Dear Members and Friends of the German American Chambers of Commerce,

The year 2012 has seen great progress on both sides of the Atlantic. Germany, Europe, and the U.S. have all moved forward - in dealing with economic and financial crises, in finding ways to unlock new momentum for jobs and growth, in coping with the challenge to provide a sustainable energy supply, and in improving education to build a skilled workforce. Enterprises on both sides of the Atlantic will benefit from these advancements.

The transatlantic marketplace is already the most integrated market in the world, with the EU and the U.S. economies together accounting for about half of global GDP. But this marketplace holds enormous additional potential, which is far from being fully exploited. Therefore, Germany called for an ambitious and comprehensive new initiative, for now is the time to marshal our efforts and move forward in our common interest. I do hope and I am optimistic that there will be an opportunity in 2013 to start negotiations to integrate the transatlantic marketplace even further.

To attain our goals, which will lead the transatlantic economy to a prosperous future, a well-educated and skilled workforce is essential. Here, too, Germany and the U.S. face similar challenges. That is why the German Embassy launched its Skills Initiative in 2012 in close cooperation with the German American Chambers of Commerce. Together with state governments, we want to support regional partnerships between German-owned companies in the U.S. and vocational training institutions. Best practices can be identified and successful approaches further developed. We already held the first state-level events in 2012 and are looking forward to expanding the initiative in 2013.

As you can see, transatlantic cooperation and progress is taking place in a variety of fields. In all of them, the German American Chambers of Commerce play an important role as a link between businesses on both sides of the Atlantic. I thank the Chambers for being such an excellent partner of the German Embassy in Washington, DC and the Consulates General throughout the U.S. I count on the German American Chambers of Commerce to continue to be an active partner in the current transatlantic discussions on a new Transatlantic Partnership fostering jobs and growth on both sides of the Atlantic.

All the best for a successful year 2013!

Sincerely,

Dr. Peter Ammon, German Ambassador to the United States
Dear Members and Supporters,

In my second year as Chairman of the Board I have had the privilege of becoming even more involved with the GACC South.

As markets remain uncertain and challenging, I am pleased to report that German firms within the U.S. continue to remain confident as they look toward 2013 - a trend highlighted by the GACCs’ Annual German American Business Outlook (GABO).

The survey detailed several key insights, including that 95% of German subsidiaries in the U.S. anticipate growth for their own business, while 87% expect a growing U.S. economy and 76% of firms expect to create new jobs in the upcoming year.

One of the explanations for this outlook rests within the long withstanding relationship between Germany and the U.S. - a necessary ingredient for lasting success and future investments and one which our organization remains committed to strengthening.

This past year has proven to be an incredibly active year for the GACC South. We hosted a total of over 10,000 people at 82 networking events, 6 industry-specific conferences, 19 business seminars, and 41 events where we partnered with other organizations. The commitment shown by the entire GACC South staff continues to make these events a success while strengthening our transatlantic business relationships.

Among the noteworthy accomplishments, it is important to stress our efforts to serve the entire Southern U.S. as we opened a new chapter in Tampa, Florida. The guidance shown by our President & CEO Martina Stegmeier in her first year has proven to be invaluable to our chamber’s future and success. Additionally, the experience James Blair as new Managing Director of the GACC South Services LLC brings to our organization will also further deepen the trade relationship between the two countries.

As the year comes to a close, I would like to take this time to thank all our members, supporters and GACC South employees for all the dedication and effort you have shown throughout 2012. Thank you for all your contributions to a successful year and for your continued support to strengthen German-American trade. I would also like to thank the Board of Directors of the GACC South for your commitment and the time you invest in numerous projects and events. It has been a great pleasure and honor to work alongside each of you.

I look forward to continue working with the Board of Directors, the GACC South staff, and our members on building an even stronger bilateral economic relationship between Germany and the Southern U.S. in 2013.

Martin Richenhagen, Chairman, President & CEO of AGCO Corporation
Chairman of the Board, GACC South
Dear Members and Business Partners,

It has been a pleasure to return to the GACC South as President & CEO and I would like to thank everyone for the support I have received.

The previous twelve months were filled with significant accomplishments that have created a solid foundation for our organization to better support bilateral trade relations in the region.

In the year ahead, we will continue to elevate the region and will support efforts to ensure we have the best possible climate for German businesses in the Southern United States and remain dedicated to make sure every member and client has a benefit to improve their business.

A great portion of this annual report reflects the organizational evolution that is producing these goals. It presents a view of what we have learned and are learning about how to better serve our members, including what we have discovered about our communities, our partnerships, and our shared cultures.

Of course, an annual report is essentially a snap-shot, not a complete portrait. While it consists of a sample list of the efforts we have made during the year, it can’t begin to detail the full range of internal and external efforts on which we’ve worked together.

The efforts mentioned in the following pages demonstrate how maximizing both knowledge and opportunity remain an important component in strengthening an already impressive business community between Germany and the Southern United States in the year ahead.

I look forward to working with the Board of Directors, our members & clients, partner organizations, and the staff to build upon the successes of the previous year as we move into 2013.

Martina Stegmeier, President & CEO, GACC South
Throughout the World

Welcome to the global network of German Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs). Our Chambers are located in markets of particular interest to German industry and commerce - with more than 120 locations in 80 countries around the globe. 1,700 employees work to support German businesses in their international endeavors, through consulting services provided under the joint AHK service brand DEinternational, and by connecting them to the local business communities through membership services and events. Around the world, the AHKs have 50,000 member companies. The Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) in Berlin coordinates the global network of German Chambers Abroad.

Throughout the United States

The three German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) in the U.S. - together with their three branch offices, their chapters and affiliates - support and promote German-American business in key economic and political centers. The GACCs’ network consists of approximately 2,500 members, as well as excellent contacts to associations, governmental institutions, and corporations. The political liaison office of DIHK and BDI in Washington DC, the Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT), with whom we work closely, represents the interests of the German business community to the U.S. government.

Throughout Germany

Close cooperation with the 80 Chambers of Industry and Commerce (IHKs) throughout Germany, allows the AHKs to know what companies are concerned about in their involvement in foreign markets. The communication between the 3.6 million entrepreneurs in Germany and the additional millions throughout our global network enables us to coordinate one clear unified message for German business.
The Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) is the Washington, DC, liaison office of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK). RGIT’s mission is to foster free trade and a welcoming business environment on both sides of the Atlantic to achieve sustainable growth, jobs and innovation for the German-American economic relations. Founded in 1988, RGIT is supported by Germany’s Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and serves as the voice of German Industry and Trade towards U.S. politics, American business organizations and the general public. RGIT is part of the AHK USA network and cooperates closely with GTAI.

Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI) is the economic development agency of the Federal Republic of Germany. The organization promotes Germany as a business and technology location and supports companies seeking to expand abroad and provides companies looking to enter Germany with expert advice. There is a particularly close cooperation between the IHKs and the GTAI, headquartered in Berlin. The Chambers and GTAI share offices in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, and work together on various projects.

"The three German American Chambers of Commerce in the USA (AHK USA) with their six U.S. offices are part of a worldwide Chamber Network (AHK) with more than 120 offices in 80 countries. The AHKs are the voice of German business abroad and support German companies entering and expanding in international markets. Through active membership work and their bilateral orientation, they connect German with local companies as well as with other local partners. Therefore, they provide a very important contribution to the dynamics and the success of German business on the world markets."

Dr. Volker Treier, Deputy Chief Executive and Managing Director International Economic Affairs, DIHK e.V.
Annual Economic Forum  January 26, 2012 | Rosemont, IL

The German American Chambers of Commerce in conjunction with the Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) presented the Annual Economic Forum 2012 in Chicago. On this occasion, top executives and economists came together to discuss and share their views on the year ahead in the German American business community. The successful forum was opened by W. David Braun, Chairman of the GACCoM Board of Directors, and moderated by Michael Backfisch (Middle East Correspondent). It featured expert presentations by Prof. Dr. Joachim Scheide, Head Forecasting Center and Research Economist, The Kiel Institute for the World Economy; Diane Swonk, Chief Economist, Mesirow Financial; Gerhard Kiewel, Vice President, Volkswagen Group of America, Inc., as well as Norbert G. Riedel, Corporate Vice President and Chief Science & Innovation Officer, Baxter International.

GABO 2013  December 3, 2012 | New York, NY

In the fall of 2012, the German American Business Outlook (GABO) survey aimed to measure the satisfaction of German companies with the U.S. as an investment location and takes on a different topical angle each year. This year’s study addressed the impact of debt crises discussion on both sides of the Atlantic on the German subsidiaries as well as the critical question of how to secure, build and maintain a strong workforce. 95% of surveyed German companies in the U.S. expect their own business to grow in 2013, and 76% of all firms plan on adding new jobs in the upcoming year. 1,900 firms all around the U.S. were approached and approximately 12% of senior management responded.

dasHaus  North American Tour Coordinated by the GACCs │October 2011 - October 2012

After spending a majority of the year across the U.S., dasHaus continued its North American tour in New York and Chicago during the months of July and September respectively. The dasHaus is a traveling pavilion aimed at promoting dialogue about advanced technologies for home construction and operational energy savings by showcasing German innovations that have achieved these efforts in sustainability. Academic and industry leaders attended tours and conferences alongside GACCoM and GACC NY members to engage in the vibrant discussion about the future of home construction. After finishing its stay in Chicago, dasHaus completed its successful North American tour in Denver during October. For further information about dasHaus, please visit: dashaustour.com.
One of the largest and most significant trade events in Germany welcomed over 800 participants, 70 exhibitors, 50 representatives of the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad and 60 speakers to Dortmund. Organized by the 16 IHKs of North Rhine-Westphalia, this year’s Aussenwirtschaftstage brought together the majority of the worldwide AHK network to discuss the latest information, participate in workshops and join in intercultural training to improve international trade. Stemming from one of the most diverse countries in the world, the representatives from the GACCs were part of a DIHK/AHK booth.

92% of German subsidiaries in the U.S. showed healthy gains in the Top 50 Ranking of German Firms conducted by the German American Chambers of Commerce. Their entities are investing in business expansions and new hires throughout the U.S. Overall, the sales performance increased by 7.5% from $295 billion in 2010 to over $318 billion in 2011. Companies in the Top 50 created over 461,000 jobs, up from 427,000 in 2010. These numbers prove that the U.S. economic upturn gathered pace as the year progressed, and the risk of sliding back into a recession consequently receded further into the background. Many of the Top 50 companies manufacture in the U.S. for the U.S. market. They also often source locally and thereby create local value. The Top 50 companies remained confident for the remainder of 2012, planning on increasing their investments, adding more jobs, and expanding their footprint in the U.S.

With over 6,000 exhibitors, 300,000 attendees and various new technologies being introduced each year, the Hannover Fair is the world’s largest trade show for industry and energy. During the Hannover Messe 2012, the GACCs were part of a DIHK/AHK booth. From April 23 - 27, the booth was a meeting point for various companies interested in international expansion. Given the opportunity to meet with representatives of the German Chamber Network, these companies received professional advice and insights into entering foreign markets and establishing successful operations abroad.
AnnuAl RepoRt 2012

Our Region

Headquartered in Atlanta, with a branch office in Houston, five state chapters, and two affiliates the GACC South serves as the official representative of German industry and trade in the Southeastern U.S. Through active local leadership, we provide membership and consulting services and also organize events and networking opportunities for an expanding membership base. More than 3,500 German companies of all sizes are active in the U.S. and 1,500 of those are located in the Southern United States.

Texas

While the state remains a major exporter of oil and its derivatives, its broad-based economy is a major source of other products including machinery; electronic parts and telecommunications equipment; chemicals; civilian aircraft; and, increasingly, automotive components and large vehicles. Since 2005, 48 German FDI projects have been recorded within the state, representing 12% of the total projects.

Georgia

Access to the world’s busiest passenger airport, the state’s skilled workforce, network of deep-water ports, among numerous other factors contribute to Georgia’s impressive international growth. Latest figures show Germany accounting for 15.3% of all imports within the state.

Arkansas

Germany currently ranks first among foreign-owned operations in Arkansas with 32 companies doing business within the state.

Affiliates

Through close cooperation with the Alabama-Germany Partnership and the German American Business Chamber of South Florida (GABC), the GACC South is able to expand business services to support commercial and personal partnerships within these states.

Louisiana

As 22 German subsidiaries operate in Louisiana, total trade volume between Germany and the state is valued at more than $1.5 billion.
North Carolina

The Charlotte region continues to be the benchmark for North Carolina in terms of a concentrated presence of German firms. Today, there are 194 German-owned firms in the area including 59 U.S. headquarters; making Germany the most largely represented foreign country within the state.

South Carolina

Over 700 firms from 40 counties continue to play a vital role in South Carolina’s economy by investing almost $41.1 billion in the state and employing 104,300 South Carolinians - placing the state 4th in the percent of its workforce employed by foreign companies. Currently, the number of German subsidiaries within the state totals 220.

Florida

As international trade proved, once again, to be one of the state’s strongest sectors; Florida continued as the world’s principal commercial gateway to Latin American & Caribbean markets. The EU accounted for 57% of all FDI employment in Florida with Germany accounting for 22,600 jobs.

Oklahoma

Since 2008, German imports to Oklahoma have increased by 42% and currently totals $380 million, ranking Germany fifth among all foreign importers.
2012 proved to be an active and productive year marked by the numerous accomplishments that fill the pages of this report - all of which were motivated on providing a higher level of service to our members, the German-American business community, and our region.

With our former CEO, Kristian Wolf, departing after ten years with the GACC South, I had the honor to serve as Interim President to start the year. I am very thankful for the experiences I gained throughout that time, as they proved to be invaluable in welcoming back Martina Stegmeier and the transition that followed.

This year, our organization has continuously brought forth new initiatives and projects aimed at strengthening the growth between Germany and our region. Being part of the DIHK peer group for vocational training export and developing our German-Chamber of Commerce U.S. wide workforce initiative for vocational training is both rewarding and promising. This will be one of the Chambers main focuses for 2013.

With our dedicated staff; the continued involvement from our Board of Directors; and the support of our members; I am very confident our organization will build on the progress of this year and continue to strengthen and grow the German-American business community in the upcoming year.

Stefanie Jehlitschka, Vice President

What a whirlwind this year has been for me and the Houston office - for me personally especially since I transitioned into Managing Director of the GACC South Houston office in April. Though the period has been marked by many challenges any structural transition brings, it has also been filled with a sense of accomplishment and success.

During the past year, the Houston office has demonstrated the ability to represent the regional business community and the resources to support new initiatives. We have dramatically increased the number of membership events and services which has been met by enthusiasm and positive feedback.

As always, an entire network of people deserves our thanks, from the German Consulate in Houston to the Greater Houston Partnership to many other supporting organizations and individuals in the Houston and Texas region.

We plan to increase the momentum the organization built in 2012 over the next year, by providing more opportunities and events to our members while expanding our focus to include additional projects on a wide variety of subjects.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a successful 2013.

Julia Zimmermann, Managing Director - Houston Office
The GACC South continued to experience a great amount of change in 2012. Nevertheless, our organization’s membership continued to grow, attendance at our events reached record levels, and our services stayed supportive in assisting the German-American business community. We are privileged to work alongside members & clients that remain committed to improving the partnerships between our two nations. Comprised of the Consulting Services and Marketing Department, the GACC South fulfills three main tasks. First, we are the official representation of German companies within the Southeastern U.S. We also act as a member organization for the companies located in our eleven-state region to aid in bilateral business relations. Additionally, under the brand ‘DEInternational’, we provide consulting services to companies from Germany and in our region in order to support their foreign business activities.

### Consulting

During 2012, our Consulting Department completed the highest total of market entry projects in GACC South history resulting in a **39%** increase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current business representation clients</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New clients</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients departed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established own U.S. facility</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew from the U.S. market</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market entry projects</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Events

With increased activity by our Houston office and chapters, we witnessed an increase in attendees by **50%**; making 2012 the second consecutive year that total attendance grew.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-partner events in total</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking events</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-specific conferences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business seminars</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner events with other organizations</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People attended: more than</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Membership

Our organization experienced a **25%** increase in members since 2011 throughout the eleven states in the Southeast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current members</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in members since December 2011</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New members joined in 2012</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New executive members</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Membership level created in Summer 2011)

### Public Relations

Activity in our social media networks grew by **20%** since 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website visitors in 2012 - more than</td>
<td>67,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website pageviews in 2012 - more than</td>
<td>231,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog posts in 2012</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog views in 2012 - more than</td>
<td>14,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total AHK USA LinkedIn group members</td>
<td>2,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Twitter followers (GACC South)</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Twitter followers (Bierfest)</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Facebook likes (Bierfest)</td>
<td>1,238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Website - GACC South & German Bierfest
Blog - GACC South
Twitter - GACC South & German Bierfest
Facebook - German Bierfest

### Division of membership base

- TX: 13%
- SC: 10%
- FL: 46%
- GA: 44%
- others: 19%
AnnuAl RepoRt 2012

EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

German Baked Goods & Pasta Business Reception
February 6-10, 2012 │ Atlanta, GA

As the global food industry continues to expand into new markets, the GACC South hosted four German food companies on their trip to Atlanta to explore business opportunities in the U.S. During the business trip, sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, the companies participated in expert roundtables to gain knowledge on the U.S. market and network with German companies who have already established a presence within the region. Throughout the trip, the businesses improved their understanding for the product presentation, retail pricing, as well as differences in the taste of products and the perception of food products in the U.S. from actual U.S. consumers. Moreover, the German professionals gained the opportunity to meet potential importers, freight forwarders, consultants, brokers and distributors.

Annual General Meeting May 7, 2012 │ Huntsville, AL

This year’s Annual General Meeting brought together over a hundred members and other business guests to the charming city of Huntsville, Alabama as elections for the Board of Directors took place. The results welcomed in Dr. Eike Jordan, Thomas Ginschel, Felix von Nathusius, Michael G. Sauer and Russ Wheeler as new members. In addition to the election, panel discussions and a speaker series took place during the all-day event. The discussions highlighted German-U.S. business relations and the economic forecasts centered on the challenges ahead for the Southern U.S.

Spargelfest May 17, 2012 │ Greenville, SC

Following up on the success of the inaugural Spargelfest, the South Carolina Chapter returned to the Bavarian Pretzel Factory to host its 2nd Annual Spargelfest to commemorate the tradition for the arrival of spring. Through an effort with the Atlanta office, the evening featured a menu dedicated to white asparagus from appetizer to dessert. The evening brought together 60 guests, including Honorary Consul Wolf Stromberg, who remarked on how delightful the event was to bring something so uniquely German and introduce it to the U.S.

Case Study Nimak North America, Inc.

With over 45 years of experience in the welding industry, Nimak started using the Business Representation Services offered by the GACC South in early 2010 and continues to experience growth ever since. The past year has proven to be an exceptionally active year signified by remarkable successes for Nimak North America, Inc. The company recently expanded its operations into Tuscaloosa, Alabama, with the addition of a new facility in late December 2011. This decision enabled Nimak to begin the year with an operations base specifically designed for the maintenance of welding guns and machinery. The 6,000 sq. ft. facility houses the state-of-the-art machines and testing equipment in which Nimak recently invested. Among the abundant developments of 2012, the Nimak team welcomed Kai Guenther as the new Operations Manager of the Alabama facility, along with David Jackson and Alexander Cordes, bringing Nimak’s grand total of U.S. employees to five. Together the three, as well as Nimak as a whole, are excited to meet the growing welding needs of the community and look forward to continue building our partnership with such a vibrant and committed chamber.
Maifest  May 19, 2012  |  Cleveland, TN

The Tennessee Chapter’s celebration to mark the end-of-school-year of the Montessori Kinder International School received a welcomed response from the greater Cleveland area in its third year. In total, 650 guests enjoyed a program highlighted with food and music from Bavaria. With record attendance and strong support from Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland, U.S. Congressman Chuck Feischmann, and German Deputy Consul General Dr. Alfred Schlicht the event was able to raise over $12,000 to assist in the construction of a new facility on the Montessori Kinder campus.

AWEA German Evening Reception  June 4, 2012  |  Atlanta, GA

Through cooperation with the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Atlanta, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and support from the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, the GACC South greeted more than 300 guests during a reception focused on German innovations in the wind industry. The evening served as a platform to exchange ideas and network, while celebrating industry success stories within the German-American business community during the AWEA WINDPOWER 2012 Conference & Exhibition. The AWEA WINDPOWER trade fair is considered the largest annual wind-focused exhibition in the world, featuring over 1,000 exhibitors. This year’s conference marked the first occasion Atlanta hosted the trade show and featured over 35 German companies. The event was jointly-sponsored by seven companies and featured a media partnership with AllEnergy Magazine.

New Member Reception  July 10, 2012  |  Atlanta, GA

This year’s New Member Reception brought together over 130 members and clients to enjoy an evening of light hors d’oeuvres and the company of both old and new friends during the GACC South’s New Member Reception. In addition to network with fellow members, the casual evening meet-and-greet provided guests to learn more about the services and resources offered by the GACC South and to discuss future opportunities to strengthen business relationships with our expansive network.

Staff Highlight  Nico Rudolph - Senior Project Coordinator

I came to the GACC South after five years in event and conference management for the German Energy Agency. Though my friends insisted I was crazy - and I probably was - in leaving my beloved Berlin and career behind to take a chance to work in the U.S., I proved everyone wrong. Since joining the chamber as an intern in our Houston office in January 2011 before arriving in Atlanta earlier this year, the chamber gave me the opportunity to live my American dream; which has in turn aided me in both my professional and personal development.

With our vibrant multicultural work environment and strong connection to our other offices throughout the U.S. and Germany, I am able to work with a number of influential decision makers from the political and corporate communities. I appreciate the trust our management and my colleagues put in me and look forward to the new and exciting challenges of the years to come.
Florida Chapter Grand Opening  September 20, 2012 | Tampa, FL

More than 200 guests arrived at the Museum of Science and Industry to commemorate the newly created Florida Chapter of the GACC South. The new Florida Chapter, as well as the affiliation with the German American Business Chamber of South Florida (GABC), mark the continued efforts by the GACC South to strengthen its presence throughout the Southern U.S. The event drew support from a number of officials and dignitaries including: Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn, Hillsborough County Commissioner Al Higginbotham, German Consul General Eva Alexandra Countess Kendeffy, Honorary German Consul Norma Henning and Bauer Foundation CEO and GACC South Florida Chapter Director Charles Puccini.

Kuehne & Nagel Speaker Series: BMW in South Carolina
September 27, 2012 | Charlotte, NC

Josef Kerscher, President of BMW Manufacturing USA, presented an insightful overview on how the world-renowned company built a solid foundation for exports in the Carolinas since 1994 in part of Kuehne & Nagel’s 2012 Speaker Series. Speaking to an audience of 130 guests, Mr. Kerscher spoke on the shared attributes between parent and subsidiary company to lead its respective industries based on the principles of design, evolution, innovation, and performance. Held throughout the year, the Kuehne & Nagel Speaker Series hosts distinguished guests from both academia and industry to discuss the challenges, opportunities and innovative applications in key business sectors.

Bauer Factory Tour  October 16, 2012 | Houston, TX

Fellow member company Bauer Manufacturing, Inc. provided a candel tour to the GACC South community of the company’s Conroe, Texas facility. The event provided a behind the scenes look into the state-of-the-art equipment, new technologies, and innovative solutions Bauer Manufacturing uses in its crane building, assembling, and production operations. Following the private visit of the facility’s 57,000 sq. ft. assembly hall guests participated in a Q&A session with Bauer Manufacturing CEO Thomas Jarobe and enjoyed an evening of networking and hours d’oeuvres.

Case Study  EQ Laboratories, Inc.

The past year marked 15 years of collaboration between the GACC South and EQ Laboratories, Inc., a distributor of analytical standards, reference materials and environmental standards for residue + environmental analysis and subsidiary of the German company Dr. Ehrenstorfer GmbH. Our partnership is a stellar example of how exceptional the Business Representation service of the GACC South is in facilitating a successful U.S. presence. The support of the GACC South allows us to operate in the U.S. Market with minimal costs by providing a service tailored to their needs. Dr. Ralf Schäfer, Managing Director of EQ Laboratories, Inc., speaking on the partnership asserted, “The employees of the GACC Atlanta are always attuned to our needs and willing to meet the extraordinary wishes of our customers. Their expertise combined with personal attention was crucial for our loyalty in Atlanta. ‘What can we do for you’ was never just a phrase, but their genuine offer.” To commemorate the long-withstanding and mutually beneficial relationship Martina Stegmeier, President & CEO of the GACC South, was pleased to have the opportunity to personally present Dr. Schäfer with a certificate.
First Annual Houston Oktoberfest  October 20, 2012 │ Houston, TX

Houston’s first annual Oktoberfest was held at Houston Community College (West Loop Campus) with over 3,500 guests. The Oktoberfest featured more than twenty-five types of German beer and also included German food from vendors such as Saussibun and Yummy Dog; as well as a Kid’s Corner with carnival games and pumpkin decorating. There were performances by Enzian Buam and the Rathkamp Dance Troupe. The German Consul General, Klaus-Jochen Guehlcke, was also in attendance.

YEC Meeting with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas  October 23, 2012 │ Dallas, TX

The North Texas Chapter continued its dedicated efforts to host young international professionals throughout the year with an evening at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to take in the ‘Economy in Action’ exhibit, an interactive experience with multimedia displays aimed to provide understanding on the role of the Federal Reserve in relation to money and the economy. Guests were welcomed by Christoffer Koch, Research Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, who headed the tour and shared his insights.

GACC South 17th Annual Gala  November 10, 2012 │ Atlanta, GA

The GACC South, along with 500 members, friends and supporters toasted to the strength of the German-American business community at the prestigious St. Regis Atlanta. Throughout the evening, speeches were given by our special guests, including the Lieutenant Governor of Georgia Casey Cagle, newly appointed Consul General Christoph Sander, and Minister Peter Fischer of the German Embassy in Washington, DC. Following the evening’s dinner guests enjoyed a night of dancing and networking, while participating in the evening’s GACC South Silent Auction.

Staff Highlight  Rachel Evans - Membership & Events Coordinator

My first experience with Germany was through my best friend in high school, an exchange student from Berlin, who remains one of my oldest friends. Since adolescence, my fascination with the German language and culture has grown tremendously. I completed my degree in 2007 in German, Modern Languages, and International Business at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC. I also studied German for a year abroad at the University of Heidelberg in 2005. I joined the GACC South in the summer of 2012 after working for several years in a sales support and project coordination role at a German subsidiary in the Oil and Gas Industry. As the Membership & Events Coordinator, and a native Houstonian, I enjoy bringing people together in the German American Business Community within my hometown and throughout our region. There are many challenges I face in the fast paced environment of our growing office; however, I find the unique mix of small business meets big corporation feel of working at the Chamber thrilling.
One of the primary roles of the GACC South is to support German companies with their activities in the U.S. We are an experienced, trustworthy partner and we individually consult businesses in a professional manner. Our bilingual employees know the particularities of both countries and are always ready to help with any questions a company may have. The following graphic shows a breakdown of the consulting services offered by the GACC South:

**Site Selection USA** - The complexity of the site selection process requires a partner who is well versed with the intricacies of the U.S. environment. As a subsidiary of the GACC South, the official representative of German industry in the southern U.S., the GACC South Services LLC offers a range of professional business location services. Besides the advantages of experience, an established network and bilingual staff, GACC South Services offers its clients neutrality with respect to the investment destination, focusing instead on the quality of the location decision. How do we achieve these objectives?

### Phase 1
- Define Project Parameters
- Receive Site/Facility Options
- Analyze Site/Facility Data
- Eliminate Weak Options

### Phase 2
- State/Community Visits
- Further Analysis of Site/Facility Data
- Additional Site/Facility Eliminations
- Create Site/Facility “Long List”

### Phase 3
- Community Visits - 2nd Round
- Expanded Analysis of Site/Facility Data
- Additional Site/Facility Eliminations
- Create Site/Facility “Short List”

### Phase 4
- Final Community/Site Visits
- Closing Discussions & Negotiations
- Contract Signing & Announcement

**Case Study**  Wendt & Kühn KG

U.S. Business Representation Services client Wendt & Kühn will celebrate ten years with the GACC South in July 2013. The company’s headquarters are located in Grünhainichen in the beautiful Erzgebirge region of Germany, where they handcraft their signature green-winged angels, as well as numerous other fine gift figurines and music boxes. The Wendt & Kühn Grünhainichen Angels° are known and admired by collectors around the world.

For many years, the company has successfully exhibited at the AmericasMart trade show in Atlanta, GA. Therefore it was no surprise this past summer when the company decided to participate in the New York International Gift Fair (NYIGF), one of the largest shows for the gift industry with more than 2,800 exhibitors and an estimated 35,000 attendees. Representatives from the GACC South Consulting team joined Wendt & Kühn in New York, supporting them on-site for the duration of the trade show as well as assisting with the organization of services, communication with show personnel and logistics coordination. The event not only marked Wendt & Kühn’s first appearance at the NYIGF but also the grand unveiling of the company’s brand new exhibition booth.
In early October I transitioned from a long career with the State of Georgia to work with the GACC South, as the new Managing Director of GACC South Services LLC, the for-profit subsidiary of the GACC South which has provided business site consulting services for the past three years. I am thankful to the GACC South Board of Directors and to the Chamber’s executive management for their vision and commitment in successfully developing the site selection program which I now manage.

With twenty-five years of economic development experience, I arrive at the GACC South with a unique understanding of the roles of both state and community-wide economic development organizations and how these groups can contribute to the success of GACC South Services’ outreach to German companies.

Working with the State of Georgia, first as Managing Director of Georgia’s European Office in Brussels, and most recently as the Director for Foreign Direct Investment prepared me well for this new role assisting German executives in their search for attractive and profitable business locations in the Southeastern U.S.

Upon assuming my position in October, I travelled with GACC South executive management to meet the state economic development leadership in Alabama, Tennessee, and the Carolinas and I look forward to visits in Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Florida. Not only will this travel further my knowledge of this region, but it will also allow me to get acquainted with the people and organizations that play a critical role in providing support and business location solutions to German clients.

The guiding principal for GACC South Services in the upcoming year is clear. It is our commitment to provide exceptional professional and neutral site selection assistance to companies and executives as they evaluate a wide range of business locations across the U.S. Through our experience and knowledge we will continue to help German firms find solid ground in the GACC South’s region, contributing to the overall mission of encouraging growing business and commerce between Germany and the U.S.

James Blair, Managing Director, GACC South Services LLC

Staff Highlight  Katrin Gillespie - Director, HR & Administration

Having lived in 18 countries from early childhood on, I consider multicultural international environments my natural setting. Before coming to the GACC South in April 2012, I fulfilled a successful career with a Fortune 100 company. I consider myself lucky to have worked at world class organizations with procedures and structures in place; though the ability to create a unique organizational long-term strategy for the GACC South has proven to be both exciting and challenging. As the Director of Human Resources, my principal duty is to implement internal compliance structures with regards to all legal, benefits, employment, and non-immigration matters, but I find the human aspect in my work is the most rewarding one, as we have such a great talent pool here. Looking to the year ahead, I look forward to completing any internal HR organizational procedures and focusing on training and development of the great team we have.
Welcoming Consul General Christoph Sander

In welcoming Christoph Sander, the newly appointed Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany to the region we hosted a breakfast meeting with our members and greeted him as a guest of honor during our 17th Annual Gala.

German American Career Connection Reception

Held in conjunction with The Halle Fellowship Program, the evening reception greeted returning students who interned in Germany with an opportunity to share the experience of being abroad with local businesses and members.

AHK Argentina Visit

An exchange of business practices and cultural insights between the GACC South and our global AHK network brought Juan Pablo from the AHK in Buenos Aires, Argentina to Atlanta this August.

AHK Colombia Visit

Business operations, cultural distinctions, and discussions on the GACC South's Business Representation services were all focal points during the week-long stay of Mr. Alexander Steinberg of AHK Colombia to Atlanta.

Collaborations

Staff Highlight Jessica Worm-Dunn - Customer Representative

Ever since spending 10 months as an exchange student in Texas, I have had a great interest in experiencing different business cultures. This desire led me to return to study International Business in Washington, DC. I joined the GACC South in August of 2012 as a part of a multi-faceted Consulting Team. Living and working in the U.S. has given me the chance to gain a new perspective on cultural relations and communication.

As a Customer Representative with the GACC South Consulting team, I have the opportunity to support German companies in developing and expanding their U.S. market share by assisting them with daily tasks as well as special requests. Interacting with companies from different industries, each with their own approach, and seeing them adapt to the U.S. business culture has been an interesting experience for me. As a part of a dynamic and motivated team in the GACC South's international work environment, I look forward to the new and exciting challenges the upcoming year will bring.
In the fall of 2012, the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs - AHK USA), the Representative of German Industry & Trade (RGIT) and Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, for the fourth time, conducted a survey of German subsidiaries in the U.S.: The German American Business Outlook (GABO) 2013.

1,900 headquarters of German-owned subsidiaries in the U.S. were approached, from which approx. 12% of senior management from various industries responded, mainly from the classic German Mittelstand (75%). The survey asked for the respondents’ opinions on the state of the economy, their market expectations, and the outlook for their own businesses.

The majority of firms find themselves well positioned to focus on growth, expansion, and innovation by introducing new product lines, optimizing processes, and increasing their workforce in 2013.

76% of all companies and 86% of SMEs plan to create new jobs in 2013 - an indicator for a very positive economic development (see top graph).

95% anticipate growth for their own business, while 87% expect a growing U.S. economy (see middle graph).

Reforming the tax system and developing an educated workforce are ranked as the highest priority economic and political long-term measures to improve the competitiveness of the U.S. (see bottom graph).

Staff Highlight  Christopher Rasmussen  - Membership Coordinator

Since participating in the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange at the age of 17 and being able to serve as the Ambassador to Germany while assisting in social and culture education, I knew I wanted a life involved in international relations. Having worked for two companies in Germany, I was able to further expand my understanding of global cultures and people. The opportunity to continue my desire to work in a multinational setting came with the GACC South in January 2010 following a position as the Social & Field Director for a South Carolina Congressman. The transition from politics to business was seamless; as Membership Coordinator with the Chamber I have the ability to handle member administration, outreach, and relations instead of assisting constituents. Looking towards the upcoming year I look forward to my next chapter in the GACC South by assisting in the development of our membership community in the Carolinas.
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President & CEO, GACC South

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Chairman, GACC South  
Chairman, President & CEO  
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