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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **HCCA Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator Graduates from Georgia Academy for Economic Development**



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA - Houston County Career Academy Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator, Sandi Couillard, recently graduated from the 2019 Region 6 Georgia Academy for Economic Development training program. Class participants represented a number of professional economic development fields, to include elected officials, public servants, business leaders, educators and social service providers from 10 counties in middle Georgia.

The training provided an opportunity for the class to gain a unique understanding of the complexities of economic and community development on local, regional and state

levels. The multi-day program was taught one day a month for four months.

Graduates from Houston County are shown with their class facilitators, Araina Reaves from Georgia EMC and Mickey Daniell from Georgia Power. Pictured at the April 30, 2019, ceremony are: (from left, front row) Slaytan Carter, Jamie Cook and Dan Rhodes; (back row) Reaves, Justin Wright, Couillard, Hayley Myers and Daniell. (Not pictured is graduate Ashley Hardin.)

The program includes training in the basics of economic and community development, as well as specialized segments on business recruitment and retention, tourism product development, downtown development, planning and other essentials for community success. The curriculum also 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.

“One of the goals for the multi-day regional Academies is to encourage multi-county cooperation,” says Corinne Thornton, 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 the combine limited resources to address the issue.”

Created in 1993, the Academy assembles a cross section of economic development professionals and resources to provide training in all 12 service delivery regions in Georgia. The Board of Directors of the Academy represent public and private economic development organizations and agencies from across the state. Since its organization, the Academy has provided training for thousands of professional and non-professional economic developers across the state of Georgia. As of 1998, the academy has been offered annually in all 12 regions of the state. Georgia EMC and Georgia Power provide facilitators for the program, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs provides staff support to this important program.

The next Region 6 Georgia Academy for Economic Development will begin in February 2020. For more information, please contact Tonya Mole, Georgia Department of Community Affairs Region 6 Representative, at 404-852-6876 or [tonya.mole@dca.ga.gov](mailto:tonya.mole@dca.ga.gov).

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