

# Quick Start Salutes Laura Meadows

Cochran native Laura Meadows recently was named commissioner of Georgia's Department of Community Affairs, bringing new energy and a profound appreciation for Georgia's potential to the table.

"I don't mean to be sentimental about this, but it really does seem as if I've been preparing for this job all my life," says the new commissioner, who oversees approximately 400 employees at the agency.

"I feel so blessed and appreciate this opportunity to serve Georgia. I feel very strongly that our state's success depends on a true partnership. We don't work in

a vacuum; our efforts with other state agencies, like DTAE; Industry, Trade & Tourism; and the Department of Labor—and others—are interdependent. I want us to all share in the high quality of growth, planning, and implementation aspects of Georgia's economic well-being," says Meadows.

Meadows was appointed by Gov. Roy Barnes last fall and took office Oct. 15. Prior to becoming DCA commissioner, Meadows served as the first director of OneGeorgia in Dublin. Before serving OneGeorgia, Meadows worked for several years with USDA Rural Development out of its Athens office.

DCA oversees state and federal funding for economic development across the state and works closely with local governments administering community development block grants and employment incentive programs, as well as grants for buildings to house new or expanding businesses.

"But I want to emphasize that none of the work we do would pay dividends if Georgia did not have a trained workforce. It is absolutely critical, and Quick Start is such an excellent value to companies. Its ability to meet the needs of new and expanding companies quickly and effectively is unprecedented. I know of no other state that offers such an effective service," says Meadows.

As OneGeorgia director, the commissioner worked closely with Farmland in its decision to locate the National Beef facility in Moultrie. DCA put \$2.1 million into the town for land acquisition, building improvements and infrastructure improvements, OneGeorgia provided \$1.5 million for building renovation and equipment, and Quick Start helped train its initial workforce of 160 people.

Meadows holds a bachelor's degree from UGA and a master's degree in Public Administration from Brenau University. **QS**



**"I want to emphasize that none of the work we do would pay dividends if Georgia did not have a trained workforce. It is absolutely critical, and Quick Start is such an excellent value to companies."**

**Laura Meadows**  
COMMISSIONER  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS