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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Governor Bev Perdue is recognized by LF USA President Rick Darling (seated) and Li & Fung Ltd CEO Bruce Rockowitz (at podium) at the announcement in Greensboro.

LF USA opens Greensboro office

Following hands-on recruiting by N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco during HQ calls in Hong Kong and New York, Governor Bev Perdue joined company executives on Feb. 6 to announce the opening of a LF USA office in Greensboro. LF USA is a multinational consumer goods export and logistics group, and is a subsidiary of Hong Kong-headquartered Li & Fung Limited. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Melissa Smith](#) was the developer on this project.

With a total of 30,000 square feet, the LF USA office will house key functions including accounting and finance, treasury management, transaction services, logistics and customs compliance. The office is located at 4620 Grandover Parkway.

Headquartered in New York, LF USA is a leader in the design, development and marketing of fashion brands, licensed apparel, footwear, accessories and home to major department stores and mass retailers like Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom's, Macy's, Kohl's, JC Penney and Walmart. Its portfolio includes premier brands and licenses for women, men and kids such as Coach and Calvin Klein footwear, Frye boots, Hurley, Rocawear, Under Armour and fashion lifestyle collections such as Rachel Zoe, Sofia Vergara and Jennifer Lopez. [Read more.](#)

[LF USA adding jobs at new Greensboro office](#) (*The Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Feb. 6)

Caterpillar again chooses N.C. for expansion

Governor Bev Perdue announced Feb. 1 that Caterpillar Inc., the largest maker of construction and mining equipment, diesel and natural gas engines and industrial gas turbines in the world, will expand its manufacturing facilities in Johnston County. The company plans to create 199 jobs over the next five years and invest \$33 million. The project was made possible in part by state grants from the [Job Development Investment Grant](#) program and [One North Carolina Fund](#). The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Anna Lea](#) was the developer on this project.

In Clayton, Caterpillar will expand its existing operations, which are part of Caterpillar's Building Construction Products Division. Upon completion, the Clayton facility will be the world source for several models of small wheel loaders produced by Caterpillar. In addition, engineering and design work for BCP products will take place at a new engineering and test facility near Caterpillar's Clayton manufacturing facility.

"As we see global demand for our products increase, we continue to make long-term investments like this in our facilities to help meet customer needs," said Mary Bell, Caterpillar vice president with responsibility for the Building Construction Products Division.

[Caterpillar plant to add 199 jobs in Johnston](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Feb. 2)



A packed house at Sundance learns about filming and digital media incentives in North Carolina.



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco (center, with yellow tie) at the ribbon-cutting for the new Strata solar farm

Strata holds ribbon-cutting for new solar farm

Officials cut the ribbon on a new solar farm in Kings Mountain on Jan. 12. The farm, developed by Chapel Hill-based Strata Solar, can supply enough power to Duke Energy to support hundreds of homes.

"We're all looking to go green and be environmentally friendly," said Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey. "It does not leave a big footprint and you can have the livestock right here together."

The 28-acre solar farm on Dixon Dairy Road is now on the grid, using power from the sun to light up more than 600 homes in the area.

With 22,000 panels, it's the second largest solar facility in the state. The project took about three months to construct, providing local work for more than 70 installers and engineers.

"We have so many that are still unemployed in the area, due to the textiles as they continue to be depressed, and we're just so excited about those jobs," said Murphrey. [Read more.](#)



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Francisco Sanchez, and President of Leadership North Carolina Brian Etheridge at the 2012 Leadership North Carolina Forum. (Photo courtesy of Leadership North Carolina)

Commerce presents at the Leadership NC forum

N.C. Film Office returns from Sundance with new contacts, project leads

Officials from the North Carolina Film Office returned from Utah with new contacts and project leads following a successful trip to the Sundance Film Festival.

While in attendance, the Film Office hosted meetings with filmmakers and industry executives about filming in North Carolina, highlighting the state's well-established infrastructure and competitive incentive.

In addition to meetings throughout the festival, the Film Office also hosted a Filmmakers Gathering at the celebs.com media studio located inside the McCarthey Gallery on Park City's Main Street. The event, held on Jan. 21, saw more than 300 people come and meet with state officials and learn more about North Carolina. Entertainment was provided by recording artist Stephanie Quayle, and attendees sampled North Carolina wines. They also received gift bags that included more information about the state's resources as well as uniquely North Carolina items from Burt's Bees, Dewey's Cookies, Biltmore, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival and Piedmont Distillers Inc.

Additionally, the Film Office used the Sundance platform to launch the NC Film iPhone app. The Film Office is the first film commission to launch an app that integrates locations, crew and support services. The app was created and powered by the Charlotte-based company, Reel-Scout.

This year marks the fifth time the Film Office has been in attendance and had a presence at the Sundance Film Festival.

The 2012 festival included 117 feature-length films, representing 30 countries by 45 first-time filmmakers. Additionally, the festival showcased 64 short films. Attendance for the festival was expected to be around 60,000.

Commerce participates in the Emerging Issues Forum

The 27th [Annual Emerging Issues Forum](#), held Feb. 6 and today at the Raleigh Convention Center, focused on Gen Z. According to the [Institute for Emerging Issues](#), which conducts the forum, Gen Z is "the most highly connected, globally aware and digitally savvy group in our history."

Former Governor Jim Hunt, along with N.C. State University Chancellor Randy Woodson, and Institute for Emerging Issues Director

The Fifth Annual [Leadership North Carolina Forum](#) was held on Jan. 26 in Raleigh. The forum is designed to provide information and dialogue on charting our state's future for leaders in business, government, education, and nonprofits from across North Carolina. N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco introduced Francisco J. Sánchez, under secretary of commerce for international trade, who was the keynote speaker.

During the forum, as part of the economic panel discussion titled "Are We Idle or Moving Forward?," Commerce's Susan Fleetwood, director of the Business and Industry Division, reflected on North Carolina's progress during the Great Recession – its consistently top-ranked business climate, close oversight of financial incentives paid to companies, the thousands of jobs created and billions of dollars in business investment that have flowed into the state, and the growth of workforce training and advanced manufacturing.



(Left-right) Henderson County PED CEO Andrew Tate, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, Duke Energy Economic Development Manager Harry Poovey during a September 2009 Ferncliff CIS Park visit (Photo Courtesy of Hendersonville Times-News)

The backstory on recruiting Sierra Nevada to N.C.

What do product development, marketing and teamwork have in common in economic development? In the most recent example, they represent some of the key ingredients for successfully recruiting companies like Sierra Nevada to North Carolina.

Following an evaluation in the Duke Energy Site Readiness Program, a large tract of land called Ferncliff in Mills River near the Asheville Regional Airport was submitted for the N.C. Department of Commerce CIS Program by the Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development. CIS is the acronym for the Certified Industrial Site program that was designed and implemented by the AdvantageWest Economic Development Group in 1995. Following several successful years across Western North Carolina the CIS program was adopted by the N.C. Department of Commerce and launched state-wide. In 2009, the Ferncliff CIS Park became one of the first sites in the state to become certified under version 3.0 of the CIS program setting the stage for a shovel ready site to be presented to companies like Sierra Nevada.

Anita R. Brown-Graham, delivered the Welcome Address on Feb. 6.

Also on Feb. 6, economist Mike Walden delivered "An Economic Perspective." N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Community Development Henry McCoy moderated a panel in the well-being track titled, "Cultivating Gen Z as Leaders." N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco spoke about Gen Z's impact on North Carolina's economic development in a video produced prior to the forum by the Institute for Emerging Issues. [See the video.](#)



Helen Ruth Almond, executive director of the Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor, in front of one of the new signs.

Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor signs unveiled

The new "gateway" signs that will mark the entrance along major highways to the four-county Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor area were unveiled Jan. 31 in a dedication ceremony at the Jonesville Welcome Center.

The "Entering the Yadkin Valley" signs are a part of the effort to market the upper Yadkin Valley in Wilkes, Caldwell, Surry and Yadkin counties as a destination for tourists.

The signs will be placed on U.S. 421 at the Wilkes-Watauga county line and the Wilkes-Yadkin county line, in Caldwell County near the intersection of U.S. 321 and N.C. 268, and on Interstate 77 at the North Carolina-Virginia line.

[Heritage Corridor signs unveiled](#) (*The Wilkes Journal-Patriot*, Feb. 1)

Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number

AdvantageWest's primary responsibility is to market and promote western North Carolina. In the case of the Sierra Nevada project, AdvantageWest marketing staff identified the company's potential expansion to the East Coast while participating in an industry event in Tulsa, Okla. This led to AdvantageWest originally submitting 11 sites in five counties across the region, including the Fernciff CIS Park. Sierra Nevada narrowed their search to three of these sites and later made the Fernciff CIS Park the finalist site in North Carolina versus locations in Tennessee and Virginia. The company indicated that they looked at approximately 200-sites east of the Mississippi in the United States. AdvantageWest served as a base of operations during the company's visits to western North Carolina.

In order to reinforce the efforts of a large team in North Carolina that continued to meet with the company on each of their visits, a smaller team was assembled to complete a recruitment trip to the company's headquarters in California. This recruitment team included participants from Henderson County PED, the WNC Legislative Delegation, AdvantageWest and the N.C. Department of Commerce. The recruiting team toured all of the company's facilities and completed in-depth negotiations with all of the C-Level executives of the company. This outreach by the recruiting team was reinforced by legislative leaders working with the Governor to address the company's needs for their future operations in North Carolina. The Sierra Nevada management team reciprocated by returning to North Carolina for final negotiations hosted by Governor Bev Perdue in Raleigh.

of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - Feb. 7, 2012

New projects assigned:	34
Projects announced:	8
Jobs announced:	1,821
Capital investment announced:	\$144M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	88
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	1,825

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [NCCU dedicates lunch counter from 1960 sit-ins](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, Feb. 6)
- [CentMesh aims for first open-air Wi-Fi network](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Feb. 6)
- [Charlotte-area fifth-grader wins Super Bowl honor](#) (*The Charlotte Observer*, Feb. 5)
- [First Lady to attend Raleigh fund raiser](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Feb. 5)

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