



# The Southern District of Georgia:

## One of the Nation's Oldest Districts, and Home to One of the FBA's Newest Chapters

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A short drive from this year's FBA National Convention in Atlanta, you will find the Southern District of Georgia. The Southern District of Georgia has a rich history, a diverse geography, and is home to one of the newest FBA chapters.

The district lies in the southeastern corner of the state and includes Georgia's Atlantic coastline. The northernmost portion of the district includes Augusta, which is famously known as the home of the PGA's Masters Tournament. The district also includes Georgia's coastal islands, affectionately known as the Golden Isles, the Okefenokee Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, and the historic port city of Savannah. The district is also home to Hunter Army Airfield, Fort Stewart, Fort Gordon, and Kings Bay Naval submarine base.

The Southern District of Georgia has a rich history. It was one of the original 13 courts established by the Judiciary Act of 1789 on Sept. 24, 1789, making it one of the oldest courts in the country. The northern and middle districts were later formed out of the original district. The seat of the Southern District is in Savannah, where the original federal judge and U.S. attorney for the District of Georgia were located. The district now has six divisions, spans 43 counties, and has three active judge seats and two senior judges.

The chief judge of the court, Hon. Lisa

Godbey Wood, recently had this to say about the district: "Each of the 94 federal judicial districts has its strengths, but I am unapologetically not objective when it comes to the Southern District of Georgia. It has nationally respected lawyers, beautiful courthouses, complex cases, a rich legal history, natural beauty, a stunning coastline, and unique barrier islands. It is home to critical military bases, multiple colleges, notable authors, artists, and chefs, as well as the loveliest golf tournament ever played. The judges of the district value collegiality among themselves and promote respect for the lawyers and parties who appear in court. In short, if I were ever given the opportunity to move to any other place—I simply wouldn't."

In mid-2015, members of the Southern District of Georgia's bench





and bar joined efforts to establish the first FBA chapter in the district. Since its founding, the chapter has thrived. Membership in the chapter has nearly doubled, and the chapter is hosting some truly great events. For example, the chapter recently held an event at which Second Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Denny Chin spoke as part of a naturalization ceremony in Savannah. Judge Chin—himself, a naturalized citizen—delivered a powerful message, sharing his personal story with our nation’s newest citizens. The ceremony was attended by chapter members, students and faculty from the Savannah Law School, and friends and family of the new citizens. To round out the program, a local high school’s a cappella chorus performed the “Star-Spangled Banner” and “America the Beautiful.” The chapter was able to host the event in no small part due to the FBA Foundation’s generous Community Outreach Grant and the FBA’s Chapter Activity Fund.

In short, the Southern District of Georgia is a gem, beloved by many. It has beautiful history and a bright future, which will be enhanced by its newly formed FBA chapter. If you ever have the opportunity—for work or for pleasure—take a trip to the Southern District of Georgia. You won’t be disappointed. ☉



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