

# ATLANTA-TBILISI SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

## “BRINGING TOGETHER THE TWO GEORGIA’S”

### INTRODUCTION:

Dear Committee Members:

With great pride I again announce the Committee’s resounding success at its first ever fundraiser this past September. The Committee has delivered \$16,000.00 in much needed relief to charities in Georgia. This aid has been instrumental in the lives of many Georgians, and could not have been possible without the hard work of every Committee member. Many of you contributed your time, money, effort, and goods to this worthy event, and we thank you.

The Committee continues to move forward. Following the September fundraiser, we hosted a group of Georgian attorneys through the Open World program, here to study jury trials. Next month, we are partnering with the U.S. Department of Commerce to host in Atlanta an economic forum of Georgian and American businessmen and dignitaries. This event will forge stronger business ties between our two countries.

On a personal note, I recently returned from a week long trip to Tbilisi. While there, I had the opportunity to present Mayor Ugulava with a plaque from Mayor Shirley Franklin commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Atlanta-Tbilisi Sister City Committee and the relationship between our countries. The event was televised nationally. Without your hard work and commitment over the last year and over the last twenty years, this achievement could not have been possible.

Finally, I encourage you to continue becoming involved in the work of the Committee. In the next few months, there will be many opportunities to achieve our common purposes. Together, we can continue to build humanitarian, educational, charitable, and economic bridges to Georgia. We look forward to seeing you at our November 20, 2008 meeting, and look forward to partnering with you then.

Sincerely yours,  
John E. Hall, Jr.



John Hall presents ATSCC plaque to Mayor Uguilava in Tbilisi.

### “A TASTE OF GEORGIAN CULTURE” FUNDRAISING

The ATSCC hosted its first and annual “A Taste of Georgian Culture” fundraiser in the atrium of Atlanta’s City Hall on September 27, 2008. It was a huge success, drawing over 200 guests and raising nearly \$16,000 to support humanitarian aid for Georgia. In addition to raising much needed funds, it highlighted the long term relationships between the State of Georgia and the Country of Georgia, including the Sister City relationship between Atlanta and Tbilisi, now in its 20th year. Native Georgian Atlanta Hawks’ basketball player, Zaza Pachulia, and Neurologist and Honorary Georgian citizen, H. Kenneth Walker, M.D. proudly served as the event’s guests of honor. The event drew significant media coverage, including articles in both the Atlanta Business Chronicle and the Fulton Daily Report.



Guests sample authentic Georgian food at the event.

A special thanks to the many Committee members who graciously gave in so many ways to make this event possible, particularly Nina Tickaradze who oversaw the food for the event. You have set the bar high, and we look for even better things in the future.



Next ATSCC Committee Meeting: 6:30 P.M., November 20th, Offices of Hall, Booth, Smith and Slover, 1180 West Peachtree St., Suite 900, Atlanta 30309. For directions, see [www.hbss.net](http://www.hbss.net), or call 404-954-5000.

## GEORGIAN ECONOMIC FORUM TO BE HELD IN ATLANTA ON DECEMBER 12TH, 2008

The Atlanta-Tbilisi Sister City Committee will be hosting a major economic forum at the W Hotel in midtown Atlanta on December 12th, 2008. Sponsored by the United States Department of Commerce, this forum will raise visibility of business opportunities in Georgia and provide an opportunity for American and Georgian businesses and financial institution to interact.

The forum will provide a deeper understanding of the Georgian business landscape, and will offer a rare opportunity for American and Georgian business executives to meet with potential business partners, high-level government officials, and governmental agencies. Targeted industries will include retail, construction, finance, tourism, trade and energy.



**Delegates meet fellow Georgian Zaza Pachulia at Phillips Arena.**

From October 18th through the 25th, the Committee hosted its **fourth** Open World delegation. Funded and administered by the U.S. Congress, the Open World program seeks to build bridges between professionals from Eastern Europe and the U.S. by exposing them to some of the opportunities available in our great country. This group consisted of three attorneys, one judge's assistant, one facilitator, and two interpreters. Of the attorneys, two were prosecutors and one works with the ABA's Rule of Law Institute to train defense lawyers in Georgia.

The week's schedule focused upon jury trial observation in DeKalb County State and Superior Courts. Georgia will institute its first jury trials during 2009, and the attorneys benefited from firsthand observation of actual criminal jury trials. They were able to observe three jury trials and built strong relationships with several Judges in DeKalb County.

In addition to rigorous study, the Georgians forged friendships with their hosts, from Hall, Booth, Smith & Slover, P.C., Peachtree Road United Methodist Church, and the Georgia National Guard. Special thanks to the Georgia National Guard for taking ownership in the week.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: GENERAL THOMAS MCCULLOUGH

Brigadier General Thomas McCullough has a long history with the ATSCC. General McCullough received his bachelors and masters degrees from Georgia Tech, where he participated in the ROTC program. His lengthy military career includes two years on active duty in Germany, 15 years in the Army Reserve, and 19 years with the Georgia National Guard.

General McCullough's involvement with Georgia began in 1995, when he traveled to the country as a part of the Georgia National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP). It was through this endeavor he learned about the Atlanta-Tbilisi Sister City Committee, and in July 2003 he was asked by the Committee to serve as Chairman, which he did through 2007. In September 2006, General McCullough traveled with a group from the Georgia National Guard and the Georgia Forestry Commission to conduct an economic development conference in Georgia. The objective was to assist the republic in privatization of the forestry industry; specifically in managing forestry resources and fostering cooperation between the private sector and the Georgian government.

Gen. McCullough noted many significant accomplishments of the Committee during his tenure:

- Arranging treatment at Savannah Memorial Medical Center for two citizens of Tbilisi who had become infected with Hepatitis C as a result of blood transfusions. Both individuals are now in remission, and one currently serves as a member of the Georgian Parliament.
- Bringing heads of Georgian government to the state to for meetings with government leaders in and around Atlanta on a array of topics. Participants included the Atlanta Fire and Police Departments, Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, and the Savannah Historic Preservation Department.
- Providing shipments of humanitarian goods and medical equipment to the Republic of Georgia through the ongoing efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hassinger, members of Friendship Force.
- Hosting an exchange student from Tbilisi, Nino Sesitashvili, to live in Atlanta and attend McEachern High School for the 2004-2005 school year.

General McCullough said he believes John Hall, current ATSCC Chairman, brings a new energy to the group. He hopes the Committee not only continues to foster the exchange of culture between the two Georgias, but also take advantage of the economic benefits we have to offer the businesses of Tbilisi and the country of Georgia.



**General and Ms. McCullough receive an award from ATSCC Chairman John Hall at the Taste of Georgian Culture Gala.**