



**March 26th,
2024**

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Meeting Recap: Dalton State College Virtual Tour

Last week our guest speaker, Dr. Jamie Connors took us on a virtual tour of Dalton State Colleges Gignilliat Hall. Introduced by one of her accounting students, Katie, Dr. Connors serves as the Associate Dean of the Wright School of Business. Connors oversees the VITA program, which is their volunteer income tax assistance program which allows accounting students the opportunity to have real life practices doing tax returns for community members. Katie believes that Dr. Connors is the best example of how a professor can impact students.



Gignilliat Hall has recently undergone renovations to better serve DSC's students. The goal of the renovations was to create an environment where students felt a sense of belonging and excitement for learning. Gignilliat Hall is home to the Wright School of Business, whose mission is to "provide innovative educational opportunities and create a knowledgeable, engaged graduate prepared to add value to an ever-changing business community". The Wright School of Business holds a prestigious ASCSB accreditation, achieved by only 5% of business programs worldwide.

During our virtual tour, we were introduced to the "œbiz hub", providing space for meetings, group collaborations, and more. Sprinkled throughout the building are quotes, hand-picked by Mr. Wright to inspire students. Finance students benefit from specialized classrooms equipped with a stock market ticker and a world clock, offering a global perspective alongside practical exposure. Dr. Connors transformed an unused classroom into a homework lab, providing students the space to seek help from their professors. The Wright School of Business prepares students for life beyond college by offering resume guidance, interview tips, etiquette workshops, and access to The Nest, a professional attire resource for students.

Our virtual tour was both enlightening and inspiring. Dalton State College and the Wright School of Business continue to be an incredible asset to our community. In appreciation of Dr. Connors's presentation, a children's book was donated in her honor to our local library.

This Week: The CRI - Past, Present, and Future

This week, we're getting a look at the Carpet and Rug Institute and its role in our community and in the flooring industry. Our speaker is Ross DeLozier, the CRI's president.

Russ graduated in 1989 from the GA Institute of Technology with a BS in Chemical Engineering and a minor in Polymer Science. He started his career with The Dow Chemical Company in Plaquemine, LA. The early portions of Russ's experiences were in startup or operation of various plastic plants.

In 2002, Russ moved with his family to Dalton, GA where he served as the plant manager of Dow's Styrofoam plant.

In 2004, Russ left Dow to join Shaw Industries where he was the Director of Materials Reclamation. While at Shaw, Russ helped establish the largest nationwide carpet recycling program.

Russ is the past recipient of CARE's Carpet Recycler of the Year and a two-time recipient of The Carpet and Rug Institute's (CRI's) distinguished Joseph J. Smekar Memorial Award that recognizes individuals who show exemplary service to the carpet manufacturing industry.

In 2012, Russ joined the J+J Flooring Group as Director of Sustainability. In that capacity, Russ helped oversee all aspects of J+J's corporate sustainability including environmental affairs, reclamation, product stewardship, recycling, recycled content, waste elimination, product transparency, landfill avoidance, energy conservation, renewable energy, and environmental certifications. Russ helped lead J+J to become the first in the industry to achieve 3rd party certification for Zero Waste to Landfill (ZWL). In 2017, J+J was purchased by Engineered Floors where Russ continued in a similar role.

In late 2020, Russ left Engineered Floors and opened his own consulting firm, Regenerate Environmental and Sustainable Consulting, which focused on plastic recycling, waste reduction, flooring recycling, and overall sustainability issues.

In June of 2023, Russ joined The CRI as their President.

Russ has been actively involved for over 20 years in the Big Buddy program at a local high school. He lives in Dalton, GA, with his wife, Kirby and has three grown children. Russ enjoys golf, astrophotography, drone photography, and fishing.

