

GMA South Georgia Broadband Summit October 21, 2021

- 11:00 am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Becky Taylor, Georgia Municipal Association
- 11:03 am **State and Federal Resources for Broadband Assistance**
Jessica Simmons, Deputy Chief Information Officer for Broadband and Special Projects, Georgia Technology Authority
- Josh Hildebrandt, Director of Broadband Initiatives, Georgia Technology Authority*
- Andrew E. Hayes, General Field Representative: FL, GA, PR, USVI, Loan Origination and Approval Division, Telecommunications Program, Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture*
- Jonathan Corso, Alabama and Georgia Economic Development Representative
Atlanta Regional Office, U.S. Economic Development Administration*
- Scott D. Woods, Senior Broadband Program Specialist, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)*
- 11:35 am **Focus on South Georgia: Discussion with Panelists and Participants**
*Moderator:
Scott Woods, National Telecommunications and Information Administration*
- 11:55 pm **Closing Remarks**
*Scott Woods, NTIA
Becky Taylor, GMA*
- 12:00 pm Adjourn

About our Panelists



Scott Woods, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

As a Team Lead and Senior Broadband Program Specialist with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA), Mr. Woods currently leads the Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program and serve as a principal liaison between the CMC and BroadbandUSA program offices and key strategic partners and external stakeholder groups, including representatives from state and local governments, telecommunications/broadband companies, for-profit and non-profit corporations, and colleges/universities. Mr. Woods has also managed the BroadbandUSA Technical Assistance Program and numerous broadband infrastructure construction projects under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) including projects in California, Arizona, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, West Virginia, Arkansas, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Jessica Simmons, Georgia Technology Authority

Jessica Simmons serves as the Deputy CIO for Broadband and Special Projects at the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA). Prior to joining GTA in July 2021, she served as a Deputy Commissioner at the Georgia Department of Revenue where she oversaw the Legal Affairs and Tax Policy Division, the Department’s law enforcement divisions, and the Department’s communications and legislative programs. She began her career in public service in the Georgia Secretary of State’s Office. After working in Washington, D.C., Simmons returned to Georgia as the Assistant Director of the Georgia Elections Division and later served as Chief of Staff in the Secretary of State’s Office. Simmons is a native of Marietta and holds a bachelor’s

degree in Political Science from the University of Georgia. Simmons and her husband, Matt, live with their two children in Sandy Springs.



Josh Hildebrandt, Georgia Technology Authority

Josh Hildebrandt serves as the Director of Broadband Initiatives at the Georgia Technology Authority, focusing solely on Georgia’s broadband strategy and supporting local communities in their expansion efforts. Before starting at GTA, Josh worked at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources where he oversaw the agency’s legislative and public policy efforts, communications, and external affairs. Prior to joining DNR, Josh served in Governor Brian Kemp’s administration as the Policy Advisor for natural resources and technology and as the Coastal Region Manager for then-Secretary of State Kemp’s office in Savannah. A native of Chattanooga, TN and graduate of Belmont University in Nashville, TN, he is happy to now call Cobb County home with his wife Elizabeth and dog Lucy.



Andrew Hayes, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Mr. Hayes joined the USDA’s Rural Utilities Service in 1992 after graduating from George Mason University and began his career working in Washington DC as a loan analyst reviewing the financial feasibility of loan applications from rural telephone companies. In 2001, he became a General Field Representative and relocated to McDonough, Georgia where he began working directly with broadband, distance learning and telemedicine providers in Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. In 2016 he relocated to Jacksonville, Florida where he lives with his wife, Olga.



Jonathan Corso, U.S. Economic Development Administration

Jonathan Corso is the Georgia Representative for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in Atlanta. He provides applicants with technical assistance, reviews funding requests and makes funding recommendations. Mr. Corso received his Master of Public Administration from Syracuse University and his B.A. from the University of Massachusetts.