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L-R: UGA Vice-President for Public Service and Outreach Jennifer Frum, UGA President Jere Morehead, Tourism Director Tobie Chandler, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamr Paris, Mayor Jim Conley, Neely Young Publisher and Editor in Chief of Georgia Trend Magazine and UGA Provost Pamela Whitten

Commerce Cindy Williams. “Believe It” is a philosophy as much as it is a branding tagline, meant to attract young entrepreneurs and their families to a diverse community that is overflowing with both potential and major benefits situated in the here and now.

The targeted branding initiative, which included county-wide site visits in collaboration with Carl Vinson employees, an extensive community survey, and the new tagline and logo, focused on Union County’s Top 5 school system, the Appalachian Trail, the Blairsville Airport, fiber optic Internet in many areas, an award-winning hospital in Union General, the Farmers

Market and much more. “All this can be your story as you grow a business, plant your family, expand your opportunity and improve your life,” said Stacy Jones, associate director of the Carl Vinson Institute, in that August meeting. “Blairsville-Union County – Believe It.”

On attending the April 11 awards ceremony, which also acted as a banquet recognizing outstanding UGA faculty members and students, Commissioner Paris said that he was equally honored and excited to be so welcomed by his alma mater.

“We were kind of overwhelmed when we got down there and saw what a big

deal it was, and the caliber of people who were there,” said Commissioner Paris. “I just expected an awards banquet with maybe 50 people there – the four counties and a few people from Carl Vinson.

“I didn’t know we were going to have the president of UGA, the provost and all those other people that were there. It says a lot about our community and our county, and how we work together – I think that impresses people more than anything. We may have a little disagreement occasionally, but we all work together to make Union County and Blairsville the best that they can be.”

UCDA Director Griggs,

also a UGA alumnus, said that the “Believe It” rebranding campaign and subsequent “Four for the Future Award” amounted to significant steps in attracting new players in economic development to the county, especially since Union County is rurally located.

“That’s kind of where this whole branding and marketing thing first started,” said Griggs. “We were like, hey, we’ve got to increase our footprint. We’ve got to make ourselves more noticeable, not only to the outside world but to our partners and strategic allies.

“The city and the county, the Development Authority and the DDA (Blairsville

Downtown Development Authority) have always done a really, really good job of bird-dogging opportunity to partner with folks. And you look at half the stuff that Lamar does, there’s a grant or something involved with it, so they just do a great, great job of leveraging assets.

“But there’s always more, so it’s really important that our strategic partners understand how ready we are to jump on stuff and get it done right. There’s a difference between doing something, and doing something that pays dividends, and that’s what we’re really looking for, is that ROI (return on investment).”

Representing Union County and Blairsville that Monday in Athens were Commissioner Paris, Mayor Conley, UCDA Director Griggs and Blairsville DDA Program Manager Darren Harper.

Several representatives from the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce also were in attendance: Chamber President Regina Allison, Tourism Director Chandler and Chamber Board Chair Joey Swanson.

The article in *Georgia*

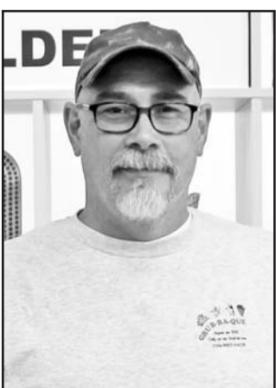
Trend magazine featured a community profile from Chandler and then-Interim Chamber President Patrick Malone, Commissioner Paris and Griggs.

Joining Union County for the “Four for the Future Award” were Statesboro-Bulloch County, the City of St. Mary’s and Sumter County.

Georgia Trend boasts circulation totals of more than 50,000 readers around the state, including CEOs of businesses, politicians at every level of government and leaders in economic development statewide.

Commissioner Paris added that he would like to extend a very warm “thank you” to the county’s “Believe It” partners in UGA’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government: Director Laura Meadows, Associate Director Jones, Communications Director Shannon Ferguson, Senior Graphics Designer Kaitlin Messich, Public Service Associate Danny Bivins, Leadership Development Program Manager Mara Register, and also to UGA’s Jennifer Frum.

Local inventor James Grubbs featured on upcoming TV show



James Grubbs

James Grubbs and his Dessert Cone Holders invention will be featured on the National TV Show Hatched. The show will air April 24th 11:30 a.m. in our viewing area. James and his family have lived in Union County for 20 years. He has won many of our local BBQ cook-offs. James invented the Dessert Cone Holders about one and a half years ago and has been trying to share the joy of happy food with everyone since. Tune in to see how the Dessert Cone Holder came about and if James and his Dessert Cone Holders are ready for the big time. Follow James’ adventure on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Dessert-Cone-Holders-1546404872350644/> or order online at <http://dessertconeholders.com/>

Hatched is the new entrepreneurial show that gives American inventors – with a focus on teens, moms, military and minority owners – the exciting and educational opportunity of a lifetime. The chance to learn directly from real potential customers, as well as our savvy business experts will help educate them and thus the audience on what it takes to be “Ready For Retail”. <http://www.onemagnificentmorning.com/programs/hatched/>

Feel Good Friday meeting April 29

Feel Good Friday is a monthly get together that explores and offers experiential ways to feel calmer, healthier and happier. It is always the last Friday of the month.

Sometimes we will have videos that are uplifting and it is always fun to share with like-minded people.

This month we will explore energy for healing our bodies and the planet.

If you let us know you are coming, we will have enough food, give-a-ways, etc. for everyone. Come even if you did not let us know. This is an easy fun sharing time and everyone is welcome.

This month our meeting will fall on Friday, April 29th at 7 PM. Please RSVP to Natural Treatments for Brain and Body at 706-781-4048.