

# sync<sup>TM</sup> Highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



## White Labs to Open New Facility in Buncombe County and Create 56 New Jobs

Governor Pat McCrory and North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla along with the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina announced January 9 that White Labs, Inc. is opening a new facility in Buncombe County. The company plans to create 56 new jobs over the next three years and invest \$8.1 million over the next five years in Buncombe County.

"White Labs is a leader in one of the fastest-growing industries in the country," said Governor McCrory. "By locating its East Coast operations in Buncombe County, it is establishing North Carolina as a key location for other companies related to the craft beer and wine industries."

White Labs, based in San Diego, was founded in 1995 and supplies breweries, wineries and distilleries with fresh yeast and related products, including analytical services.

"Buncombe County is becoming known around the country for its craft beer industry," said Secretary Skvarla. "North Carolina boasts the largest number of craft breweries in the South, with more than 100 breweries and brewpubs. It says a lot about the growth of the industry here that White Labs chose this part of North Carolina for its first East Coast operation."

"At White Labs we are excited about being closer to our customer base in North Carolina and the East Coast, and



### North Carolina Invests More Than \$200,000 in Employee Training

North Carolina awarded more than \$205,000 in grants to help employers train their workers, as part of the NCWorks Incumbent Worker Training Grant program.

The grants are awarded in the summer and winter of each year and are meant to help businesses improve the skills of their workforce by reimbursing them for the cost of training programs. Employers submit their applications to the 23 Workforce Development Boards, which in turn makes recommendations to the N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions.

This season's grants helped 26 employers and more than 475 workers.

"The incumbent worker training grant allows a company to identify the skills gaps of their employees and address these gaps, which benefits both the company and the employees," said Laura Spivey, manager of Business Services in Commerce's Division of Workforce Solutions. "A company can add to the skills gap solution by working with its local workforce development board to learn more about this training alternative."

North Carolina companies can attest to the value of the grants. [Stone Truck Parts](#), which has offices in Raleigh, Charlotte, Greensboro, and Wallace, used two different grants to train salespeople. The company increased its sales as a result of the training, said Keith McLemore, one of the company's partners.

having the opportunity to expand production to meet our industry's growing needs," said Chris White, president and CEO of White Labs. "We expect this facility to be our anchor for production needs east of the Mississippi and places beyond including Europe. The decision of where to locate our facility was difficult, and we made this decision based on the people we worked with, the city of Asheville, the great breweries in the area, and the quality of life we have witnessed."

The Buncombe County operation will be White Labs' first on the East Coast and will manufacture yeast for alcoholic beverage production, conduct sales and marketing, beer production, on premise beer sales, classes and retail sales. In addition to San Diego, White Labs has operations in Davis, California and Boulder, Colorado.

[Read more.](#)



Joining North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla (second from right) are (left-right) Joe Harwood, Ombudsman, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; from Goodwill Industries of Northwest NC Sherry Carpenter, Vice-President for Workforce Development; Ray Cerda, USN (Ret.), Regional Veterans Services Coordinator; Art Gibel, President; and Gayln Shivers, Workforce Development District Director.  
(photo courtesy Goodwill Industries)

## Skvarla Visits Key Workforce Development Partner

North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla paid a visit to a key workforce development partner on Friday, January 9.

[Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina](#) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to create opportunities for people to enhance their lives through training, workforce development services and collaboration with other community organizations.

Secretary Skvarla met with Goodwill President and CEO Art Gibel, Vice President of Workforce Development Sherry Carpenter and other staff members to learn more about the job training and assistance programs that Goodwill provides to more than 36,000 people each year. He then toured the University Parkway facility, which includes a Career Connections/JobLink computer lab, skills training classrooms, the Success Outfitters professional clothing closet, and welding lab offered in partnership with Forsyth Tech.

Skvarla also met with Goodwill staff who coordinate *Operation:*

[Southeastern Metal Products, LLC](#) of Charlotte is one of the employers that has received a grant in the past. The employer trained 36 workers how to read blueprints, the basics of supply chain, advanced robotic welding and programming, the basics of electrical wiring, Microsoft Excel, solid modeling CAD, and Crystal Reports I.

"It really helps as a retention tool," said Violet Carter, human resources manager for the company. "Employees can see the company is investing in them."

[Read more.](#)

## N.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority Approves Building Reuse Grant for Thomasville

The N.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) has approved a building reuse grant of \$500,000 for the city of Thomasville with the commitment of 40 new jobs.

North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla and Assistant Secretary for Rural Development Dr. Pat Mitchell made the announcement January 8.

The funds will be used to support the reuse of a total of 275,000 square feet in multiple buildings that were constructed between 1973 and 1984 and have been vacant for three years. Ennis-Flint will locate in the buildings to expand its manufacturing operation. The company produces innovative products that include traffic safety markings for road and highway striping, heavy-duty intersections, and custom horizontal surface signage. Ennis-Flint has committed to create 40 new, full-time jobs.

The RIA was established as part of the Rural Economic Development Division at the N.C. Department of Commerce to assist with the review and approval of grants for rural areas in the state. The grants-making programs of the division include assistance for building reuse and well as infrastructure including water and sewer.

The Building Reuse Program provides grants or loans to local governments to support the reuse of vacant and occupied buildings that will lead to the creation of new, full-time jobs.

[Read more.](#)

*GoodJobs*, which assists veterans with overcoming barriers to employment; *Project Re-entry*, a partnership with the Piedmont Triad Regional Council that serves former offenders; and programs for youth.



(Left) Adrian King, Executive Director of Pride of Kinston and Assistant Secretary Pat Mitchell

## Mitchell Visits Kinston

North Carolina Commerce Assistant Secretary for Rural Development Dr. Patricia Mitchell delivered a presentation to the Kinston Rotary Club January 8.

Mitchell was welcomed and introduced by Rotary President Dirk Griffith and Kinston Main Street Director Adrian King, who also serves as Executive Director of [Pride of Kinston](#), a nonprofit organization created in 1984 to lead revitalization strategies and activities in Kinston's downtown.

Following the Rotary meeting, Mitchell toured several areas of the city's Main Street program, including the buildings and the 1900-era mill village homes that entrepreneur Steve Hill is restoring. Hill is the founder and CEO of Mother Earth Brewing.



(Left-right) Christopher Chung, CEO of the Economic Development Partnership of N.C.; Jim Chesnutt, CEO of National Spinning Co.; and Martyn Johnson, Director of the Beaufort County Department of Economic Development



## Health Report Card Released

Prevention Partners, a non-profit wellness organization working to create healthier places in North Carolina has released its annual assessment of the state's overall health in a new report.

The 2015 Prevention Report Card, drawing on data from state and federal agencies as well as proprietary data cites behaviors including cigarette smoking, poor diet choices and not enough physical activity along with too little access and cultural support for making healthy choices. Ranking the state's overall health as poor, the report issued grades of 'C' for tobacco use, 'D' for physical activity and 'F' for both nutrition and obesity.

The report also points to solutions and success stories and offers basic, actionable steps for making improvements. "Such poor grades can feel overwhelming," says Meg Molloy, DrPH, MPH, RD, Prevention Partners' President and CEO. "But we know effective, affordable solutions, and we're finding strong leadership interest in bringing these solutions to all 100 counties across the state. Poor health is an economic development issue. Business leaders are particularly well positioned to bring prevention policies and practices to their workplaces and communities."

On average, North Carolinians have shorter life expectancies (a half-year less than the national average) and more risk factors for expensive, debilitating chronic diseases. Even more alarming, life expectancies drop by as much as four years - and health care costs increase - in the state's economically distressed areas.

"Improving the health of residents in our rural communities is a crucial ingredient for us in improving the economic well-being and quality of life," says Dr. Patricia Mitchell, Assistant Secretary for Rural Development with the N.C. Department of Commerce. "By working with major employers, especially in our less populated counties, we can go a long way towards reducing health care costs, improving the quality of life, and attracting and growing businesses."

Prevention Partners has published eight North Carolina report cards since 1998 to raise awareness about the human and economic costs of poor health. The N.C. Department of Commerce partners with the

## New EDPNC Chief Executive Chung Visits Beaufort County

Christopher Chung, CEO of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) attended the Beaufort County Committee of 100 Annual Oyster Roast on January 9. Jim Chesnutt, CEO of National Spinning Company and Chairman of the Beaufort County Committee of 100 introduced Chung.

During the event, Chesnutt and Martyn Johnson, Director of Beaufort County's Department of Economic Development briefed Chung on the current economic conditions in Beaufort County and eastern North Carolina and offered their thoughts on economic development issues in the rural portions of the state.

organization to publish *Healthy Places Change Lives*, a series in SYNC highlighting workplace wellness programs.

[2015 North Carolina Prevention Report Card](#)

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## N.C. in the News

### This Week's Highlights

- [McCrorry pitches funding for innovators](#) (WRAL - January 16)
- [Movement Mortgage CEO: N.C. 'didn't have a lot of flexibility or funds for us'](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - January 15)
- [Wilmington area eco-devo leaders announce 3-county micro-region for job growth](#) (Tringle Business Journal - January 14)
- [Brewery supplier opening plant in Buncombe](#) (Hendersonville Lightning - January 9)
- [Sealed Air to build headquarters complex at LakePointe Corporate Center](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - January 14)
- [David Powell: finishing his work on megasite, looking toward life after PTP](#) (Triad Business Journal - January 14)
- [Cozza Looks To Raise Ports' Profiles This Year](#) (WilmingtonBiz.com - January 8)
- [Chatham megasite changing its name, but not its focus](#) (Triad Business Journal - January 6)

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