

Good Morning Ms. Napier,

I want to take a moment to thank Mr. Frazier for his time and allowing me the opportunity to speak last in at the Coastal Georgia Center on August 31. I cannot even begin to imagine the size of this endeavor and the countless persons that associate his face with local tax issues. It takes a special person to continually stand in front of communities and listen to hostile and frustrated citizens. I myself realize I was one of those citizens, and I regret in some small part that my passion interfered with the message I wanted to state.

Attached to this e-mail is a current summary of the education workers in Chatham County possess. This information is on the Department of Labor website and is available to the public. If you will notice 1 out of 2 people in this area have never continued their education beyond that of high school. Only 14% of the working force in this area have a 4 year degree. People consistently speak of wanting to draw companies to this area because of the great work of the Georgia Ports Authority and the infrastructure that goes along with it. However this area is seriously deficient in one particular area that we MUST address. We don't have the employees needed to carry on basic day to day operations in a typical office environment. Basic office skills are not being taught in High School and many graduates have no means to gain access to these skills. Any business considering locating operations to this area would have to consider training the expense in their cost analysis, and depending on the number of workers, those costs could potentially outweigh any benefits.

Listed on the mission statement presented to me last evening was the following: "The council is charged with conducting a thorough study of the state's current revenue structure and submitting its finding and recommendations for changes to the state's tax code to the Speaker of the House and Lieutenant Governor..." Current revenue is being generated by service industries and these jobs require education beyond a high school diploma. One of the questions I really wanted to ask last night was this: "Are tax incentives for businesses that provide on the job training or make necessary training available, being considered"? Shouldn't a successful business be rewarded for addressing educational concerns and providing their employees with a brighter future? Also, how can government programs that are already in place get the attention they need. I mentioned the WIA program, available at the Department of Labor offices across this state. I was not surprised that you didn't know about this program, most people have remained in the dark about this opportunity. However, I don't have the revenue sources to market programs such as these; couldn't that be a possible job opportunity that could be considered when your recommendations are presented at the 2011 legislative session?

I know that my emotions got the better of me, and public speaking has never been my forte. However, I do believe my sincerity was evident. I am concerned with my future, in fact I'm terrified. The disparity between working classes is growing larger every day, and I see it every day. My heart goes out to people who have the desire and ethics to become something special but can't afford basic training. If businesses are not required to help alleviate this burden how can this economy grow? We will not compete with global companies with the workforce we currently possess and with no ability to train them in future endeavors.

One of Mr. Frazier's opening comments mentioned job growth as a major concern of this task force. I have the same concerns, so do my neighbors. I don't have the answers; I am hoping this committee can help us find some. Education is an investment, not an expense.

Best Regards,
Jeff Graham
Georgia Southern University
305 Fahm St.
Savannah, Ga. 31401
(912) 478-2560
JeffGraham@GeorgiaSouthern.Edu

Education of the Labor Force

Chatham Area

	PERCENT OF TOTAL	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE				
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Some High School	20.7%	24.8%	13.2%	15.5%	17.6%	38.8%
High School Grad/GED	29.4%	31.7%	27.5%	30.6%	30.6%	26.0%
Some College	29.0%	36.5%	33.0%	30.9%	27.3%	17.9%
College Grad 4 Yr	14.2%	6.5%	21.0%	15.6%	14.2%	10.9%
Post Grad Studies	6.7%	0.6%	5.2%	7.4%	10.4%	6.4%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Totals are based on the portion of the labor force between ages 18 - 65+. Some College category represents the percentage total of workers with either Some College with no degree or an Associate degree.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Decennial Census.

High School Graduates - 2009

	PUBLIC SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS*	TOTAL
Bryan	372	--	372
Chatham	1,528	--	1,528
Effingham	644	--	644
Chatham Area	2,544	--	2,544



Note: Public schools include city as well as county schools systems.

* Private schools data is not available for 2009 from Georgia Independent School Association.

Colleges and Universities

Chatham Area

Chatham

Embry-Riddle - Savannah Campus	http://fusion.erau.edu/ec/wwc/centerinfo.cfm?code=11
Georgia Tech Savannah Campus	http://www.gtsav.gatech.edu/
Troy University	savannah.troy.edu
Armstrong Atlantic State University	www.armstrong.edu
University of Phoenix-Savannah Campus	www.phoenix.edu
Savannah State University	www.savannahstate.edu/
Crossroads Campus (Satellite campus of Savannah Technical College)	www.savannahtech.edu
Savannah Technical College	www.savannahtech.edu
Savannah Technical College (Technical college servicing area)	www.savannahtech.edu
Savannah College of Art and Design	www.scad.edu
South University-Savannah	www.southuniversity.edu

Note: The colleges and universities listed include public and private institutions. This list is updated periodically as information becomes available.

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Technical College Graduates - 2009

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2007	2008	2009	2007-2008	2008-2009
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping	44	44	57	0.0	29.5
Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General	32	17	30	-46.9	76.5