

“BRINGING TOGETHER THE TWO GEORGIA’S”



FIRST ANNUAL GEORGIA TO GEORGIA BUSINESS FORUM ATLANTA-2008

The Atlanta-Tbilisi Sister City Committee (ATSCC) & Atlanta based law firm Hall Booth Smith & Slover, P.C. (HBSS), in partnership with The United States Department of Commerce, organized its first annual "Georgia to Georgia Business Forum" at the W hotel in Midtown Atlanta on December 12, 2008. The forum aimed to raise visibility and awareness for the country of Georgia in the United States as an exciting place to invest and do business.



Badri Japaridze, John Hall, Malkhaz Mikeladze & Archil Undilashvili.

The forum was led by Mr. John E. Hall, Jr., Chairman of both the ATSCC and HBSS. Mr. Hall. Throughout the day, speakers pointed out that despite the Russian invasion in August of 2008, Georgia remains to be a promising market for U. S. investors because of its strong banking systems, low taxes, light governmental business regulation, and an infusion of billions in foreign aid.

The Forum included speakers from various backgrounds with great expertise and experience doing business in Georgia, including Mr. Ted Jonas, Managing Partner of DLA Piper law firm in Tbilisi; Mr. David Shafer, a Georgia State Senator; Ms. Claire McLeveighn, Manager of International Affairs at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport; and Mr. Paul Dyck, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe, International Trade Administration of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

Speaker Akaki Lomidze, Senior Counselor at the Embassy of Georgia in Washington also noted that: "Georgia needs foreign investment in areas such as financial services, real estate, retail and hydropower".

Over fifty State of Georgia based companies participated in the forum, gaining new perspective on how to maximize opportunities to expand their services within the country of Georgia.

"We are a stronger business as a result of the contacts we made while attending", said Mr. Leon Osborne, CEO of Osborne Wood Products, Inc.

Overall the event was characterized as an enormous success by all that attended, and plans for the second annual forum already started.



Discussion Panel included: Danika Starks, Archil Undilashvili, Akaki Limidze, Giorgi Simongulashvili, & Ted Jonas.

OPEN WORLD DELGATION FROM GEORGIA VISITS ATSCC

ATSCC hosted an evening with the Delegation of Higher Education, Administration and Accreditation through Open World Leadership Center and Friendship Force. The delegates were: **Berdia Natsvlishvili**, Facilitator Program Director, USAID Community Connections Program; **Anzor Beridze**, Dean of Math & Computer Science, Head of Academic Department, Shota Rustaveli State Univ. **Ekaterine Chinchaladze**, Coordinator of Higher Educational Institutions Department, National Accreditation Center; **Khatuna Mkheidze**, Head of the Department of Higher Educational Institutions Accreditation, National Education Accreditation Center; and **Mogel Shengelia**, Director, Center of Academic Standards and Quality Management Grigol Robakidze University.

John Hall, the Chairman of ATSCC along with members of ATSCC met the delegation and shared with them current and future goals of ATSCC. ATSCC also learned a great deal about the current education system in Georgia and will follow up and work closely with the delegates to assist in building relationships with the Universities in the US.

Since its founding by Congress in 1999, the Open World Program has enabled more than 14,000 current and future Eurasian leaders to experience American democracy, civil society and community life; work with their American counterparts; stay in American homes; and gain new ideas and inspiration for implementing change back home. Some 6,000 American host families and their communities in all 50 states have partnered with the U.S. Congress and Open World to make this ambitious public diplomacy effort possible.



NEW WEBSITE FOR ATSCC

www.atssc.org

New website for ATSCC is being developed by Tulip Systems, Inc. which is a local company whose owners are natives of the Rep. of Georgia and great supporters of ATSCC, Nino Doijashvili and Gia Bokuchava. They have volunteered their resources, time and staff to help us build a new website. We all appreciate their great enthusiasm and assistance.

TULIP is a multimillion dollar, privately held, international corporation focused on providing web-based services including; website and application design and delivery, hosting, multimedia platforms including internet and cell phone delivery systems, social networking platforms and a multitude of other web based services that meet the needs and maximize the performance of businesses, organizations and individuals.

If you have any photos of country Georgia or of events you have attended at ATSCC and you would like to share them on the website please email them to nina@atssc.org;

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2009

MAY 15-23

OPEN WORLD DELEGATION-LEGAL EDUCATORS

MAY 26- 31

TEACHING SEMINAR-APPELLATE COURT TRAINING PROGRAM, USAID & ATSCC IN TBILISI

SEPTEMBER 1- 2

TWO DAY ECONOMIC FORUM IN TBILISI

SEPTEMBER 19

2ND ANNUAL "TASTE OF GEORGIA" FUNDRAISER

NOVEMBER 6-14

OPEN WORLD DELEGATION-RULE OF LAW, CLERKS/JURY TRIALS



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, or call 404-954-5000.