, the ICRP hosted a networking event for real estate consultants representing businesses in the process of global real estate searches. Firms including Grubb & Ellis, Cushman & Wakefield, Deloitte, Jones Lang LaSalle, Forest City Life Science Group, Suffolk Construction and others attended our event.

Lastly, our team attended the Area Development Consultants Forum in San Francisco in June. This semi-annual, limited attendance event is meant to match economic developers with site location consultants. At this conference, site location consulting and corporate real estate professionals examined the corporate decision-making process as the economy continues to emerge from the recession. The Consultant's Forum has built a reputation as a no-nonsense, insightful event where you'll learn about the latest deciding factors in the site selection process from the best minds in site consulting, real estate, and corporate real estate.

"These trips help us to maintain direct relationships with contacts in real estate that have been developed over the years and to make new contacts", Simon added. "During these trips we have recruited businesses like Legal Sea Foods, developed new project leads to work over time and we have planted the seeds for future projects. Competition to attract businesses and jobs is fierce between states and countries and these trips help Atlanta to be in consideration," concluded Simon.

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## Atlanta Welcomes New and Expanding Businesses

In the first half of 2010, the city of Atlanta welcomed news of firms relocating to the city and companies who already have a local presence expanding their Atlanta operations. ADA was instrumental in attracting these businesses and creating the incentive packages that ultimately helped them choose Atlanta over other locations.

Most recently, Sony Ericsson announced its selection of Atlanta as the home of its Americas headquarters. This will serve as the hub for the company's regional operations in North America and Latin America. The company's North America regional headquarters facilities were formerly located in Research Triangle Park, N.C., and its Latin America regional hub operations were based in Miami, Fla. The new headquarters in Atlanta will house a range of employees, including the executive team, sales and marketing staff and operations.

Anderson Teixeira, president of Sony Ericsson Region Americas, cited Atlanta's impressive office space, a diverse pool of talent, close proximity to operator partner AT&T and easy access to Latin America as contributing factors in the company's decision.

Another newcomer to the intown Atlanta market is Corinthian Colleges, a California-based company that runs more than 100 technical, health care and business colleges in the U.S. and Canada. They signed a lease on the former Cub Foods grocery store in Greenbriar Mall and began renovations on the 63,000-square-foot space in the spring. Corinthian Colleges is one of the largest post-secondary education companies in North America. They offer short-term diploma programs and associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

Novelis Inc. made headlines earlier this year when it announced it would consolidate its North American headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio into its world headquarters in Atlanta. A \$10.2 billion global leader in aluminum products and aluminum can recycling, Novelis first arrived in Atlanta in 2005. The consolidation will add approximately 80 new positions to Novelis' Buckhead office, bringing the total number of employees to about 220 by the end of this year.

This move is the latest in a series of steps taken by Novelis over the past year designed to realign its global operations, consolidate corporate functions, enhance organizational effectiveness, increase efficiencies and reduce costs.

Global data center service provider Equinix is also expanding its Atlanta presence with an additional data center at 180 Peachtree Street. The company's content and service provider customer base includes Apple, CBS Broadcasting, Facebook, Google, Netflix, YouTube, Yahoo!, Microsoft, Adobe and DirectTV Limelight Networks. Atlanta won out over Fairfax, Va., Toronto, Dallas, Seattle, and Santa Clara, Calif. Switch and Data is building out 80,000 square feet of space on the second and

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## Entertainment Tax Credit Update

ADA recently participated in the Metro Atlanta Chamber's Entertainment Tax Credit Forum, along with partners from the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the entertainment industry. Since the passage of the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act in 2008, the number of productions in Georgia has increased by 400 percent. More than 100 feature films and television series have been produced in Georgia in the past two years, placing the state in the top five in the nation for film and TV production. The tax credit is also available for video game animation and development, commercials, and music videos.

What does this influx of film, music, and digital gaming productions mean for Atlanta? The entertainment industry is estimated to employ 25,000 Georgians, the majority of whom are in Atlanta. As we continue to become a top location for productions, these jobs numbers will increase dramatically. The increase in production is a welcome addition to our already thriving media industry presence. CNN, Turner Broadcasting, and Tyler Perry Studios already provide a major economic boon to our city. Additionally, our educational programs at Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, and SCAD Atlanta continue to provide the talented workforce needed for this specialized and thriving industry.

So far, the state and city have assisted several major TV and film productions including *The Blind Side*, *Zombieland*, *Drop Dead Diva*, and of course Tyler Perry's *Meet the Browns* and *House of Payne*. If you are interested in more information about the potential 30 percent tax credit for qualified production and post-production expenditures, please call Amanda Shailendra at 404-614-8299 or email [ashailendra@atlantada.com](mailto:ashailendra@atlantada.com).

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