Who we are

The German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States, Inc. was founded in 1978 to promote and support bilateral trade between Germany and the US. Our main office is located in Atlanta, Georgia and we opened a branch office in 2008 in Houston, Texas to better serve our region. We are a private, non-profit organization and serve as the official representative of German industry and trade in the southern US.

Our organization is part of an international network composed of 120 German foreign chambers of commerce and government offices in 80 countries. These organizations are under the direction of the German Chamber of Industry and Trade in Berlin (DIHK).

Our mission...

Fostering German-American trade relationships. To deliver the best possible service to our clients and members, respecting clients' and members' time, and being partners in their endeavors.
Letter from the Chairman

When moving to North Carolina four years ago after a couple of years in Mexico City and in Portugal, my family and I were overwhelmed by the dynamic development of this region. People here are enthused to bring their lives and lives of others to the next level, which we share. When meeting the GACC South team for the first time, I observed this same enthusiasm of a team working very hard to fulfill its mission.

The GACC South is the go-to place for German companies doing business in the southern United States. The team, as well the new offices, spread the positive spirit of the “new economy” and stand for fun of doing business, growth, customer orientation, personnel development and the permanent desire to improve. It made me very happy and proud when the Board of Directors elected me as Chairman in May of this year. It is great to be part of this team and I will be devoted to continue the excellent work my predecessor, Dr. Eike Jordan, started 30 years ago.

Under the leadership of Kristian Wolf, the team of 35 employees working in Atlanta and Houston do an outstanding job in helping German companies establish business in the US, attracting new industries, informing US companies about doing business in Germany and in being an active partner to numerous German organizations who promote German-American business.

We are very content to see that our members appreciate the services the GACC South provides to them, as evidenced by the 189 new members gained in 2010 and the impressive number of members renewing their membership for the 2010-2011 year.

The regional Chapters form an important part of the GACC South’s activities; they are all run on a volunteer basis and I would like to sincerely thank the Chapter Presidents Klaus Becker (North Carolina), Peter Caldwell (Tennessee), David Lewis (South Carolina), Traute Malhotra (North Texas) and Jan Wiedemann (South Texas) for their hard work and achievements in promoting the German-American business relationship.

I would also like to acknowledge the incredibly strong support given by my colleagues from the Board of Directors, all of whom invest innumerable hours of their valuable time into their engagement with the chamber.

Has our dedication, motivation and effort paid off? The answer is most definitely yes and best supported by the fruits of our labors. For example, the GACC South is the spearhead of promoting sustainability and German energy technology in the Southern US. The GACC South also helps new businesses enter the US market and aides in creating business opportunities for both German and American companies. Our activities have helped create jobs and growth in 11 Federal States!

As acting Chairman, I am proud to work with an organization that is so successful in achieving their goals and maintaining their vision. I would like to thank you for contributing to this success and for taking an active role in our community. Let’s continue to work together to make 2011 another successful year for German-American Trade.

Matthias Schönberg
CEO, Continental Tire the Americas, LLC
Chairman of the Board, GACC South
2010 was a year of renewal. We kicked off the year with the opening of our brand new offices in Atlanta and Houston. We welcomed new companies from a variety of industries including manufacturing, renewable energies, logistics and more. We worked to develop conferences to better address the business development of the southeast, including the first annual Texas Offshore Wind Energy Roundtable (TOWER) & Offshore Wind Law (OWL) Conference. We closed out the year on a high note with our 15th Annual Gala at the St. Regis Hotel in Atlanta and a reception at the New York Stock Exchange for our Second Annual German American Business Outlook presentation.

Our membership has grown again in size and quality, and we welcomed great new additions to our already tremendous Board of Directors. We are thankful to our members and sponsors for their unwavering support. I would also like to thank our staff members for their relentless effort to serve our members and clients throughout this year. Their commitment and motivation are paramount to our continued success.

We anticipate further growth of our network in the South and aim to create more awareness of how important German investment has become to this region. In a year when many new lawmakers and governors are taking over, this will be crucial to continued development. We look toward 2011 with excitement as the US economy continues on its path of recovery and many new German investments take place throughout the South. Best regards for the coming year!

Kristian Wolf
President & CEO
GACC South
A word from our Consul Generals

In 2010 like in previous years, joint ventures with the GACC South have been highlights throughout my calendar. In January, we enjoyed the Grand Opening of the new GACC South premises on Howell Mill Road, with Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed and GACC South members from at least five states of my consular district. In February, the meetings with business representatives and city officials Kristian Wolf and I held in Nürnberg, Stuttgart and Halle, promoting trans-Atlantic opportunities in Germany. In April, the Annual GACC South Meeting in Savannah with more than 150 GACC South members, this time preceded by the first Annual Meeting of the new German-American Culture Foundation (South). In July, the visit to Sage Hill Industrial Park in South Carolina, probably the world’s first industrial park fully equipped with hydrogen infrastructure, and to the nearby Center for Hydrogen Research (CHR). In August, the very internal 2nd joint staff pool party of Consulate and Chamber, as a warm-up to the very public 7th German Bierfest where Kristian Wolf and I tapped the keg. In November, the stellar Annual GACC South Gala in Buckhead, this time a Bavarian night with President Reinhold Bocklet of the Bavarian State Parliament. I look forward to 2011 as another year of joint promotion of German-American cooperation for jobs and prosperity.

Dr. Lutz H. Görgens
Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany
Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee

It is an honor and a privilege for me to send my greetings and best wishes on the occasion of the publication of the first Annual Report of the GACC South. From day one when I took over as Consul General in Houston in July 2009, the Chamber, and in particular the Houston office under the competent leadership of Jan Wiedemann and his deputy, Julia Zimmermann, have supported me and the Consulate in our work. We try to be equally helpful in their activities wherever we can. After all, our goals are the same: to enhance business relations between Germany and the US in every possible way and to support German interests - be it investments, trade, or other aspects - in an increasingly competitive environment. I am happy to say that our “product”, Germany, has always been and still is very attractive. The Chamber’s focus on new technologies, particularly in energy production, distribution, and efficiency, has proven extremely successful. All staff in the Consulate General and I personally look forward to continuing and increasing our cooperation with the GACC South.

Roland Herrmann
Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany
Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico

I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to the GACC South and its leadership on the publication of its first Annual Report. I greatly enjoyed the excellent cooperation with the GACC South on my first tenure as Consul General in Florida from 2004-2007. It is very rewarding to see upon my return to the same post that the GACC South is flourishing even in these present times of more austerity and that its dynamic leadership has developed a number of new and exciting projects. I am looking forward to further strengthening our cooperation built upon our common goal to enhance business relations between Germany and the United States of America.

Eva Alexandra Countess Kendeffy
Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany
State of the Chamber

DOING BUSINESS IN THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

The business environment of the southern United States is very company-friendly due to the region’s low operating and real estate costs, educated workforce, economic incentives and non-union companies. Furthermore, the southern US provides companies with an excellent transportation infrastructure. Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International airport is the busiest airport in the world and has the best flight connections within the US. This region also has two of the largest container ports in the US: one in Savannah, Georgia and the other in Charleston, South Carolina.

Metro Atlanta’s large presence of German companies has developed into an extensive German-speaking business community, which includes lawyers, CPAs, banks, insurance and real estate brokers. This is particularly important for small to medium sized German companies expanding to the US. Texas and its surrounding states are at the forefront of sustainable and renewable energies, including solar, wind, water and biofuels.

In addition to the advantages offered to companies, this region draws in many young people due to the high standard of living and low living costs. As a result, the southern US has experienced a large population growth and is now deemed as one of the fastest growing regions in the states.

THE ROLE OF THE GACC SOUTH

All AHKs (German Chambers of Commerce across the world) fulfill three main tasks at their locations. That is:

Official Representation of German Companies
AHKs are the key players of German foreign business development on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany. They represent German business interests in their countries and they inform about and promote Germany as a business location.

Member Organizations
AHKs are member organizations for companies actively involved in bilateral business relations. These members give the authority needed when interacting with politics, business and administration in terms of promoting the bilateral business relations.

Service Providers to Companies
Under the brand “DEinternational” AHKs provide services to companies both from Germany and their host countries in order to support their foreign business activities.

The GACC South is comprised of two primary sectors, Consulting Services and Marketing. The Consulting Services Department (under the brand “DE International”) supports small and medium sized German companies in their efforts to enter and expand their business in the US market. Our team of professional, trustworthy bilingual employees is experienced and familiar with the US market. Together we develop and implement a strategy based on the company’s individual needs. We provide the following services:

- General Information Services
- Address Research
- Business Partner Search
- Business Representation
- Establishing a Company
- Trade Show Services
- Market Research
- Site Selection

In addition, we offer a variety of industry-specific events and projects, especially for companies in the automotive industry. Our Houston office specializes in site selection services and renewable energies. Germany is a leading supplier of innovative clean technologies and it is the GACC South’s goal to successfully position these technologies in the US market to meet local energy needs.

1,500 German subsidiaries in the southern US
40 business representation clients
3 market entry projects
3 companies in our business incubator space

The Marketing Department’s primary aim is to publicize the German-American business community and its importance to economic development and job creation in the region, while working to facilitate networking and sharing of resources amongst the German-American business community. The Marketing Department consists of three sections, membership, events and public relations.

The membership team works to recruit new members while providing valuable networking and other resources to current members. A monthly membership newsletter outlines new benefits in the Member to Member (M2M) program, provides an overview of the new members and their industries, and informs membership about relevant news and milestones in the region.

677 members in the region
189 new members in 2010
126% increase in Patron members*
26% increase in overall number of members*

The events team plans a wide variety of events ranging from breakfast meetings with key members of the German-American business community, to our annual German Bierfest in Atlanta, which draws over 3,000 attendees. The majority of our events are networking and business based, and our members and clients rely on our events to create business connections and opportunities.

34 events (not including chapter events)
5,189 event attendees

The public relations team works with the media in the region to provide coverage of major milestones and company announcements, while further expanding the reach of the German-American business community. We work to get the message out about our business through newsletters, websites, the German American Trade magazine, and social media presences. We also work with clients and members to ensure that their marketing plans will work in the US, which offers a drastically different marketing environment than Germany.

Over 70,000 website views
25 press releases w/ over 13,700 online views
63 blog posts w/ over 8,900 views
615 LinkedIn group members
46 Twitter followers**
Looking back on 2010, we see that the success of the chamber and the German-American business community as a whole is a large testament to the strength and willpower of the people within it. We thank all those who have been involved for their efforts and support.

* since 2008
** started in summer 2010 to post news

Staff Spotlight

Meet Elaine Walters
Director, Accounting & Administration

I came to work at the GACC South in 1996 after working in administrative positions at several manufacturing companies. In 2001, I became Director of Finance and Administration and have witnessed a tremendous growth in the Chamber, not only in consulting and membership, but in the number of full time staff. My years at the Chamber have been educational, interesting and challenging and I will miss it when I retire at the end of 2011.
Consulting Case Study: Proplant, Inc.

Proplant Inc. provides engineering services for production and logistics. Headquartered in Wolfsburg, the company, whose clients include Volkswagen, Audi, and Porsche, began working with the GACC South in 2009. Not having any prior experience on the US market, the GACC assisted Proplant with a market research. This first step was followed by a business partner search to identify and contact American business partners for future collaboration within the automotive industry. After the completion of this project, Proplant became a business representation client in April 2010, receiving full office support, including customer service, bookkeeping, and access to the GACC’s extensive contact network. At this point, Proplant is employing 7 employees with the goal to increase its staff up to 10 by the end of 2010.

Letter from the VP & Director of Consulting Services

Our 11 experienced, bilingual staff members of the GACC South Consulting Services department are well-equipped to handle the unique needs of German companies entering the US market. Over the past year, we have served close to 40 business representation clients as well as carried out 15 market entry projects. We “test the waters” with market surveys and business partner searches, provide sales and marketing support, as well as trade show and bookkeeping services, among others.

Currently, three companies use our incubator offices as a convenient home base. Our clients represent industries as diverse as automotive, renewable energy, and consumer goods. Tailored to fit our clients’ needs, our services are backed by a strong expert network and a close cooperation with important international multipliers in the region.

We not only serve our clients but also the greater Southeastern business community by hosting international delegations and by organizing industry-specific conferences, such as the e-Mobility and Logistics Conferences. These events provide business matchmaking opportunities and inform about the latest industry trends while the delegations attract potential investors to the region.

Martina Stegmeier
Vice President and Director,
Consulting Services
GACC South
February 23, 2010 - Austin, Texas, USA

US-German Conference on the Commercialization of Nanotechnologies

The GACC South – Houston Office partnered with Germany Trade and Invest to host the first “US-German Conference on the Commercialization of Nanotechnologies” in Austin, Texas and featured four speakers who presented about the successes achieved in the commercialization of nanotechnology, both in Germany and the United States.

March 22-23, 2010 - Berlin, Germany

2nd German American Energy Conference

The 2nd German American Energy Conference took place at the House of German Business in Berlin, Germany. This conference is the flagship event in the transatlantic energy dialogue and is organized by the German American Chambers of Commerce and the German Energy Agency.

Staff Spotlight

Meet Silke Miehlke
Manager, US Market Entry Services

After graduating in 2003, I started my career at Volkswagen Logistics in Wolfsburg where I gained work experience in SCM and CRM concepts. In 2006, I began working for Tchibo Logistics in Bremen as a project manager. After my husband got a job offer in Atlanta, we just packed a container and moved! I always liked the idea of living and working in the US.

I joined the GACC South in Atlanta in 2009 where I hold the position of Manager, US Market Entry Services. Additionally, I am responsible for our automotive competence center. Working in this international team has provided me a great opportunity: with our expertise as well as our great network throughout the Southeast, we can help German companies to enter the US market. My team and our member companies are a great platform to realize this successfully.
June 3, 2010  -  Atlanta, Georgia, USA

**eMobility**

The South has become a new center for the automotive industry. In June, the GACC South hosted the 1st e-Mobility Conference with more than 70 attendees. The State of North-Rhine-Westphalia presented the status quo “Electro Mobility in Germany” whereas CU-Icar, the Clemson Research Institute for Automotive, explained clean transportation technologies. Furthermore, experts from Bertrandt, Continental, GA Power, and Hofmann & Krippner discussed future requirements for hybrids as well as electric cars and the connectivity to the smart grid.

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September 21, 2010  -  Atlanta, Georgia, USA

**The Georgia Water Challenge**

Organized by the GACC South, the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Georgia (JCCG), the “Georgia Water Challenge” was held in Atlanta in June. More than 50 attendees signed up for the seminar. The manufacturers Hansgrohe and TOTO, besides other products both manufacturers for high-end bath products, presented their newest water efficiency technologies.

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October 19-22, 2010  -  Houston, Texas, USA

**TOWER & OWL**

The GACC South – Houston Office hosted the premier of the annual Texas Offshore Wind Energy Roundtable (TOWER) and Offshore Wind Law (OWL) Conference. This conference focuses on the developments and potentials of the Texan offshore wind market.

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November, 2010  -  Hanover, Germany

**Food Forum**

With an annual turnover of $1.3 trillion, the US food industry is the largest market in the world. However, German importers must consider a number of regulations before doing business in the US – therefore the GACC South and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce Hanover organized a Food Forum in September. More than 130 attendees signed up for this conference in Hanover, Germany. Companies such as Dr. August Oetker and Abraham Schinken gave first-hand advice in a panel discussion. In addition, FDA experts, marketing and technical surveillance specialists, as well as lawyers presented important information about how to enter the US market.
In January 2008, we opened the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern US, Inc. – Houston Office with two employees. Since then the Chamber has not only expanded to a new and larger office, but has also grown to include a staff of twelve.

2010 was a busy and successful year for us and began with the official office opening of the new GACC South – Houston Office in January and continued with many conferences, in addition to the comprehensive consulting services offered to our German clients.

The 2nd German American Energy Conference were held on March 22-23 at the House of German Business in Berlin, Germany and focused on “Promising Markets for Renewables and Energy Efficiency.” On October 19-22, 2010 the premier of the annual Texas Offshore Wind Energy Roundtable (TOWER) and Offshore Wind Law (OWL) Conference took place with approximately 100 wind energy professionals in attendance to learn more about the potential of the Texan offshore wind market.

Additionally, our consulting team has assisted more clients with their site selection process this year than ever before. These clients included successful medium-sized companies such as Schulz and Mage Solar. Through these and newly introduced services such as collection services and project financing, we helped bring millions of investment dollars and hundreds of new jobs to the southern US.

Although 2010 was a great success, we have set even more ambitious goals for 2011. These goals include a multitude of conferences focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as an expansion of the consulting services we offer, such as human resources and business development.

Jan Christoph Wiedemann
Managing Director, Houston Office
GACC South

Site Selection Case Study: MAGE SOLAR

The GACC South actively supported the German solar company “MAGE SOLAR” with its site selection and took on the task of process control. Working jointly with MAGE SOLAR, the GACC South created a personalized list of criteria to allow for the selection of appropriate states and counties. Determining criteria included strategic logistic locations, proximity to customers, qualified personnel, tax burdens, and financing. Individual states and counties were asked to submit offers, which were analyzed and compared by the GACC South Team. To give MAGE SOLAR an idea of available properties, site visits were also arranged by the GACC South. Negotiations with contractual partners were conducted by the GACC South conjointly with the accounting firm, Rödl & Partner and the law offices of Smith, Gambrell and Russell. The new North American corporate campus of MAGE SOLAR will be home to the company’s headquarters, a large manufacturing facility, as well as a solar academy. All administrative and operational processes necessary to serve the growing US solar market will be managed by the new headquarters.
2010 began with the official office opening of the new GACC South – Houston Office on January 27, 2010. Both Kristian Wolf, GACC South CEO & President, and Jan Christoph Wiedemann, GACC South – Houston Office Managing Director, are excited about the rapid growth and financial strength the Houston office has developed over the past two years.

After a successful launch in 2009, the 2nd German American Energy Conference took place on March 22-23, 2010 at the House of German Business in Berlin, Germany. The theme of this year’s conference was “Promising Markets for Renewables and Energy Efficiency” and drew over 400 participants from both sides of the Atlantic. In addition to the topics featured at last year’s conference (solar, wind and bioenergy), energy efficiency was included to reflect the growing need for clean and sustainable energy in the United States. The 2nd German American Energy Conference not only offered participants information on the current trends and support frameworks within the US energy market, but also discussed how German companies are well positioned to enter the renewable energy and energy efficiency market in the US.

On October 19-22, 2010, the GACC South – Houston Office kicked off the premier of the annual Texas Offshore Wind Energy Roundtable (TOWER) and Offshore Wind Law (OWL) Conference with approximately 100 wind energy professionals in attendance. The objective of this conference was to provide insights into the latest developments of the offshore wind energy markets as experts have agreed that Texas offers great potential for the development of offshore wind energy. The conference also addressed the opportunities of this emerging market as well as characteristics, risks, technological capabilities and inevitable challenges that will come forth such as the Jones Act, which were presented by A-list speakers from organizations such as Baryonyx Corporation, E.ON Climate and Renewables, Hochtief, SIAG, and SIEMENS.

In addition to these conferences the GACC South – Houston Office also organized the WINDPOWER 2010 German Evening Reception which took place on May 25, 2010 at the Magnolia Hotel in Dallas, Texas. This evening reception allowed over 250 German and American leaders and professionals from the wind energy industry to network and exchange ideas about the current trends and developments of wind energy in the United States and Germany.
Letter from the Director, Marketing

I have now been at the GACC South for four-and-a-half years and have witnessed the immense business growth of the southern region. It is an honor and a privilege to work with this organization and such a fantastic team. I love the diversity of my job; every day is new and exciting.

Over the past year, we have examined our marketing strategy to determine how to better recruit members, serve our members’ interests and increase awareness about the GACC South. We have created new and exciting benefits for all members and believe our strategy has proven successful as evidenced by our new member growth, which has exceeded past years.

Our team has hosted 34 events with over 5,000 attendees in 2010. We have further developed communication processes and found more useful and efficient ways to reach out to our members and friends. Our reach has extended further in the Southeast, with more people aware than ever before of the strength and value of the German-American business community. We are forging headlong into the new era of online and social media, developing our online community through our blog, LinkedIn group and Twitter account. We are also reworking our email communications, hoping to create a better experience for our audience and lay the foundation of resources for the coming years.

We have a true “Dream Team” at the GACC South and I am looking forward to the further development and growth of our community in the coming year.

Stefanie Jehlitschka
Director, Marketing
GACC South

Member Case Study: Transparent USA

“Joining the chamber has drastically improved brand awareness for our organization in the southeastern states and has helped me grow my professional and personal network immensely. The GACC and its’ staff take a hands on approach to help me get the most out of my membership. I have truly enjoyed and benefited from my involvement throughout the past year and I look forward to many more years of partnering with the German American Chamber. Thanks for everything!” – Stefan Gutman, Director, Strategic Consulting, Transparent USA
Annual General Meeting 2010

On Friday, April 30, 2010, the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern US, Inc. held its Annual General Meeting in Savannah, Georgia. As part of the Annual General Meeting, Chairman Matthias Schönberg and Vice Chairman Steven Markham were elected by the Board of Directors. Schönberg as Chairman marked an historical occasion for the GACC South, as he is the first chairperson to be based outside of Atlanta, Georgia.

In addition to the election, the business program of the Annual General Meeting included a variety of interesting speakers who discussed how to further expand German business within the Southern US, and what challenges would face the community as it continued. Mr. Gregory Miller, the First Vice President and Chief Economist of Suntrust Bank, Inc. spoke about how to move forward past the recession and what trends would be seen. Mr. Matthias Sonn, Head of the Economics and Science Department of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Washington, D.C., expanded upon transatlantic economic challenges and opportunities.

The GACC South would like to extend our sincere thanks to their sponsors in Savannah for embracing the chamber’s Annual General Meeting, as it was the first time we worked closely with the city to integrate the event into the fabric of the city’s business life.

15th Annual Gala

The German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern US, Inc. hosted its 15th Annual Gala at the exclusive St. Regis, Atlanta’s premier hotel, on Saturday, November 20, 2010. Along with our Gala Partner, Audi, and our Gala Patron, the State of Bavaria, we were proud to host 450 distinguished guests at the premier black tie event of the year. Guests included GACC South members, First Vice President of the Bavarian State Parliament Reinhold Bocklet and members of the Bavarian delegation, Senator Chip Pearson, Consul General Dr. Lutz Görüns and his fellow members of the Atlanta Consulate Corps, Mr. Mackensen from Audi, Chairman of the Board Matthias Schönberg and members of Board of Directors.

Some of the evening’s highlights included a raffle for a one-year lease for an Audi A5 Cabriolet and a silent auction with close to 100 items. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the charity SOS Children’s Villages. The evening was an elegant and festive occasion where the strength of partnership and unity was jointly celebrated by the GACC South, its partners and the German-American business community we so proudly serve.

Staff Spotlight

Meet Carsten Jacobi
Consultant, U.S. Market Entry Services, Project Coordinator Renewables

I joined the GACC in March 2010 after graduating with an MBA from Florida State University. Ever since, I experienced what it means to work in a truly international environment. I work on a variety of projects in various industries and interact with businesses from Germany and the United States on a daily basis. In addition, the executive level professionals and political figures I get to deal with make my work an exciting experience. I currently head up the renewables program at the GACC in Atlanta and my work enables me to promote renewable energies ‘Made in Germany’ to serve energy needs in the United States.

I had the strong urge to launch a career in the U.S. ever since I spent a high school year in Columbus, Ohio. I always liked the idea of working and living abroad and using my intercultural and language skills to bridge the gap between Germany and the United States. The GACC is a combination of German business and American entrepreneurial spirit and a great platform to do so. And my coworkers are a truly diverse group of people that’s fun to work with.
Other Major Events 2010

Mar 30 – Houston, TX: Business Luncheon  
“Getting Your Message Across – How to Win Over German Clients”

Apr 8 – Atlanta, GA: Expert Luncheon on Bioenergy

Apr 13 – Austin, TX: Expert Luncheon on Solar Energy

Apr 14 – Austin, TX: “Wind Boom in Texas”:  
2nd German American Wind Energy Conference

May 4 – Atlanta, GA: YEC Professional Seminar  
“Presentation Skills Workshop”

May 11 – Houston, TX: Business Luncheon  
“Fraud Detection and Prevention in International Business”

May 20 – Atlanta, GA: “A Taste of Germany”  
Spargel Gourmet Dinner

May 24 – Dallas, TX: Windpower 2010  
German Evening Reception

Jun 10 – Houston, TX: Networking Event –  
“Shell Energy Scenarios to 2050 – An Era of Revolutionary Change”

Jun 24 – Atlanta, GA: Business Seminar  
“State and Local Incentives for German Companies Locating in the Southeast”

Jul 27 – Atlanta, GA: YEC Professional Seminar:  
“Always On: Maintaining Your Public Image in Private”

Aug 13 – Milton, GA: 8th Charity Golf Tournament

Aug 19 – Houston, TX: “Building Global Relationships” Seminar

Sep 14 – Houston, TX: Conference on  
Industrial Energy: Efficiency as the Competitive Advantage for Manufacturers

Oct 14 – Washington, D.C.: German American  
Energy Forum 2010

Oct 21 – Atlanta, GA: Business Seminar &  
Reception: “Foreign Exchange, Protect your Profits and Mitigate Risks”

Nov 7 – San Antonio, TX: Texas  
Renewables 2010

Nov 18 – Atlanta, GA: Transatlantic Logistics  
Conference

Nov 18 & 19 – Atlanta, GA: “An Introduction to the Max Planck Florida Institute”

Member Events Highlights

New Year’s Reception

The annual New Year’s Receptions were located at the GACC South offices in Atlanta and Houston, with between 200 to 300 guests. Held in January, they were a casual gathering of the GACC South community, providing an exceptional forum for networking and the ever-important opportunity for face-to-face interaction. We were honored to welcome newly-elected Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed to the event in our Atlanta office, as well as many members and partners of the GACC South. In addition, the member company Poggenpohl US, Inc. was kind enough to sponsor a champagne corner to welcome our guests.

New Member Reception

The annual New Member Reception was located at the GACC South office in July, with 150 guests. We host this event to officially welcome the new members of the GACC South to the community. This allows old and new members to meet personally, and provides new members with the opportunity to see our offices first-hand, meet the GACC South team and enjoy the company of their fellow members. The event was jointly sponsored by Transparent USA, LLC, who joined the chamber in November 2009, and HK Automation Inc., a new division of the member company Hoffmann + Krippner Inc., who joined the chamber in March 2008.

7th Annual Bierfest

The 7th Annual Bierfest was held on Saturday, August 28th in Woodruff Park in Atlanta with over 2,500 guests. The Bierfest featured unlimited samples of over thirty types of German beer. There was also German food from vendors such as Petite Auberge and Village Corner, as well as a Kids Zone from the Hawks/Thrashers. There were performances by The Conditionals, DJ Eric ZBD, and Jacob Herzog and the Bavarian Express. The magazine Beer Connoisseur and the events website Yelp were also in attendance.

Breakfast w/...

Several times this past year, Breakfast w/ events were hosted in the GACC South Atlanta office featuring an interesting member of the German-American business community. Instead of a formal speech or presentation, these events provide the space for informal discussion, where members can ask questions and speak with the guest. 2010 guests included people such as Wolfgang Krueger, Executive Director of the German Cultural Center Atlanta, Reverend Dr. Margot Kässmann, Thomas Wiedenhöfer from Georgia Biomass LLC, Michael Eissing from RWE Innogy Cogen GmbH.

Co-organized Events

Burgers & Spätzle

The cultural seminar “Burgers & Spätzle: Bridging the Cultural Gap between Germans and Americans” was hosted in coordination with our partner, the German Cultural Center of Atlanta, with special guest speaker Rita Wuebbeler, Founder and President of INTERGLOBE Cross-Cultural Business Services, Inc. This was a fast-paced, 90- minute seminar with over 70 attendees. Participants enjoyed Rita’s engaging and eye-opening presentation, where they learned, among other things, the difference between the American “peach” and the German “coconut”. Afterwards, guests networked while sampling the delicious burgers and spätzle prepared as a tongue-in-cheek representation of the two cultures.

European Social Mixer

In August, the European community of Atlanta (and even some members from beyond the state who were adventurous to make the drive) took over Fadó’s Irish Pub and Restaurant. A ‘best national costume’ contest was held, spurring people to show up in kilts, dirndls, lederhosen, feathered fadora hats and more. The event was held in conjunction with the Belgian American Chamber of Commerce, the British American Business Group, the Danish American Chamber of Commerce, the French American Chamber of Commerce, the Netherlands American Chamber of Commerce and the Swedish American Chamber of Commerce.
GACC South Chapters

The German American Chamber of the Southern U.S., Inc. has four chapters in addition to its branch office in Houston through which it serves the eleven southern states. They are located in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and North Texas.

The Chapters ensure that the GACC South is represented in their area and facilitate networking and growth among their members. Chapter membership makes up almost half of the GACC South membership base. The division of membership as of December 2010 between Atlanta and the five chapters can be seen in the chart below.

The GACC South also has two affiliate organizations, the German American Business Chamber in Miami and the Alabama Germany Partnership in Birmingham. We worked closely with these affiliates in 2010, pursuing the common goal of promoting German-American business in the southern United States.

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Staff Spotlight

Meet Friederike Munzinger
Events Associate

Having the opportunity to go abroad has always been appealing to me. When I got the chance this year I took it. Since April 2010 I have been working for the Chamber as an events intern in the Marketing Department and I was given tasks like organizing our 7th Annual German Bierfest and our 15th Annual Gala. I’m grateful for what I have learned so far. Not only did I improve my language skills, but I was given great responsibilities from the beginning which strengthened my work abilities in general. Working in such a good work environment with great colleagues definitely makes up for being far away from home.
On the Radar for 2011

January 20 – Houston, Texas
New Year’s Reception

January 25 – Atlanta, Georgia
New Year’s Reception

March 7 – Atlanta, Georgia
1st German American Bioenergy Conference

March 14–17 – Miami, Florida
Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention

March 14–17 – Germany
Board of Directors Road Show

April 28–30 – Asheville, North Carolina
GACC South Annual General Meeting

May 3 – Houston, Texas
OTC Conference German Evening Reception

May 12–13 – Berlin, Germany
3rd German American Energy Conference

May 19 – Atlanta, Georgia
Annual Asparagus Dinner

June 28 – Houston, Texas
3rd German American Wind Energy Conference

July 12 – Atlanta, Georgia
New Member Reception

August 16 – Atlanta, Georgia
European Social Mixer

August 27 – Atlanta, Georgia
8th Annual German Bierfest

September 29–30 – Houston, Texas
2nd Texas Offshore Wind Energy Roundtable (TOWER) and Offshore Wind Law (OWL) Conference

October 19 – Houston, Texas
Solar Power International German Evening Reception

November – Atlanta, Georgia
16th Annual Gala

November 15 – Houston, Texas
The Future of “Green Buildings”: 3rd German American Energy Efficiency Conference

Staff Spotlight

Meet Catherine Tuten
Consultant

Having studied German since high school and completed a yearlong study abroad program in Bamberg during college, I definitely wanted to maintain my ties with Germany while honing my professional skills in the ‘real world’. I was fortunate enough to land a Consulting internship at the GACC South in 2008, despite the recession, and have since transitioned to a full-time Consultant. My focus is the market entry of small- to medium-sized German companies. Working with diverse clients in a dynamic, international team has provided me a wealth of experience.
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Angela Daberkow
Consultant

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Thank you to all of the interns who have worked with the GACC South in some capacity over the past year. Your efforts are not overlooked.

Coco Bassey
Dominique Baryalei
Zachary Blalock
Nina Böttner*
Lorena Cazares
Tobias Clausen
Alexandra Dowty
Franziska Grünberger
Pamela Hiegl
Zadora Hightower
Dle Kahike
Patrick Kempf
Marcus Leach
Britta Lipke
Alex Locke
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Anita Rademacher
Ulrike Rosenberg
Ellen Schmidt
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Mona Spitzer
Ben Warner
Sebastian Weber
John Williams

* staff as of January 2011