

## News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE  
**GATES PORTAL**

### ENDING ONE YEAR TO PREPARE FOR A NEW ONE

***TIME TO ACT - Call Governor Deal  
Respond now - see below!!***



*By Dawn A. Randolph, MPA*

#### **Georgia's Economic Indicators**

This has been a very busy year for GATES in terms of policy development and meetings to discuss current and future policy activity with GVRA. I know it seems like we have moved from one crisis to another throughout the last twelve months. Each success or change has been the hard work of GATES staff and members toward serving clients with few resources in the short term but the hope of long term growth.

Georgia government seems to mirror this struggle as unemployment was a challenge for most of the year and now more than 43,000 are faced with losing their unemployment benefits by year's end. While the unemployment rate was finally on decline the decision by Congress not to extend these benefits could be a drag on Georgia's economy.

Nearly halfway through this fiscal year there is a mixed bag of revenue news for Georgia. While overall Georgia's revenue is coming in at projected growth of 5.4% or \$7.34 billion there are winners and losers among the various revenue sources. In November both the income and state sales tax declined slightly while the new tax structure for motor vehicle sales tax was extremely high as was corporate tax collections.

#### In This Issue

[NEW YEAR](#)

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Special  
Announcements



**GATES Board  
of Directors  
Winter Meeting  
Date/Location -  
TBD**

**GATES Board  
of Directors  
Spring Meeting  
April 25, 2014  
Location: -TBD**

**State Use**

You can see in the table below corporations are doing very well and the motor vehicle sales tax collection are providing enough of a bump to cover the slump in the income and sales taxes. However, the vehicle tax collection will smooth out in a year or two and won't be giving the state a consistent revenue boost.

<i>Source</i>	<b>Nov %</b>	<b>Nov \$</b>	<b>Fiscal YTD %</b>	<b>Fiscal YTD \$\$</b>
<i>Income</i>	- 1%	\$7.2M	3.1%	\$3.8B
<i>Sales</i>	- 2.7%	\$11.7M	- 6.3%	\$2.1B
<i>Corporate</i>	109.8%	\$10.5M	44.3%	\$240.6M
<i>Vehicles</i>	260.6%	\$70.1M	252.2%	\$426.9M

### **Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Status Update**

Work continues inside the agency to reduce operating expenses and change policies to streamline operations and contain costs within the limited budget they inherited. At the most recent GVRA Board meeting Executive Director Greg Schmieg reviewed several steps they are prepared to take to ensure they stay within current budget appropriations, including postponing/consolidating central staff positions, consolidate office space around the state, and plan for possible furloughs of up to two days a week for all staff.

Director Schmieg emphasized his priority is continue to move through the waiting list and avoid any further impact on case services and contract funding. While working on internal operations the agency continues to work on external partnerships to find interagency agreements to support match dollars and make the case for increased state appropriations. The agency's new mantra is Think Big, Serve MORE, Do Better.

### **Time to ACT - CALL GOVERNOR DEAL**

Everyone should contact the Governor's Office in the next two weeks with the following message:

**Add an additional \$8.2 million of state funds to the Vocational Rehabilitation Division within the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to fully fund services for people with disabilities to support their employment goals. These state dollars will match \$31 million federal funds allotted to Georgia and fully fund GVRA. These additional dollars will be used to support employment services across Georgia and have a huge impact of \$2.1 billion, a sixteen times return on investment.**

**Governor Deal's office number is 404-656-1776.** Just leave this message with your name, organization and address/location. The Governor now has all the information from each agency and it is time to see which priorities he will recommend for funding increases to the Legislature. Calls this week could make the difference in his budget recommendations,

### **Council Meeting**

January 23, 2014  
10:00 AM

Location: Sloppy  
Floyd Bldg - West  
Tower

### **State Use Council Meeting**

March 27, 2014  
10:00 AM

Location: Sloppy  
Floyd Bldg - West  
Tower

### **Working Wonders Day**

March 27, 2014  
Noon

Location: Sloppy  
Floyd Bldg

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THE PORTAL is a regular publication of GATES. If you have staff or others associated with your organization that you would like to receive THE PORTAL, please send their email address to: Charles Hall, [chall@asqinfo.net](mailto:chall@asqinfo.net)

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## Call for Information

*THE PORTAL* is a communication tool for GATES and GATES members. If you have stories about your organization, staff announcements, program descriptions, or other information you want to share with other GATES members, please send the info to Charles Hall, [chall@asginfo.net](mailto:chall@asginfo.net)



## GATES

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