

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



Matt Guth of Eaton's Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure department and Tracee Humes, Product Manager ETI for Eaton, watch as Governor Bev Perdue tries charging an electric vehicle at the plant.

## Perdue visits Eaton plant in Asheville

Governor Bev Perdue visited the Eaton Corporation plant in Asheville March 14. While there, she toured the plant's new electric vehicle charging station production line. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll, Western N.C. Governor's Office Director Juleigh Sitton and members from the Asheville Chamber of Commerce also participated in the tour.

[In Asheville, Gov. Perdue vows no retreat on schools](#) (*The Citizen-Times* - Asheville, March 14)



The Platform Party at the March 17 Boyles Lecture included (left-



Gaston County Board of Commissioners Chairman Donnie Loftis, Gastonia Mayor Jennifer Stulz, N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll and REPI S.p.A. President Ferruccio Angiolini during the announcement that the company will locate a new office, lab and production facility in Gaston County.

## Italian company announces HQ, plant for Gaston County

Governor Bev Perdue on March 17 announced that REPI, a producer of liquid colors and additives, will locate a new office, lab and production facility in Gaston County. The company plans to create 27 jobs and invest \$5.8 million during the next three years in Gastonia. The project was made possible in part by a \$75,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"North Carolina is attracting an increasing number of companies, not just from other states, but from around the world," Perdue said. "They know this is a terrific place to do business, where our investments in education have built a highly skilled workforce, perfectly suited for the sort of R&D and production work that REPI performs, and a business climate that fuels success."

REPI develops and produces high performance liquid colors, additives and dosing systems for applications in the polyurethane (automotive, footwear, furniture) and thermoplastic sectors (soft drink bottles, cosmetics). Based in Italy, REPI has been present in the U.S. for 20 years, covering the polyurethane market through a distributor based in Maine, and active in five northeastern states.

right) Walker College of Business Dean Randy Edwards, Appalachian State University Chancellor Ken Peacock, The Duke Endowment President Gene Cochrane, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, N.C. Senator James T. Broyhill and Managing Director of Wells Fargo Securities Edward Boyles.

## Crisco speaks at Harlan E. Boyles Distinguished CEO Executive Luncheon & Lecture series

N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco gave the keynote address at the Harlan E. Boyles Distinguished CEO Executive Luncheon & Lecture series, March 17 at Appalachian State University. This was the 47th program in the series.

The series brings a chief executive officer to campus each semester for classroom visits, an executive luncheon, lecture and reception. This provides many opportunities for interaction with students, faculty and the business community. A traditional part of the Boyles CEO Lecture Series is the Executive Luncheon held prior to the lecture. Along with university and college administrators, invited guests include leaders of the business community, the college's Business Advisory Council, the Walker Fellows and MBA students and the 24 William R. Holland Fellows from Appalachian and Fudan Universities.

Harlan Boyles served the State of North Carolina for 49 years, including six four-year terms as Treasurer. He was dedicated to education and, through his involvement with Appalachian and the Walker College, was able to share his experience, advice and wise counsel with hundreds of students and future business leaders. In 1991, with the assistance of N.C. Senator James T. Broyhill, an endowment fund was established to support the Boyles lecture series. In 2000, on the occasion of Boyles' retirement from state government, a second endowment was established to support a faculty professorship and student scholarships.

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## Obama praises small Charlotte company

President Barack Obama praised Rhino Assembly Corporation, a small Charlotte company, during his weekly radio address, and in an OP Ed article in *USA Today*. The president, who is currently visiting Brazil, mentioned Rhino as a company that is benefitting from strengthened economic ties to the South American company.

[Obama: Jobs at top of Latin America agenda](#) (*USA Today*, March 16)

[Small Charlotte company praised by President Obama](#) (News 14 Carolina, March 21)

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## Nanotech Conference comes to Charlotte next week

Building on the successes from the past two years in Raleigh and Greensboro, the 2011 N.C. Nanotechnology Commercialization Conference comes to the UNC-Charlotte Barnhart Student Center on March 29-30. This annual conference brings together leading entrepreneurs, business leaders, researchers and investors to accelerate the commercialization of nanotechnology and nanoscience

REPI LLC, a fully owned subsidiary of REPI, was established in Charlotte in 2003 with commercial offices, labs and warehouses and now needs to start production on site as a global company selling worldwide. REPI will establish a new Western Hemisphere Headquarters in Gastonia, conducting research and development, production and administrative services to serve their expanding markets. The new facility will also accommodate future expansion.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$41,586 plus benefits. The Gaston County average annual wage is \$33,956. [Read more.](#)

[Italian company to build in tech park](#) (The Gaston Gazette, March 17)

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## Perdue, Crisco Return from productive California business trip

During a three-day business development trip earlier this month to Northern California, Governor Bev Perdue, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and Commerce developers met and held discussions with more than 35 companies, promoting North Carolina as a location for their business. The governor and Commerce led a recruitment mission focused on IT, life sciences, pharmaceuticals and serious gaming industries. In addition, the governor and secretary met with several venture capital firms to discuss strategies to increase the presence and availability of venture capital in North Carolina.

During the course of the visit, Perdue and Crisco met with California-based executives for several businesses with an established presence in North Carolina, including Facebook, Google and Apple. They discussed how North Carolina can best support the businesses' operations and help expand their presence in the state. They also met with companies considering expanding their operations into North Carolina and promoted the benefits doing business in our state. The N.C. Department of Commerce will aggressively follow up with all the companies as we continue our efforts to attract new jobs and business investment.



(Left-right) David H. Murdock Research Institute

innovations.

The 2011 NCNCC has a theme of "Nano: Technology Building Blocks," which highlights the role of nanotech and nanoscience in almost every aspect of technology, health and medicine. The conference agenda offers more than 12 engaging sessions highlighting key topics in nanotechnology such as cutting-edge research and high-growth companies in North Carolina as well as emerging technology applications in electronics, medicine and environmental sustainability.

This year's program features three keynote addresses, one of which will be given by Travis Earles, the assistant director for Nanotechnology from the White House Office of Science and Technology. Two new additions to the NCNCC this year are one-on-one pitch and coaching sessions with experts for companies and optional half-day morning workshops. The morning workshops include a non-academic career pathways workshop with free resume review, a workshop on "Avoiding Patent Disasters," which may qualify for Continuing Legal Education, and a workshop on nano-biotechnology commercialization.

The 2011 NCNCC is the premier venue to network with professionals, discover the latest nanoscience advancements, and gain insight on commercialization strategies to promote the creation of high-wage jobs and businesses in nanotechnology. As a global leader in nanotechnology, this year's conference is expected to draw in hundreds of participants from across the state, nation and the world. [Online early registration](#) ends on March 25.

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## Celgard to expand in Cabarrus County

With state and local government support, green technology continues to grow in North Carolina. One of the latest examples of this burgeoning green industry is [Celgard](#), LLC, a subsidiary of Polypore International and a major global manufacturer of separators for lithium-ion batteries. Celgard will invest \$65 million to expand capacity at its Concord facility, which produces lithium-ion battery separators for electric drive vehicles.

"We are very encouraged by the early success of the initial lithium-based EDVs launched into the marketplace, as well as the rapidly increasing number of programs in which we are actively participating," Robert B. Toth, Polypore president and CEO, said in a statement. "We are actively involved in development programs for over 50 vehicles scheduled for launch between now and 2015. We are working closely with our customers to evaluate the rate of acceleration in EDV demand and the corresponding impact on our capacity needs, and we will continue to make the necessary investments to ensure sustainable growth over the long term." [Read more.](#)

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## Workforce training goes virtual in WNC

While the Research Triangle Park is known as North Carolina's tech epicenter, high-tech companies are locating and expanding all across the state. The western part of North Carolina, thanks to available natural resources and existing industry infrastructure, has become a magnet for data centers, attracting the likes of Apple, Facebook and Google. In order to supply companies like these with a highly trained workforce, Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock is employing an interactive 3-D stereo simulation environment called a

*President Michael Luther, Bijay Singh of the BASF Plant Science Technology Center, Novozymes North America President Adam Monroe, N.C. Biotechnology Center President Norris Tolson, N.C. Biotechnology Center VP of Agricultural Biotechnology Gwyn Riddick, Syngenta Biotechnology Director of Technology Evaluation Simon Warner, N.C. Community College System Director of BioNetwork Life Science Initiatives Doug Drabble and Clyde Higgs of the N.C. Research Campus* (©2011 Donna Jernigan, [www.jerniganphoto.com](http://www.jerniganphoto.com))

## Tech leaders participate in ag biotech roundtable

Several North Carolina life science leaders participated in a recent agricultural biotechnology roundtable facilitated by *Business North Carolina* magazine. The roundtable took place at the N.C. Research Campus in Kannapolis. Topics included the global impact of North Carolina ag biotech companies, the state's efforts to attract and retain these companies, and ways the N.C. Community College System is addressing the industry's workforce needs.

[Biotechnology Round Table](#) (*Business North Carolina*, March 2011)

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## American Motorcyclist names 3 in N.C. among top roads

In its April issue, *American Motorcyclist* magazine names the Top 15 Best Roads in America to ride motorcycles -- and three North Carolina highways are among the list. The Blue Ridge Parkway ranked No. 2, followed immediately by U.S. 129, "The Tail of the Dragon," at No. 3, and Cherohola Skyway came in at No. 7. The results came from a survey of members of the [American Motorcyclist Association](#).

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## NCTA holds tech day at the legislature

The N.C. Technology Association held its annual Tech Day March 15 at the General Assembly. Tech Day is the group's effort to spotlight technology's importance to North Carolina's economy and present their public policy agenda to legislators. Cisco sponsored this year's legislative breakfast, which was followed by a showcase of exhibitors including AT&T, Lenovo, IBM and more.

[Tech Day boosts legislative agenda](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 16)

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## Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of

Computer Automatic Virtual Environment, or CAVE for short.

The CAVE, which cost approximately \$450,000, is part of the college's simulation and game development department. Inside the graphic environment, students don special glasses to interact with virtual floating objects.

"We investigate a lot of different topics in the game and simulation industry," Richard Sykes, a simulation and game development instructor, told the (Thomasville) *Times-News*. "We do 3-D and 2-D. We talk about level design. We talk about modeling different aspects."

The CAVE offers applications for a variety of industries from architecture and city planning to training medical and emergency personnel. [Read more.](#)

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## High Point Market's 'Market Week' campaign and website win Addys

The 2011 Addy Awards, a competition sponsored by the American Advertising Federation to recognize excellence in marketing, conferred high honors on two recent High Point Market communications initiatives. The awards were held in early March by the Piedmont Triad chapter of AAF.

The Market Week campaign for Fall 2010 won a Gold Addy in the Multiple Media B-to-B category and finished as runner-up for Best of Show. [The High Point Market Authority website](#) captured another Gold Addy, the highest award given in the B-to-B website category. [Read more.](#)

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## Enrollment, course numbers up in '12 in 6' program

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Workforce Development continues to track the progress of Governor Bev Perdue's JobsNOW "12 in 6" initiative. The community colleges have been asked to provide monthly reports regarding the number of students enrolled, courses offered and the number of jobs created and maintained. The numbers through Feb. 28 show that 19,567 students are enrolled in the program (up from 19,340 as of Jan. 31), and 2,925 courses have been offered (up from 2,900 as of Jan. 31).

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 22, 2011

New projects assigned:	84
Projects announced:	35
Jobs created:	3,508
Capital invested:	\$542M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	326
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	4,865

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## N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [The jobs creation report: Them that got get](#) (*The Star-News* - Wilmington, March 21)
- [All Things Green as ASU Featured in ARC Report](#) (*Go Blue Ridge*, March 18)
- [U.S. 17 project ahead of schedule, more funding possible](#) (*The Sun Journal* - New Bern, March 17)
- [Energy grants available for businesses, non-profits](#) (*VaNc News*, March 16)

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