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Gwinnett County graduates at the November 10th ceremony included Joe Allen, Executive Director of Gwinnett Place CID and Nicole Wright, Business Development Manager with the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce. Pictured receiving their graduation certificates from Academy Board Members Pat Merritt and Mary Ellen McClanahan and Academy Facilitator, Steve Foster.

Gwinnett Place CID Executive Director Joe Allen is one of the 2011 graduates of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development's Region Three Multi-Day Training Program

ATLANTA, Ga., (November 28, 2011) - The Board of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development announces Gwinnett County graduates from the 2011 Region Three Multi-Day Training Program. Class participants represented a number of professional and non-professional economic development fields, including elected officials, public servants, business leaders, educators, and social service providers from nine counties in Metro Atlanta. The Academy provided each of the graduates an opportunity to gain a unique understanding of the complexities of economic and community development on the local,

regional, and state levels.

Created in 1993 by then-Governor Zell Miller's Development Council, the Academy assembles a cross section of economic development professionals and resources to provide this training in all twelve service delivery regions in Georgia. The Board of Directors of the Academy consists of 22 members representing public and private economic development organizations and agencies from across Georgia. Since its organization, the Academy has provided training for thousands of professional and non-professional economic developers around the state, and since 1998 the Academy has been offered annually. Georgia EMC and Georgia Power provide facilitators for the program, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs provides staff support to this important program.

"One of the goals for the multi-day regional Academies is to encourage multi-county cooperation," says Saralyn Stafford, Executive Director of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development. "Many times the participants discover the issues facing their community are the same as those facing other communities in their region, and can then combine limited resources to address the issue."

The Academy's multi-day program, taught one day a month over a four-month period, includes training in the basics of economic and community development, plus specialized segments on business recruitment and retention, tourism product development, downtown development, quality planning, redevelopment and other essentials for community success. In addition, the curriculum features specific leadership skills such as consensus building, ethics in public service, collaborative leadership and other segments needed for effective community leadership in economic development. Local elected officials receive certification training credits through the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association for completion of this program, and the program is certified for CEUs through the UGA Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

The next Region Three Georgia Academy for Economic Development will begin in August 2012. For more information on this, please contact Ms. Cynthia Easley at 404-679-4789 or by email at cynthia.easley@dca.ga.gov.

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