

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



(Left-right) Gov. Bev Perdue announces the "Jobs Now: 12 in 6" workforce development initiative at WakeMed in Raleigh with Jeanene Martin, WakeMed senior vice president of human resources, Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Dr. Susan Weaver, WakeMed senior vice president of physician practices, and N.C. Community College President Scott Ralls.

Perdue launches worker training initiative

Gov. Bev Perdue on April 16 launched "[Jobs Now: 12 in 6](#)," a workforce development initiative designed to benefit job seekers, especially those who have lost their jobs due to recent layoffs and plant closures. The initiative will create community college programs in 12 careers, each requiring less than six months to complete. The [N.C. Community College System](#) and the N.C. Dept. of Commerce are collaborating on the program as part of Gov. Perdue's larger JobsNOW initiative, which focuses on job creation and economic development.

The new training programs will be available at all [58 community colleges](#) by the end of September. The state's 24 [workforce boards](#), [JobLink Career Centers](#), and [Employment Security Commission](#) offices will connect job seekers with the training programs and employment opportunities.

"North Carolina is well-known for having an outstanding workforce," said Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. "This program is a great way to help those who have lost their jobs due to the economic downturn and who are eager to get back to work quickly, but who may need to enhance their skills or plan to pursue a new career."

Commerce's Workforce Development Division has allocated \$13.4 million in federal recovery funds to the program. Funding is expected to be distributed to campuses on July 1. [Read more.](#)



N.C. works to lure films

[Click here to see video of the booth in action.](#)

Several leaders from the North Carolina film industry participated in the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Trade Show April 16-18 in Santa Monica, Calif. N.C. Film Office Director Aaron Syrett and industry partners, including the Charlotte Regional Film Commission, Piedmont Triad Regional Film Commission and the Wilmington Film Commission, attended the show. The North Carolina booth included the N.C. Film Office's rocking chair, an oversized director's chair with the FilmNC logo and a motorized rocker, to showcase North Carolina's Southern hospitality and the ease of working in the state. Meetings with television and film representatives were also held. The Locations Trade Show offers a unique opportunity to connect with film industry decision makers and to participate in discussions on issues facing the film industry today.

On-demand flight service available across N.C.

Airport managers and leaders of 11 small communities in North Carolina are working closely with the N.C. Dept. of Transportation Division of Aviation to promote the availability of on-demand air service at their local airports.

The promotion, designated "NCFlyPorts," will work closely with local airports and communities to inform and educate potential users that air service direct to their local airport is available. The communities themselves will benefit from the increased use of the airports as transportation portals and the economic development that air

[Perdue launches job-training initiative to get people working](#)
(WRAL - Raleigh, April 16)

N.C. unemployment highest on record

Unemployment in North Carolina reached 10.8 percent in March, up from 10.7 percent in February, according to figures released April 17 by the N.C. Employment Security Commission. That's double the number (5.4 percent) from March 2008. According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), that's the highest on record for North Carolina.

In total, non-farm payroll employment in the state declined by 41,300 jobs during the month. Nationally, the unemployment rate rose from 8.1 percent in February to 8.5 percent in March.



(Left-right) N.C. Community College President Scott Ralls, Gov. Bev Perdue, Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Greg Burkart of Duff & Phelps

Site selectors hear from Perdue and others about N.C.'s business culture

The 2009 N.C. Site Selectors Invitational, underwritten by the [Friends of North Carolina](#), wrapped up April 21 in Pinehurst. Gov. Bev Perdue, Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Deputy Commerce Sec. Dale Carroll, Transportation Sec. Gene Conti and N.C. Community College President Scott Ralls briefed 37 site selection consultants from across the U.S. and Canada on North Carolina business trends and emerging issues.

New program to help laid-off rural workers start businesses

A new program was launched April 15 to help laid-off rural workers start their own small business. [Project GATE](#), or Growing America Through Entrepreneurship, is being offered by the U.S. Dept. of Labor, and targets dislocated workers from rural counties for a variety of assistance directly related to starting and running a business.

In North Carolina, Project GATE is being offered as a cooperative venture of the Dept. of Commerce, the N.C. Community College System Small Business Center Network, the Employment Security Commission, N.C. REAL Enterprises, local JobLink Career Centers and the [Rural Center](#).

Locally, the Small Business Centers of eight community colleges, which serve 13 rural counties, are partnering with their local JobLink Career Centers to provide GATE services. Dislocated workers in other rural counties may participate

service brings. [Find out more.](#)

The communities participating in the initial program are: Andrews/Murphy Airport, Brunswick County Airport, Currituck County Airport, Dare County Airport, Duplin County Airport, Elizabeth City Regional Airport, Northeastern Regional Airport in Edenton, Rocky Mount - Wilson Regional Airport, Rutherford County - Marchman Field, Clinton-Sampson County Airport, Stanly County Airport

Database: N.C. in top 5 for alternative energy manufacturing

North Carolina was the fifth-best location for corporate facility expansion projects in the manufacturing of alternative energy in the United States in 2008, according to a Conway Data Inc. database.

Conway Data, which publishes *Site Selection* magazine, tracks the growth of power generation from alternative energy sources, such as bio fuels, solar and wind, in its New Plant Database. According to the database, Ohio was the top location, followed by Texas, Pennsylvania and Michigan. The May issue of *Site Selection* magazine explores why these locations have found favor with alternative energy companies, and looks at where such firms might be headed in the future, both inside the United States and overseas.



Haw River Valley recognized

The Haw River Valley has earned a special status by being recognized as an American Viticultural Area (AVA), one of the nation's officially designated grape growing regions. The designation certifies the area has features including climate, soil, topography, and elevation that make it a unique grape growing region. The Haw River Valley viticultural area, covering approximately 868 square miles (555,508 acres), is located in all of Alamance County and portions of Caswell, Chatham, Guilford, Orange, and Rockingham Counties. Other AVAs in North Carolina are the Yadkin Valley and Swan Creek. [Read more from the U.S. Treasury Dept.](#)

through a "virtual site" that includes counseling by telephone and online training programs combined with training and business counseling at local community colleges.

"This program has the potential to do far more than provide a source of income for individuals who've lost jobs," said Billy Ray Hall, president of the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center. "It can help us build homegrown economies in struggling communities all across the state."

DRS to add 100 jobs in Pasquotank County

Gov. Bev Perdue announced April 13 that DRS Technical Services Inc., a global aircraft services supplier, will expand in Pasquotank County. The company, which services U.S. Coast Guard C-130 aircraft in Elizabeth City, plans to create 100 new jobs during the next two years.

While wages will vary by position, the average annual wage for the 100 new jobs is \$48,779, not including benefits, which exceeds the Pasquotank County average wage of \$27,872.

"When DRS explored expanding our global aircraft services business, North Carolina worked harder to rise above other possible locations. State, county and local government agencies worked closely with us to support our expansion plans and create good-paying new jobs," said Al Dietrich, president of DRS's C3 and Aviation Group. [Read more.](#)

Perdue signs legislation authorizing N.C. Aquarium Pier

Gov. Bev Perdue has signed House Bill 628 for the construction of the North Carolina Aquarium Pier at Nags Head, which will create jobs and enhance tourism in one of North Carolina's most popular destinations.

Construction of the pier will provide 555 on-site jobs and 1,250 off-site jobs and a benefit of more than \$14 million to North Carolina's economy. Formerly known as Jennette's Pier, the North Carolina Aquarium Pier will be an educational satellite facility for the aquariums and be constructed to protect the state's sounds and beaches from storm water runoff.

"Jennette's Pier has been a landmark on the Outer Banks for generations and this legislation will help expedite construction and jump-start the economy," said Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight, D-Dare.

International Trade Division travels to meet with businesses

Commerce's International Trade Division takes its expertise on the road this week to support and inform North Carolina businesses interested in expanding their presence in the international marketplace. Division staff and the state's foreign trade representatives kicked off their "Go Global Road Show" in Charlotte April 20. Additional seminars this week are in Candler, High Point, Fayetteville, Kinston and Raleigh.

Companies must be pre-qualified as export-ready and must register with the Dept. of Commerce to attend the sessions. To register for the conference or for more information, contact Bethany Khouri-Wisbey at 919-733-7193. [Read more.](#)

- April 21: Candler - Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College/Enka - Doing Business in

[Haw River Valley designated as U.S. prime grape growing region](#) (WGHP - Greensboro, April 9)

'Main Street' begins filming in Durham

Filming for "Main Street," a contemporary drama about a Southern town, began the week of April 6 in Durham. John Doyle is directing the film, which stars Colin Firth, Orlando Bloom, Andrew McCarthy, Ellen Burstyn, Patricia Clarkson, Amber Tamblyn and Nadya Simpson. "Main Street" will make use of various sites in and around downtown Durham, and is expected to film through the middle of May.

[Shooting begins on 'Main Street'](#) (Durham Herald-Sun, April 7)

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.

January - April 20, 2009

New projects assigned YTD	129
Projects announced YTD:	24
Jobs created YTD:	2,257
Capital invested YTD:	\$441.2 million
Direct Account Interactions (industry visits by existing industry staff) YTD:	552
Calls to the Business ServiCenter YTD:	8,601

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Perdue charting North Carolina's course through troubled waters](#) (Triangle Business Journal, April 17)
- [Film studio wants N.C. to raise incentives for industry](#) (Triangle Business Journal, April 17)
- [Hospital would create 300 jobs](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, April 17)
- [Cleveland County plant cutting 90 jobs](#) (Charlotte Observer, April 16)
- [Stimulus lifts quick job training effort](#) (Triad Business Journal, April 16)
- [DRS Technical Services to add 100 jobs.](#)

- Germany
- April 22: High Point - High Point Chamber of Commerce - Doing Business in China
 - April 23: Fayetteville - Fayetteville Technical Community College - Doing Business in Mexico
 - April 23: Kinston - Lenoir Community College - Doing Business in Korea
 - April 24: Raleigh/Cary - Wake Technical Community College - Doing Business in Canada

Meeting promotes global trade

On April 13, Jean Davis, director of Commerce's International Trade Division, was the invited guest speaker at the N.C. World Trade Association meeting held in RTP. She spoke about "Exploring Global Opportunities in the Current Economy" and emphasized the many resources and programs available to North Carolina businesses seeking to expand overseas.

- [get N.C. incentives](#) (Triangle Business Journal, April 13)
- [N.C. offers \\$1.2M for Coast Guard plane overhaul hub](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, April 13)
- [Shelby furniture plant plans to close in 2 months](#) (Winston-Salem Journal, April 14)
- [ABB moving headquarters to Cary](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, April 14)
- [PPG announces layoffs](#) (Shelby Star, April 16)
- [N.C. Colleges to offer 12 career paths taking less than 6 months](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, April 16)

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