



**DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**

COLUMBIA COUNTY
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Cheney Eldridge Chosen to Lead Economic Development in Columbia County, Georgia



New Contact Information

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(Evans, Georgia – February 2024) The Development Authority of Columbia County (DACC) has selected Cheney Eldridge, an economic development professional in the region, as the professional to serve as executive director. The announcement was made by Rick Evans of SME CPAs and Chair of the DACC Board.

The Chason Group (www.thechasongroup.com), a firm specializing in economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, tourism, and non-profit executive searches, assisted the authority in the executive search process.

Eldridge's first day at the authority is scheduled for March 4.

"Cheney is an excellent candidate to serve as the next executive director of DACC," according to Evans. "Her expertise and energy in the field of economic development will mix well with the needs of our community in terms of existing companies and new developments. She is known in the region and on the state level as someone who is pro-active and focused."

Eldridge currently serves as Manager of Existing Industry and Strategic Partnerships with the Augusta Economic Development Authority. She started with the AEDA as Existing Industry Coordinator in July 2018. In the role, Eldridge was responsible for building relationships with corporate entities, industrial partners, and educational organizations. She recently led the strategic rebranding of AEDA, which included the development of a new

mission statement, logo development, full website build, strategic identity development, and roll out of the new brand.

Originally from Newnan, Georgia, Eldridge received a B.A in Public Policy Leadership from the University of Mississippi in 2017.

Eldridge received the 2021 Gold Rank Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council for the Masters Tournament Partnership Box project. The project strengthened relationships and facilitated 13 new partnerships as well as resulted in 24 potential projects for Richmond County with the potential of \$1.59B in investment and 4,700 jobs for Augusta. She is also an active member of the Georgia Economic Developers Association.

"I am very excited to join the DACC team," Eldridge said. "I have received numerous calls during my tenure for positions across the state but have always turned them down because I love this region and plan to raise my family here. I truly believe we are doing great things and want to continue to provide a life of opportunity to

all who call this home. I appreciate the opportunity to apply for this position and hope to be able to share my gifts as the organization's next leader."

Cheney and her husband Harris have a six-month-old son named Winslow.

The executive director for the authority is charged with recruiting the types of business and industry identified by the board and community stakeholders. The professional is responsible for building relationships with economic development partners on local, regional, and state levels. The position is also responsible for overseeing the building and site inventory database for the county. Media relations, marketing, and website management fall within the executive director's responsibilities as well.

DACC is recognized for its role in establishing White Oak Business Park on Interstate 20. Two significant employers, Club Car and Amazon, have purchased land in the park and built facilities.

Other members of DACC's professional team include Anita Patel and Linda Peplau.

Robbie Bennett held the position for ten years before departing to serve as president and CEO of the SRS Community Reuse Organization, which is based in the Augusta region.