



(Left-right) N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla on stage with Gov. McCrory addressing the Small Business Summit at Guilford Technical Community College.

Governor McCrory, Secretary Skvarla Share N.C.'s Economic Successes at Small Business Summit

Governor Pat McCrory and N.C. Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III joined over 200 business and education leaders January 8 at the 7th annual small business summit to celebrate North Carolina's economic successes.

"Small businesses employ half of North Carolina's workforce and play an important role in our economy," said Governor McCrory. "I am proud of all the success our state and small businesses have shared this past year, and I look forward to continuing to work together to grow our economy and prepare for the future."

Small Business Fast Facts:

- North Carolina has 833,107 small businesses - those with 500 or fewer employees.
- Nearly 1.6 million North Carolinians work for a small business - about half our total private workforce.
- In FY 2015, the Small Business Administration (SBA) loan programs put more than half a billion dollars into North Carolina's small businesses.
- Small companies dominate North Carolina's construction industry - providing nearly 82% of the total employment in that industry.
- Small companies employ nearly 60% of those working in the professional, scientific and technical services industry.



Governor McCrory (third from left) cuts the ribbon at the ceremony held in Concord January 12.

Governor McCrory Celebrates Gordon Food Service Expansion at Grand Opening Ceremony

Governor Pat McCrory joined Gordon Food Service employees, government officials, community stakeholders and business executives January 12 at the Gordon Food Service Grand Opening and ribbon cutting ceremony.

"This grand opening by Gordon Food Service is another example of how our improvements to North Carolina's business climate and workforce development are helping our state recruit and retain jobs," said Governor McCrory. "Companies like Gordon Food Service recognize the potential for growth that exists in North Carolina and we are proud to welcome them to our state."

Since Governor McCrory took office in January of 2013, North Carolina has witnessed the net creation of over 250,000 private sector jobs.

In October 2014, Governor McCrory announced that Gordon Food Service would be building a new 300,000 square foot distribution center investing \$58 million and creating 275 new jobs in Concord. The company has now surpassed these expectations and plans to hire a total of 300

Since January 2013, North Carolina has added the sixth most jobs in the nation and created over 250,000 private sector jobs. North Carolina's employment growth is among the strongest in the nation. Economists anticipate that N.C. will add approximately 100,000 new jobs in 2016 and it is expected that at least half will be in small businesses.

North Carolina community colleges play an instrumental role in training our small business workforce. All 58 community colleges across the state operate Small Business Centers, which helped establish 771 start-ups in North Carolina and advised more than 5,800 entrepreneurs over the past year.

North Carolina Community Colleges also partner with the SBA and U.S. Department of Defense in the "Boots to Business" program to provide training and advice to military personnel looking to start their own businesses. In 2015, "Boots to Business" served 700 servicemen and women in N.C. and is part of Governor McCrory's effort to make North Carolina the most military and veteran-friendly state in the nation.



Two new NCWorks Apprenticeship programs launched at this November 5 event in Whitsett.

NCWorks @ Work: Businesses Turn to Apprenticeship Programs to Fill the Gap

Tammy Simmons knew how valuable apprenticeships could be in recruiting new talent.

Simmons first learned of apprenticeship programs through the local Triad Workforce Solutions Collaborative group. The organization is comprised of local businesses that want to do more to spur workforce development, and Simmons learned of the benefits an apprenticeship could bring to her business.

"There's a huge need for highly skilled employees," said Simmons, director of sales and marketing for Machine Specialties, Inc. "We can't find enough of them to keep our business growing."

That need sparked the creation of the Guilford Apprenticeship Partners, a seven-company collaboration in which local businesses are teaming up to train students to be CNC machinists, tool and die makers, or welders. Through her contacts with the workforce group and the Manufacturing Council Board, Simmons found six more companies that would join with Machine Specialties to create GAP: ABCO Automation, Bright Plastics, ConvacTec, Machine Specialties Inc., PRECOR, Purolator, and TE Connectivity. Guilford Technical Community College and Guilford County Schools also work closely with the partnership.

employees within the next three to five years.

Gordon Food Service began as a simple butter-and-egg delivery service and is now North America's largest privately held, family-managed foodservice distributor. Gordon Food Service distributes to foodservice operators within the Midwest, Northeast, Southeast and Southwest regions of the United States and coast-to-coast in Canada.



Students and teachers tackle hands-on projects together.

Students and Teachers Invited to Apply to Study at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Two residential, hands-on learning institutes focusing on math, science, and technology for students and teachers will be held this summer in Oak Ridge, Tennessee at one of the nation's premier facilities for scientific research.

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is collaborating with the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) to offer the opportunities for high school students and teachers (July 9-22, 2016) and for middle school students (July 17-22, 2016). Middle and high school students and teachers from throughout Appalachia will participate in a hands-on learning program that will focus on the application of math and science principles in the world of work.

Students work in teams on research projects during each one-week academy, with each team comprising three to six students. The team approach provides an opportunity to conduct research activities and solve problems in a group setting. Research topics and activities may include such areas as biofuels and alternative energy.

Interested parties can view examples of the research and other activities engaged in during previous summer science camps at the [SummerSTEM website](#).

The participants will spend most days in one of several ORNL research laboratories, but field trips to nearby industries, universities,

GAP's apprentices take community college classes as part of the curriculum and learn skills through on-the-job learning. When they finish the program, the students will have earned an AAS degree - without accumulating college debt - and learned the manufacturing skills that many companies are heavily seeking in the younger generation.

In addition to developing a new pool of talent, GAP's partners also benefit from their numbers. Because the partnership will train a steady stream of apprentices, the community college can build and maintain a curriculum that fulfills the requirement for classroom instruction. The public schools can help recruit new applicants because they know the apprenticeship program is sustainable and its founders are committed to its success.

"If we're united, then we can get more done in the schools and the community colleges," Simmons said.

Even in its early stages, GAP has attracted statewide attention. Governor Pat McCrory helped officially launch the program during a special ceremony in Greensboro on November 5. GAP also joins other well-known apprenticeship programs based in the state, including Apprenticeship2000 and Siemens Charlotte's training program.

"Apprenticeships are the perfect example of how our administration is working with businesses, education and other leaders to close the skills gap in North Carolina," Governor McCrory said in a written statement. "Not only do they provide workers with on-the-job training and practical education, apprenticeships further our legacy as a state where innovation comes first."

Businesses in North Carolina work with NCWorks Apprenticeship to build their training programs. The state helps employers finalize the training involved and the wages the apprentices will earn. Simmons said NCWorks Apprenticeship was the "glue" in the work to build Guilford Apprenticeship and provided resources and connections the company didn't have on its own.

"The thing I'm most proud about is our collaboration, not only in our community with the businesses but also with the state network," said Simmons.

NCWorks @ Work is a SYNC series highlighting success stories from North Carolina's integrated workforce development system. More information about the [NCWorks Apprenticeship Program is online](#).

and museums will illustrate applications of math and science in the real world and provide participants with opportunities to learn more about Appalachia and some of its unique characteristics.

Applications must be submitted to Olivia Collier, the North Carolina ARC State Program Manager, on or before March 18, 2016.

The applications and additional information are available online at nccommerce.com.

N.C. in the News

- [Officials: Proposed CSX Intermodal Terminal Would Mean Boost For Port](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - January 14)
- [Triad exec awarded board role with major economic development group](#) (*Triad Business Journal* - January 12)
- [Home Sales Jump 13 Percent In 2015](#) (*WilmingtonBiz* - January 11)
- [Railroad leader: Plans to boost NC's economy](#) (*Carteret County News-Times* - January 9)
- [Wake Tech takes steps forward for new RTP campus](#) (*News & Record* - Greensboro - January 5)
- ['It's a big day': N.C. Railroad buys remainder of megasite land](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - January 5)
- [Developer plans new data-center building in Kings Mountain business park](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal* - January 5)
- [New State Requirements Affect All Economic Development Spending](#) (*WilmingtonBiz.com* - January 5)

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Building Location:

301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:

4301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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