

**MAYOR**  
Lamar Scroggs

**CITY COUNCIL**  
Martha Collins  
Sam Evans  
Ron McFarland  
Montie Robinson, Sr.  
Todd Wilson



**CITY MANAGER**  
Stan Brown

**CITY CLERK**  
Tangee Puckett

**NEWS ARTICLE: Access North Georgia on January 23, 2013**

## **GHCC celebrates, recognizes existing industry**

GAINESVILLE - The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Wednesday named Industry of the Year winners for 2013 during the 4th Annual Industry Appreciation Luncheon celebrating existing industry at the Chattahoochee Country Club in Gainesville.

Sponsored by Lanier Technical College, the event included the presentation of Industry of the Year awards to small, medium and large industries in the Greater Hall area.

This year Zebra Technologies in Flowery Branch, BITZER US in Oakwood and Kubota Manufacturing in Gainesville were winners in the small, medium and large employer categories.

Featured speaker Jackie Rohosky, head of Quick Start, Georgia's workforce training program, said Gainesville/Hall is a steady customer.

"This area is extremely strong," Rohosky said. "Look at the industry base, we're out here all the time. The thing that is interesting about your area is it's been consistent. You've consistently attracted manufacturers and I attribute a lot of that to your economic development team."

GHCC Vice President of Economic Development Tim Evans said existing industries in the area have continued to grow and expand.

"We support their efforts," Evans said. "We expect to see a lot more additions to employment as well as investment in 2013."

Evans added that expansion and development at one industry generates supply industry and employment in the area.

"Kubota has four or five suppliers for their business and there are examples of that throughout the community and the region. One location has many spinoff benefits for Gainesville/Hall County."

Established in Gainesville in 1988, Kubota Manufacturing of America produces high quality lawn and garden tractors, subcompact tractors and rough terrain vehicles. Kubota currently has 1,015 employees and made significant investments in 2012 by adding an assembly line with 95 additional employees for a completely new line of consumer turf products and by enhancing local research and development and product testing capability.

Kubota is involved in several community projects including United Way, Georgia Mountain Food Bank, Leadership Hall County and the Hall County Farm Bureau. The company provides Eagle Ranch with turf equipment for their use and by mowing the large areas for them. Kubota saves Hall County over \$30,000 annually in grass cutting contracts by giving Kubota access to local parks and utility sites for turf product testing.

In 2012, the company adopted the brand statement "For Earth, For Life" and is committed to the cause of protecting the environment.

Bitzer, established in Oakwood in 2001, is an industrial compressor and pressure vessel manufacturer with worldwide distribution and sales. In the past year, Bitzer has invested \$9 million in purchasing land, constructing a new building and investing in new equipment. Bitzer's workforce has increased by 47% by adding 45 new jobs and currently has 125 employees. The Bitzer Corporation ranks among the leading manufacturers of refrigerant compressors.

Zebra Technologies Corporation, a bar coding label manufacturer, located to Oakwood South Industrial Park in 2007 to a 20,000-square foot facility with 10 employees. The facility quickly grew with an expansion in 2008 to 30,000-square feet and in 2012 expanded to 40,000-square feet investing over \$1.5 million in space, new automated equipment and additional jobs. Now with 38 employees, Zebra manufactures bar coding labels for retail, healthcare, manufacturing, automotive and other industries.

The Oakwood Zebra location is the company's second largest (supplies) plant in North America and services three major distributors in the Southeast. The plant has more than doubled their revenue since manufacturing began at the site. The company credits its success to its location and proximity to major customers, the shipping corridor, availability of quality local employees and resources, and the strong support for manufacturing by local officials.

Zebra initiated the implementation of a Flexographic Printing program with their Partner in Education, Johnson High School, to the tune of \$90,000 to develop the workforce of tomorrow.

The Greater Hall area has over 300 manufacturers, processors and distributors, including over 40 international subsidiaries, and automotive suppliers, food processors, life science companies and others. Industries were recognized for their economic impact on the community, corporate responsibility and workforce excellence.

Shelley Davis, Chamber Vice President of Existing Industry said Gainesville's industry was challenged but weathered the recession and is set to expand this year.

"We were happy at this event to not only show appreciation for our industry but also to celebrate their growth," Davis said. "Ninety percent of our applicants of manufacturers and processors have expanded this year and made capital investments. Seventy percent have hired this year, so we're really looking forward to 2013."

Albert International, producing bulbs, pumps, syringes and other products used in medical fields drew this year's Environmental Stewardship recognition. Poly Enterprises, a molded vinyl manufacturer, received safety recognition. SKF USA Inc. got employer recognition and Kipper Tool, with 90 employees, assembling and distributing custom tool kits to business, industry and the military and was recognized for corporate citizenship.