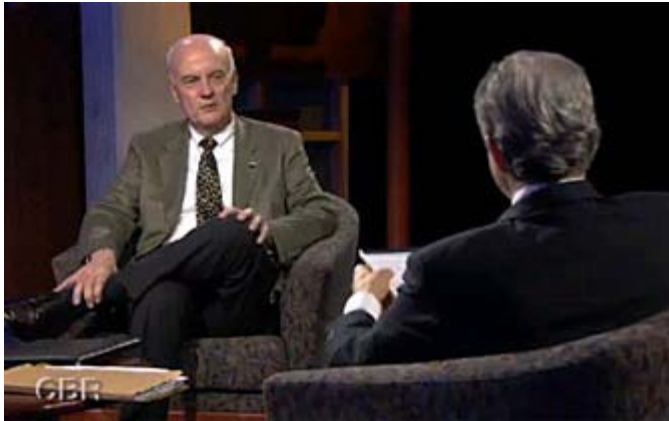


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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Carolina Business Review features Crisco

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco was featured on the Jan. 30 episode of "Carolina Business Review," a weekly broadcast seen on PBS stations throughout North and South Carolina. Talking to host Chris William, Crisco said that there is likely to be a "gulf in timing, in addition to concept," between what economists call a recovery from the current recession and job increases. Crisco said he also believes that advanced manufacturing will flourish in North Carolina, and that companies come to North Carolina for the state's quality of life and workforce. [See the video.](#)

Cigarette tube maker to bring 35 jobs to Rockingham County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Feb. 4 announced that Commonwealth Brands Inc. (CBI), a national manufacturer of tobacco and tobacco products, will expand its operations in Rockingham County. The company will invest \$6.7 million and create 35 jobs in 2010. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$100,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Melissa Smith was the developer on this project.

"We continue to work hard to create jobs across our state," said Perdue. "North Carolina is a great location for international companies looking to expand. Our top business climate and our tremendous workforce continues to be very attractive to growing companies."

CBI, a wholly owned subsidiary of Imperial Tobacco Group in England, manufactures and distributes blended and fine cut tobaccos, cigarettes and cigarette tubes. CBI, headquartered in Kentucky, owns and operates the former American Tobacco

IBM unveils green data center

Gov. Bev Perdue joined IBM officials and community leaders Feb. 4 to unveil the company's greenest data center. The \$360 million Research Triangle Park facility uses half the energy of a typical complex. The new data center, IBM's largest in the world, was designed to support companies moving into cloud computing, where the operating and other software are stored at a remote site and used as needed instead of stored on a user's computer. IBM owns or operates more than 450 data centers worldwide.

Raleigh group wins cash for Super Bowl ad

An ad for Doritos by Raleigh's 5 Point Productions was chosen as the second-place favorite for Super Bowl ads by the USA Today Ad Meter, garnering the group \$650,000. Titled "Underdog," the ad features a Labrador Retriever who outsmarts a guy in order to get a bag of the snacks.

[Raleigh group wins \\$650k for "Underdog" Super Bowl ad](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Feb. 8)

Road Show: ITD travels to meet with businesses

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's International Trade Division will take its expertise on the road April 12 – 16 to meet with North Carolina businesses interested in expanding their presence in the international marketplace. Division staff and the state's foreign trade representatives will kick off their 2010 Go Global Road Show in Wilmington on April 12 and travel to cities across the state. Additional seminars will be held during that week in Kinston, Raleigh, Charlotte and High Point. North Carolina companies can learn about opportunities in world markets through individual meetings with state's foreign trade representatives. To register for the Road Show or for more information, contact Bethany Khouri-Wisbey at (919) 715-1855 or bkhouri-wisbey@nccommerce.com. Information is also available online at

facility in Reidsville, where 224 people are employed.

The company plans to expand its Reidsville operations by adding a new product line for cigarette tubes, which are currently manufactured in Canada and will be sold across the U.S. and Canada. While salaries will vary by job function, the new positions will pay an average annual wage of \$37,571, not including benefits, which is higher than the Rockingham County average annual wage of \$30,472. [Read more.](#)

Recovery Act funding to boost energy efficiency, create green jobs in 6 N.C. communities

Gov. Bev Perdue on Feb. 3 announced that another \$755,148 in federal Recovery Act funding for energy efficiency block grants has been awarded to help six local agencies create jobs and save on utility and fuel bills. The six grants mark the second distribution of money from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program in North Carolina, for a total of nearly \$1.5 million to a dozen local agencies. Additional grants are expected to be announced in the coming weeks as funding applications are reviewed and acted on.

"These recovery dollars will create new jobs while helping communities and taxpayers save on their energy bills," said Perdue. "This program is another excellent example of how local, state and federal agencies are collaborating to create green jobs in North Carolina."

The grants program is administered by the North Carolina Energy Office, part of the state's Dept. of Commerce, to encourage energy conservation and economic investment in counties, municipalities, community colleges and public schools. A total of \$7.2 million is available to local government agencies and \$6.3 million to public schools and community colleges. [Read more.](#)

Steel tubing maker to bring 40 jobs to Cleveland County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Feb. 3 announced that Solaris Industries Inc., an international manufacturer of steel tubing, will locate a new facility in Cleveland County. The company plans to invest \$3.2 million and create 40 jobs during the next three years in Kings Mountain. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$50,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Ron Leitch was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs continues to be my number one priority," said Perdue. "North Carolina is attractive to international companies looking for the perfect place to expand because of our skilled, dedicated workforce and our top-notch business climate."

Solaris Industries is a wholly owned subsidiary of Delhi Solac Inc. of Canada. The company produces steel tubing for use in furniture, greenhouses, fencing, store displays, scaffolding, recreational equipment, garage doors and the restaurant, hospital and automotive industries.

The company plans to open a new manufacturing facility in Kings Mountain to better serve an expanding U.S. market. While salaries will vary by job function, the new positions will pay an average annual wage of \$32,080, not including benefits, which is higher than the Cleveland County average

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- April 12: Wilmington -- McKeithan Center, Cape Fear Community College - Doing Business in Mexico
- April 13: Kinston -- Small Business Center, Lenoir Community College - Doing Business in China
- April 14: Raleigh/Cary -- Wake Tech Community College, Western Wake Campus -- Doing Business in China
- April 15: Charlotte -- Central Piedmont Community College, Harris Conference Center - Doing Business in Canada
- April 16: High Point -- High Point Chamber of Commerce -- Doing Business in Japan

January economic overview released

On Feb. 4, the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Policy, Research & Strategic Planning Division released its Monthly Overview of North Carolina's Economy for January 2010. North Carolina's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in December increased to 11.2 percent. unemployment rate surpassed the previous historic high of 11.1 percent, ending a string of six consecutive months where unemployment either improved slightly or remained relatively the same. North Carolina's average annual labor underutilization rate for 2009 was 17.7 percent. [Read the overview.](#)

Among the findings:

- Non-farm employment decreased between November and December.
- The number of combined announced closings and layoffs and the approximate number of workers affected increased in December.
- There were slightly more than 9,000 announced jobs and approximately \$1.3 billion in announced capital investment in the state for the fourth quarter 2009 (Oct. 09 – Dec. 09).
- Preliminary estimates suggest 850,000 jobs were lost in December, worse than expected. However, the pace of job loss has slowed markedly.

Register now for Governor's Conference at early bird rate

Early bird registration for the N.C. Governor's Conference on Hospitality & Tourism, March 21-23 in New Bern, continues through Feb. 19, so now's the time to take advantage of the \$50 early bird discount. Whether you work with a destination marketer, attraction or operate a tourism-related business, this is the can't miss conference for you this year.

annual wage of \$31,200. [Read more.](#)



Talecris Biotherapeutics in Clayton is among the growing regional companies that announced a total \$1.9 million in new investments in 2009.

RTRP reports record year

[Research Triangle Regional Partnership](#) is reporting a record year for business investment. Growing companies announced \$1.9 billion in new investments during 2009 for projects expected to create more than 10,000 jobs. The announcements came from both new and existing companies, domestic and international, in a broad range of industries all across the 13-county region, in both rural and urban areas.

Walden predicts slow economic growth

N.C. State economics professor Michael Walden was one of the featured speakers at the 49th annual N.C. City and County Management Seminar, which took place Feb 3-5 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham. Walden stated that the state's economy appears to have bottomed out and should now begin a slow recovery from the recession.

Gov. Bev Perdue delivered the keynote address at the seminar, and also stated that it would take time to get the economy back to where it was before the recession.

[Slow economic recovery predicted](#) (The Herald-Sun, Feb. 4)

US Airways, community colleges earn 2010 economic development honors

[Charlotte Regional Partnership](#) has announced the recipients of its annual economic development awards. On May 25, the Partnership will honor US Airways with the private-sector Jerry Award, while all 10 community and technical colleges within the 16-county Charlotte region will be recognized with the public-sector award. They are Catawba Valley Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Cleveland Community College, Gaston College, Mitchell Community College, Northeastern Technical College, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, South Piedmont Community College, Stanly Community College, and York Technical College.

"We couldn't narrow it down to just one college. Each has made a significant, ongoing impact on our regional economy and is essential to workforce development in the areas that it

Network with more than 500 of the state's hospitality and tourism leaders while gaining new insights into North Carolina's travel industry. Learn how to use social media effectively. See how national tourism policy issues affect your community. Hear what your neighbors are doing that works and how to do it yourself. And take some time to visit beautiful, historic New Bern as North Carolina's colonial capital celebrates its 300th anniversary. You'll leave the conference with new ideas and renewed enthusiasm for 2010.

[Click here](#) to register for the Governor's Conference now. New information is being added daily to the Web site, so watch [the Web site](#) for updates. For sponsorship information or additional information about the Governor's Conference, contact Heidi Walters at (919) 715-6702 or via hwalters@nccommerce.com.

Article cites N.C. as an example

A recent article in The Arizona Republic praised North Carolina for its efforts in economic recovery. The article cites Research Triangle Park and state and local incentives for attracting high tech business and jobs from around the world. The article also points out that Gov. Bev Perdue's first priority is jobs.

[Arizona needs job growth strategy to recover](#) (The Arizona Republic, Jan. 31)



In SYNC: Donna Phillips

Originally from Murfreesboro, Senior Economic Developer Donna Phillips is the manager for the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's regional office in Greenville. A graduate of East Carolina University, Donna still pulls for the Pirates and often spends her free time volunteering at the university.

Donna works with various industries including pharmaceutical production, wood products,

serves," said Ronnie Bryant, president and CEO of the Charlotte Regional Partnership. "The customized training that they offer businesses gives us a competitive advantage as we meet and talk with advisors and corporations that are making decisions about where to expand, consolidate or relocate their companies."

The community colleges and US Airways are invaluable business recruitment tools for the Charlotte region. Bryant said a skilled workforce and robust infrastructure are two of the top qualities that can make or break a deal.

US Airways is being recognized for being the centerpiece of a regional transportation infrastructure that easily and quickly connects Charlotte – and regional businesses – to customers, suppliers, visitors and friends throughout the world. In the past year, the airline has added service to Honolulu, Paris, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paolo. Daily, year-round nonstop service between Rome and Charlotte begins May 13.

N.C. Pavilion at BIO to feature new look

The N.C. Pavilion for the BIO Conference, scheduled to take place in Chicago, May 3-6, is getting a whole new look this year. The North Carolina Biotechnology Center, in partnership with the N.C. Dept. of Commerce and NCBIO, is planning an impressive showcase of the state's life-science community. More than 60 companies are now participating in the Pavilion. Bronze sponsorships -- which include a listing at the Pavilion and inclusion in a promotional video loop -- are still available. For more information, contact Kendyle Woodard at the Biotechnology Center at (919) 549-8873 or Kendyle_Woodard@ncbiotech.org.

First in Flight LinkedIn group launched

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce has launched the LinkedIn group "First in Flight - North Carolina Aerospace Professionals." Jim Roberts, business development manager for aerospace, IT, alternative energy and nanotechnology moderates the group, and posts relevant articles and Webinars. If you are on LinkedIn, and are interested in connecting with aerospace and defense professionals in our state, please [check out the group](#).

NYC mission draws immediate results

The Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development's New York Media Mission on Jan. 13 resulted in immediate coverage for North Carolina and will continue to benefit the state in the coming year. In addition to confirmed editorial placements in Town and Country Magazine and Country Living, several North Carolina partners were interviewed for Erik Hastings' nationally syndicated Travel Talk Live radio show on WABC radio. Travel Show Live, the nation's first on-air and online travel show reaching more than 300,000 followers every week, also featured North Carolina on its first ever Destination Spotlight, an hour-long show highlighting the diverse appeal of North Carolina. [View part of the Travel Show Live segment](#).

concrete and brick building products, and construction equipment manufacturing. Recently she worked with DuPont's Kinston facility to recruit the Sorona Project, in which Toyota will use DuPont fibers in a new green car.

She says that Eastern North Carolina has many growing industry sectors such as metalworking, precision instruments, rubber, nonresidential building products and marine-trade related segments. She also says that the state's versatile workforce, excellent infrastructure and superior workforce development training make it a good fit for many industry sectors.

"Eastern N.C. has a remarkable appeal to companies," she says. "We have a dedicated workforce, great available sites for new construction and generally offer a lower cost to do business. Our close proximity to the coast and numerous water amenities is a strong plus for us. There is a strong sense of loyalty, family and history that prove we are a nice place to live, work and play."

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the Division of Business and Industry (B&I) 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 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. 8, 2010

New projects assigned:	57
Projects announced:	9
Jobs created:	1,197
Capital invested:	\$186.4M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	106
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	2,347

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Recovery Act Funding to Create Green Jobs. Boost Energy Efficiency in Six Communities Statewide](#) (Carolina Newswire, Feb. 8)
- [Data centers go green](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Feb. 5)
- [Maker of tobacco products to add 35 jobs in Reidsville](#) (The News & Record -

Greensboro, Feb. 5)

- [Area census jobs remain available](#) (Lexington Dispatch, Feb. 5)
- [CPCO offers jobs fast track](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Feb. 5)

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