

**2023**

# ANNUAL REPORT

**Mayor's Office of International and  
Immigrant Affairs – Welcoming Atlanta**





Andre Dickens  
MAYOR



**CITY OF ATLANTA**

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-0300

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**Greetings:**

Atlanta is a city that draws circles, not lines. This dedication to inclusivity and equity contributes to the incredible diversity of our city, which continues to grow exponentially. Individuals who hail from all over the world call Atlanta home, and these residents play an important role in strengthening our communities.

Over the past year, my administration has continued to connect Atlanta to the world through numerous city diplomacy initiatives by engaging with organizations like the Truman Center for National Policy and the Aspen Institute Germany, as well as the 850,000 immigrant residents, 70 Consular and foreign trade offices, 30 binational chambers of commerce, and 2,600 foreign-owned enterprises located in our city.

From welcoming the United States Secretary of State Anthony Blinken to hosting more than 110 delegations from over 55 countries, the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs (MOIIA) continues to pave the way for Atlanta to grow its international presence and highlight the numerous businesses, communities, and organizations that thrive in our city.

MOIIA works to uplift our foreign-born population and promote international initiatives through flagship programs such as iSpeakATL and Community Resource Events. This office also continues to promote equity, opportunity, and safety through its diplomacy efforts, youth and education initiatives, promotion of international business, and sports diplomacy efforts.

At the City of Atlanta, we're working to raise our city's profile as a global hub for commerce, innovation, culture, and diplomacy. We are moving Atlanta forward, together.

Sincerely,

Mayor Andre Dickens

Dear MOIIA partners,

As we wrap up 2023, I am pleased to announce that this has been a record-breaking year for the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs – Welcoming Atlanta (MOIIA).

2023 was a year of recommitting to our mission of empowering local communities and positioning Atlanta as a global city. Our staff is dedicating to creating spaces of belonging and opportunity, especially in the areas of diplomacy, business, innovation, education, culture, and sports.

**As we celebrated Mayor Dickens' Year of the Youth, we ramped up our youth engagement efforts, hosting and participating in 74 youth-related activities, while employing 17 interns** who specialized in the areas of international affairs, community engagement, marketing and communications, and policy. Other activities included international youth delegations at City Hall, robust partnerships with schools, youth-centric programming like Bike Giveaways and volunteer opportunities.

**Over the last four years, our office has established a consistent presence in 12 Atlanta neighborhoods through our Community Resource Events. In 2023, MOIIA worked with 91 cross-sector partners to host over 120 Community Resource Events and serve 9,057 households, representing 46 countries around the world.** These events connect people, place, and partners, developing healthy neighborhood ecosystems that recognize identity, culture, and heritage, while providing a safe environment where residents can access the resources they need.

**To further invest in community, our office was allocated \$150,000 to continue our Community Navigator program,** which is designed to address resource access gaps through trust and communication. In 2023, we were awarded a 60% increase in Victims of Crime Act funding, which will enable our team to continue providing support and services to victims of crime.

**The City of Atlanta's Language Access Plan, iSpeakATL, provided over 8,000 minutes of interpretation services in 25 languages.** This ensures that our city can equitably serve every constituent in a meaningful way, regardless of the language they speak or the country they are from.

**Our MyCity ATL program had 57 participants representing 22 countries,** continuing to provide information around City services to New Americans here in Atlanta.

**Our office secured close to \$11.6 million in federal funding to assist newly arrived migrants,** which will support the ongoing work of several partner agencies who are welcoming these individuals to our city.

**Moreover, we welcomed more than 120 delegations from over 55 countries.** Our office has hosted over a dozen events at City Hall, including the Mayor's Ramadan Iftar Dinner, the first Latinx Pride Reception, Mexican Independence Day, the annual Pan-African Trade and Investment Conference, and a Naturalization Ceremony that welcomed 50 new U.S. citizens representing 30 different countries.

**I am excited to lead MOIIA as Interim Director and continue our impactful work in 2024.**

Atlanta is a group project, and I am incredibly grateful for the dedicated MOIIA team and partnerships that continue to Move Atlanta Forward.

Kind regards,

Paulina Guzman  
Interim Director  
Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs – Welcoming Atlanta

# ABOUT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL & IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

## OUR VISION

Position Atlanta as a welcoming City—a connected, inclusive community that uplifts our foreign-born population and provides an opportunity for all—and a global hub for diplomacy, business, innovation, education, culture, and sports.

## OUR MISSION

Inclusion is a part of Atlanta's DNA, and we stand proud as a welcoming city.

MOIIA's mission is to develop and foster relationships between Atlanta's international communities, City departments, and external partners to empower our foreign born population through access to information, to identify economic opportunities, and to address local and global challenges.

## OBJECTIVES

### YOUTH & EDUCATION

Engage youth, including foreign-born and limited English speaking communities, and educational institutions to promote foreign language acquisition, cultural competency building, and equitable access to career development opportunities.

### WELCOMING CITY

Build a more connected, inclusive community through the adoption of intentional and welcoming policies, practices, and programming that provide residents opportunities to meaningfully engage and strengthen the social, civic, and economic environment of Atlanta in an equitable manner.

### NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

Enhance public safety, trust, and access to internal and external resources through place-based outreach efforts that invest in community development and enable everyone to live, thrive, and contribute fully.

### DIPLOMACY

Lead the City's diplomacy efforts and International Partnerships by engaging with local partners and both national and international counterparts to identify solutions to local and global challenges.

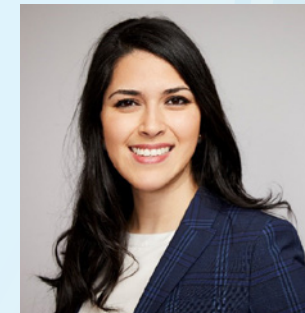
### INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Establish opportunities for trade, advance international strategic partnerships, and connect minority- and women-owned businesses to resources, collaborative networks, and tools for growth.

### SPORTS DIPLOMACY

Host visits and exchanges that improve dialogue and promote connection and cultural understanding between diverse groups, while underscoring Atlanta's global passion for sports and delivering cultural experiences for youth and professionals.

## MEET THE TEAM



**Paulina Guzman**  
*Interim Director*



**Meredith Steinmetz-Rodriguez**  
*Interim Deputy Director*



**Valerie Mills**  
*Senior Manager*



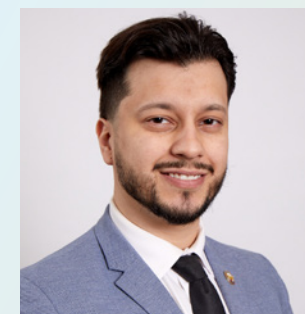
**Holly Malerba**  
*Senior Outreach and Programs Manager*



**Carolina Ramos**  
*Senior Policy and Partnership Manager*



**Christina Chu**  
*Community Outreach Manager*



**Peter Pimentel**  
*Community Empowerment Manager*



**Nicholas Mulkey**  
*Ecosystem and Experience Manager*



**Ana Petrova**  
*International Affairs Specialist*

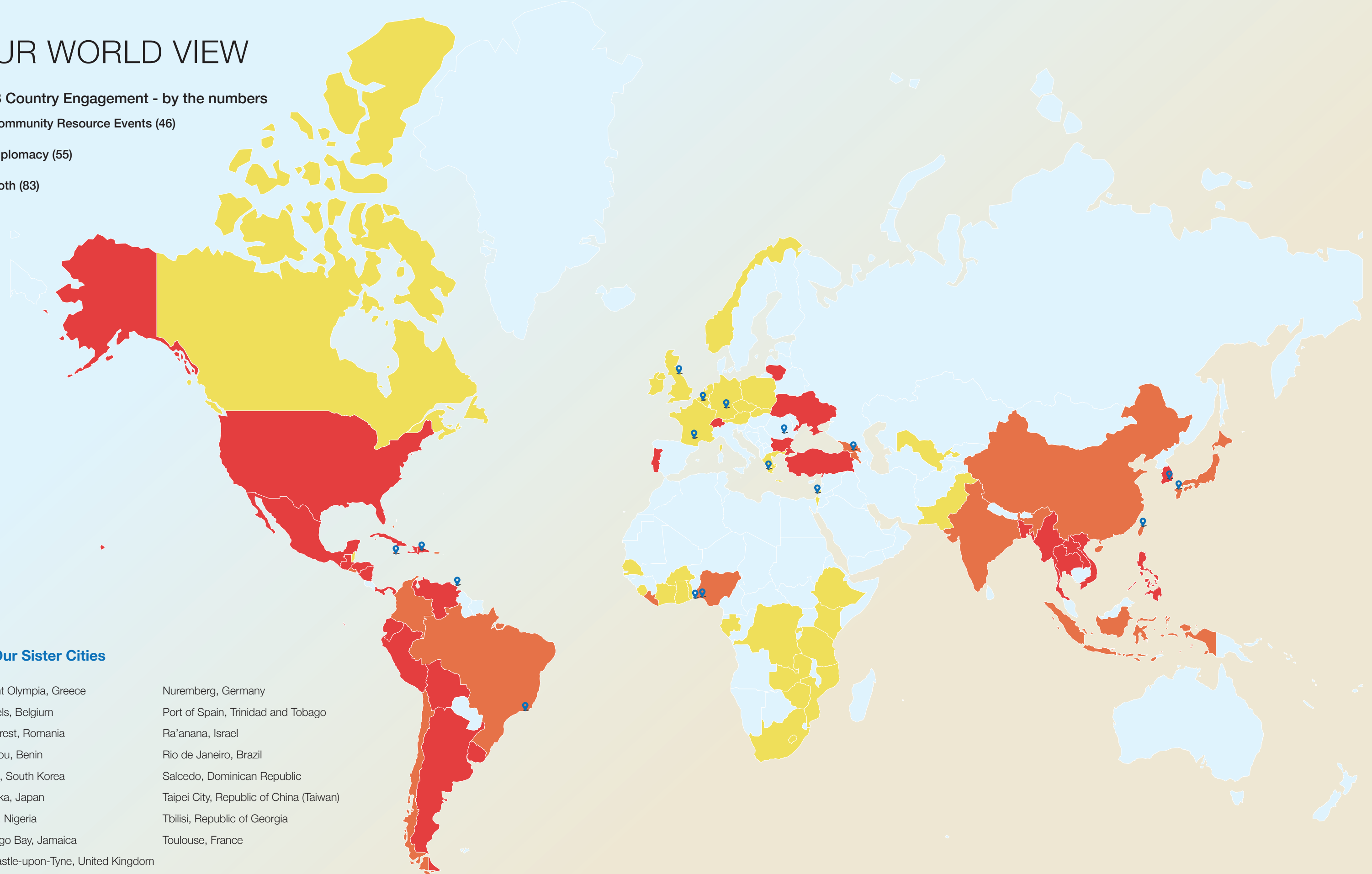


**Jacob Noh**  
*Programs and Operations Assistant*

# OUR WORLD VIEW

## 2023 Country Engagement - by the numbers

- Community Resource Events (46)
- Diplomacy (55)
- Both (83)



### Our Sister Cities

- Ancient Olympia, Greece
- Brussels, Belgium
- Bucharest, Romania
- Cotonou, Benin
- Daegu, South Korea
- Fukuoka, Japan
- Lagos, Nigeria
- Montego Bay, Jamaica
- Newcastle-upon-Tyne, United Kingdom
- Nuremberg, Germany
- Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
- Ra'anana, Israel
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Salcedo, Dominican Republic
- Taipei City, Republic of China (Taiwan)
- Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia
- Toulouse, France

# YOUTH & EDUCATION

Engage youth, including foreign-born and limited English speaking communities, and educational institutions to promote foreign language acquisition, cultural competency building, and equitable access to career development opportunities.



## Public Service Interns

We hosted our 12th and 13th cohorts of Public Service Interns, representing 4 different schools! Our Public Service Internship (PSI) Program is a professional, civic engagement and leadership development program that provides aspiring leaders an opportunity to serve, engage and empower immigrant communities across the City of Atlanta, either for the summer semester or for the full academic year. This year's interns focus areas included community engagement, international affairs, international business, and marketing.

*"The public service internship with MOIIA has provided me the opportunity to work across task forces and projects, fostering a multidisciplinary approach to international relations. Understanding the role of the governmental office and observing its interaction with the local community, alongside balancing international audiences, was both impactful and eye-opening. Exploring the intricacies of city-level public diplomacy has been beneficial for my future career in U.S. foreign policy, intensifying my dedication to understanding diplomacy in its diverse forms."*

— Feben T., senior at University of Georgia

## Summer Youth Employment Intern

This was our first year welcoming an intern through the Summer Youth Employment program, and she spent her summer supporting our office with international business initiatives. The Summer Youth Employment Program is open to Atlanta's young people ages 14 to 24 and provides young people with opportunities to explore career interests and build work-related skills.



## Social Work Interns

We hosted our 2nd and 3rd cohort of Social Work interns! Our Social Work Internship Program is hosted in partnership with Georgia post-secondary institutions and allows Masters and Bachelors of Social Work students to complete their field practicum with our office. This year's interns completed projects related to case management, community engagement, data analysis, event planning, and more.

*"My favorite memory would have to be the day I went to the airport for the Hispanic Heritage Event. The event was very powerful since many individuals were able to speak about their experience as Hispanics in the working industry. During work, I was able to learn about the stories of families when we would distribute them throughout Metro Atlanta communities. I would help with passing out food, cleaning up, and translating if needed. I was also able to learn about the process of working as a team and not individually. You think you can work alone but to be successful you need a team to cheer you on. From this experience, I received a closer look into what Atlanta does for its community."*

— Jennifer G., sophomore at Cristo Rey Atlanta Jesuit High School

*"My time at Welcoming Atlanta has been incredibly educational and fulfilling. Seeking meaningful work, I've contributed in various projects, from immigration policy research to event organization with community partners. Though focused on social work, I've also explored international relations and city infrastructure. Every task, whether in events or offering assistance, feels like a contribution to a greater cause."*

*This experience has shaped my vision of the social worker I aspire to be and the impact I aim for in my career. I'm grateful for this opportunity and excited to see the organization's future impact on Atlanta."*

— Avery J., Masters of Social Work student at University of Georgia



## Cristo Rey Interns

We welcomed our 5th and 6th cohorts of Cristo Rey Atlanta Jesuit High School's Corporate Work Study interns. Through this program, we provide mentorship, leadership development, and job skills to Cristo Rey students!



17

YOUTH INTERNS

## HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

We hosted and attended 74 youth-related activities and events alongside 81 partners, including volunteer events, international youth delegations, speaking engagements with middle and high school groups, and programming with partner organizations.



### Youth Volunteers

Over the past year, we have welcomed 132 youth volunteers to our Community Resource Events. In an effort to encourage and empower youth to get involved in their local communities, we offered volunteer opportunities to students looking to earn community service hours for their graduation requirements. We worked with 6 active partners (Agape Youth and Family Center, Atlanta Public Schools Multilingual Programs and Services, Mays High School, Midtown High School, North Atlanta High School, and Young Middle School) to ensure all students have equitable access to volunteer opportunities!

According to teachers, students report feeling as if they are a real part of their community through service. Students noted that their engagement with our program has provided a positive emotional space, social engagement opportunities, and hours earned towards their community service graduation requirements.

*"[The] presence of student volunteers adds to the effectiveness of the community initiative.*

*Their involvement helps them to positively impact on their own communities. They are able to make new friends, develop a sense of social awareness, and build confidence while engaging in activities that directly support their parents, grandparents, family friends, neighbors and other community members."*

—Ms. Adams, ESOL Teacher at Young Middle School

### Young Middle School Partnership

We entered our second year of partnership with "The Den" at Young Middle School, collaborating on several in-school and in-neighborhood events aiming to bridge the gap between communities and the school.

This year, we worked diligently to scale up programs to reduce violence, increase access to quality education in a safe environment, and improve youth mental health and overall wellbeing, ensuring Atlanta's youth have all the resources to thrive. We hosted 4 in-community events and participated in school events like Career Day, Parents Night, and Curriculum Night.

Anecdotal evidence from Young Middle School administration and teachers show that our efforts have resulted in a significant reduction in incidents of violence and improved relationships between students of different communities.

*"I have noticed substantial improvement in a range of areas since the community initiative in Abby Ridge began. Within the past school year, there have been no reports gang related activity involving my students. Students have reported less vandalism and fighting. ...Overall, the students have reported a reduced sense of fear, although obvious issues still exist."*

—Ms. Adams, ESOL Teacher at Young Middle School



### Bike Giveaways

This year we hosted our 4th and 5th Annual Bike Giveaways, including a holiday event in Buckhead and a summer event in Adamsville! In total, 103 children received bikes, in partnership with Free Bikes 4 Kidz Atlanta and the City of Atlanta's Department of Enterprise Assets Management. We also supported Free Bikes 4 Kidz at their Annual Holiday Bike Giveaway, where 68 of our families received bikes. Riding a bike benefits youth mental health, keeps kids physically active, and promotes healthy habits. Over the past five years, we have hosted Bike Giveaways with Free Bikes 4 Kidz Atlanta in 6 distinct neighborhoods, providing over 615 bikes to kids across the city.



### Georgia Tech Cohort Presentation

Georgia Tech's Human-Centered Computing PhD student Ashley Boone presented her work to our team, titled "Data Systems for Care." As part of her research, Ashley studied the way our office collect data out in the community and used these practices as a model for her published research paper: **"Data Practice for a Politics of Care: Food Assistance as a Site of Careful Data Work."**



### United Nations of Play

MOIIA joined the Children's Museum of Atlanta for their United Nations of Play event. This celebration of play around the world highlighted the Bahamas, Germany, Ghana, and Pakistan! The event featured cultural performances, children's activities, and fun facts from each country.



# WELCOMING CITY

Build a more connected, inclusive community through the adoption of intentional and welcoming policies, practices, and programming that provide residents opportunities to meaningfully engage and strengthen the social, civic, and economic environment of Atlanta in an equitable manner.

## WELCOMING CITY

### SIGNATURE WELCOMING EVENTS



#### Iftar Dinner

Mayor Andre Dickens partnered with the Islamic Speakers Bureau to host the 5th Annual Mayor's Ramadan Iftar Dinner. This annual event brings together over 200 interfaith leaders, City officials and employees, and members of the Muslim community to observe the holy month of Ramadan and break bread together over an iftar meal. Founder and Executive Director of ISB Atlanta Soumaya Khalifa welcomed guests, and Mayor Andre Dickens exchanged greetings, accompanied by student volunteers from Mays High School and ISB Atlanta in celebration of ATL Year of the Youth.



#### Mexican Independence Day

We kicked off Latinx Heritage Month with a special celebration of **Mexican Independence Day** and a presentation of El Grito by Consul General of Mexico Javier Díaz de León. In commemoration of the 213th Anniversary of the proclamation of Mexico's independence, Mayor Andre Dickens joined the Consulate General of Mexico in Atlanta for a night of culture and celebration at Atlanta City Hall. Consul General of Mexico Javier Díaz de León presented the Ohtli Award to Alejandro Coss, founder and CEO of the Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Georgia. This is one of the highest honors bestowed by the Government of Mexico to individuals living outside of Mexico.



#### Diwali

Mayor Andre Dickens joined the Coalition of Hindus of North America to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights. This holiday symbolizes the victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance in several faiths, including Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Buddhism. Mayor Dickens was joined by Atlanta's newest Consul General of India, Mr. L Ramesh Babu, and City of Atlanta Chief Procurement Officer Jaideep Majumdar.



#### Naturalization Ceremony

Our **Naturalization Ceremony** welcomed 50 new U.S. citizens who completed their journey to citizenship at Atlanta City Hall. During the ceremony, Atlanta Field Office Director Micah Brown administered the Oath of Allegiance to candidates from 30 countries around the world, making them officially citizens of the United States. Mi Familia Vota Georgia provided voter registration to the newly eligible-to-vote citizens, Atlanta Passport Agency assisted with obtaining a passport, and Refuge Coffee Co. provided coffee and pastries for attendees.

#### Immigrant Heritage Month Proclamation

Our office was proud to stand with Atlanta City Council President Doug Shipman as he introduced **a proclamation recognizing June as Immigrant Heritage Month**. Thank you to FWD.us, GALEO (formerly known as the Georgia Association for Latino Elected Officials), the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Latin American Association, and the Latino Community Fund for their efforts in pushing this important moment forward, as we celebrated the rich culture, heritage, and influence of immigrants in our city.





### Citizenship Clinic

We co-hosted a Citizenship Clinic in partnership with Asian Americans Advancing Justice Atlanta! 19 participants attended, and 3 applications were completed. Thanks to Asian Americans Advancing Justice's scholarship fund, we saved participants over \$2,000 in application fees. Attendees were also able to receive civic engagement and legal resources from Atlanta Legal Aid Society and Mi Familia Vota Georgia.



### Latinx Pride

We were honored to welcome the first Orgullo Latinx Pride at Atlanta City Hall, hosted by the Latino Community Fund! In commemoration of Latinx Heritage Month, this event celebrated the intersection of LGBTQ+ and Latinx cultural identities. Thank you to all the vendors, performers, organizers, advocates, and attendees who joined the celebration.

## WELCOMING CITY

# IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION PROGRAMS

### iSpeakATL

This is the 2nd year of the **City of Atlanta's in-service training on iSpeakATL**, our language access plan. iSpeakATL ensures that City of Atlanta programs and services are accessible to all, regardless of the language you speak. Here in Atlanta, you don't have to speak excellent English to receive excellent service!



**8,817**  
MINUTES OF  
INTERPRETATION

**622**  
CALLS

### TOP 10 LANGUAGES

requested in descending order:

- Spanish (488)
- Haitian Creole (20)
- Mandarin (17)
- Burmese (15)
- French (13)
- Portuguese (12)
- Arabic (9)
- Korean (8)
- Vietnamese (6)
- Amharic (5)

### 26 TOTAL REQUESTS

for Document Translations:

- Spanish (15)
- Korean (2)
- Mandarin/Chinese (1)
- French (1)
- Portuguese (1)
- Russian (1)
- Swahili (1)
- Dutch (1)
- Japanese (1)
- Italian (1)
- German (1)



### New Arrivals

The City of Atlanta is a recipient of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program – Humanitarian (EFSP-H) Grant, which is administered by the United Way National Board, and we were awarded over \$6.8 million to support newly arriving migrants. This funding is a crucial lifeline for non-profits dedicated to assisting new arrivals from the southern border, reinforcing our commitment to humanitarian efforts. The City of Atlanta has carefully selected experienced nonprofits to be subrecipients of the EFSP-H program, including the Georgia Asylum Immigration Network, Casa Alternativa, Latin American Association, Inspiritus, Catholic Charities, and the International Rescue Committee. These organizations play a pivotal role in providing support and resources to those in need.

The City has been working tirelessly to ensure not only the availability of funds, but also to bolster sheltering coordination efforts. By doing so, we aim to foster a sense of community and inclusion for newcomers, emphasizing our dedication to welcoming them into the City of Atlanta. Together, we strive to build a more compassionate and supportive environment for all residents.



## LOCAL AND NATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS



### Cities Summit of the Americas

Former Executive Director Vanessa Ibarra participated in a panel at the Cities Summit of the Americas to address gender-based violence in our cities. Hosted by the Carter Center, the Metropolitan State University of Denver, and Peace in Our Cities, Vanessa spoke on the challenges the city faces when it comes to gender-based violence and why it's important to ensure that all women in Atlanta receive key information from the city in equitable ways to live safe, prosperous lives, and to strengthen their communities.



### National League of Cities City Summit

Atlanta welcomed the National League of Cities City Summit! Our team led a mobile workshop featuring our partners at Soccer in the Streets, the Atlanta Sports Council Metro Atlanta Chamber, and Agape Youth & Family Center. MOIIA's former Executive Director Vanessa Ibarra, Community Outreach Manager Christina Chu, and Community Navigator Tony Albarca presented on our office. Participants learned about the work we are doing to engage the international and immigrant communities here in Atlanta! The National League of Cities City Summit brought together municipal leaders and policy makers from across the country to develop connections and exchange ideas.



### Rising Voices Forum

Former Executive Director Vanessa Ibarra participated in All In Together's Rising Voices Forum for a panel discussion with State Rep. Jasmine Clark and Janelle King, co-founder of Speak Georgia, about building long-term power and how young people can engage in civic strategies to create stronger, more resilient communities.

## Latinx Heritage Month Engagement

To celebrate Latinx Heritage Month, we shared our office's mission and work with several corporate partners:



Fireside Chat with Microsoft's HOLA Employee Resource Group



"Immigrant Stories of Prosperity, Power, and Progress in America" Panel with Intercontinental Hotels Group SOMOS Hispanic Employee Resource Group and PATH Pan Asian Employee Resource Group



"Empowering Latinos in the Tech Sector" Panel with Technology Association of Georgia's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Society



### International Volunteer Day

In partnership with Atlanta-based International Consulates, our office celebrated U.N. International Volunteer Day by hosting volunteers at our Winter Resource Fair. This event recognized the importance of volunteer involvement in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level. We welcomed 26 volunteers representing Georgia Power, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Atlanta, and Nelson Mullins law firm.

# NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

Enhance public safety, trust, and access to internal and external resources through place-based outreach efforts that invest in community development and enable everyone to live, thrive, and contribute fully.

## NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

### COMMUNITY RESOURCE EVENTS

Our Community Resource Event program uses a place-based community engagement strategy to improve resource access in immigrant and limited English proficient neighborhoods. This program utilizes food access as a connecting mechanism to introduce residents to other resources, and aims to earn trust in disinvested communities by maintaining consistent in-person presence and building meaningful relationships with City of Atlanta residents.

This year, we worked with cross-sector partners in the areas of: education advocacy, financial resources, food access, health and wellbeing, housing stability, legal services, public safety, victim services, violence reduction, and youth empowerment to provide resources at our events. We also developed partnerships with consular and corporate partners, educational institutions, governmental partners, and religious institutions.

## Community Resource Event Locations



125

COMMUNITY RESOURCE EVENTS HOSTED

+



40,757

INDIVIDUALS SERVED

+



9,057

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED

+



46

COUNTRIES SERVED



91

PUBLIC + PRIVATE PARTNERS ENGAGED

+



208

VOLUNTEERS

+



5

CORPORATE VOLUNTEER GROUPS

including 9 City of Atlanta partners



FEATURED RESOURCE EVENTS



**Youth Mental Health and Wellness Fair in Adamsville:** celebrating ATL Year of the Youth with a holistic approach to wellbeing and connecting parents to youth behavioral health services, parent support resources, teen mental health programming, and summer camp and lifeguarding opportunities



**Feed the Children Event Series:** distributing ~53,800 pounds of food, hygiene items, children's books, and more to 1,037 households alongside corporate sponsor Americold



**Youth Empowerment and Community Health Fairs in Browns Mill and Metropolitan Corridor:** connecting youth engagement partners to 102 families with children's activities, books, and resources



**Hispanic Heritage Month Community Resource Fair in Thomasville Heights:** serving 158 families while celebrating community and public-private partnership with Atlanta Braves Foundation, Georgia Power, and 15 partners



**Home Plate Project with Atlanta Braves Foundation:** providing fresh produce, protein items, and youth resources for 200 families in Thomasville Heights neighborhood



**Atlanta Braves Foundation Event Series:** serving 1,079 households at 8 neighborhood events centered on food access, youth empowerment, and community building



**Hispanic Heritage Month Community Resource Fair at Sara J. González Memorial Park:** unveiling park improvements, while serving 170 families with 28 partners and Latinx vendors



**Winter Resource Fair at 3200 Lenox with Feed the Children:** promoting community empowerment through health equity, public safety information, and food access to serve 225 families



**Immigrant Heritage Month x Juneteenth Resource Fair:** honoring history, culture, and inclusion while promoting safety, empowerment, and education in community



**Back to School Resource Fairs at Sara J. González Memorial Park and 32Hundred Lenox Apartments:** pairing food access with health services and nearly 1,000 school supplies items for students



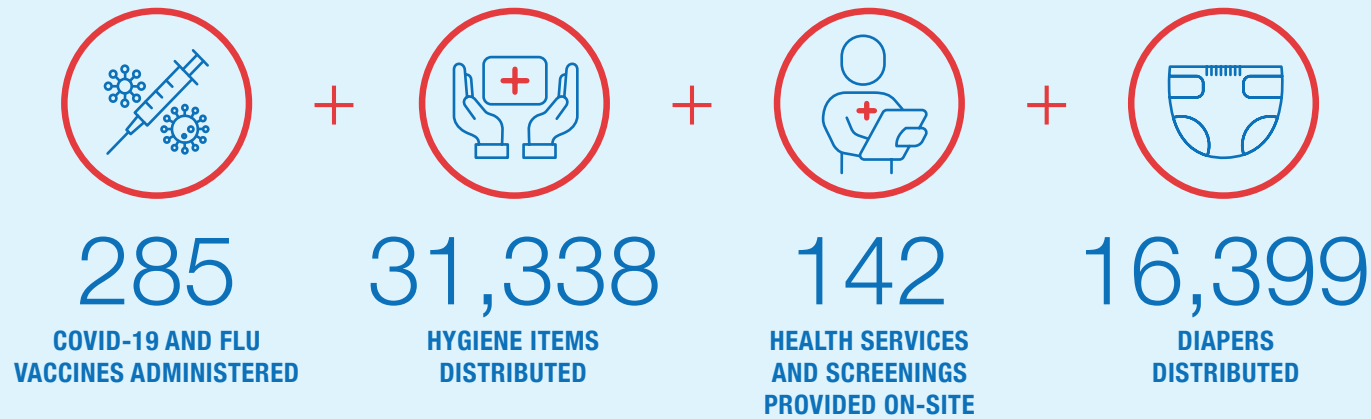
**2nd Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Event with Second Helpings Atlanta:** kicking off the holiday season by serving 354 families at our turkey giveaway



**4th Annual Winter Resource Fair at Sara J. González Memorial Park:** celebrating community through service to 293 families, who received 488 toys, 525 grocery sets, and \$5,000 worth of grocery store gift cards

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

HEALTH & WELLBEING



NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

Our Community Navigator program uses a people-powered community engagement strategy to invest in leaders, equip them to empower their neighbors, increase equitable access and opportunity, and create a welcoming infrastructure where foreign-born communities can see themselves represented in local government. Through this program, our Community Navigators receive training and education, and they provide feedback to our office, City departments, and other organizations on how to best serve their communities.

We currently employ 8 Spanish-speaking Community Navigators, who are immigrants themselves and improve language access conditions for Spanish-speaking residents in the city. This year, we facilitated 5 trainings with: Giving Kitchen, Tahiri Justice Center, US Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division, Atlanta Community Food Bank, and Tapestri.



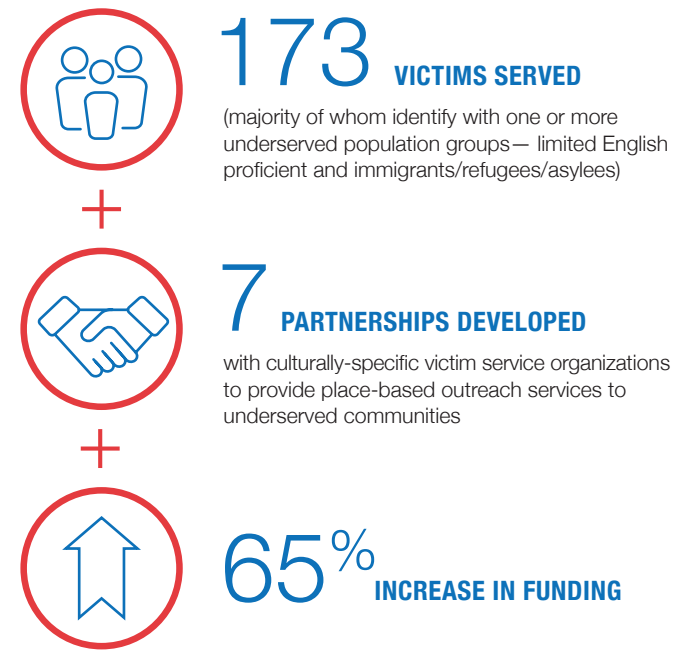
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

VICTIMS' SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Since 2019, we have received funding from Georgia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to employ a bilingual staff member to lead a culturally competent victim assistance program. This year, our office received a 65% increase in funding to support three staff members part-time to provide direct victim services to Limited English Proficient and foreign-born victims of crime and oversee grant administration. We have also partnered with Atlanta Police Department and Atlanta Fire Rescue Department on violence reduction initiatives to build trust in public safety among immigrant communities and to host multiple trainings to ensure officers are equipped to serve all constituents.

TOP 5 VICTIMIZATIONS

1. Assault, Domestic Violence, Fraud (equal #s each)
2. Robbery
3. Labor Trafficking



Language Access and U-Visa Trainings

We partnered with Raksha, Inc., the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, the Latin American Association, Cobb County District Attorney's Office, and Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network to host 3 trainings related to language access and U-visas. 64 survivor advocates and law enforcement professionals joined nearly 17 hours of training, representing 22 organizations and including officials from 5 local counties. These trainings prepared participants with culturally responsive, trauma-informed language access skills to better serve immigrant survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

We honored Domestic Violence Awareness Month with the Partnership Against Domestic Violence, who attended 7 Community Resource Events to provide resources and advocacy. Our team also attended several partner events honoring lives lost to domestic violence and to support work being done to serve survivors, including Partnership Against Domestic Violence's Candlelight Vigil, Tahiri Journey to Justice Luncheon, Tapestri's "Hope and Healing" Domestic Violence Forum, and Raksha's Ek Shaam Raksha Ke Naam (meaning An Evening in the name of Raksha in Hindi).



NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

MYCITY ATL PROGRAM

MyCity ATL is a community engagement program in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools Adult ESOL, and it is structured to empower our immigrant and refugee population to directly engage with City of Atlanta services on topics that are important to New Americans. This year's cohort consisted of 57 participants, representing 22 countries, and engaged 6 presenting partners: WorkSource Atlanta, Atlanta Police Department, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Atlanta, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation, ATL 311, and Atlanta Technical College.



57  
PARTICIPANTS

+



22  
COUNTRIES

+



6  
PRESENTING  
PARTNERS

DIPLOMACY

Lead the City's diplomacy efforts and International Partnerships by engaging with local partners and both national and international counterparts to identify solutions to local and global challenges.

DIPLOMACY

DELEGATION HIGHLIGHTS



Secretary of State Anthony Blinken Visits Atlanta

Mayor Dickens welcomed Secretary Blinken at Refuge Coffee Co. in Midtown for a conversation on Atlanta's efforts to support immigrant and refugee communities as well as our role on the global stage. They had the opportunity to speak with Refuge Coffee Founder Kitti Murray and learn about her organization's work to help resettled refugees and other immigrants.

Mayor Andre Dickens Leads Mission to Ethiopia in Celebration of Ethiopian Airlines' Direct Flight from Addis Ababa to Atlanta

Mayor Dickens met with Addis Ababa's Mayor Adanech Abiebie, U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Tracey Ann Jacobson, AmCham Ethiopia, local entrepreneurs and innovators, leaders of Ethiopian Airlines, students of the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, and students and faculty of Cambridge Academy Ethiopia. After welcoming the Atlanta delegation in Ethiopia, a group of Ethiopian government and airline officials met with Invest Atlanta, Atlanta BeltLine, the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs, and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Atlanta City Council President Doug Shipman welcomed H.E Ambassador Seleshi Bekele, Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States and provided a proclamation celebrating the direct service between Atlanta and Addis Ababa.



Atlanta and Nuremberg Celebrate 25th Anniversary of Sister City Relationship

We hosted a delegation led by Nuremberg Mayor Marcus König of City Councilors, City officials, business and university representatives who met with Mayor Dickens and MOIA. They discussed the successful sister-city relationship and how our two cities can continue to collaborate to strengthen our ties further. The delegation also met with City Council President Doug Shipman to discuss the importance and structure of Atlanta's City Council system and the role it plays in civic engagement.



### Mayor Dickens Welcomes 25 Mandela Washington Fellows to the City of Atlanta

This group of young African leaders attended an intensive leadership institute at Clark Atlanta University, which is one of the 28 educational institutions across the United States hosting this year's 700 fellows. Our office facilitated a meet and greet between Mayor Dickens and the Mandela Washington Fellowship CAU cohort to discuss leadership, the Mayor's personal and professional experiences, his vision and mission for the City of Atlanta, and exploring opportunities between Atlanta and the fellows' home countries.



### Connecting Atlanta to the World through City Diplomacy

MOIIA, the Truman Center for National Policy, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber welcomed city leaders, nonprofits, academia, businesses, Consular Corps members, economic development agencies, and civic organizations for two city diplomacy discussions exploring how to maximize the benefits of Atlanta's diplomacy for all residents and the role of Atlanta in shaping American foreign policy. The first discussion was a strategy session with leaders from key regional organizations involved in the City of Atlanta's international engagement efforts. Following the roundtable, Mayor Andre Dickens participated in a panel to discuss Atlanta's expanding global footprint and what makes Atlanta built for the future and a city of opportunity for all. Mayor Dickens is the co-chair of the Truman Center's City & State Diplomacy Task Force.



### MOIIA Partners with Aspen Institute Germany

Former Executive Director Vanessa Ibarra participated in a panel discussion hosted by the Aspen Institute Germany titled "Global Outlook, Local Impact: The Transatlantic Potential for Citizen Engagement," focusing on youth empowerment and workforce development alongside Paige Alexander (CEO, The Carter Center), Clyde Higgs (President & CEO, Atlanta BeltLine Inc.), and Anna Roach (Executive Director & CEO, Atlanta Regional Commission). Later in the year, Meredith Steinmetz-Rodriguez traveled to Berlin, Germany to participate in the Aspen Institute Germany Future Cities — A Transatlantic Townhall Closing Conference. This conference brought together over 100 participants from Europe, the United States, and all over the world to support sustainable and future-oriented development in cities.



### DIPLOMACY

### MOIIA WELCOMED 5 YOUTH DELEGATIONS



### Atlanta Public School Students & French Delegation Students Tour City Hall

Mayor Andre Dickens, Atlanta City Council members, the Office of Youth Engagement, Constituent Services, Department of Finance and MOIIA welcomed students from Atlanta Public Schools and French students from the metro Paris region representing ACLEFEU.



### Youth Delegation from San Juan, Puerto Rico Tours City Hall

MOIIA partnered with the Office of Constituent Services in welcoming a youth delegation from San Juan, Puerto Rico. The group visited Atlanta to learn about the Civil Rights Movement and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



### YLAI Fellows - Young Leaders of the America's Initiative

We partnered with the Atlanta Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative in hosting 14 YLAI / Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative Fellows. A U.S. Department of State initiative, YLAI empowers emerging entrepreneurs from the Western Hemisphere to enable their full economic potential.



### MOIIA Hosts St. Maarten Delegation Led by the U.S. Consulate to the Dutch Caribbean

MOIIA hosted a delegation of youth entrepreneurs, winners of the nation's 1st ever National Youth Pitch Competition and the International Young Entrepreneurs Programs from St. Maarten, along with the island's Minister of Finance Honorable Ardwel Irion and founder and CEO of Islandpreneur Ife Badejo. The students also participated in a joint meeting with the Metro Atlanta Chamber and Invest Atlanta.



### Youth Group from Nuremberg Meets Mayor Dickens and City Council President Doug Shipman

The delegation received a personal tour of City Hall and had the opportunity to meet Mayor Dickens and City Council President Doug Shipman. They also visited Benjamin E Mays High School, Mayor Dickens' alma mater, to meet with students from the U.S. and discover life in an American high school!

# INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Establish opportunities for trade, advance international strategic partnerships, and connect minority- & women-owned businesses to resources, collaborative networks, and tools for growth.

## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

### HIGHLIGHTS



#### MOIIA and UPS Host the 3rd Annual Women Export University

**Women Export University** is a partnership between MOIIA and UPS that aims to increase the participation of women-owned businesses in exporting and create more opportunities for women entrepreneurs to achieve economic equality. At a day-long conference, the participants engage in panel discussions and conversations around e-commerce, export strategies, marketing, and learn about various federal, state, and local resources for women entrepreneurs. Mayor Andre Dickens, former MOIIA Executive Director Vanessa Ibarra and Maria Luisa Boyce, VP of Global Public Affairs at UPS provided opening remarks. UPS' Kevin Warren, EVP & Chief Marketing Officer, and Laura Lane, Executive Vice President & Chief Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Officer, gave a fireside chat about the important role that women entrepreneurs play in today's economy.



*Women Export U is yet another shining example of our work to keep Moving Atlanta Forward. Together, we can make Atlanta a city of opportunity for all—a place where Atlantans can embark on a pathway toward prosperity. We are excited to see the growth and development of women entrepreneurs in Atlanta as you continue to strive for excellence and success.*

— Mayor Andre Dickens

#### Ecosystem and Experience Architect Nicholas Mulkey Joins RICE Trade Mission to Cali, Colombia

Nicholas joined a group of 20 Black entrepreneurs from Atlanta, led by the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs, as they set to expand their business and forge trade connections between Atlanta and Cali. The group met with dozens of businesses, officials, and locals of Cali and surrounding areas. The Ambassador of Colombia to the U.S., Luis Gilberto Murillo, hosted the group and led them on a personal tour of his hometown. Invest Atlanta, Atlanta Black Chambers, PROCOLOMBIA, Marca País Colombia, and the Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo, supported the delegates during this trade mission.



#### Mayor Dickens Welcomes the Pan-African Global Trade Investment Conference

MOIIA and Mayor Dickens welcomed the 12th Pan-African Global Trade and Investment Conference (PAGTIC), hosted by the Africa-USA International Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for an Opening Ceremony at City Hall. The Atlanta HBCU-PAGTIC is focused on the expansion of multilateral trade programs between Africa and the Pan African Diaspora. For the first time, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are being featured as active participants, including Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological Center, and Morris Brown College.



#### MOIIA Hosts “Doing Business with the City” Seminar

MOIIA, in partnership with the Atlanta Department of Procurement, Invest Atlanta, and The BIG Partnership hosted a **“Doing Business with the City of Atlanta” workshop**. It showcased how businesses and organizations can work directly with the City of Atlanta by bidding for contracts, becoming vendors, and applying for business licenses. This program aims to empower minority-owned and small business owners by simplifying the process and providing a direct line of communication with City officials while fostering a more diversified supply chain of vendors.



#### METRO EXPORT CHALLENGE

#### MOIIA partners with the Metro Atlanta Chamber's Metro Export Challenge

MOIIA is a partner of this year-long program designed to assist metro Atlanta companies in their global business development efforts. This year, Nicholas Mulkey presented the \$15,000 first-place award to Jetaire Group. Since its implementation in 2016, the program has supported more than 120 metro Atlanta businesses with over \$800,000 in financial support and counseling.

#### Nicholas Mulkey Speaks at Georgia Tech Soft Landings

Soft Landings, led by Innovation Ecosystems at Georgia Tech, is a program to help foreign companies evaluate and navigate their way into the U.S. market. Ecosystems and Experience Architect Nicholas Mulkey joined a training session to connect various Colombian businesses with Atlanta's international community, provide resources from the City to help their businesses expand, and discuss the larger business ecosystem in Atlanta.

# SPORTS DIPLOMACY

Host visits and exchanges that improve dialogue and promote connection and cultural understanding between diverse groups, while underscoring Atlanta's global passion for sports and delivering cultural experiences for youth and professionals.

## Atlanta Hosts the Premier League Summer Series

The English premier league held its first pre-season tournament in the USA, with six clubs taking part in matches and events in five major East Coast cities. Two of the matches, Brentford v. Brighton and Newcastle United v. Chelsea were held at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Mayor Dickens and MOIIA joined the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the British Consulate General in Atlanta, and the Premier League as they hosted a panel discussion around the growth of soccer in the United States and United Kingdom. Mayor Dickens also joined current Newcastle FC Midfielder and former Atlanta United player Miguel Almirón for a surprise visit with Atlanta's young soccer stars at Soccer in the Streets.



## MOIIA Inspires Atlanta's Youth with Czech Athletes

In partnership with the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C. and the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Atlanta, MOIIA welcomed a Czech sports diplomacy delegation, including professional rower Daniela Nacházelová and professional soccer player Libor Volf. We hosted a special workshop with Soccer in the Streets and Agape Youth & Family Center during which they shared their stories and skills with students and players.



## MOIIA Participates in "Peaches and Soccer: Exploring the Allure & Economic Impact of the World Cup in Atlanta" Panel Discussion

Meredith Steinmetz-Rodriguez joined fellow panelist Jerry D. Parrish, Ph.D. from the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to discuss the diplomatic and economic impacts of the World Cup 2026 with the World Affairs Council of Atlanta. She discussed the impact of sports diplomacy and how the City of Atlanta will work to ensure the World Cup 2026 brings together community organizations and provides opportunities to youth and minorities.



## MOIIA Joins USC Center on Public Diplomacy's 3rd Annual Summit on City Diplomacy

Meredith Steinmetz-Rodriguez joined USC Center on Public Diplomacy's 3rd Annual Summit on City Diplomacy and participated on a panel looking at the intersection of sports and city diplomacy. Meredith spoke about our office's sports portfolio and the positive impact public-private partnerships have on cities, organizations, and businesses. Meredith also joined city representatives from Boston, Charlotte, Los Angeles, Portland, San Antonio, Seattle, Silicon Valley, Georgetown University, the University of Manchester, the University of Michigan, and LA84 to strategize around enhancing sub-national diplomacy at the local, regional, and state level.





