

# GREATER COLUMBUS<sup>GA</sup>

Chamber of Commerce



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### On the Inside:

Explore the art, community, opportunities and innovations of this remarkable region.





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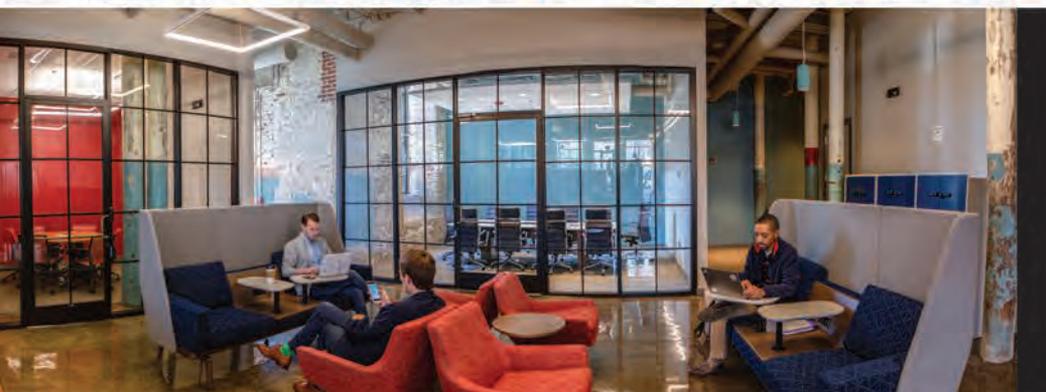
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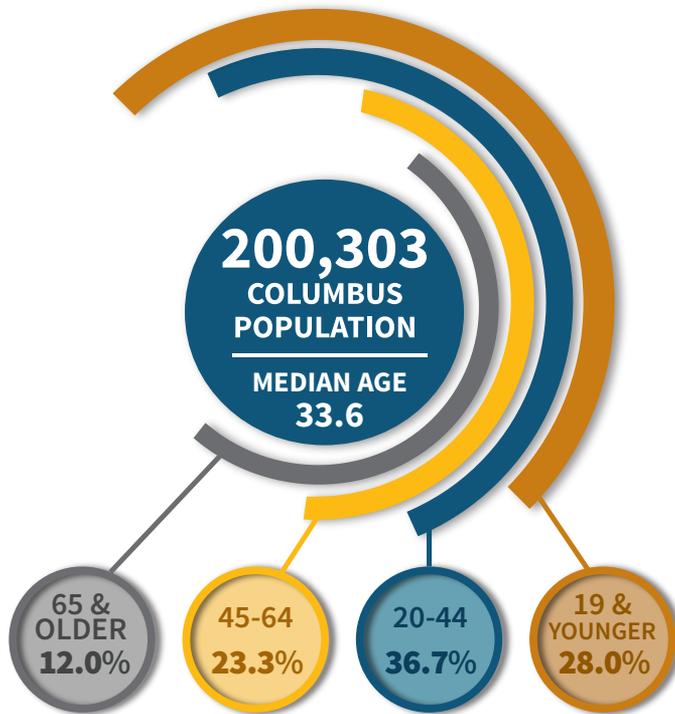
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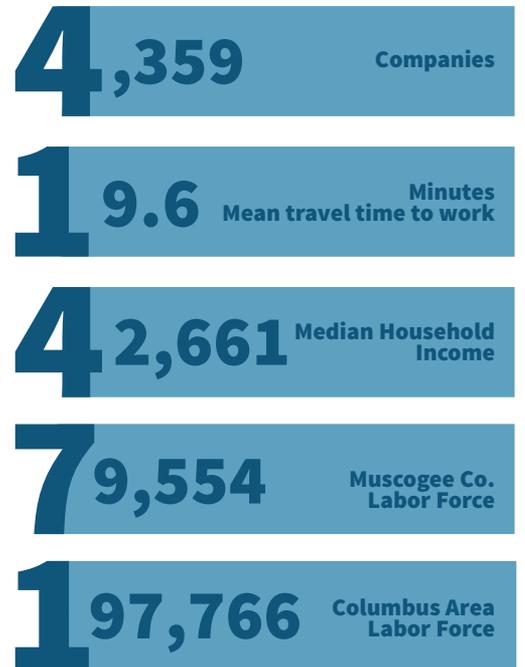
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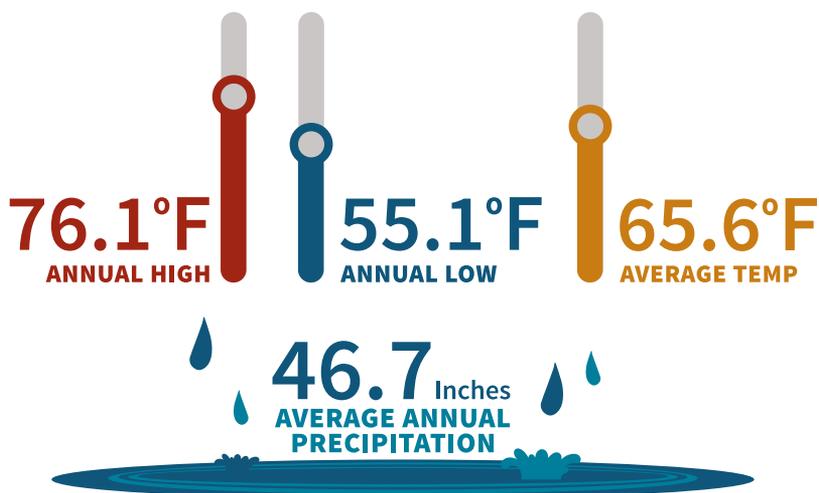
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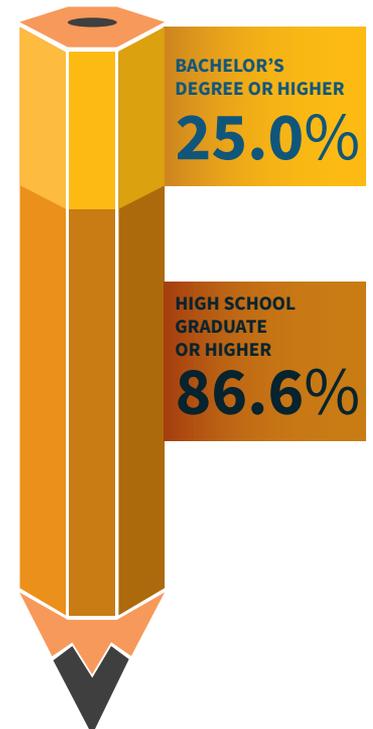
HOUSING



CLIMATE



EDUCATION



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Georgia Dept. of Labor Area Profile Nov. 2018

WELCOME

# Welcome to



# WELCOME

We Do **Amazing!**





**BRIAN ANDERSON**

President & CEO  
Greater Columbus Georgia  
Chamber of Commerce

# LETTER from the PRESIDENT

**O**n behalf of the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the community at large, I welcome you to this wonderful place we call home.

As our mantra says, “We Do Amazing,” and if you spend any time here, I think you’ll find this is true.

While Greater Columbus is certainly a place where ideas flourish, businesses thrive, and innovation thrusts us forward, it’s also a place where families settle down, children grow, and community is developed.

The Chamber of Commerce prides itself on being the bridge between industry and the residents. Our staff has an undeniable passion for helping Greater Columbus reach its potential and we work diligently to ensure all citizens have opportunities to achieve their dreams.

The Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in West Georgia. As you read this publication, you’ll see the many ways the Chamber partners with local government, non-profits, educational institutions and businesses of all sizes to give our community the necessary foundation for steady and meaningful growth.

With plenty of small-town charm and an ample supply of big-city opportunity, Greater Columbus has become an attractive place to not only live but also build a business. Whether it’s an emerging startup or a *Fortune 500* company, Greater Columbus has the support network in place to develop resources, locate real estate and tap into a qualified workforce.

Whether you’re visiting or relocating, step into the spirit of Greater Columbus and find out how you can be part of something Amazing.

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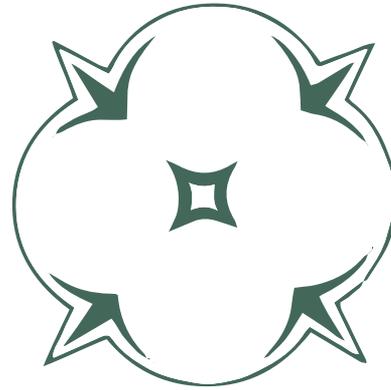
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“The people of  
Columbus are  
constantly striving  
for growth & we’re  
succeeding at it.”  
~Chris Woodruff

# Cotton COMPANIES

Q & A with Local Innovative Entrepreneur  
Chris Woodruff of the Cotton Companies

**Chris Woodruff is a shining example of the innovative spirit and pursuit of progress that drives the people of Columbus.** From the second floor of his modern industrial office, Chris looks out over the revitalized 1200 Block of Broadway in Uptown Columbus. The landscape of the city has changed significantly since he was a boy growing up in the area.

Unused buildings have been repurposed, the waterfront along the Chattahoochee River has been developed to become a hallmark of the area and several *Fortune 500* companies now call Greater Columbus home.

We sat down with Chris from the offices of The Cotton Companies, the real estate development and investment firm he founded in 2016, to find out what makes the people of Columbus tick and why the area

has been so successful in achieving steady growth since its inception in 1828.

Chris, a 1997 graduate of Brookstone High School, specializes in adaptive reuse and urban infill projects, several of which have taken Uptown to new heights. He speaks with a strong reverence for the history of his hometown and the accomplishments of past leaders. Chris is confident that he, his peers and future generations have the will and knowledge to move the region forward.

**Q: How did growing up in Columbus shape you?**

**A:** Growing up, I watched and saw that anyone can make a difference. You can see this in Columbus—that it didn’t matter who you were or what you came from, and I was fortunate to grow up with this mentality.



If you want to do something for the right reasons and people are behind you – you can do it. There’s a sense of community and sense of ability to bring about change... you don’t see this as much in a larger city. Ultimately, it’s not what’s in the water, it’s what’s in the people. If we want to do it, we can. If the time is right and the cause is right, we’ll roll up our sleeves and we will do it – together.

**Q: How does the size of the Greater Columbus area factor into the ability to bring about change?**

**A:** Columbus is not a small town, it’s not a big town, it’s the perfect size in between. In Columbus, I – or anyone – can have an idea, take it to the right people, garner support, implement change, and they can positively impact people or the community in days, weeks or months. Not years, not decades, like some larger cities. You can do it in a reasonable time frame. Columbus is small enough where you can effectuate change, but big enough to see the impact made.

**Q: What drives the innovation and culture in Columbus?**

**A:** Going through Columbus’ history you will see marked moments of innovation fueled by...locals and transplants. There

is an underlying element of appreciation and cooperation amongst everyone in this community to help innovation succeed. That is something that has historically been in Columbus...that stems from an environment where innovation is celebrated, and I think what we’ve seen in the past decade is that it is growing even more. And that is a testament, I believe, to the community that is Columbus. Why are we such an innovative community? It’s because our leadership truly does embrace the younger generations and they want to help them. And they do. Couple this with the incredible public-private partnership we have in this community and all walks of life can grow. They just have to raise their hand or ask the question “how”.

**Q: What is the mission of The Cotton Companies?**

**A:** At The Cotton Companies, we fundamentally believe that community can be changed through the built environment. People experience life on a daily basis through the buildings and the parks and the trees around them. If done correctly, I believe that community can be enhanced because of that. And I think our pioneer project, which was the transformation of two dilapidated buildings at 1230 and 1232 Broadway, is a great case study to that – as is the median pocket park that sits out front of those two buildings.

**Q: What’s your favorite thing about the Greater Columbus Region**

**A:** That’s tough. I choose to be in Columbus. I chose to move back to Columbus (in 2002 after attending University of Colorado, Boulder). And I choose to continue to stay here because of the opportunities that exist within the community to build relationships and show positive movement and change. It’s an interesting town, with interesting people. It has a great history and a lot of things to do...as simple as, me waking up in the morning and taking my pup, Daisy, for a stroll on the RiverWalk...then grabbing lunch somewhere in Uptown. And then hopping in my kayak and going whitewater kayaking. And then culminating the day with dinner with friends in Uptown. There’s so much to do and it’s all in our backyard here. So, my favorite thing to do? Is to experience everything Columbus has to offer.

*~by Andrew Smith & Bonnie Hunter*





# Lights, Camera, **ACTION!**



## The Future of **Filmmaking in Columbus**

By Andrew Smith  
& Bonnie Hunter

**I**n Hollywood, they say “money talks.” If that adage is true, then Georgia’s film industry is speaking loud and clear, and Columbus is listening. Annually, the film industry contributes \$9.5 billion to the state’s economy and several Greater Columbus area organizations want to secure the region’s piece of the pie.



**“Our goal is to promote Columbus as a film-friendly destination, with the expertise, knowledge, and skill sets to navigate the local environment in a way that is efficient and productive for anyone in the film, television, and entertainment industry.”**

~ Peter Bowden

with state-of-the-art sound stages. The project also includes a partnership with Columbus State University, which is a great example of the private-public cooperation that fuels innovation in Columbus.

Columbus State University’s Department of Communication offers a Georgia Film Academy certification program. Thanks to W.C. Bradley Co. Real Estate, the program is now based out of Flat Rock Studio. The collaboration is primed to create a well-trained film production workforce.

With the University System of Georgia’s approval of the new “nexus degree” – a 60-credit-hour degree that includes 18 credits of film industry coursework – the number of students who can reap the benefits of Flat Rock Studio is predicted to increase quickly. Both the location and the degree are pending approval by CSU’s regional accreditation agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Along with the emergence of Flat Rock, an already legendary venue of the Chattahoochee Valley is readying the region for bright lights. In February 2018, the Springer Opera House announced the opening of the Springer Film Institute. This film industry incubator offers an array of 4- to 6-week film-making workshops.

The Springer Film Institute knows there are stories to be told, as well as money to be made, and its approach encourages

furthering education and promotes experimentation. From acting to production, through editing and screenwriting, seasoned and fresh filmmakers alike can cultivate their craft, try out a new role or simply expand their understanding of the entire process.

These important Columbus institutions are hoping to secure the region a spot as a film-making mecca of Georgia – third only to Atlanta and Savannah. Industry impact data released by the Motion Picture Association of America indicates roughly \$250,000 per day can be injected into local economies when a film shoots on location. In some cases, popular films and television shows can also boost tourism.

**Along with financial benefits, there are experiential benefits. With each movie or TV show that rolls into the Greater Columbus Region, the workforce becomes stronger and the area becomes more appealing to future productions.**

W.C. Bradley Co., Springer Opera House and Columbus State University aren’t waiting for Columbus to be discovered as a prime location for film production. They are actively setting the stage for success through innovation.



CSU film students in action at Flat Rock Studio



## The Columbus Film Commission

Starting in 2010, the Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office launched the Camera Ready Communities program, designed to connect film and television productions with skilled county-based liaisons across the state while providing local expertise and support.

Thanks to the leadership of Peter Bowden, president and CEO of VisitColumbusGA, Columbus was one of the first communities to become certified by the State. Bowden, who worked passionately to develop the Columbus Film Commission within his existing organization, said film and television production in the area starts with the Columbus Film Commission.

The Columbus Film Commission serves as a point of contact in Muscogee County for production teams considering the area for an upcoming film or series. Bowden and his staff are ready to assist by providing information and resources.

“We have identified – and continue to build – resources and processes to help streamline film making wherever possible,” Bowden said.

From accommodations and catering, to scouting locations and securing permits, the Columbus Film Commission uses local insight and well-established relationships to showcase the area and assure production companies that the community is equipped and excited to assist and support their project.

Ready to learn filmmaking?  
It's your time to call the shots.

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# AMAZING

# INNOVATION

Columbus 2025 & StartUP Columbus  
light the way to regional success  
By Andrew Smith

Just like the Greater Columbus Region, the doors of StartUP Columbus are open for new businesses. StartUP Columbus' storefront space on Broadway is a prime location for prospective entrepreneurs looking to take the next step on the journey to owning a business or creating a product.

Founded in 2018, StartUP Columbus is a non-profit business incubator that works with area residents to turn good ideas into profitable businesses. Program Manager Ben MacMinn said the organization's mission is to support local entrepreneurs by providing work space, mentorship and assistance in securing funds to start a new business.

"We act as a conduit, if you will, to connect prospective entrepreneurs to their best resource," MacMinn said. "We want business ownership to be an option for all residents of the Greater Columbus Area."

With so many things to consider when starting a business, like securing a license

and applying for necessary permits, MacMinn said the free support StartUP provides in the initial phases of development can help eliminate many bumps in the road.

StartUP Columbus is a direct expression of Columbus 2025, the area's long-range economic development strategy championed by Columbus officials and organizations, including the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, the City of Columbus, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Columbus State University Foundation.



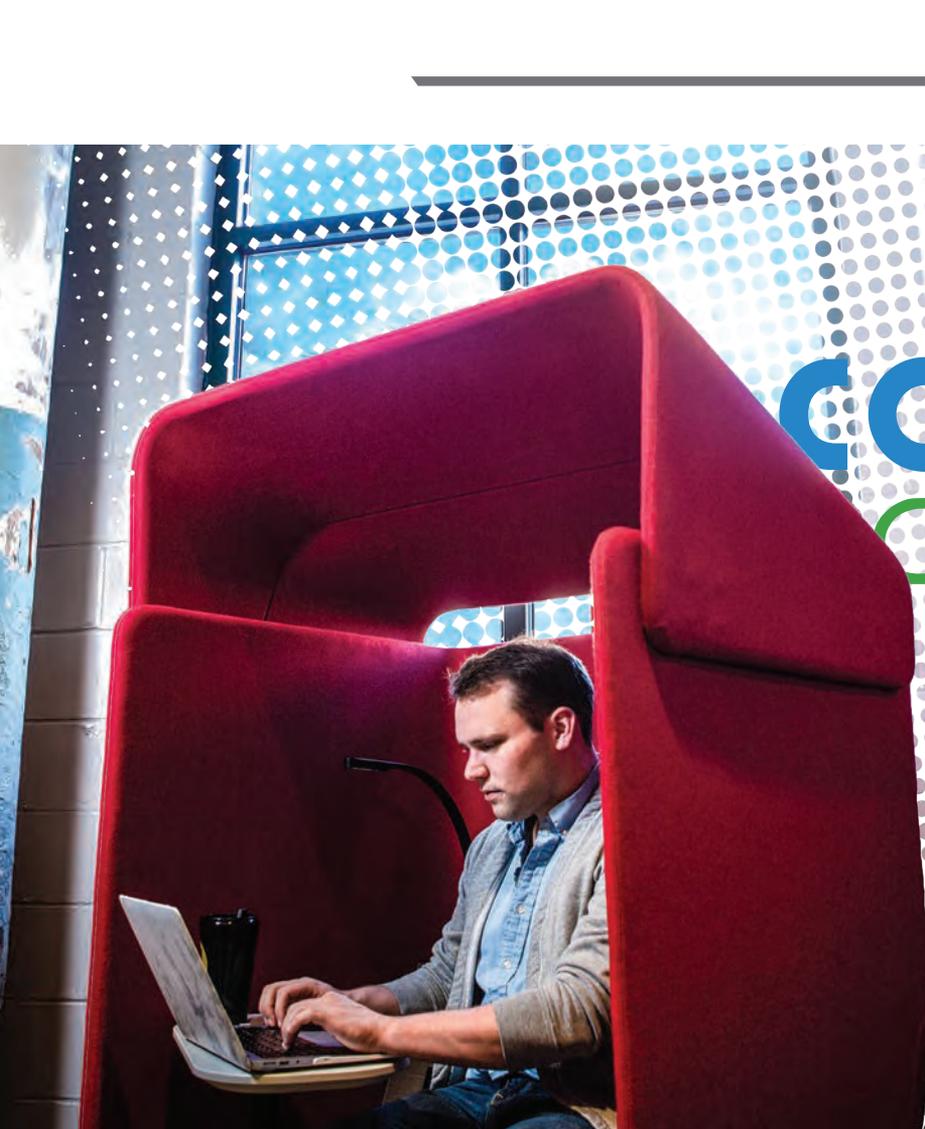
Guided by the Regional Prosperity Initiative, Columbus 2025 was developed in 2014 to align the region's collective community and economic development efforts in a comprehensive and holistic plan of action for the next decade and beyond.

The philosophy of Columbus 2025 uses action areas, such as fostering an enterprising culture, implementing targeted economic growth, and the importance of talented and educated people.

As the concept from which it sprang would suggest, StartUP Columbus is squarely focused on new avenues for economic development, from mom-and-pops to large corporations.

"Of course, we support entrepreneurs that generate two or three jobs, but we also want to focus on ideas and businesses that are going to employ dozens or hundreds of local residents," MacMinn said.

To connect with StartUP Columbus, please visit [StartUpColGa.com](http://StartUpColGa.com).



# COWORK COLUMBUS

## The next phase of modern workspace

By Andrew Smith

**T**he landscape of work has changed greatly in the last decade. With the connected nature of the current working world, the days of a business operating solely in a corporate office setting are long gone.

Enter CoWork Columbus, W.C. Bradley Real Estate's latest venture and the next phase of modern workspace in Columbus.

Located on the street level of the Eagle and Phenix Mill 3, CoWork Columbus has positioned itself as the ideal workplace solution for startups, established companies, consultants and freelancers with a desire to get out of a traditional office complex, home office, or crowded coffee shops.

Opened in February 2019, CoWork Columbus is a membership-driven facility that offers six private offices, 18 dedicated desks and more than 50 flexible

workstations. Members have access to a full complement of amenities including two shared conference rooms with up-to-date tech functionality, three private phone booths for personal conversations, a fully stocked refreshment center, a high-speed color copier-printer-scanner, and Wi-Fi connectivity with a dedicated fiber network.

Membership Coordinator Patti Martin said a diverse group of professionals use the space because it eliminates significant overhead costs and allows for flexibility. From real estate agents to accountants and engineers to online marketers, Columbus' growing workforce is opting for less traditional operating spaces.

"A lot of people work remote or are new entrepreneurs trying to start here in Columbus," Martin noted. "CoWork

provides temporary or long-term space for them to work."

While most members use the space during typical business hours, Martin said it's not uncommon to see members working hard on nights and weekends.

"The feedback from our members has been very positive," Martin said. "It's open 24/7, so that flexibility is something that coffeeshops don't offer."

With a variety of membership options, CoWork is ideal for any number of established or emerging businesses.

Find out more:

CoWork Columbus  
1201 Front Ave., Ste. N  
Columbus, GA 31901  
706.571.3400  
cowork@wcbradley.com  
cowork-columbus.com



## Continuing the **Regional Tradition** of Amazing Innovation

**H**istorically, Columbus has served as a hub for forward-thinking entrepreneurs. As global and state business climates ebb and flow, the strength and innovation of our local business leaders have allowed Greater Columbus to chart its own course.

Columbus is the ideal place to start, relocate, or expand your business. Approximately 100 miles southwest of Atlanta, the Greater Columbus Georgia Region is home to more than 450,000 residents. Our prime location adjacent to major highways in the No. 1 state for



**WC Bradley Real Estate has played a large role in the transformation of Uptown Columbus.**



business (2013-2018), means our companies can rely on:

- an extensive transportation network for national and global reach
- an educated and agile workforce supported by multiple universities and technical colleges
- a supply of motivated soldiers whose military careers are drawing to a close
- a wealth of resources to support industries such as aerospace, automotive, financial services, information security, call centers, and shared services, among others.

Once here, both corporate executives and their employees can enjoy exceptional economic prosperity and quality of life.

### **C BUSINESS CLIMATE**

Thirty *Fortune*® 1000 companies, 17 of which are also on the *Fortune*® 500, have planted headquarters in Georgia to lower production costs, grow a skilled workforce, optimize access to the world's top business markets, and ultimately improve their bottom line. Two of those *Fortune*® companies, Aflac and TSYS, are home-grown Columbus headquartered companies. They are joined by corporate headquarters for Synovus, the W.C. Bradley Company, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia, and Salt Life, among others. Additionally, multi-national companies such as Kia, Kodak, and Pratt & Whitney also have significant footprints in the region and continue to expand their operations.

Additionally, the region is home to Fort Benning and the Maneuver Center of Excellence, with approximately 38,000 military personnel, contractors and civilians working and training at the installation every day.



We show businesses why their future is brighter in Georgia.

New jobs have a powerful effect. Every factory or tech firm that opens its doors makes surrounding communities that much stronger. That's why Georgia Power works hard to bring new businesses here, creating over 134,000 new jobs in the last 10 years alone. And showing people across our state more possibilities than ever before. To see how we're generating opportunity, visit [georgiapower.com/growth](http://georgiapower.com/growth).



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Chattahoochee River



**C TRANSPORTATION**

The Greater Columbus Region is less than two hours from Atlanta and less than 90-minutes from the world's busiest airport, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, which connects to

150 U.S. destinations and 75 international destinations. We border the Alabama state line and have an extensive transportation network – including Interstates 185 and 85, CSX and Norfolk Southern railroads, and Columbus Metropolitan Airport. All these factors

converge to create amazing access to regional and global markets.

**C WORKFORCE AND TRAINING**

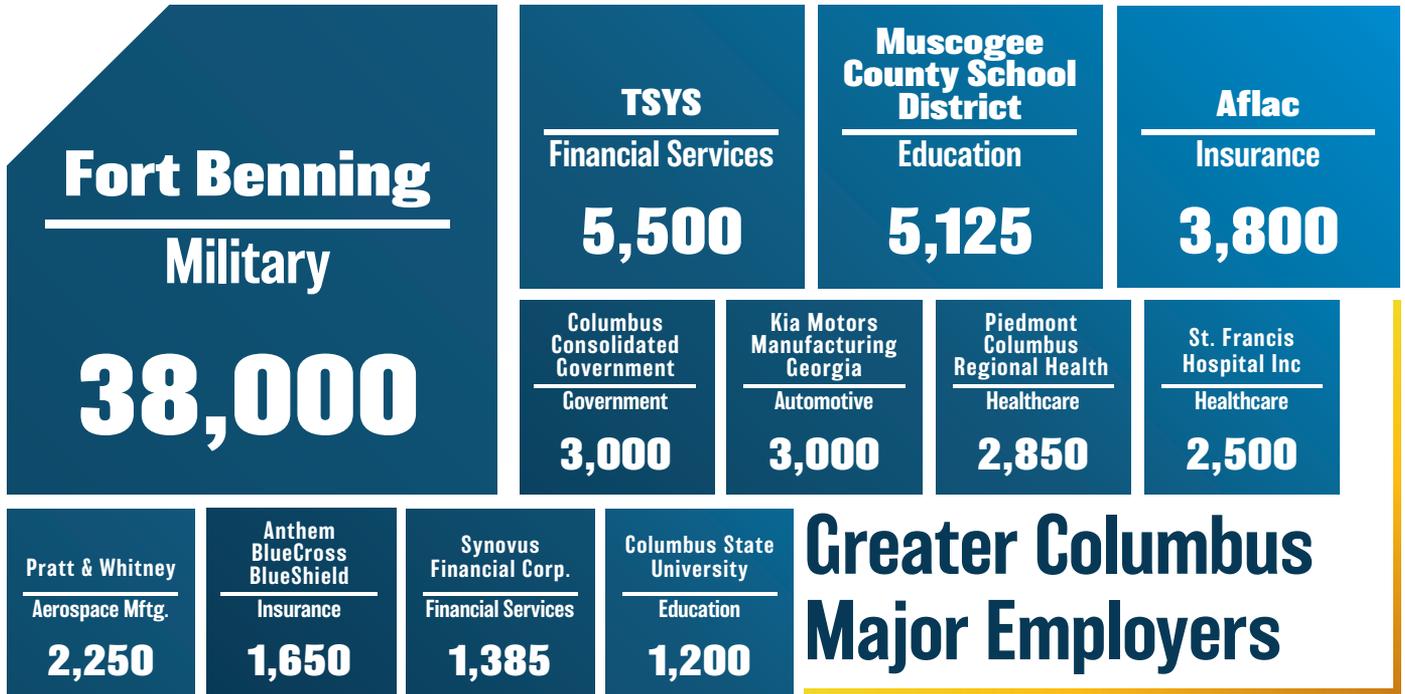
The Columbus Region leverages a bi-state workforce (West Georgia/East Alabama), many of whom hold certificates and/or

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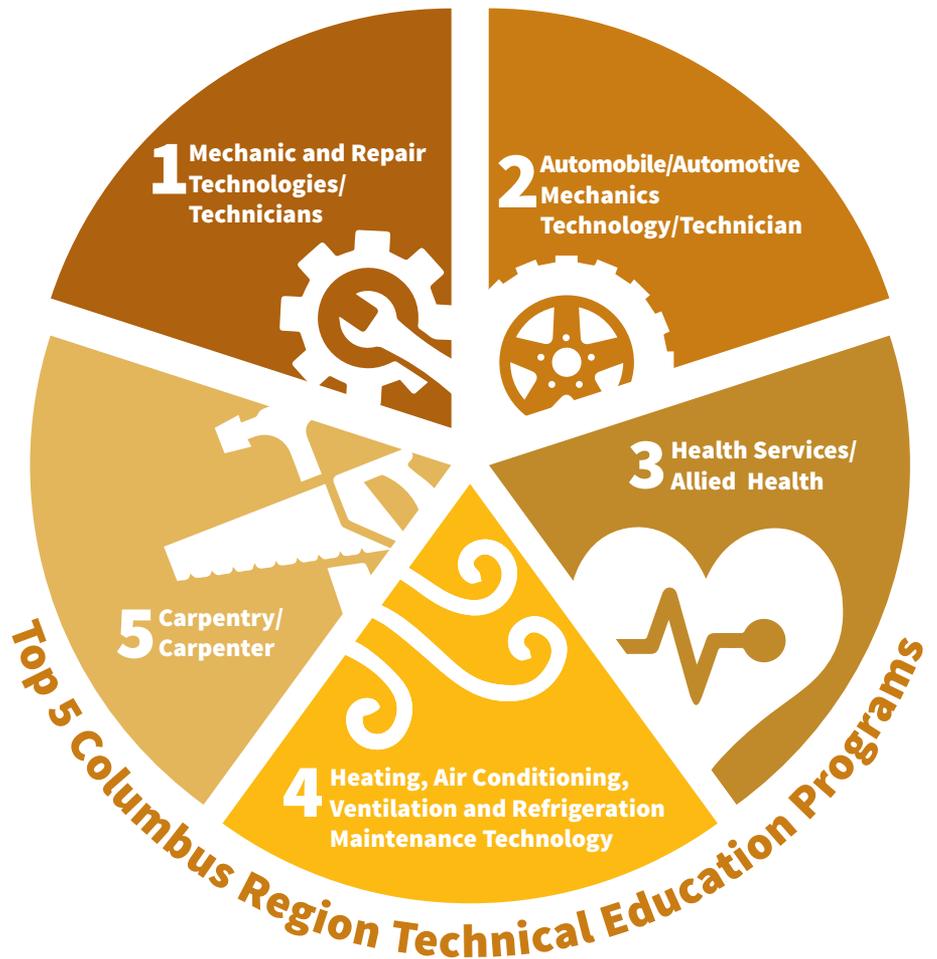


degrees from Columbus State University, Troy University, Auburn University, Columbus Technical College and dozens of other top colleges and universities. These workers are highly skilled, wage competitive and possess a strong work ethic. In addition, veterans leaving service at Fort Benning potentially add as many as 1,300 prospective employees to the area workforce each year.

Businesses with specific training requirements may utilize Georgia's renowned Quick Start program. Considered one of the top workforce training programs in the U.S., Quick Start offers free, customized training to new and expanding qualified companies.



Synovus HQ



AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES

# THE VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

## **Governments Unified** and Future Focused

**S**pearheaded by the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce, The Valley Partnership is a collaborative joint development authority whose mission is to enhance commerce and trade opportunities in the Greater Columbus Region. Members of The Valley Partnership include: Cusseta-Chattahoochee County, Marion County, Muscogee County, Talbot County and the city of West Point.

Collective efforts continue to strengthen the region's economy. The Valley Partnership turned vision into action by:

- optimizing partnerships
- developing and supporting industry growth
- improving employment opportunities
- creating and sustaining opportunities for business success
- supporting educational excellence and lifelong learning opportunities
- creating a diverse, family-friendly environment.

### **BUSINESS PARKS**

- **Benning Technology Park**
- **Corporate Ridge Business Park**
- **Phenix Industrial Park**
- **Muscogee Technology Park**
- **Northwest Harris Business Park**
- **Talbot County Industrial Park**
- **West Point Technology Park**

# VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

The impact is clear in recent projects, such as the allocation of more than \$100 million to fund cultural arts projects, vital infrastructure support, the 22-mile RiverWalk, and the Columbus RiverCenter. Over the last decade, the region has experienced the benefits of more than \$2.8 billion in new capital investment and 18,000 new jobs.

Among the leading businesses in the region are Aflac, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Kia, Pratt & Whitney, Synovus, and TSYS. These companies and others have realized the advantages that coincide with calling the Greater Columbus Region home.

## INCENTIVES

State of Georgia (if applicable)

- **Job Tax Credits** – Most of Greater Columbus is Tier 2 – up to \$3,000 credit per new job, minimum 10 jobs.
- **Quality Jobs Tax Credit** - \$2,500 to \$5,000 per job, per year for projects that create



Greater Columbus Chamber

at least 50 net new qualifying jobs during a 24-month period, and jobs pay at least 110% of the average wage in the county.

- **Port Tax Credit Bonus** – an increase in imports or exports through a Georgia port by at least 10% may qualify for either a \$1,250 bonus added to the job tax credit or an adjustment to the investment tax credit.
- **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** – federal tax credit to Georgia companies that hire individuals who have faced barriers to employment. The tax credit ranges from \$1,200 to \$9,000 per hire.
- **Mega Project Tax Credit** – Businesses that employ at least 1,800 “net new”

employees and have either a minimum annual payroll of \$150 million or make a minimum \$450 million investment in Georgia may qualify for the mega project tax credit.

- **Investment Tax Credit** – Companies in manufacturing or telecommunications support that have operated in Georgia for at least three years are eligible to earn investment tax credits of 1 percent to 8 percent of qualified capital investments of \$50,000 or more.
- **Research & Development Tax Credit** – Companies that spend more on qualified

research in Georgia may qualify for an R&D tax credit equal to a percentage of that spending increase.

- **Retraining Tax Credit** – Georgia businesses may offset their investment in retraining employees to use new equipment or learn new skills. The credit equals 50% of direct training expenses, up to \$500 credit per full-time employee, per training program.
- **Film, Television and Digital Entertainment Tax Credit** – Film and television companies may receive a tax credit of up to 30% of money spent on production and post-production in Georgia; minimum spending amount is \$500,000.
- **Musical Tax Credit** – Eligible production companies that meet the applicable spending threshold may receive a tax credit of up to 20% on qualified production expenditures on eligible musical or theatrical performances or recordings.

## Possible Local Incentives

- **Property discounts**
- **Industrial revenue bonds-property tax abatement (requires application, through Development Authority)**
- **Accelerated permitting timelines**
- **Reduced utility costs**
- **Infrastructure improvements**
- **Freeport tax exemption**
- **Other incentives possible depending on scope of project**

**WE WORK FOR YOU.**

It's not something you expect to hear from an electric company. But, we're not your typical utility. We're a local not-for-profit electric cooperative. We want to help you save energy so you can save your hard earned money.

To learn more about the cooperative difference, visit [flintenergies.com](http://flintenergies.com)

**Flint Energies**  
Your Teachers Energy Cooperative

*Flint Energies is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



# INSPIRING FUTURE INNOVATORS

Amazing **Educational Opportunities** in the Greater Columbus Region

**H**igh quality education across all levels continues to fuel this already strong community.

Residents of the region, of any age and interest, enjoy a deep pool and diverse mix of educational institutions.

Muscogee County's nine public high schools have a four-year graduation rate of nearly 90%, more than 7% higher than the state average, while several private schools achieve strong academic results as well. Higher learning is a top priority for the workforce, which can meet the needs of the area's top employers through matriculation at numerous post-secondary institutions. From preschool to post-grad, Columbus is a great place for students to cultivate their talents and prepare for the future

## **C** ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY

The **Muscogee County School District** is recognized as one the best school districts in the Central Georgia Region. The district

includes 31 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, nine high schools and six centers and programs, serving more than 32,000 students. With more than 92% of all school-age children in Muscogee County attending public schools, the Muscogee County School District employs approximately 5,400 teachers, administrators, and staff. Of the professional employees, 66% have a master's degree or higher; 93 have doctorates.

## **C** PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**Brookstone School** is Columbus' only K3-12 independent college preparatory program. At Brookstone, every student is challenged to discover the leader he or she is meant to be, to be bold in tackling problems, strong enough to stand firm, hold true to high ideals, and be fearless out in front.

**Calvary Christian School** is an ACSI and SACS-accredited K3-12 grade school. Calvary offers: Biblical instruction; AP and Honor classes; dual enrollment; fine arts; full

athletic program; extra-curricular activities; weekly chapel; Discovery School for students with moderate learning disabilities; and before and after school care.

Students of many faiths enhance the diverse student body at PK-12 **St. Anne-Pacelli Catholic School**. St. Anne-Pacelli offers small class sizes, AP classes, on-campus dual enrollment, 50+ clubs and activities, 12 sports teams, and 100% of its graduates are accepted into a college or university.



# EDUCATION

**St. Luke School**, a ministry of St. Luke United Methodist Church, is an independent Christian school that serves children from junior kindergarten-8th grade and offers challenging academics, fine arts, competitive athletics, and servant leadership development.

## **C INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING**

### **Chattahoochee Valley Community**

**College (CVCC)** offers accessible, quality, and engaging educational opportunities through academic transfer, career and technical education, workforce development and adult education. A member of the Alabama Community College System, CVCC is a public, comprehensive, community college serving a diverse population through traditional classroom and distance-learning formats.

**Columbus State University** offers nationally distinctive programs in the arts, education, business, nursing and more. CSU is part of the University System of Georgia, enrolling more than 8,200 students in a wide variety of degree programs. Currently, the university offers 46 undergraduate and 42 graduate degrees.

**Columbus Technical College** is a two-year, regionally-accredited public college that consistently boasts a job placement rate of 100 percent, nearly 90 percent in-field. Columbus Tech offers associate degrees, diplomas, and technical certificates in more

than 100 areas of study. Students may transfer courses and even entire degrees to many four-year colleges. The College also provides industry training and workforce education.

### **Georgia Military College – Columbus**

opened in 1996. Students take classes on campus or online and may earn Associate of Art or Science degrees or Bachelor of Applied Science degrees. GMC offers small class sizes, free tutoring, and eight-week terms. GMC has articulation agreements with more than 40 colleges and universities. GMC also has an office at the Soldier of Life Center at Fort Benning.

### **Mercer University School of Medicine**

established a clinical campus in Columbus in 2012, with both Piedmont Columbus Regional Midtown Medical Center and St. Francis Hospital serving as the clinical partners in the students' education. The School has graduated four classes of students and recently welcomed the sixth class to the Columbus campus. Mercer University is committed to expanding the Columbus campus of the School of Medicine to a four-year curriculum by the fall of 2021.

**Miller-Motte Technical College** provides the knowledge and hands-on training employers are looking for, including certificate and degree programs in fields such as healthcare, business, and short-term career training programs including ICD-10 and Microsoft Office. In as little as nine to 24

months, students gain the skills needed to succeed in the job market.

**Troy University Phenix City's** Riverfront Campus houses the business, nursing, and social work programs, along with the Center for Water Resource Economics. The campus, located off U.S. 431, is home to the University's education and arts and sciences programs.

**University of Phoenix** is innovating to help working adults move efficiently from education to careers in a rapidly changing world. Flexible schedules, relevant courses, and interactive learning help students more effectively pursue career aspirations while balancing their busy lives. University of Phoenix offers associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs.

**The University of Oklahoma Extended Campus on Fort Benning** offers a Master of Human Relations (HR) program and many 100% online programs. Focusing on the higher education needs of place-bound working adults, military-connected personnel, and those seeking specialized study in selected professional areas, OU offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate degrees.

## **C CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY LIBRARIES**

The Chattahoochee Valley Libraries serve 250,000 people across four counties – Chattahoochee, Marion, Muscogee and Stewart. The library system's seven branches are owned and operated by the Muscogee County School System. In addition to traditional services, the libraries provide access to computers and Internet, bookmobiles, meeting rooms, computer labs and study areas, classes and activities, and many other services.

Completed in 2005, the Columbus Public Library is one of the "10 Most Beautiful Libraries in Georgia" according to the Georgia Public Library Service. It's





Columbus Public Library

the second largest library in the state, spanning 100,000 square feet, and features a Grand Reading room, an outdoor garden, and a story time space where children can participate in many activities.

In an area that celebrates art, culture and innovation, it's no surprise to find such an exceptional library system. No matter the size, each branch is an amazing asset that supplies something important to the area. Amid the stacks and online, a world of discovery is waiting for you through the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries.

## **C** RESOURCES

- **Muscogee County School District**  
2960 Macon Rd., Columbus, GA 31906  
706.748.2000 | [muscogee.k12.ga.us](http://muscogee.k12.ga.us)
- **Brookstone School**  
440 Bradley Park Dr., Columbus, GA 31904  
706.324.1392 | [brookstoneschool.org](http://brookstoneschool.org)
- **Calvary Christian School**  
7556 Old Moon Rd., Columbus, GA 31909  
706.323.0467 | [calvaryknights.com](http://calvaryknights.com)
- **St. Anne-Pacelli Catholic School**  
202 Kay Cir., Columbus, GA 31907  
706.561.8232 | [BeAViking.com](http://BeAViking.com)
- **St. Luke**  
318 11th St., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.256.1301 | [school.stlukeum.com](http://school.stlukeum.com)
- **Chattahoochee Valley Community College**  
2602 College Dr., Phenix City, AL 36869  
334.291.4900 | [cv.edu](http://cv.edu)
- **Columbus State University**  
4225 University Ave., Columbus, GA 31907  
706.507.8800 | [columbusstate.edu](http://columbusstate.edu)
- **Mercer University School of Medicine-Columbus**  
33 West 11th St., Columbus, GA 31901  
800.MERCER.U | [medicine.mercer.edu](http://medicine.mercer.edu)
- **Columbus Technical College**  
928 Manchester Expwy.  
Columbus, GA 31904  
706.649.1800 | [columbusstech.edu](http://columbusstech.edu)
- **Georgia Military College-Columbus**  
7300 Blackmon Rd., Columbus, GA 31909  
706.478.1688 | [gmc.edu](http://gmc.edu)
- **Miller-Motte Technical College**  
1800 Box Rd., Columbus, GA 31907  
706.225.5637 | [miller-motte.edu](http://miller-motte.edu)
- **Troy University**  
1510 Whitewater Ave., Phenix City, AL 36867  
334.448.5106 | [troy.edu](http://troy.edu)
- **University of Phoenix**  
7200 North Lake Dr., Columbus, GA 31909  
706.320.1266 | [phoenix.edu](http://phoenix.edu)
- **University of Oklahoma at Fort Benning**  
8150 Marne Rd., Bldg. 9230,  
Fort Benning, GA 31905  
706.780.1183 | [pacs.ou.edu](http://pacs.ou.edu)
- **Chattahoochee Valley Libraries**  
800.652.0783 | [www.cvlga.org](http://www.cvlga.org)
- **Columbus Public Library**  
706.652.2669
- **Cusseta-Chattahoochee Public Library**  
706.989.3700
- **Marion County Public Library**  
229.649.6385
- **Mildred L. Terry Public Library**  
706.243.2782
- **North Columbus Public Library**  
706.748.2855
- **Parks Memorial Public Library**  
229.887.2103
- **South Columbus Public Library**  
706.683.8805

Muscogee County Schools named State Economic Development Partnership District *(next page)*



Photo (Courtesy of the Georgia Department of Education) L-R: State School Superintendent Richard Woods, GEDA Chair Missy Kendrick, Georgia Department of Economic Development Regional Project Manager Anna Hurt, Muscogee County Schools CTAE Director Victoria Thomas, GEDA President Kevin Shea

“Additionally, District administrators have gotten more involved with the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, leading to the development of the annual industry bus tour for educators and enhanced support for a college and career academy to be added,” Thomas said.

Pratt & Whitney has partnered to provide an internship program for the past ten years. Interested students must successfully complete the Certified Manufacturing Specialist (CMS) program at Columbus Technical College. Afterward, Pratt & Whitney will interview students for intern positions. Following the internship, some students have been offered full-time positions with the company. Over the course of the partnership, about 40 area students have been hired and remain with the company.

Through the Chamber’s Partners in Education program, Pratt & Whitney also has individual partnerships with Aaron Cohn Middle School, Double Churches Middle School, and Northside High School through which it provides additional real-world experiences.

TSYS and MCSD partnered to provide exposure to IT careers for high school and middle school students. The four mandatory activities that are part of this partnership are student job shadowing, teacher job shadowing, education tours, and Hour of Code activities.

W.C. Bradley provided a sizeable donation to support the District’s STEAM Center, which was named in honor of retired W.C. Bradley President, Stephen T. Butler. Through W.C. Bradley’s donation, the school district has been able to expand the robotics program and support students by opening the STEAM Center on weekends for robotics teams to practice and provide them with lunch.

## Muscogee County Schools named State Economic Development Partnership District

By Andrew Smith

The Muscogee County School District recently was recognized as one of the first districts in Georgia to become a State Economic Development Partnership District. At a September 2018 event, State School Superintendent Richard Woods commended Muscogee County Schools and four other districts for their efforts to build partnerships with local employers and gain knowledge of local industry needs.

“For the benefit of our students and our state, it’s essential that we forge stronger connections between the educational system and industry,” Woods said. “Muscogee County Schools is doing an excellent job of working in partnership with their community to provide the best possible opportunities for students.”

The Economic Development Partnership program, which began in 2017, seeks to promote improved relationships between local school districts and businesses or industry. To finish the program, district leaders must complete economic

development training courses, while Career, Technical and Agricultural Education directors, teachers and school counselors must complete a business externship every five years. Participating districts also review local Career Pathway offerings for alignment to high-demand careers and must display evidence of business and community partnerships.

“We are so excited to receive the Economic Development Partnership District designation,” said Victoria Thomas, Muscogee Schools CTAE Director. “It validates the work that our CTAE Department and others throughout the District have done to understand workforce development and build relationships with businesses that will ultimately enable our students to be prepared for careers.”

Thomas said the school district has existing partnerships with Pratt & Whitney, TSYS, and W.C. Bradley, among others, and will continue to build relationships as the program progresses.



# FAITH & CHARITY IN GREATER COLUMBUS

Columbus Residents **Open Their Hearts**  
in *Amazing Ways*

**F**aith and charity have been long-standing principles of our community. Throughout our history, faith- and secular-based organizations have increased in number and diversity. Thanks to these groups, residents of the Greater Columbus Region have an amazing opportunity to grow in their faith and give back to our area in a variety of ways.

Whether you are searching for a new spiritual home within our diverse

# COMMUNITY

## FAITH & CHARITY

religious atmosphere and inclusive philosophy, or whether you want to personally make a difference in the community, discover the many supportive worship centers and non-profit organizations that are dedicated to the people of the Chattahoochee Valley.

### **C** WORSHIP CENTERS

- **Cascade Hills Church**  
706.327.5743  
cascadehills.com
- **Christ Community Church**  
706.565.7240  
ccclive.org
- **Evangel Temple Assembly of God**  
706.323.1876  
etcolumbus.org
- **Faith Worship Center International**  
706.256.6160  
ahministries.net
- **First Baptist Church**  
706.322.4468  
firstbaptistcolumbusga.com
- **First Presbyterian Church**  
706.322.4523  
columbusfpc.org
- **Grace Baptist Church**  
706.323.1046  
gbccolumbus.org
- **Morningside Baptist Church**  
706.561.0343  
morningsidebaptist.com



First Presbyterian Church

- **North Highland Assembly of God**  
706.561.7777  
north-highland.org
- **Ollie Tarver Ministries**  
706.689.1446
- **Rivertown Church**  
706.221.0777  
rivertownchurch.com
- **St. Luke United Methodist Church**  
706.327.4343  
stlukeum.com
- **Take the City**  
706.223.5338  
takethecity.com
- **Temple Israel**  
706.323.1617  
templeisraelga.com
- **The Bridge Church**  
706.565.9969  
mybridgelife.com
- **The Ridge UMC**  
theridgecolumbus.com
- **Wynnbrook Baptist Church**  
706.323.4374  
wynnbrookbaptist.com
- **Wynnton United Methodist Church**  
706.324.2424  
wynntonumc.org

### **C** NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

- **A.J. McClung – YMCA, Inc.**  
706.322.2579  
columbusymca.com
- **Alzheimer’s Association – Chattahoochee Valley Regional Office**  
706.327.6838  
alz.org/georgia
- **American Cancer Society**  
706.324.4573  
cancer.org
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Columbus**  
706.327.3760  
bbbschattvalley.org
- **Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley**  
706.596.9330  
bgc-colsga.org
- **Boy Scouts of America/ Chattahoochee Council**  
706.327.2634  
chattahoochee-bsa.org
- **Columbus Area Habitat for Humanity**  
706.653.6003  
columbusareahabitat.com
- **Columbus Symphony Orchestra**  
706.256.3646  
csoga.org



- **DHS/Georgia TeenWork Internship Program**  
404.463.7288  
dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/teenwork
- **Drugs Don’t Work In Georgia**  
404.223.2277  
livedrugfree.org
- **Easter Seals of West Georgia, Inc.**  
706.660.1144  
westgeorgia.easterseals.com
- **Feeding the Valley Food Bank**  
706.561.4755  
feedingthevalley.org
- **Fellowship of Christian Athletes -West Central Georgia**  
706.366.5252  
westcentralgafca.org
- **Georgia-Alabama Land Trust**  
706.718.3324  
georgiaalabamalandtrust.org
- **Georgia Organics**  
678.702.0400  
georgiaorganics.org
- **Girls Incorporated**  
706.683.0809  
girlsinc-columbus.org
- **Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia, Inc.**  
888.689.1912  
gshg.org
- **Greater Columbus American Heart Association**  
678.224.2000  
heart.org
- **Homeless Resource Network**  
706.571.3399  
homelessresourcenetwork.org
- **Hope Harbour**  
706.324.3850 (24 Hour Crisis Line)  
706.256.0237  
hopeharbour.org
- **House of Heroes**  
706.569.7011  
houseofheroescvc.org
- **Lifelink of Georgia**  
800.544.6667  
lifelinkfound.org



- **Twin Cedars Youth Services, Inc. / Anne Elizabeth Shepherd Home**  
706.322.8984  
twincedars.org
- **UGA Small Business Development Center**  
706.569.2651  
georgiasbdc.org
- **United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley**  
706.327.3255  
unitedwayofthecv.org
- **Uptown Columbus Inc.**  
706.322.9078  
uptowncolumbusga.com
- **Urban League of Greater Columbus, Inc.**  
706.322.6840  
ulgcyp.org
- **Valley Interfaith Promise, Inc.**  
706.494.6348  
valleyinterfaithpromise.com
- **Valley Rescue Mission**  
706.322.8267  
valleyrescuemission.com
- **West Central Georgia Cancer Coalition**  
706.660.1914  
wcgcc.org
- **YMCA**  
706.322.5016  
columbusymca.com

- **Junior Achievement of Georgia**  
404.257.1932  
georgia.ja.org
- **Lower Chattahoochee Direct Service**  
706.327.5208  
directservicecorp.com
- **March of Dimes**  
706.660.0160  
marchofdimes.org
- **MidTown, Inc.**  
706.494.1663  
midtowncolumbusga.org
- **Minor in Business, Inc.**  
706.718.7663  
minorinbusiness.com
- **Miss Georgia Pageant**  
706.322.2315  
missga.org
- **National Infantry Museum Foundation**  
706.653.9234  
nationalinfantrymuseum.org
- **New Horizons Behavioral Health**  
706.596.5757  
nhbh.org
- **Open Door Community House, Inc.**  
706.323.5518  
opendoorcommunityhouse.org
- **PAWS Humane, Inc.**  
706.565.0035  
pawshumane.org
- **Russell County Child Advocacy Center**  
334.297.4962
- **Sexual Assault Support Center**  
706.571.6010 (24/7 Hotline)  
706.221.1033  
sexualassaultsupportcenter.com
- **SOMA Foundation**  
706.221.7262  
somafoundation.net
- **Southern Teal**  
770.584.2078
- **St. Francis Hospital Foundation Inc.**  
706.596.4000  
saintfrancisfoundation.org
- **Stewart Community Home, Inc.**  
706.327.2707  
sch-info.org
- **Still Serving Veterans**  
334.384.9111  
ssv.org
- **Teen Challenge International**  
706.576.6555  
globaltc.org
- **Teen Challenge of Columbus**  
706.507.3705  
teenchallenge.cc
- **Teen Challenge of Southeast Region**  
706.596.8731  
teenchallenge.cc
- **The Columbus Community Center**  
706.687.6809  
cccgeorgiakids.com
- **The Family Center**  
706.327.3238  
thefamilyctr.org
- **The Literacy Alliance**  
706.748.2610  
theliteracyalliance.org
- **The Salvation Army**  
706.561.9026  
salvationarmy-georgia.org



St. James AME Church



# UNPARALLELED HEALTHCARE

Columbus  
**Health Facilities**  
Keep Residents in  
Amazing Shape

**O**ver the last several decades, healthcare in the Columbus Region has taken giant leaps forward. Two of the area's top 10 employers are healthcare providers and in total, the industry employs more than 12,000 experienced healthcare professionals. These healthcare providers have equipped the large and talented workforce with state-of-the-art facilities and cutting-edge treatment options, which allows them to deliver exceptional medical care to area residents.

## **P**IEDMONT COLUMBUS REGIONAL

Piedmont Columbus Regional serves the Greater Columbus area with a network of health and medical services through its

two hospital campuses. Patients can select from a wide array of services and facilities, including the following:

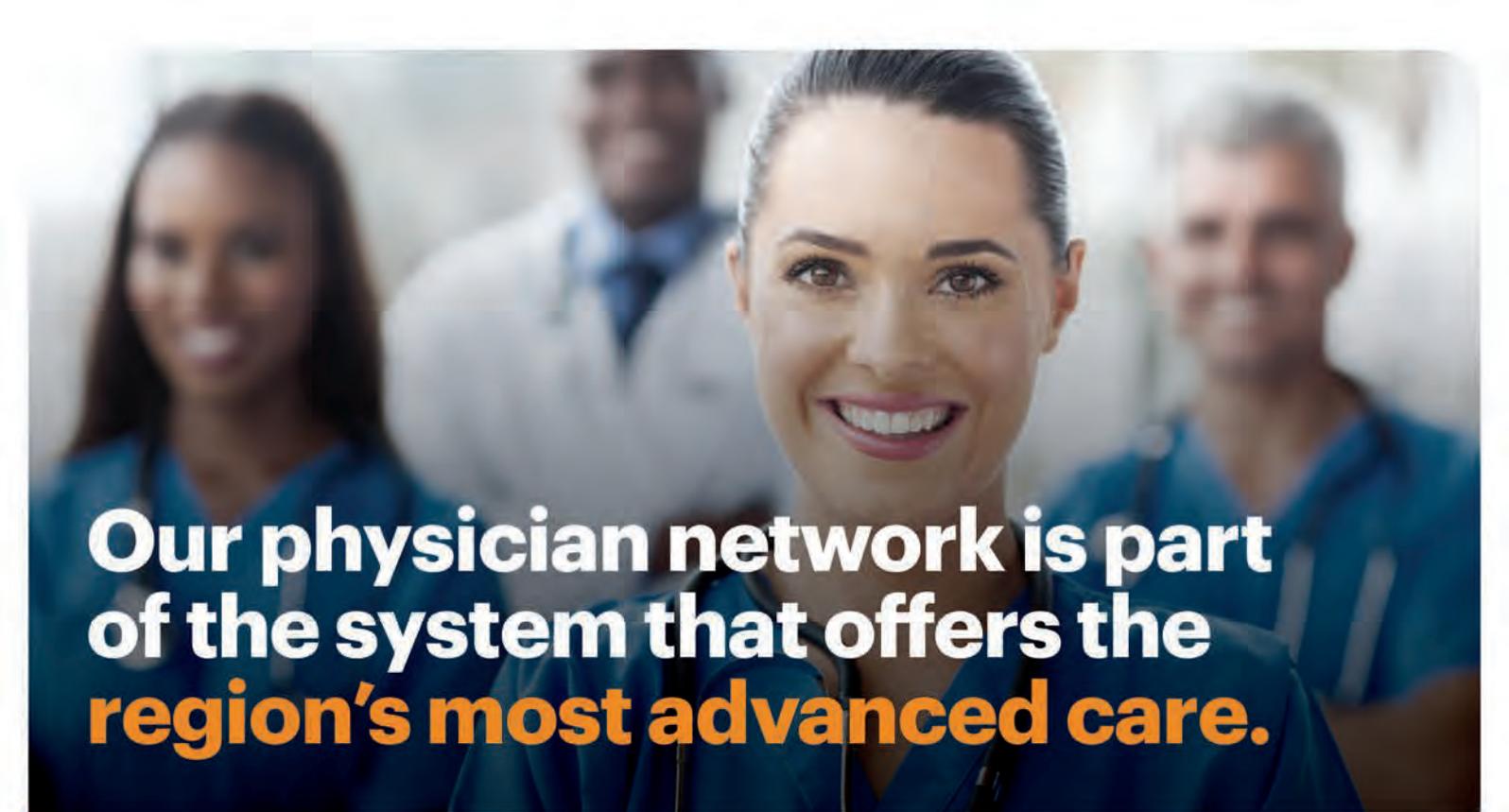
Piedmont Columbus Regional Midtown Campus, with 583 licensed beds, provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient care including routine and specialized services in neurosurgery, orthopedics, oncology, women's and children's services and intensive care.

PCR Midtown Campus houses the region's only Level II Emergency Trauma Center, a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) within a 100-mile radius and is one of only six perinatal centers in Georgia. PCR Midtown Campus is a Children's Miracle Network hospital and money is raised to

provide support to the children in Piedmont Columbus Regional's service area.

PCR Midtown Campus also operates an accredited graduate medical education teaching program consisting of a three-year Family Medicine Practice Residency Program of 36 residents.

PCR Midtown Campus is a stroke-certified facility and accepts life-flight helicopter services from throughout the region for its trauma and specialized services. PCR Midtown Campus has an "open medical staff" meaning any physician who meets the training and education requirements and who has demonstrated quality practices may apply for clinical privileges and, if granted those privileges by the Board of Directors,



# Our physician network is part of the system that offers the region's most advanced care.

Which is why it is so important to not only have a doctor you see regularly, but the right doctor. One who is part of a system of primary care doctors and leading specialists who provide the latest treatments right where you live. Because what better place is there to be treated than home?

Alzheimer's care

Bariatrics

Breast surgery

Cardiac care

Child neurology

Critical care

Endocrinology

Ear, nose and throat

Family medicine

Gastroenterology

General surgery

Gerontology

Hematology

Internal medicine

Labor and delivery

Maternal fetal medicine

Obstetrics-gynecology

Occupational medicine

Oncology

Pediatrics

Psychology

Pulmonology

Rehabilitation

Sleep medicine

Stroke care

Thoracic surgery

Trauma surgery

Urgent care

Urogynecology

Urology

Vascular surgery

Piedmont Columbus Regional Hospital - Midtown Campus • **706.571.1000**

Piedmont Columbus Regional Hospital - Northside Campus • **706.494.2100**

John B. Amos Cancer Center • **706.320.8700**

Piedmont Physicians • **706.494.4999**

[piedmont.org/columbus](http://piedmont.org/columbus)

 **Piedmont**  
PHYSICIANS

# Exquisite Community in Columbus

## 100 Spring Harbor Drive



### Choose the Area's Only Continuing Care Retirement Community

The luckiest people in southwest Georgia love living on the beautiful campus of Spring Harbor—the area's only continuing care retirement community with a **5-star rated health care center**.

Choose from 160 apartments with 11 different sizes and floor plans.

Or live in one of the 36 garden villas on the gated grounds.



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Columbus, Georgia 31904

**(706) 576-6003**

[SpringHarborLife.org](http://SpringHarborLife.org)



Join us for a  
complimentary meal and tour!



**Juanita Thomas**  
Marketing Director



**Dan Johnson**  
Move-In Coordinator

*Come and meet our  
dedicated sales team.*



may admit their patients to PCR Midtown Campus. There are more than 550 physicians on staff at PCR Midtown Campus and more than 2,600 employees at this location alone.

Piedmont Columbus Regional Northside Campus serves the entire community but is an optimal location for the northern Columbus residents and surrounding counties. PCR Northside Campus has an array of services including general surgery, plastic surgery, neurosurgery, urology and gynecology. There is also a strong orthopedic surgery program that specializes in total joint replacements, sports medicine and spine surgery. PCR Northside Campus provides both inpatient and outpatient services and opened a new 11,000 square-foot Emergency Department in April 2018 to better serve the acute care needs of the community.

PCR Northside Campus has a progressive inpatient rehabilitation program that aids patients to gain or regain functional independence. Rehab is used for stroke, spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, amputations, trauma, neurological disorders and other conditions.

PCR Northside Campus is one of two hospitals in Georgia to receive the 5-star rating for Quality and Patient Experience – upholding the reputation of providing the “Northside Experience” to all patients. The hospital has also won multiple Quality and Patient Satisfaction awards such as the Outstanding Patient Experience and Patient Safety Excellence Award. Most recently, the Northside Campus was recognized as a Milestone 8 Hospital by the Georgia Hospital Association and the facility achieved an “A” grade in Leapfrog ratings for Fall 2018.

The John B. Amos Cancer Center (JBACC) is recognized by many as the “crown jewel” of the Columbus medical community. JBACC is accredited by the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons – the only cancer treatment center with this distinction in the 14-county service area that PCR serves in west Georgia and east Alabama.

The center offers a full range of cancer treatment services, including medical oncology, radiation oncology, radiation therapy, outpatient infusion services, nutrition services, pharmacy, lab services, patient navigation services, pastoral care and an array of support services for patients and families. The John B. Amos Cancer Center also provides cancer patients access to clinical research trials.

The center houses cancer specialty clinics and a medical team of board-certified physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners with advanced oncology training and a team of clinical and non-clinical support staff.

**C COLUMBUS SPECIALTY HOSPITAL**

Columbus Specialty Hospital, on the PCR Midtown West campus, is a Joint Commission-accredited facility that offers treatment for patients with medically complex conditions, pulmonary disorders,



The Columbus Hospice House is the original inpatient unit in the area. While the main focus of the hospice program is to provide care to enable patients to spend their final days at home, sometimes needs cannot be met. They may be admitted into the Columbus Hospice House. Services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



[www.columbushospice.com](http://www.columbushospice.com)  
706.569.7992





**BROOKSIDE GLEN**  
SENIOR LIVING  
ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

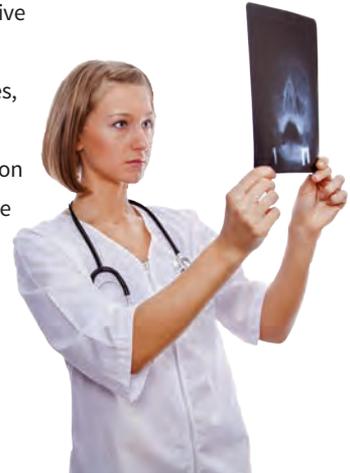
A specialized Community for Alzheimer's and the Memory Impaired. Come LIVE at a community where the staff is excellent, activities are phenomenal and the benefits are endless!

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www.brooksideglen.com  
400 Bradley Park Dr., Columbus, GA 31904

neurological illness, post-trauma or patients who require ventilator weaning or complex wound care. Admission is through referral only, from a physician or another hospital.

**C REGIONAL REHABILITATION HOSPITAL**

A joint venture between Piedmont Columbus Regional and HealthSouth Corporation, Regional Rehabilitation Hospital is a 48,000 square-foot, 48-bed rehabilitation facility. The hospital offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services for stroke, trauma, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, arthritis, chronic pain, neuromuscular disease, amputation and other disabling conditions that have caused loss of functional mobility.



**C ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL**

Since opening its doors in 1950, the caregivers at St. Francis have been committed each day to provide the

**FEATURING THE AREA'S FIRST 3T MRI AT CDC NORTHSIDE**

**2 GREAT CENTERS**



**COLUMBUS DIAGNOSTIC CENTER**  
2040 10th Avenue • (706) 322-3000

**CDC NORTHSIDE**  
7500 Veterans Pkwy, Suite C • (706) 323-7622  
ColumbusDiagnosticCenter.com



**MERCER UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

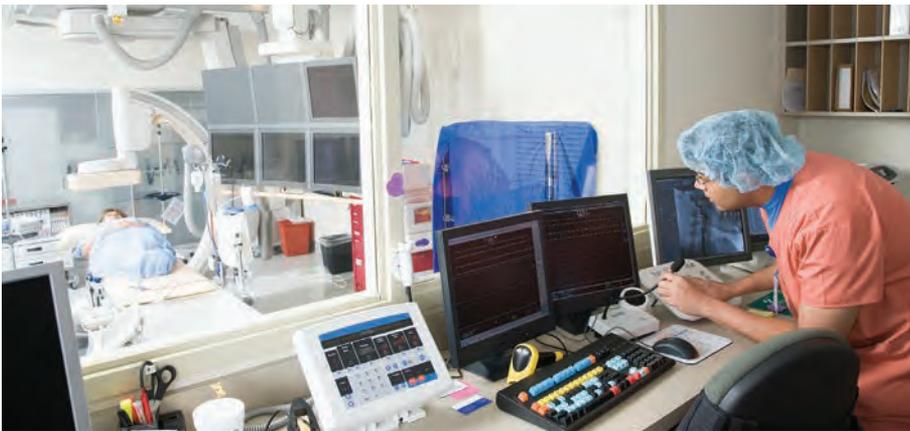


**Columbus Campus Class of 2020**

Our Mission:  
**To educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and health care needs of rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia.**

More than 60 percent of Mercer M.D. graduates currently practice in the state of Georgia, and of those, more than 80 percent are practicing in rural or medically underserved areas of Georgia.

**MEDICINE.MERCER.EDU**  
**478-301-2600**



highest quality care to the Chattahoochee Valley and surrounding region. With 376 beds on two campuses, more than 2,500 associates, and 300 physicians, St. Francis offers a full range of inpatient, outpatient, and emergency room services, including the only open-heart surgery program in the region.

An affiliation with Emory Clinic's Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery in 2016 helped take St. Francis' cardiac service to the next

level, bringing life-saving care to more people. Since the 2013 opening of St. Francis' two newest towers, cardiac services and cardiology practices have been under one roof, making care more convenient for patients.

In addition, the opening of St. Francis Women's Hospital that same year brought obstetrical services back to the hospital and is now a destination for a full range of women's services, including the St. Francis

Center for Breast Health, Center for Surgical Care, Gynecologic Oncology, OB/GYN Associates, and OB/GYN Partners.

St. Francis accomplishments and accolades include being recognized by the American Heart Association, for earning the Get with the Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for exceeding standards of care for the treatment of stroke patients. In 2017, St. Francis earned the American College of Cardiology Society of Chest Pain Center Accreditation. Additionally, in 2018 St. Francis received the association's Target: Stroke Elite Plus award. St. Francis' Family Birthing Center was the first in Georgia to obtain the Perinatal Care Certification from The Joint Commission. Most recently St. Francis became the only hospital in the region to achieve the Baby-Friendly Facility Designation from Baby-Friendly, USA. Through The Joint Commission, St. Francis has also earned Advanced Primary Stroke

There's a very good chance she could leave it all to the dog. We'll give you a leg up.



At Thrive, we treat parents differently. Like June treated the Beav. We're there for them with encouragement and anything they need. We forge meaningful relationships based on admiration and trust. There is purpose in every breath. Let us help you see how. Come. Bring your parent. Experience what it feels like to thrive.

**Thrive at Green Island**

6896 River Road | Columbus, GA 31904  
706.383.0590 | [ThriveSL.com/GreenIsland](http://ThriveSL.com/GreenIsland)





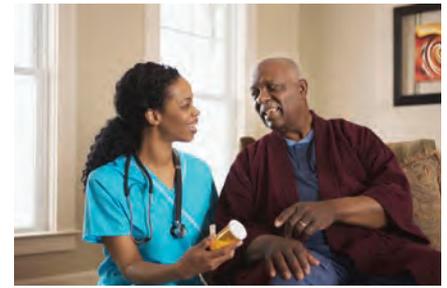
## Zoe Pediatrics

### Come Grow With Us

**We accept walk-ins, appointments, and you do not have to be a patient of ours to come into After Hours!** When you walk in the door at one of the ZDe Pediatrics offices, you join the ZDe family. It's not just a practice, it IS a family. The fact that you bring your children to us for care tells us that you trust us to provide the best Pediatric services available. We work at exceeding your expectations every time we meet.

[www.zoepeds.com](http://www.zoepeds.com)

 <p><b>13TH STREET COLUMBUS OFFICE &amp; AFTER HOURS</b> 706.641.2462 1110 13th Street, Columbus, GA 31901</p>	<p><b>WILLIAMS ROAD OFFICE</b> 706.221.7139 3031 Williams Road Columbus, GA 31909</p>	<p><b>WILLIAMS ROAD AFTER HOURS</b> 706.221.7099 3033 Williams Road Columbus, GA 31909</p>
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Care, Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement disease-specific certifications.

St. Francis has been part of this community for almost three generations. Moving into the future, St. Francis will continue to add new resources and build on its already strong foundation to ensure that you and those you love receive the best patient experience possible.

### **C ST. FRANCIS COLUMBUS CLINIC**

St. Francis Columbus Clinic is a multi-specialty clinic offering a full spectrum of primary care services, as well as cardiology, podiatry, and neurology specialties. In addition, they provide services such as mammography, lab, and diabetes education. The clinic is staffed with more than 30 board-certified physicians and mid-level providers, putting comprehensive, compassionate, quality care in one convenient location.

### **C ST. FRANCIS BRADLEY CENTER**

The Bradley Center, a community service of St. Francis Hospital, is a unique mental health resource committed to establishing wellness for the whole person – including children, adolescents, adults, and senior adults.

Founded in 1955, The Bradley Center has built a strong reputation as the mental health provider of choice for the people of the Chattahoochee Valley. The Bradley Center employs a multi-disciplinary team approach to treatment. An expert group of professionals, including psychiatrists, nurses, therapists, case managers, and mental health technicians, collaborates to ensure the best possible care.



## Great Choices for Senior Living in Columbus

### Assisted Living & Memory Support at Savannah Grand and Savannah Cottage

**COME SEE OUR NEW MEMORY SUPPORT COTTAGE**  
*An intimate community of just 14 apartments ensuring personalized attention!*  
**Call today for a tour and special introductory rates!**

Savannah Grand is proud to announce the addition of Memory Support services at our Columbus campus. We've just completed construction of our new Savannah Cottage offering specialized memory support services and conveniently located within Savannah Grand.

Savannah Grand and Savannah Cottage are different from other senior living communities. While anyone can vacuum, clean, serve food, transport residents and assist with medications—we truly go a step further! We work as a team to assure that our residents are emotionally and socially content and collaborate with health and social service professionals to ensure that each resident is happy and healthy. We know each of our residents well, allowing us to address their individual needs and desires.

Savannah Grand and Cottage offer a personalized approach to senior living, creating an environment where our residents thrive!



**SAVANNAH GRAND**  
ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES



**SAVANNAH COTTAGE**  
MEMORY SUPPORT RESIDENCES

8301 Franciscan Woods Dr. • Columbus  
**(706) 653-8100**  
[www.SavannahGrandColumbus.com](http://www.SavannahGrandColumbus.com)

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The Bradley Center's mental health services include detoxification treatment and inpatient and day treatment programs. These programs, along with support groups and educational programs, work together to enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and the local community and region.

### **C COLUMBUS DIAGNOSTIC CENTER**

Since opening in 1987, Columbus Diagnostic Center has become a highly dependable and cost-effective diagnostics resource in the heart of Columbus' healthcare community. Columbus Diagnostic Center's two locations provide a full range of services including MRI, CT, ultrasound, digital mammography and routine radiology. The Center's highly trained team of physicians, technologists and associates ensure that the care you receive reflects the highest level of personal attention.

### **C PASTORAL INSTITUTE**

The Pastoral Institute in Midtown Columbus provides counseling to individuals, couples, families, and children for a wide spectrum of mental health and behavioral issues. Staff includes psychologists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, licensed professional counselors, addiction counselors, and pastoral counselors (regardless of denomination). The Institute partners with more than 150 local and regional companies to offer counseling services for local employees through its Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at no cost to the employee. The Institute also offers corporate and community training and education to local companies and churches.



### **C RESOURCES**

- **Piedmont Columbus Regional-Midtown**  
710 Center St., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.571.1000 | [piedmont.org](http://piedmont.org)
- **Piedmont Columbus Regional-Northside**  
100 Frist Ct., Columbus, GA 31909  
706.494.2100 | [piedmont.org](http://piedmont.org)
- **John B. Amos Cancer Center**  
1831 5th Ave., Columbus, GA 31904  
706.320.8700
- **St. Francis Hospital**  
2122 Manchester Expwy.  
Columbus, GA 31904  
706.596.4000 | [mystfrancis.com](http://mystfrancis.com)
- **St. Francis Columbus Clinic**  
610 19th St., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.322.7884
- **The Bradley Center**  
2000 16th Ave., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.320.3700
- **Pastoral Institute**  
2022 15th Ave., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.649.6500 | [pastoralinstitute.org](http://pastoralinstitute.org)

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- Person-Centered Lifestyles
- Separate Secured Memory Care
- Unique Craftsman Style Architecture

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OaksSeniorLiving.com • Accepting Reservations  
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*Spectacular*  
**ATTRACTIONS**  
You Don't Have to **Look Far** to **Be Amazed**

**T**he Greater Columbus Region is a hotbed of art, culture and interactive exhibitions. As Georgia's second-largest metro area, Columbus is a consistent tour stop for major performing artists and cultural exhibits. Local museums allow visitors to step back in history to learn from the past or step into outer space to discover the future. These community assets continue to attract visitors from around the region and beyond, while advancing the cultural significance of the Chattahoochee Valley.

**C ARTS AND CULTURE**

World-class artists and touring productions of Broadway shows take the stage to deliver breathtaking performances at the RiverCenter for the Performing Arts, one of the gems of Columbus' cultural arts scene.

Each year, RiverCenter presents a season of 20-30 major productions, including celebrated artists in music, theatre, and dance, and supports hundreds of additional concerts and community functions. RiverCenter is home to the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, The Schwob School of Music, the Youth Orchestra of Greater Columbus, Cantus Columbus, and the

Columbus Ballet, making the center a cultural hub for West Georgia.

When the Springer Opera House opened in 1871, it was the grandest theatre between New York and New Orleans. Such noteworthy performers as Edwin Booth, Buffalo Bill, John Phillip Sousa, Ma Rainey, Burt Reynolds, Oscar Wilde, Garrison Keillor, Chet Atkins, and W.C. Fields have trod the Springer's boards.

The Springer is not only the State Theatre of Georgia, it is also one of only seven theatres in the U.S. producing shows in a National Historic Landmark. It offers a yearly season of three play series – the

Mainstage Series, the Studio II, and the Springer Children's Theatre Series.

Columbus' first Black theatre, the Historic Liberty Theatre, opened in 1924, and has hosted ground-breaking performances from Ella Fitzgerald, Marian Anderson, Ethel Waters, Lena Horne, Columbus' own Ma Rainey and her protégé, Bessie Smith, the big bands of Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, and Fletcher Henderson. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, the theatre continues to host musical events, plays, and classes.

Distinctive art is around every corner in Uptown Columbus. Each year, at least 10 new pieces are chosen for display as a part of the city's Sculpture Walk. While most of the art pieces rotate each year, seven pieces have become a permanent part of the Uptown Columbus streetscape.

The Columbus Museum, offers a diverse collection, including an American fine art collection, historical artifacts that tell the story of the Chattahoochee River Valley, a hands-on gallery for children, traveling exhibitions from across the U.S., and the historic Bradley Olmsted Garden, all with free admission.

## **C** ATTRACTIONS

When you treat your visitors to a tour of Columbus, make sure to hit some of the city's major attractions.



RiverCenter for the Performing Arts

The Coca-Cola Space Science Center (CCSSC) is a hands-on educational facility focused on space science and astronomy. Visitors enjoy Georgia's largest collection of Space Shuttle artifacts and interactive exhibits such as A Space Shuttle Odyssey, flight simulators, Mars rovers, and the Omnisphere Theater planetarium.

At the National Infantry Museum, visitors pay tribute to the dedicated soldiers of the U.S. Army Infantry, whose sacrifices have protected our freedoms for more than 240 years. Through interactive multimedia exhibits, learn about Fort Benning, World War II, the Cold War, Afghanistan, Medal of Honor recipients and more. Visit the Global War on Terrorism Memorial, which carries the names of nearly 7,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines killed since 9/11. It sits on Heritage Walk, across from a 3/4-scale replica of the Vietnam Wall Memorial. Experience an authentically restored World War II Company Street, 3D Giant Screen Theatre, combat simulator attractions, restaurant, and gift store.

The National Civil War Naval Museum tells the full maritime story of the Civil War. The museum features warship remains, recreated ship environments, artifacts, and year-round programs and events, as well as the largest collection of original Civil War Naval-related flags in the nation. By telling the stories of the navies of the Civil War, the museum connects people with a little-known past, giving a better sense of place and time.



National Infantry Museum

## **C** RESOURCES

### Entertainment

- **RiverCenter For the Performing Arts**  
900 Broadway, Columbus, GA 31901  
706.256.3612  
rivercenter.org
- **Springer Opera House**  
103 10th St., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.327.3688  
springeroperahouse.org
- **The Liberty Theatre**  
821 8th Ave., Columbus, GA 31902  
706.653.7566  
libertycolumbusga.org

### Museums

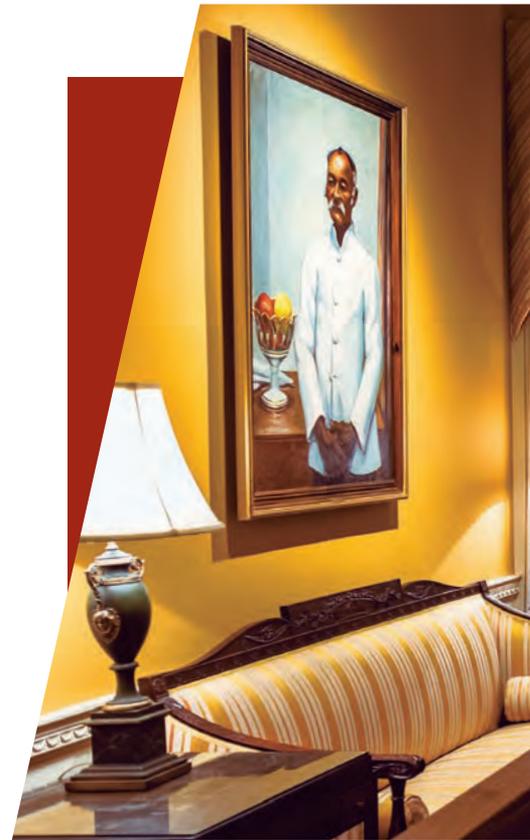
- **Columbus Museum**  
1251 Wynnton Rd., Columbus, GA 31906  
706.748.2562  
columbusmuseum.com
- **Coca-Cola Space Science Center**  
701 Front Ave., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.649.1470  
ccssc.org
- **National Infantry Museum**  
1775 Legacy Way, Columbus, GA 31903  
706.658.5800  
nationalinfantrymuseum.org
- **National Civil War Naval Museum**  
1002 Victory Dr., Columbus, GA 31901  
706.327.9798  
portcolumbus.org

# THE REGIONAL HISTORY OF COLUMBUS



Progress through  
Trials, Triumphs,  
and Innovation

**N**amed after Christopher Columbus, this city on the Georgia-Alabama border has nearly 200 years of history, sometimes finding itself at the center of national and global developments.



**1828:**

The 1,200-acre town of Columbus is planned and established.

**1828:**

The first steamboat from the Gulf of Mexico to Columbus, "Fanny", arrives and is followed by countless boats eager for a stake in the cotton market.

**1860:**

Columbus is ranked second, under Richmond, Va., in industry. The city is called "Lowell of the South" with a paper mill, a cotton gin maker, a furniture factory, several iron works, textile mills, and river transportation.

**1865:**

During the Civil War, General James H. Wilson destroys the factories and mills of Columbus and nearby West Point.

**1927:**

Bibb Manufacturing Company's 2,500-employee plant is among the largest cotton mills in America. Bibb and many others flock to Columbus throughout the 20th Century, allowing the city to remain a center for business prosperity.

**1930s:**

Royal Crown Cola is produced by the Claud Hatcher company.

**1958:**

Columbus College is established in a closed mill.

**1960s:**

Columbus' historic preservation movement begins when the 1871 Springer Opera House is threatened with demolition.



Columbus Museum

## 1886:

Dr. John S. Pemberton, a Columbus pharmacist, invents Coca-Cola. In 1891, Pemberton sells his interest to Atlanta businessman Asa Griggs Candler.

## 1898:

Mayor L.H. Chappell lures a military training camp to town, paves downtown streets, builds sewers and steel bridges, plants trees, and creates the modern municipal water works, transforming the muddy Chattahoochee into drinking water.

## 1918:

Fort Benning is established as Camp Benning, and provides basic training in World War I.

## 1918:

Ernest Woodruff, a Columbus native and Atlanta businessman, engineers the purchase of Coca-Cola from the Candler family for \$25 million.

## 1922:

Columbus becomes the first major Southern city to adopt the commission-city manager form of government.

## 1968-1971:

The city doubles in size by absorbing the remaining county areas and consolidating governments.

## 2003:

Under federal court order to build a combined sewer-overflow system, the Columbus Water Works begins developing the RiverWalk, which eventually extends for 22 miles, from Fort Benning, south of town, to Lake Oliver to the north.

## 2011:

Fort Benning becomes home to the Maneuver Center of Excellence.

## 2012-2013:

Two century-old dams on the Chattahoochee River are removed. Whitewater rafting, kayaking, and cross-river zip line courses become attractions.



# PLAY PADDLE, OR PAUSE

An Amazing Place to Go with the Flow

**T**he way the water of the Chattahoochee River rushes through the heart of Uptown Columbus adds a level of energy to the collective pulse of the region. A flurry of activity emanates from the flowing river and along its tributaries in the Greater Columbus Region.

Residents and visitors alike can explore and experience the possibilities for relaxation and adventure. Take it slow with a picnic in the park or jump into action by zipping over the rapids. Whether it's time to get active or seek serenity, you'll find the options for recreation abundant on the banks, in the rapids and around the Chattahoochee.

While recreation may start with the legendary waterway, it certainly doesn't end there. Sports fans and athletes enjoy award-winning golf courses, established youth recreation associations and the winningest arena football team in history. However you spend your time, it's easy to fill your days with amazing adventure in Columbus.

## **C** CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER

As the lifeblood of the region, it's no surprise the Chattahoochee River plays a major role in the area's outdoor recreation, offering a wealth of activities, including biking, fishing, rafting, kayaking, and more!

Possibly the biggest news in the Columbus in the last 10 years was the breaching of dams on the river and the creation of the "Longest Urban Whitewater Course in the World." Escape the ordinary with Columbus GA Whitewater. Beginner groups will love the

*This extraordinary whitewater rafting course was named by USA Today as one of the "Top 12 Man-made Adventures in the World." There is whitewater for all ages, whether you want a milder trip or an extreme adventure.*

'family classic' where you enjoy entry-level whitewater and float through a Lazy River full of turtles. Or take the 'Challenge' trip for an extreme adventure, where you encounter the biggest rapid in the East! Guides accompany all guests. Both trips offer a great opportunity to see bald eagles and ospreys.

Along with the whitewater course, visitors are coming to Columbus for the Blue Heron Zipline, which offers two crossings of the Chattahoochee River. Soaring 100 feet above the rapids from Georgia to Alabama and back is an extraordinary experience. Guests also enjoy the treetop aerial course and a spectacular canopy tour taking you high up in some of the region's magnificent Southern oaks.

## **C** PARKS

Columbus Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of facilities perfect for maintaining an active lifestyle. Head to Flat Rock Park and break out the discs for a round of disc golf. Britt David Park has walking and fitness paths in addition to baseball fields, a playground, and more. Whether you are



Columbus Lions

a tennis fan or an avid fisherman, there are endless opportunities for fun in Columbus.

**C FISHING**

Casting a line from the banks of the Chattahoochee may bring in bluegill, redear sunfish, hybrid striped bass and white bass, catfish or one of several species of trout. Another great spot to fish is Lake Oliver, a

Georgia Power hydropower impoundment, which is home to a large population of large-mouth bass.

**C TRAILS**

One of the largest and most successful recent revitalization efforts in the South is the Columbus RiverWalk project – a raised, paved pathway that follows the

Chattahoochee and stretches 22 miles from Lake Oliver to Fort Benning. Also constructed on an abandoned railroad track, the Columbus Fall Line Trace stretches approximately 11 miles through the city and offers 12-foot-wide asphalt paths for recreation. In April 2018, the first phase of the Dragonfly Trail opened to bikers, walkers, and runners. After completion, the Dragonfly network of greenway trails will total 60 miles, including the RiverWalk and Fall Line Trace. The area has been recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as one of the 40 most Bicycle Friendly Communities in the U.S., and bike rentals are readily available.

Another location for trails is at Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center. Catch a glimpse of native wildlife, view the wetlands and ponds or explore the educational and fun Discovery Trail. Inside Oxbow Meadows, explore exhibits and natural history displays, including snakes,

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Soldiers, Families, Retirees and Civilians at Fort Benning  
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[www.facebook.com/BenningFMWRfans/](https://www.facebook.com/BenningFMWRfans/) • Out-of-Home Advertising

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Gain prominent exposure by targeting the brand-loyal military market.

Leverage your brand's assets and develop sustainable promotion efforts.

Create buzz, build brand awareness, drive traffic and repeat sales.

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Independence Celebration

**CHILD & YOUTH**

Youth Sports  
Fort Benning Field Day

**GOLF**

Commanding General's  
Golf Scrambles

**MWR SPORTS**

Army Ten Miler  
5K Fun Runs  
Commander's Cup

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(706) 545-4559 or email: [terril.n.alexander.naf@mail.mil](mailto:terril.n.alexander.naf@mail.mil) • (706) 545-4499 or [mary.s.beck4.naf@mail.mil](mailto:mary.s.beck4.naf@mail.mil)

turtles, fish, alligators and other animals, and catch programs on ecology and the natural history of region.

## **C** GOLF

Tee off at any of our award-winning golf courses, including the 36-hole Bull Creek Golf Course, currently ranked in the top 25 golf courses in the U.S. Maple Ridge Golf Club offers a high-quality course co-designed by 1987 Masters winner, current Champions Tour star and Columbus resident Larry Mize. Fine courses are also found at the area's two private clubs, the Country Club of Columbus and Green Island Country Club.

## **C** SPORTS

For thrilling family fun, check out the Columbus Lions of the National Arena League (NAL). The Lions kicked off their 13th season in 2019, making Columbus the longest continually running team in arena football. The Lions are led by Head Coach Jason Gibson who has a 102-46 record entering 2019. The Lions have made 11 playoff appearances in 12 seasons, and Coach Gibson has also led the Lions to six championship appearances, winning three of them (SIFL 2010, PIFL 2015, AIF 2016).

The Lions play their home games at Hughston Clinic Field in the Columbus Civic Center, a premier local entertainment venue hosting multiple sporting events, concerts, fairs and more every year.

## **C** CELEBRATE THE SEASONS

Columbus residents have access to numerous recreational opportunities throughout West Georgia, including two state parks less than an hour away. Additionally, Callaway Resort & Gardens attracts both day and overnight guests seeking a quick escape at an authentic outdoor resort destination year-round. Roughly 40 miles from Columbus



Blue Heron Zipline

in Pine Mountain, residents and visitors have easy access to Callaway's championship golf courses, tennis, fly-fishing, water-skiing, a zipline/aerial obstacle course, gardens, butterfly center, birds of prey shows, and floral displays.

Special events make every season extra special. November brings family and friends together to watch thoroughbred horses race over timber and brush hurdles in

the annual Steeplechase at Callaway. Then, from mid-November until the end of December, witness the famous Fantasy in Lights, which includes 8 million lights in 15 dazzling scenes. Fantasy in Lights is not only the South's most spectacular holiday light and sound show, but also one of the world's "Top 10 Places to See Holiday Lights," according to *National Geographic Traveler*.

## **C** RESOURCES

### • Columbus Parks and Recreation

3111 Citizens Way  
Columbus, GA 31906  
706.225.4638  
[parks.columbusga.gov](http://parks.columbusga.gov)

### • Columbus GA Whitewater

1000 Bay Ave.  
Columbus, GA 31901  
706.321.4720  
[whitewaterexpress.com](http://whitewaterexpress.com)

### • Bull Creek Golf Course

7333 Lynch Rd.  
Midland, GA 31820  
706.561.1614  
[columbusga.gov/bullcreek](http://columbusga.gov/bullcreek)

### • Maple Ridge Golf Course

4700 Maple Ridge Trail  
Columbus, GA 31909  
706.569.0966

### • Columbus Civic Center

400 4th St, Columbus, GA 31901  
706.653.4460  
[civiccenter.columbusga.gov](http://civiccenter.columbusga.gov)

### • The Columbus Lions

706.322.3336  
[columbuslions.net](http://columbuslions.net)

### • Country Club of Columbus

2610 Cherokee Ave.  
Columbus, GA 31906  
706.322.4441  
[ccofcolumbus.com](http://ccofcolumbus.com)

### • Green Island Country Club

6501 Standing Boy Rd.  
Columbus, GA 31904  
706.324.7191  
[greenislandcc.org](http://greenislandcc.org)

### • Callaway Resort and Gardens

17800 US-27  
Pine Mountain, GA 31822  
844.512.3826  
[callawaygardens.com](http://callawaygardens.com)

### • Columbus Regional Tennis Association (CORTA)

706.317.4136  
[corta.org](http://corta.org)

### • Sports Council – Columbus, GA

706.660.1996  
[sportsCouncil.columbusga.gov](http://sportsCouncil.columbusga.gov)



Citizens Center

- **Water**  
Columbus Water Works..... 706.649.3400
- **Gas**  
Liberty Utilities ..... 855.216.6305
- **Telephone Companies**  
AT&T..... 800.222.0300  
Mediacom ..... 855.633.4226  
WOW! (Wide Open West) ..... 866.376.7003  
706.221.1000
- **Television**  
Mediacom ..... 855.633.4226  
WOW! (Wide Open West) ..... 866.376.7003  
706.221.1000

**? How do I enroll my kids in school?**

- Muscogee County School Dist. .... 706.748.2000
- Brookstone School ..... 706.324.1392
- Calvary Christian School..... 706.323.0467
- St. Anne-Pacelli Catholic School . 706.561.8232
- St. Luke School..... 706.256.1301

**? How do I find a doctor?**

- Bradley Center of St. Francis Hospital  
(mental health) ..... 706.320.3700
- Children’s Hospital at Midtown .. 706.571.1321
- Columbus Diagnostic Center ..... 706.322.3000
- Columbus Diagnostic Center  
on Comer ..... 706.323.7622
- Columbus Specialty Hospital..... 706.494.4075
- John B. Amos Cancer Center..... 706.320.8700
- Midtown Medical Center ..... 706.571.1000
- Northside Medical Center..... 706.494.2100
- Pastoral Institute..... 706.649.6500
- Piedmont Columbus  
Regional Health..... 706.571.1000
- Regional Rehabilitation  
Hospital ..... 334.732.2200
- St. Francis Hospital..... 706.596.4000
- St. Francis Columbus Clinic ..... 706.322.7884



**W**elcome to the Columbus Region! To help you get started on your Chattahoochee Valley journey, we’ve compiled a list of helpful information that will allow you check one more thing off your to-do list.

**? Is there a number I can call to inquire about Columbus City/Muscogee County government services?**

To request a service, offer a suggestion or register a complaint about Columbus City/Muscogee County government services, dial 3-1-1, or 706.653.4000. For emergency services, dial 9-1-1.

**? How do I get a Georgia Driver’s License?**

New residents to the state must apply for a Georgia driver’s license within 30 days of moving into the state. Please visit the Department of Driver Services website for more information.

**• DDS Customer Service Center**

8397 Macon Rd.  
Midland, GA 31820  
706.569.3033  
dds.georgia.gov/location/columbus

**? How do I register my vehicle?**

For information please call 706.653.4208.

**? How do I register to vote?**

The Columbus Voter Registration Office handles voter registration for all Muscogee County residents. Online voter registration is now available. For more information please call 706.653.4392 or visit [columbusga.org/elections/regVote.htm](http://columbusga.org/elections/regVote.htm).

**? Who do I call to turn on my utilities?**

- **Electric Companies**  
Diverse Power ..... 800.845.8362  
Flint Energies ..... 706.568.0333  
Georgia Power ..... 888.660.5890  
706.329.1775



Striffler-Hamby Mortuary - Columbus is dedicated to providing the Columbus, Georgia, area with compassionate, professional and personal funeral services. Since our beginning, our commitment to excellence has remained unchanged and yet our funeral home has always responded to the evolving needs of families and the community.

4071 Macon Rd.  
Columbus, GA 31907

Dignity  
MEMORIAL

706.563.2372

# RELOCATION INFORMATION

**?** Are there other resources I might need in my first few weeks in the Columbus Region?

**• General**

- Columbus Consolidated Government..... columbusga.org
- Columbus Convention & Visitors Bureau ..... visitcolumbusga.com
- Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce.....columbusgachamber.com

**• Workforce Development**

- Georgia Department of Labor ...dol.state.ga.us
- Georgia Quick Start Program ..... georgiaquickstart.org
- Regional Economic Development Partnerships .... thevalleypartnership.com
- Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce.....columbusgachamber.com

**• Libraries**

- Chattahoochee Valley Libraries ..800.652.0783  
www.cvlga.org
- Columbus Public Library ..... 706.652.2669
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*Continued on Next Page*

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

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A photograph of two women, one older and one younger, laughing together at a dining table. The older woman is on the left, wearing a red top and a patterned apron. The younger woman is on the right, wearing a white floral top. They are both smiling broadly. In front of them is a table with plates of food, including a burger and fries, and glasses. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people at the table.

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