

Press Release

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HEADLINE: GACCE Announces 2013 Executive of the Year Award Recipient

Bill Mitchell, *GACCE*, President & CEO of the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, was presented with GACCE's top award last week. The announcement was made Thursday, July 18 at the 2013 GACCE Annual Conference held at the Lake Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge.

For more than twenty years, the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (GACCE) has presented the Executive of the Year Award. The association's most prestigious award, it was created to recognize those members who give so generously of their time and talents for the betterment of the organization, for the assistance and support of their colleagues for the improvement of Chambers of Commerce, and for the advancement of the profession. The award is named in honor of Kent Lawrence who gave unselfishly to build the Chamber profession and to assist Chamber professionals in every possible way. Kent retired from the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, and in recognition of his many years of outstanding service, GACCE renamed the award in his honor in 1991 – it is now referred to as the *GACCE Executive of the Year Award Honoring Kent Lawrence*.

Bill has been in the chamber profession for over 14 years. He was appointed in 1999 to the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber and Development Authorities, where he currently serves as President and Executive Director. He is a Past Chair of GACCE and served on the Georgia Economic Developers Association's Board of Directors, the Georgia Academy Board and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce Board. Bill graduated from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Organizational Management in June 2003, and he was named a Georgia Certified Chamber Executive in 2008.

Bill served on the Board of Directors of Southeastern Technical College for nine years and as Chairman of the Board for three years. He is Past President of the Vidalia Chamber of Commerce and the Vidalia Rotary Club and was named Vidalia's Citizen of the Year in 1994.

Bill was nominated for the GACCE Executive of the Year Award by not one, but two former recipients. As stated from Jane Fryer, formerly with the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber, in her letter of recommendation for the award, "I have been very impressed with his progress in the chamber field since 1999. When he first started in this profession, he got right in there and talked to others that were in the business to learn everything he could. Like most of us that are in chamber work, there was no prior training to prepare you for what you face on a day to day basis."

Willie Paulk, President of the Dublin-Laurens County Chamber, also added, "His friendliness, pleasing personality, and eagerness to learn made an impression on me. His people skills and leadership skills are outstanding. He exemplifies the qualities that are required for nomination of this award."

We congratulate Bill on receiving this award!

GACCE is the professional society of chamber of commerce executives and staff in the state of Georgia. The mission of GACCE is to educate, engage, and empower chamber professionals.