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Three State Agencies Battle to Win Georgia's First State Building Energy Competition *Agencies Competing to Reduce Georgia's "Wasteline" and Conserve Energy*

ATLANTA – The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) is proud to announce the top three contenders, along with their trainers, at the midpoint of Georgia's First Annual State Building Energy Competition. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Headquarters Building and its trainer, Griffith Engineering; the Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) Academic Complex and its trainer, Honeywell; and the University of Georgia's (UGA) Boyd Graduate Studies and Science Library building and its trainer, UGA's Engineering Outreach Service, are neck-in-neck to take the top prize. The grand prize winner will receive additional consulting services to apply for an ENERGY STAR label (if eligible) free of charge from Georgia Power (valued at up to \$1,500). The top three energy-saving agencies will receive full tuition (valued at \$1,375) to submit one person for the Building Operator Certification Program at Gwinnett Technical College.

The rankings measure energy savings from January 2011 to March 2011 as a percentage based on energy use intensity. During this time, DCA reduced its energy use by 11.3 percent, GPSTC reduced its energy use by 8.9 percent, and UGA reduced its energy use by 8.3 percent. These agencies implemented a variety of initiatives to achieve energy efficiency:

- DCA focused its energy-saving initiatives at the employee level. With the added incentive of a barbeque lunch for their employees if they win the competition, DCA has encouraged employees to do simple things such as turning off lights and computer monitors when leaving their offices and wearing appropriate clothing so as to not have to adjust the thermostat on hot or cold days.
- GPSTC implemented a variety of system upgrades including replacing more than 2,000 ballasts and lamps with higher-efficiency technology, updating a controls system that was installed more than 25 years ago and installing variable-frequency drives on their chilled water pumps. GPSTC also made a significant investment through replacing an old 1.54 kilowatt (kW)/ton chiller with a variable drive centrifugal chiller rated at 0.382 kW/ton.

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- UGA saved a significant amount of energy by retro-commissioning systems in the building, including lowering the hot water temperature when possible, along with calibrating, repairing and replacing numerous thermostats. There is also a lighting retrofit underway replacing T-12 lighting with more efficient T-8 lighting.

The Georgia Music Hall of Fame (GMHF), which is scheduled to close on June 12, was also one the top contenders in the competition. GMHF will be disqualified from the competition as a result of its closing. The facility reduced its energy use by 14.5 percent through utilizing an energy management system and variable-frequency drives on its HVAC system, installing energy-efficient lighting upgrades and other maintenance improvements.

Open to state agencies only, the agency building that reduces its energy use intensity (EUI) the most through British thermal units (BTUs) per square foot on a percentage basis wins the competition. The goal of the competition is to move more state buildings toward higher performance standards and earn an ENERGY STAR label. An ENERGY STAR-qualified facility meets strict energy-performance standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is less expensive to operate and has fewer greenhouse gas emissions than its peers.

Agencies were invited in fall 2010 to submit one or more of its buildings to the competition using baseline energy consumption information from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010.

GEFA selected eight competitors on November 30, 2010, and assigned “trainers” to each facility to assist in the competition, which officially began on January 1, 2011, to help work off its “wasteline.” Georgia Power also worked with each competitor (all are customers) to ensure they received interval energy data free-of-charge during the competition via www.EnergyDirect.com.

Collectively these eight facilities have reduced energy consumption by more than 24 billion BTUs and have reduced carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 1,500 metric tons. This is the equivalent of removing 292 passenger vehicles from the road, the annual electricity use of 181 homes, or the carbon sequestered by more than 38,000 tree seedlings grown for 10 years. The winner will be announced in August 2011. A building photo for each competitor is available on Flickr at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gefaphotos/>.

“I’d like to congratulate the agencies and their trainers for a job well done so far in this competition, and in promoting and supporting Georgia’s culture of conservation,” said GEFA Executive Director Kevin Clark. “Many state agencies already do a great job conserving energy through the Governor’s Energy Challenge, but these three agencies are setting a precedent for what can be achieved.”

Commercial buildings currently account for 18 percent of the nation’s energy use and nearly 18 percent of its greenhouse gas emissions. These same buildings spend \$170 billion annually on energy costs (www.energy.gov). Georgia state agencies spend \$200 million annually on facility energy costs.

For more information on the Governor's Energy Challenge, visit www.GovernorsEnergyChallenge.org.

About the Governor's Energy Challenge (www.governorsenergychallenge.org)

In April 2008, Georgia committed its state agencies to reducing energy consumption 15 percent by 2020 and challenged businesses, local governments and citizens to do the same. The Governor's Energy Challenge plays an active role in helping Georgians meet this challenge through education initiatives and an easy, interactive online energy modeling tool that provides no-cost, low-cost and long-term options for businesses and residents to reduce energy use. For more information and to make the pledge, visit www.GovernorsEnergyChallenge.org.

About the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (www.gefa.org)

The [Georgia Environmental Finance Authority](http://www.gefa.org) (GEFA) provides energy, land and water resources resulting in an improved quality of life for today and future generations. GEFA is the lead agency for state energy programs and is home to the Center of Innovation for Energy; directs the Georgia Land Conservation Program and maintains state-owned fuel storage tanks; and offers financing for reservoir and water supply, water quality, storm water and solid waste infrastructure. Since 1985, GEFA has approved financial commitments totaling more than \$3 billion to local governments, businesses and nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit www.gefa.org, [Facebook](#) or [Flickr](#).

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