

syncTM Highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



Downtown Revitalization Leaders Honored at Main Street Conference

North Carolina Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III and Assistant Secretary Dr. Patricia Mitchell highlighted downtown revitalization efforts across the state at an awards celebration in Morganton March 19.

The N.C. Main Street Awards Conference featured 23 awards to participants in the N.C. Main Street and Small Town Main Street programs. Winners are recognized for excellence in downtown revitalization efforts in categories that include promotion, organization, design and economic restructuring.

"Congratulations are in order for North Carolina's Main Street Champions and award winning programs," said Secretary Skvarla. "Their hard work breathes new life into downtowns all across our state and provides opportunities for small business as well as entertainment options for our citizens."

The North Carolina Main Street program helps small towns preserve their historic fabric. Local resources help participants build on their community's unique characteristics to create vibrant central business districts. This year's award winners were chosen by a panel of independent judges from dozens of applications submitted by Main Street participants throughout the state.

The Small Town Main Street program is designed to provide downtown revitalization assistance to small towns with a population of less than 7,500 that are not likely, due to size or resource limitations, to pursue the regular program. Admittance into the Small Town Main Street program is through a competitive application process.



Secretary Skvarla breaks ground for Packrite's expansion with company owners and High Point's Mayor

Speciality Packaging Firm to Add 100 New Jobs in Guilford County

Packrite, LLC will expand its operations in Guilford County and create 100 new jobs over the next five years. The company plans to invest \$8.9 million in building and equipment in the city of High Point over the course of the first year. North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla attended an event at the company celebrating the announcement on March 17.

"Packrite is a home-grown, locally-owned North Carolina company that has a successful history in High Point," said Governor Pat McCrory. "This is a company that was started during a down economy and has grown to be an industry leader in just a few short years."

Secretary Skvarla added, "Packrite is a company that is unique to its industry and has been successful in creating its own niche. By deciding to expand here and keep all of its operations in North Carolina, the company is demonstrating its confidence in our great workforce and resources."

Packrite was founded in 2008 by Mary and Michael Drummond. By 2012, the company was ranked #205 (#1 in Manufacturing) in Inc. magazine's list of fastest growing 500 privately-owned companies in America. The company manufactures high end fluted graphic packaging and folded paperboard packaging for a variety of uses and products.

2014 N.C. SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET AWARDS

- ORGANIZATION: **Cherryville** - *Cherryville Small Town Main Street Master Work Plan*
- PROMOTION: **Benson** - *Say "I Do" In Benson*
- ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING: **Tryon** - *St. Luke's Plaza*



North Carolina Commerce Secretary John Skvarla, Governor Pat McCrory, and North Carolina Cultural Resources Secretary Susan Kluttz at the N.C. Main Street Conference in Morganton

2014 N.C. MAIN STREET AWARDS

- ORGANIZATION:
 - Best Public-Private Partnership in Downtown Revitalization
 - **Sanford** - *Chatham Street Parking Lot*
 - Best Innovation
 - **Burlington** - *The Elon University and Downtown Burlington Partnership for Revitalization*
 - **Eden** - *Rockingham Community College Center for Brewing Sciences*
 - Best Public Relations Effort
 - **Morganton** - *Morganton's Main Street Program Energizes Downtown*
 - Best Fundraising Effort
 - **Fuquay-Varina** - *Dinner on Depot Street*
- PROMOTION:
 - Best Downtown Special Event or Event Series
 - **Wake Forest** - *Wake Forest Dirt Day*
 - Best Image-Building Campaign
 - **Morganton** - *City of Morganton Wayfinding Program*
- ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:
 - Best Economic Development Incentive
 - **Burlington** - *The Burlington Downtown Corporation Small Grants Program*
 - Best Adaptive Reuse Project
 - **Elkin** - *The Liberty Renovation Project*
 - **Newton** - *Repurposing of 19 College Avenue*
 - **Salisbury** - *Emma's of Salisbury*
 - Best Upper Floor Redevelopment
 - **Eden** - *Washington Street Lofts*
 - **Goldsboro** - *Edgerton Building Apartments*
 - **Wilson** - *Nash Street Lofts*
 - Best Business Retention, Expansion or Recruitment Effort
 - **Morganton** - *Creative Arts Center*

Packrite currently has 78 employees in Guilford County.

The project was made possible in part by a performance-based grant from the One North Carolina Fund of up to \$100,000. The One NC Fund provides financial assistance, through local governments, to attract business projects that will stimulate economic activity and create new jobs in the state. Companies receive no money up front and must meet job creation and investment performance standards to qualify for the reimbursement. These grants also require and are contingent upon local matches.

In addition to the [N.C. Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of N.C.](#), other partners that helped with this project include: [North Carolina Community College System](#), [NCWorks](#), the [High Point Economic Development Corporation](#), and the [City of High Point](#).

[Read more.](#)



Company officials from Ply Gem greet Governor McCrory

Governor McCrory Commends Ply Gem on Expansion Progress

Governor Pat McCrory stopped by Ply Gem, an exterior building product manufacturer, for a tour recently while in Columbus County.

The company received a performance-based reimbursement in 2013 from the One North Carolina Fund, soon to be known as the Job:GRO Capital program.

"Ply Gem's success shows why we need to pass our comprehensive N.C. Competes job recruitment plan," said Governor McCrory. "This will continue to create economic opportunities for the people of our state."

Industrial Commission Fraud Unit Steps Up Investigations

State businesses that operate without required workers' compensation coverage should take notice - greater scrutiny of their actions are underway and penalties could be in store.

Andrew T. Heath, Chairman of the North

remembers thinking her organization was also doing a fairly good job of focusing on wellness, so scoring poorly on the first WorkHealthy assessment was "eye opening."

"I know employee health is essential to our organization's success. I didn't realize we could be doing so much more to promote overall wellness," said Bryson.

A staff team calling themselves "Bringing Healthy Back" is leading the effort. The team is careful to survey employees about their wellness interests, priorities, and progress. The initiative's launch included \$50 health and wellness vouchers that staff can spend on things such as exercise equipment and gym memberships.

"We want employees to feel empowered to make their own individual wellness decisions," said Bryson. "We've started providing more nutritious items in our kitchen, and I've noticed we're replacing the healthier items more frequently than the available candy and sweets. Staff has been motivated to share tips and mobile apps to help guide and promote a healthy lifestyle, and employees feel supported not only by management, but by each other."

NCACPA has already improved by two letter grades - representing an average of six significant policy changes, as guided by WorkHealthy.

Bryson shares this advice to businesses considering wellness initiatives: "Take the online assessment to see where you stand, and this will ultimately help identify the areas that most need improvements. Create a small internal team who will support creating a healthy workplace environment. Finally, start small and gradually introduce the concept to your staff so no one feels overwhelmed."

***Healthy Places Change Lives** is a partnership between the N.C. Department of Commerce and Prevention Partners, a nonprofit based in Chapel Hill. Prevention Partners guides schools, workplaces, hospitals and clinics to address the leading causes of preventable disease. The non-profit's Healthy Together NC initiative aims to reach at least 10 organizations in all 100 counties of the state by 2025. Learn more at ForPrevention.org/HealthyTogetherNC*

day courses on Monday and Tuesday and Thursday and Friday, and one-day courses on Wednesday. Participants will be able to choose from a wide range of data-related topics, including information visualization, data curation, data mining and machine learning, the Internet of Things, health informatics, social network analysis, and more.

Data Matters is sponsored by the National Consortium for Data Science (NCDS), the Odum Institute for Social Science Research at UNC Chapel Hill, and the Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI).

For more information, including course descriptions and online registration, visit www.datamatters.org.

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Wells Fargo: 'North Carolina's economy has clearly shifted into high gear'](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - March 30)
- [N.C. development partnership CEO: Hunt for an auto plant may lead to Korea](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - March 27)
- [Vertex Rail CEO Describes Firm's Hiring Efforts At Expo](#) (WilmingtonBiz - March 25)
- [CPCC to provide Sealed Air employees with \\$1.3M in job training](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - March 23)
- [Industry pitches offshore oil, gas](#) (Carteret County News-Times - March 22)
- [Ports CEO Talks Opportunities At Trade Gathering](#) (WilmingtonBiz - March 20)
- [Community broadband debate centered in Wilson](#) (News & Observer - March 20)
- [NC Commerce chief touts necessity of incentives](#) (Independent Tribune - Concord N.C. - March 19)
- [Thomson Plastics locates in Davidson County: 50 jobs, \\$2.5M investment](#) (Fox8 - WGHP - March 19)
- [N.C. Commerce Sec. Skvarla talks DENR, the Senate, JDIG and manufacturing at TBJ Power Breakfast](#) (Triangle Business Journal - March 19)
- [McCrorry bashes N.C. Senate incentives plan: Berger swings back](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - March 19)
- [Crowdfunding event: NC is 'out of business' without incentives. Commerce Secretary says](#) (WRAL TechWire - March 18)

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