



Kyle Ray to Lead Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce

(Ellijay, Georgia - December 2024) The Board of Directors of the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce has selected a native of the community to serve as the president and chief executive officer of the business organization. Kyle D. Ray, a well-known and respected banker in the north Georgia region, started his new leadership role last week.

The Chason Group led the executive search for the Gilmer Chamber.

“Kyle has the relationship-building skills, entrepreneurial drive, and operational expertise to elevate the Gilmer Chamber's service for all our members,” said Rebecca Harrell, chairman of the board and CEO of RLH Solutions. “His knowledge of the region in terms of its economy, and the needs of small and mid-sized businesses will be instrumental in building strong connections with our members. I’m thrilled to have him lead us forward.”

Ray, who has raised his three children in the community, has been serving as Senior Vice President, Director of branch services for Builtwell Bank in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He has also held senior level positions with the First Bank of Dalton, Bank of Ellijay, Appalachian Community Bank, and Santek Environmental. He earned a BBA in Management and Finance with a concentration in Accounting from Kennesaw State University and completed many of his undergraduate studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

In addition to his professional background, Ray brings deep community involvement to the role. In 2002 and 2003, he served as president (now chair) of the Gilmer County Chamber. His service extends to various local and statewide organizations, including the Gilmer Education Foundation, Gilmer County Parks and Recreation Board, Community Bankers Association’s LEAD division, Ellijay-Gilmer County Water and Sewer Authority, Gilmer County Economic Development Authority, Rotary Club of Gilmer County, Relay for Life, Appalachian Domestic Violence Task Force, 515 Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and East Ellijay Baptist Church.

“My passion for Gilmer County has deep roots,” Ray said. “I understand the challenges businesses face today. Along with the other members of the chamber’s team, I want to become a part of the solution that keeps these



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businesses operating successfully in our community for many years to come. I look forward to renewing many relationships and meeting the new leaders of the community in this role.”

As President, Ray will oversee all operations of the Chamber and report to the Board of Directors through the annually elected chair. He will serve as the Chamber’s primary spokesperson, advocating for the Chamber’s interests with media, elected officials, and community stakeholders. The Gilmer Chamber also functions as the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Gilmer County, with funding through a portion of hotel/motel tax revenues from agreements with the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay and the Gilmer County Board of Commissioners.

Since opening in 1978, the Gilmer Chamber is a member organization serving the north Georgia communities of Ellijay and East Ellijay. The organization operates as a welcome center, serves as the DMO for Gilmer County, and provides networking opportunities and business resources for members. As a 501c(6) non-profit, the 750+ member chamber is funded through the investment of memberships, programs, and a contract with local governments to deliver tourism services.