

Board of County Commissioners

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Office of the County Administrator

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
12 p.m. EDT, 12/03/2009

Camden County's Inaugural Citizens' Academy Graduates

Woodbine, GA – December 2, 2009: At Tuesday night's Board meeting, 12 inaugural Citizens' Academy participants were formally presented with Certificates of Completion for participating in the program throughout the past eight months. This program familiarizes the general public about the roles, services, and operations that comprise Camden County Government. The institution of a Citizen's Academy was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in February 2009; the inaugural class began in May. The program focuses on educating residents, business owners, and interested persons who work in Camden County on how daily County Government operations contribute to building a better community. *"Creating a citizenry that is more knowledgeable of how their government works and the environment it operates in consequently creates a more effective and efficient government by enabling elected officials and administrators to focus on what their constituents consider its core services and most critical issues,"* said Staci Bowick, Support Services Director.

"Leadership that Listens"

STEVE L. HOWARD
County Administrator

O. BRENT GREEN
County Attorney

WILLIS KEENE, JR.
Commissioner, District 1

KATHERINE NISI ZELL – Vice Chair
Commissioner, District 2

STEPHEN L. BERRY
Commissioner, District 3

CHARLENE SEARS
Commissioner, District 4

DAVID L. RAINER - Chair
Commissioner, District 5

Starting in May, the class met on the last Wednesday of each month from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. to learn about how their tax dollars are being spent. Presentations were given on all aspects of county government, including the court system, taxes, and public safety. The County Extension office allowed us to utilize their bus to provide a tour of the County landfill; and PSA/Leisure Services graciously provided a tour of all parks and facilities. Camden County Sheriff's Office also allowed for a tour of the jail for those interested. The participants who completed the class and received their certificates on Tuesday are Dori Brink, Doug Cooper, Freddy Howell, Maryann Jacobs, Marty Klumpp, Nelda Manning, Kay Screws, Charlie Smith, Mary Smith, Todd Tetterton, Tim Ward, and Royal Weaver.

"The Citizens' Academy has been just great! This is something every citizen of Camden County should both know about and attend," stated Mary Smith of The Cumberland Financial Group. Another participant, Tim Ward, added, *"The Citizens' Academy was a very valuable experience. The professionalism, transparency and hospitality shown by the staff was impressive. What impressed me most was the staff's commitment for their work and our community."*

In the midst of this challenging economic environment, transparency in government is more important now than ever before. One of the primary focus areas of Camden County's Strategic Plan is organizational excellence, with a goal of open government. *"The Citizens' Academy is an effective resource that complements the other communication tools that we use to provide open government, such as the County's website, the Annual Report, and the quarterly Community Outreach newsletter,"* said Steve L. Howard.

The County plans to build on success of the inaugural Citizens' Academy by offering this program annually. Detail about the 2010 class will be available on the County's website in January, 2010.

Please see picture of graduates below.

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Pictured from left to right, front row: Dori Brink, Kay Screws, Nelda Manning, Maryann Jacobs, Marty Klumpp, Mary Smith, and Steve Howard. Pictured from left to right, back row: David L. Rainer, Todd Tetterton, Doug Cooper, Royal Weaver, Freddy Howell, Charlie Smith, and Tim Ward

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