

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



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, Epic Games President Mike Capps, NetApp Director of Scalable SAN Engineering Greg Keller; Governor Bev Perdue; North Carolina Technology Association President and CEO Brooks Raiford, Red Hat Vice President of Open Source Affairs Michael Tiemann, Cicso Systems Vice President of Technical Services Acquisition Integration Joe Novak

## Executive briefing helps build relationships with California IT execs

The Friends of North Carolina program held a luncheon and information technology briefing about North Carolina's information technology industry for executives in San Jose, California March 10. The luncheon occurred during an investment mission to California by Governor Bev Perdue and members of the Department of Commerce.

A panel of speakers, including N.C. Technology Association President and CEO Brooks Raiford and Epic Games President Michael Capps, spoke to a group of more than 25 IT executives in the Silicon Valley market.

The luncheon was designed to provide these executives with a briefing on North Carolina's current programs and activities and an opportunity for them to build and sustain relationships with Commerce personnel and other economic development leaders in the state. Governor Bev Perdue provided the opening remarks, and N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco provided closing remarks.



Governor Bev Perdue speaks during the 2011 N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism and Hospitality in Asheville.

## 2010 tourist spending sets record

Governor Bev Perdue announced March 14 that visitors to North Carolina spent a record \$17 billion in 2010, an increase of nine percent from 2009. The number was higher than the previous record of \$16.8 billion set in 2008. The sixth most visited state in the nation, North Carolina gained nearly 2,000 tourism jobs in 2010 while state tax revenues from visitor spending increased 12.6 percent and have increased 16.2 percent since 2007.

"North Carolina's natural and cultural treasures bring people and dollars into our state," Perdue said during remarks at the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism and Hospitality in Asheville. "It's a consistently growing part of our economy. Visitors and vacationers spend money that helps local economies thrive and creates jobs here in North Carolina, which is my number one priority."

More than 40,000 businesses in North Carolina directly provide products and services to travelers. Those visitors spend more than \$46.6 million per day in North Carolina and contribute nearly \$4.1 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

The 2011 Governor's Conference is taking place through March 15 at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville. The conference has attracted more than 550 travel industry leaders and

[Perdue to try to lure away Calif. businesses](#) (WRAL Techwire, March 9)



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll, Gastonia Mayor Jennifer Stultz, Gaston County Board of Commissioners Chairman Donnie Loftis, and Lanxess Executives Andreas Scheurell, Michael Zobel, Werner Breuers and Randy Dearth at the groundbreaking (Photo Courtesy Gaston County EDC)

## Lanxess holds groundbreaking in Gastonia

Governor Bev Perdue on March 9 announced that LANXESS, a manufacturer of high-tech plastics, rubber and chemicals, will locate a new facility in Gaston County. The company plans to create 55 jobs and invest \$15 million during the next three years in Gastonia. The project was made possible in part by a \$250,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Department of Commerce's Dallas Hardenbrook was the developer on this project.

"When we recruit companies to locate in North Carolina, advanced manufacturing is one of our targeted industries," Perdue said. "The high-tech demands of companies like LANXESS are a perfect match for our highly skilled workers."

LANXESS Corporation, the U.S. subsidiary of the German company LANXESS AG, manufactures a wide range of specialty chemicals and polymers throughout the United States. The Gaston County project will manufacture high-tech polyamide (nylon) and thermoplastic polyester (PBT) compounds that enable engineers to design, as an example, lighter and safer parts for automobiles. Increased fuel efficiency standards are driving demand for these advanced materials.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the company anticipates that the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$41,047 plus benefits. The Gaston County average annual wage is \$33,956. [Read more.](#)

[High tech polymer plant to bring 55 new jobs to Gaston County](#) (The Charlotte Observer, March 10)

## West Pharmaceutical to expand

West Pharmaceutical Services on March 10 announced a \$29 million investment in its Kinston facility over the next five years. The State of North Carolina, Lenoir County and City of Kinston representatives also announced as much as \$1.5 million in state and local incentives and up to \$2 million in investment tax credits for West's continued investment in the

marketing partners for a dynamic, educational program and valuable networking opportunities.

During the conference, three distinguished North Carolinians were honored for their significant and continuing contributions to the growth and success of North Carolina's tourism industry. The 2011 Winner's Circle Awards were presented to Dr. Lawrence J. Wheeler, Director, North Carolina Museum of Art; Bill Cecil Jr., President and CEO of The Biltmore Company; and Gary Everhardt, former Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

"With their vision and efforts, these leaders have elevated the state's tourism offerings and thereby enhanced economic development," said N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco. "We thank them for their work and dedication."

The Division is also conducting an abbreviated Tourism Resource Assistance Center program at The Grove Park on March 15 after the conference concludes. TRAC provides accessibility for industry partners and all tourism-related businesses to the Division's staff for informal, one-on-one sessions. [Learn more.](#)



2011 Winner's Circle Awards were presented to (left-right) Gary Everhardt, former Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway, N.C. Museum of Art Director Larry Wheeler, and Biltmore Company President and CEO Bill Cecil Jr.

[2010 tourist spending sets record](#) (WWAY - Wilmington, March 14,)

[3 honored with awards at NC tourism conference in Asheville](#) (The Asheville Citizen-Times, March 14)

## Commerce projects awarded for corporate investment and community impact

Three economic development projects announced by Gov. Bev Perdue and the N.C. Department of Commerce were recently

community. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll and Regional Manager Donna Phillips took part in the announcement.

West selected the Kinston facility from among its plants in North Carolina, Florida and Nebraska for the \$29 million investment. The funding will be used to outfit the facility with world-class technologies, including the proprietary Westar® wash process, the Envision® automated vision inspection system and clean manufacturing processes. With these technologies in place, the Kinston facility will manufacture packaging components used for high-value pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical drug products. This outlay will bring West's total investment in the Kinston facility to \$49 million since 2007. A prior investment of \$20 million was announced in October 2007.

[West Pharmaceutical announces \\$29 million expansion at Kinston plant](#) (*The Kinston Free Press*, March 11)

---

## Project aims to grow clean energy jobs in WNC

AdvantageWest, the six regional COGs in Western North Carolina, and a coalition of leaders from the economic development, education and government sectors have launched a project to grow and market the region's potential in energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean vehicles industries. Funded with grants from the NC Rural Center, the US Dept of Commerce and the Appalachian Regional Commission, the goal of the project is to position the region as a global leader in clean energy innovation. Land-of-Sky Regional Council is serving as project administrator and fiscal agent.

The initiative kicked into high gear recently as more than 100 representatives of businesses, governments, colleges and universities, nonprofits and other organizations around the region gathered in a series of meetings and focus groups as part of an assessment of the region's existing clean energy business cluster. This activity followed several months of foundational work on the project, including the formation of a leadership group that represents business, government, education, the public policy sector, economic development organizations, utilities and related groups. [Learn more.](#)

[Project bills Asheville area as green jobs hub](#) (*The Asheville Citizen-Times*, March 8)

---

## Triangle towns rank high in 'Healthiest Housing Markets.'

Affordable real estate and low construction costs helped put Raleigh-Cary at the top of Builder Magazine's recent "Healthiest Housing Markets" list. Builder Magazine ranked nationwide markets according to appreciation or depreciation of home prices, building permit activity, income and household growth, job growth and unemployment rates. Durham-Chapel Hill came in at No. 3.

"Clearly our market has been able to weather the storm better than most," Tim Minton, executive vice president of the Home Builders Association of Raleigh-Wake County, told the News & Observer. "Part of it is our prices never accelerated like other markets did so we've not had to recover from that part of it."

According to *The News & Observer*, single-family building permits increased 16 percent in the Raleigh-Cary market and

selected to receive 2011 CiCi Awards by *Trade & Industry Development*, a leading magazine dedicated to site selection. The 6th annual CiCi awards go to projects announced in 2010 that have made a significant Corporate Investment and Community Impact. Together, the three projects expect to create 764 direct jobs and bring \$886 million in corporate investments to the state.

"Creating jobs is our number one priority," said N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco. "These projects, along with our other successes in 2010, will have significant impacts on local communities and the state as a whole."

The CiCi awards are unique in that it is a dual-awards program. It not only highlights the largest corporate investment projects, but also recognizes those projects that may not involve large investments, but made the most notable impact on communities. Criteria for the Community Impact division include number of new jobs created, number of current jobs retained, unemployment figures, income level of the region, and plant closings.

North Carolina tied for the most number of awards with two other states. The two projects given awards in the Community Impact division are Facebook in Rutherford County and Magna Composites LLC in Rowan, Caldwell, and Catawba counties. The Caterpillar project in Forsyth County was recognized for Corporate Investment. [Read more.](#)

---



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Division of International Trade Director Jean Davis, Office of Science and Technology Director John Hardin and Southeast TechInventures CEO Karen LeVert

## John Hardin and Jean Davis attend COIN Open House

The Center of Innovation for Nanobiotechnology held an open house March 8 at its new headquarters in the Venable Center in Durham. N.C. Department of Commerce Division of International Trade Director Jean Davis and Office of Science and Technology Director John Hardin attended the open house.

14 percent in Durham-Chapel Hill last year. Homes are now more affordable all across the Triangle. [Learn more.](#)

---

## Tourism promotes N.C. at ITB Berlin

Director of International Marketing Heidi Walters is promoting North Carolina at ITB Berlin, the world's largest tourism tradeshow, March 9-13 in Germany. She's meeting with 40 tour operators, media and airline representatives over the duration of the conference. German visitors represent the 2nd largest overseas market to the state. The average stay in the U.S. for German visitors is 16 days, with 7 spent in North Carolina. They spend an average of \$555 per person – more than domestic visitors.

---

## Public Staff's Gruber delays retirement

Less than a month after announcing his retirement, the state's top consumer advocate in utility matters changed his mind - swayed by duty's call.

Robert Gruber said March 14 that he will not step down after all from the position he has held nearly 28 years as director of the Public Staff.

Instead, Gruber, 67, will stay on the job at least through the completion of the complex utility merger between Duke Energy and Progress Energy, which is expected to be finalized at the end of this year.

[Utility merger delays retirement](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 15)

---

## Cleveland County approved for Commerce loan

The N.C. Department of Commerce Finance Center has announced that Cleveland County has been approved for a loan in the amount of \$1 million to construct a 100,000-square-foot shell building in the Foothills Commerce center. The building is expected to support a minimum of 30 new jobs. The Foothills Economic Development Corporation will manage the construction process and marketing of the building of the County.

COIN will also host a Nanomedicine Commercialization Workshop during the N.C. Nanotechnology Commercialization Conference March 29 in Charlotte. [Learn more about the event.](#)

[COIN moving HQ from Raleigh to Durham near American Tobacco Campus](#) (TechJournal South, Jan. 10)

---

## Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry 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 - March 15, 2011

New projects assigned:	76
Projects announced:	31
Jobs created:	3,421
Capital invested:	\$525M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	283
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	4,397

---

## N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Discovery could make LEDs brighter](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 14)
- [Lowe's millwork plant is growing, adding jobs](#) (*The Dispatch* - Lexington, March 14)
- [Triad's temp hiring gets boost](#) (*The News & Record* - Greensboro, March 10)

---

**(919) 733-4151**

[Business Services](#) | [Community Services](#)  
[Tourism Services](#) | [Workforce Services](#) | [Press Room](#)

Building Location:  
301 North Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:  
4301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

---

[Invite a Friend](#)   [Unsubscribe](#)   [Subscribe](#)   [feedback@nc-sync.com](mailto:feedback@nc-sync.com)   [SYNC archive](#)

