

Source #2

Helping Make Georgia a Great State for Business

By Ted Ryan
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I read the announcement from CNBC naming Georgia the best state for business. Having grown up in Georgia and knowing the leadership Coca-Cola and its leaders have demonstrated during our 128 years in the state, I was not surprised.

Since John Pemberton first served Coca-Cola at Jacobs' Pharmacy on May 8, 1886, Coca-Cola has played an active role in the state's thriving business community. The increasing popularity of the drink, which went from an average of nine servings a day sold in 1886 to being served in every state of the union by 1900, provided business growth to the company and our retail customers. Coca-Cola was a prolific advertiser even in its early days, and from the first painted wall sign in Cartersville, Ga., we created demand in the advertising industry. When the first bottling contract was signed with The Coca-Cola Company in 1899, franchise bottlers began springing up across the state, creating a positive business environment as those bottlers purchased local supplies and became respected business leaders in their communities.



Credit: Michael Pugh. Coca-Cola Chairman and CEO Muhtar Kent (middle), Georgia Governor Nathan Deal (left) and City of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed at an April 2013 press conference announcing Coke's global well-being commitments.



Asa Candler

While all of these economic impacts have played a role in the state's business growth, I think one of the leading contributions of The Coca-Cola Company has been demonstrated by our leaders in fostering a positive environment to live and work. I will recount just a few noteworthy examples.

In 1914, Asa Candler, president of The Coca-Cola Company, donated more than \$1 million and 75 acres of land to bring Emory University to Atlanta, Ga. By the time of his death, Candler had donated more than \$8 million to the university. His philanthropy was not limited to academics. When World War I damaged the cotton industry, Candler pledged his fortune to stabilize prices and even offered to buy one entire year's crop. Candler later agreed to underwrite a \$3 million bond issue for the State of Georgia.

When leadership of the company passed to Robert Woodruff, the spirit of philanthropy remained strong. Known as "Mr. Anonymous" because he always declined to be identified as the source of the donations, Woodruff gave millions of dollars to local institutions to support the arts, education, healthcare and a greater quality of life in Georgia. Woodruff established the Winship Cancer Institute in 1937 to honor his mother who died from cancer that year. When tragedy struck and the plane carrying many of Atlanta's arts leaders crashed in Paris, France, Woodruff stepped forward to donate the money for what later became the Woodruff Arts Center. In 1979, he donated \$105 million to Emory University, at the time one of the largest single gifts to an academic institution. He even donated the land for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) when it was set up in Atlanta.

Following in Woodruff's steps, Coke Chairman and CEO Roberto Goizueta established The Coca-Cola Foundation in 1984 to be the company's primary philanthropic arm. Over the past three decades, the Foundation has grown from a local foundation into a global philanthropic organization, awarding \$98 million in 2013 to impact approximately 134 million people in 122 countries.



Robert Woodruff

Even with this global reach, we continue to keep our focus on supporting our hometown. Since the Foundation's beginning in 1984, \$168 million has been awarded to support Atlanta

hometown programs and initiatives. One of the main priorities of The Coca-Cola Foundation has been education – not only here at home, but around the world. Since 1984, the Foundation has invested more than \$260 million in education initiatives in the Atlanta area and across the globe.

We started here back in 1886 when a man named Doc Pemberton invented a drink called Coca-Cola. Nobody then ever dreamed it would be the largest selling soft drink in the world.

But, then, a lot of big dreams have been realized here in Georgia. Just think of our history and the achievements of people like Eli Whitney, Crawford W. Long, Martin Luther King Jr. and, the legendary golfer, Bobby Jones.

Think of the many industries in Georgia that have grown up to be among the nation's largest ... including everything from lumber, textiles and tobacco to peaches, peanuts and poultry.

Think of how fast Georgia is growing. Already we have the third biggest convention city in the country... the second busiest airport in the world... and the tallest hotel in the world.

Think of the good life we've got here ... the very livable climate the year round ... the easy transportation to and from work ... the recreation and amusement parks ... the ocean, mountains and literally thousands of lakes and streams we have all right here in Georgia.

We could go on and on. But you get the message. It's easy to see why we love Georgia. And we think you would, too.

The Georgia Council of Coca-Cola Bottlers.

These are just a few past examples where The Coca-Cola Company and its leaders have supported the local community. More recently, Coke donated the land at Pemberton Place in downtown Atlanta, which hosts the Georgia Aquarium and the newly opened Center for Civil and Human Rights. The site is also home to our own World of Coca-Cola, where in 2013 we celebrated our 127th birthday by announcing four global commitments to address the complex societal issue of obesity.

While these commitments are global, Coca-Cola took action once again at home to support our local community's health. Our Chairman and CEO Muhtar Kent announced a \$1 million grant to the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta. This grant will support the City of Atlanta's Centers of Hope program and help it expand from two locations to all 10 City of Atlanta recreation centers. These centers will provide fitness, health and wellness and nutrition activities to more people in more places.

It is quite fitting that Muhtar presented these commitments to support healthier, happier and more active communities during an event at the World of Coca-Cola – not far from where the first Coca-Cola was served on the same date in 1886. He was joined by Georgia Governor Nathan Deal and Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, two of Georgia's leaders who work together to make our state and hometown great places to live and work.

A 1977 article from the Georgia Council of Coca-Cola Bottlers magazine

We are fortunate that Coca-Cola's leaders, from the very beginning, infused the company's culture with a desire to use our business to improve the well-being of the communities we serve, especially our hometown of Atlanta. Because of this, Coke's focus has always been to create stronger communities, and in doing so, has made Atlanta and Georgia a great place to do business.