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Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



'Today Show' correspondent Janet Shamlian interviews "Hunger Games" fan tour operator Tammy Hopkins in DuPont State Forest.

## 'Today Show' features N.C. sites in live 'Hunger Games' segment

On the morning of March 30, NBC's "Today Show" featured a [segment about North Carolina](#) film locations used in the blockbuster movie "[The Hunger Games](#)." The 3:44-minute segment featuring North Carolina reached a national audience of 12,206,542, generating \$538,268 in advertising equivalency on America's top-rated morning show program.

"Today" correspondent Janet Shamlian opened the segment by reminding viewers that the film was shot entirely in North Carolina. "You know, it didn't take long, for the fans who can't get enough of 'The Hunger Games' are flocking to the sites where the movie was filmed in search of a little adventure themselves – all of them are here in North Carolina," she said.

Shamlian interviewed N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges about the film's positive impact on the state's economy. The segment profiled Hildebran (Henry River Village) as the movie's District 12, the newly created 'Hunger Games' fan tour, residents of the town, extras from the movie, how North Carolina is capitalizing on the film and mentioned the possibility of the full trilogy being filmed in the state. "The odds are ever in our favor here in North Carolina," Minges said. Shamlian concluded the spot by broadcasting live from DuPont State Recreational Forest, located between Brevard and Hendersonville.



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Economic Development Representative Bernard Torain, Jones Lang LaSalle Vice President Hilary Holmes and N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco in Dallas on March 27

## Texas site selection consultants meet N.C.'s economic development team

On March 27, 30 site selection consultants gathered at the Rosewood Mansion hotel in Dallas, Texas, to hear an update on current business conditions in the state from N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and other state economic developers. With 2012 project activity remaining strong, Secretary Crisco detailed the many ways North Carolina is meeting the challenging environment and providing companies the competitive advantages they need to thrive in the state. The [Friends of North Carolina](#) sponsored the event.



## Red Hat tops \$1B in revenue

[Red Hat](#), the Linux software company that found a way to make money from free software, has joined the exclusive billion-

The N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development PR team pitched the story idea to the show's producers and then partnered with tourism officials in several counties to assist the five-person Today crew as they spent three days filming in the state. PR Manager Margo Metzger guided the crew and worked closely with the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, Cleveland County Chamber, Uptown Shelby Association, Burke County Travel & Tourism, and the Transylvania County TDA to facilitate the story.

"The Hunger Games" 4-Day Itinerary has the most downloaded itinerary on VisitNC.com for March and "Hunger Games" has been the top internal search request on the site with more than triple the next closest search. Visitors can discover complete information on visiting sites related to movie at [VisitNC.com/hungergames](http://VisitNC.com/hungergames).

Many Commerce partners were involved in bringing the blockbuster movie to North Carolina. Special recognition goes to Aaron Syrett, Guy Gaster, and Cheryl Mauro in Commerce's N.C. Film Office; Beth Petty and the team at the Charlotte Regional Film Commission; and Pam Lewis and the team at the Western Regional Film Commission (AdvantageWest). Each of these partners helped to land the film and support its production.

More than 5,000 people worked on this film project—nearly 4000 of them North Carolinians. This film spent approximately \$62 million in North Carolina over the course of 112 days of filming. Numerous North Carolina businesses provided goods and services to support the film. And, the best may still be yet to come as North Carolina reaps the visitor spending benefits that come with blockbuster productions like the "The Hunger Games" for years to come.



Governor Bev Perdue and executives from Reed Elsevier at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 28

## LexisNexis holds ribbon-cutting for Cary expansion

LexisNexis held a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Governor Bev Perdue on March 28 at its new operations in Cary. "Three hundred and fifty new jobs over the next five years. A couple million dollars investment in Cary and North Carolina. And this investment, I'm told, will triple the size of your existing force here," said Perdue.

The new jobs in areas like software engineering, product

dollar-revenue club.

The Raleigh business reported after the markets closed on March 28 that revenue for the fiscal year that ended Feb. 29 rose 25 percent to \$1.13 billion. Fourth-quarter revenue rose 21 percent to \$297 million, ahead of analysts' estimates.

A year ago, in a [video interview](#) with N.C. Department of Commerce editorial staff, Jim Whitehurst, president and CEO of Red Hat, explained what a high-growth technology company needs to succeed:

- Extraordinary educational system that produces an educated technology talent pool
- Low cost of living, low taxes and a high quality of life to retain employees
- A solid industry cluster that allows professionals to interact, sparking creativity and innovation that pushes the outer margins of development
- Accessible government entities willing to listen to industry ideas and needs
- Low overall cost of doing business
- Collaborative opportunities with industry, higher education and government

[Read more from ThriveNC.com.](#)

[Red Hat revenue passes \\$1 billion milestone](#)  
(*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 29)

[Red Hat CFO talks headquarters move](#)  
(*Triangle Business Journal*, March 28)

## DNC Host Committee seeks local businesses as suppliers

Dr. Dan Murrey, executive director of the [Charlotte in 2012](#) Host Committee, encourages North Carolina businesses to consider registering as vendors for September's Democratic National Convention. Speaking at the N. C. Governor's Conference on Tourism in mid-March in Concord, he said the Charlotte 2012 Host Committee recognizes that vendors are a key component to a successful convention.

The committee's vendor registration tool provides buyers with online access to detailed vendor capability profiles. The vendor directory helps national organizations connect with local and regional businesses in order to meet the Democratic National Convention-related needs. [Business owners can register and create a company profile](#) that can be searched by categories including services, company size and other demographics.

There will be more than 1,000 events held in Charlotte during the convention, in addition to official DNC activity. This tool will enable the Democratic National Convention Committee, Host Committee and other organizations to

management, marketing, operations and customer support roles will pay well. "About an average salary of about \$90,000, which I think is about double the Wake County average today," explained Michael Lipps with LexisNexis, a division of Reed Elsevier.

[LexisNexis adding new jobs in Cary](#) (WTVD, March 28)

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(Left-right) U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Roger Dow, Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges and U.S. Representative Howard Coble

## Minges attends National Tourism Forum

N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges attended the National Council of State Tourism Directors Spring Forum and the [U.S. Travel Association's](#) Spring Board of Directors meeting, March 20-23 in Washington, D.C. Minges is the current president of the council and a member of U.S. Travel's board of directors, providing a voice for state tourism offices at a national level. The forum included a "Get America Moving" policymaker reception attended by members of Congress, including Representative Howard Coble of North Carolina's 6th District.

Established in 1969, the NCSTD leverages the collective strength of state tourism offices to influence public policy and to provide leadership and the forum for information sharing and education on issues impacting tourism. NCSTD represents all 50 states, the five U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

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## PepsiCo to hold annual shareholders' meeting in New Bern

[PepsiCo](#) announced recently that the company will be holding its 2012 Annual Meeting of Shareholders on May 2 at the North Carolina History Center at Tryon Palace in New Bern. New Bern is known as the Birthplace of Pepsi, and the company is pleased to be returning to this historic place for its 2012 annual meeting. [Read more.](#)

[Pepsi unveils special can promoting Tryon Palace](#) (*The Sun-Journal* - New Bern, March 30)

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## Applications available for "Stronger Economics Together" initiative

establish new supplier relationships and identify potential suppliers for specific procurement requirements. Although registering in this portal does not guarantee that a company will become a supplier, it does provide enhanced visibility of the business. Upon submission of a complete and accurate supplier registration form and information about a business' capabilities, the company's information will be entered into a vendor database where it can be considered by the DNCC, Host Committee and other participating entities for future opportunities.

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(Left-right) Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce Chair Ralph Prestwood, President and CEO Deborah Ashley Smith, Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges, Dr. Dana Clark of Appalachian State University's Walker School of Business.

## Caldwell County hosts Tourism Expo

The Caldwell County Tourism Expo was held in Lenoir on March 27. The event brought together members of the local tourism industry to network and discuss opportunities and initiatives concerning Caldwell County's tourism assets, marketing efforts, and the local economic impact of the tourism industry. Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges was the keynote speaker and provided an informative update on the tourism industry in North Carolina.

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## Site Selection features N.C. Biofuels Company Accelerator in energy report

One of North Carolina's newly established business incubators, the [Biofuels Company Accelerator](#), was recently highlighted in *Site Selection* magazine's [March 2012 Energy Report](#). The first component of the N.C. Biofuels Campus in Oxford, the accelerator was opened by the [Biofuels Center of North Carolina](#) in February. The facility includes leased laboratory facilities, shared equipment and business development support from both the Biofuels Center as well as other agencies.

The Biofuels Company Accelerator adds to



[USDA Rural Development](#), in conjunction with the [North Carolina Cooperative Extension](#) and other state and local partners, has released details of an initiative called "Stronger Economics Together," which is designed to help regional teams develop new approaches to strengthen and enhance regional economic development activities. The SET initiative is an opportunity for current or newly formed multi-county teams to receive the latest tools, training and technical assistance to help their region move forward and capitalize on the strengths of the region to create jobs, wealth and economic development. Two multi-county regions in rural North Carolina will be chosen to participate in the initiative.

Applicants must be multi-county regions (at least three or more) in N.C. or in conjunction with counties in neighboring states. The average rural population must be 51 percent or more of the region's total population based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation; or 75 percent of their land area is located in rural areas of that region based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation.

Applications for the SET initiative are now available at [North Carolina's Rural Development website](#). A complete application must be submitted electronically to [brian.queen@nc.usda.gov](mailto:brian.queen@nc.usda.gov) by May 4.

## Carolinas Aviation Museum lands Tuskegee exhibit

A rare World War II fighter will make an appearance in Charlotte along with an exhibit honoring the Tuskegee Airmen in April. Duke Energy and the [Carolinas Aviation Museum](#) announced on March 27 that a restored P51-C, painted with the distinctive red tail of the renowned squadron, will accompany the "Rise Above" exhibit, scheduled for April 11-14. Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American Air Corps unit, flew 15,000 combat sorties in World War II with distinction, after overcoming racism and resistance from the military. A historic movie about the unit and artifacts from the era will be part of the exhibit, said Shawn Dorsch, president of the Carolinas Aviation Museum, located beside Charlotte/Douglas International Airport. "Rise Above" is among the latest high-profile exhibits at the aviation museum, which last year obtained the fuselage of Flight 1549, the "Miracle on the Hudson" jetliner that was bound for Charlotte when it splash-landed in the Hudson River. Drug Enforcement Agency aircraft were displayed at the museum last month and a FedEx air cargo expo is in the planning stages, Dorsch said.



Canadian visitors stop at a N.C. Welcome Center to view

the list of over 30 business incubators statewide, including specialized facilities such as [Blue Ridge Food Ventures](#), the [Technology Enterprise Center of Eastern Carolina](#) and the [Partnership for Defense Innovation](#).

The Biofuels Campus is a joint project of the Biofuels Center and the [N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services](#). When the campus realizes its full potential, accelerator clients will benefit from greenhouses, a pilot- and demonstration-scale production facility and other campus projects.

[Read more on ThriveNC.com.](#)

## Blue Cross and Blue Shield sponsors Health Innovation Challenge

[Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina](#) is sponsoring a competition to challenge entrepreneurs across North Carolina to develop, implement, and scale high-impact ideas designed to support healthy lifestyles, with a specific focus on reducing obesity. The best idea could win funding, professional support and development resources, and access to a network of change-makers. Ideas for the [Health Innovation Challenge](#) may be submitted through April 16 and additional information can be found online. The Health Innovation Challenge is sponsored by BCBSNC in collaboration with [Bull City Forward](#), [Queen City Forward](#) and the [Institute for Emerging Issues](#).

## Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development 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 - April 3, 2012

<b>New projects assigned:</b>	110
<b>Projects announced:</b>	30
<b>Jobs announced:</b>	4,393
<b>Capital investment announced:</b>	\$1.18B
<b>Industry visits by existing industry staff:</b>	287
<b>Calls to Business Link N.C.:</b>	5,290

## Welcome Centers provide special greetings for Canadian visitors

For the next week, Canadian visitors will get a special welcome when stopping at four of the N.C. Welcome Centers. Both I-95 North and South and I-77 North and South will be displaying Canadian flags and special limited-time collateral to encourage the visitors to "get off the highway" and see more of the state. Many of these visitors come through North Carolina twice a year, avoiding the cold Canadian winters. In 2010, North Carolina hosted 379,000 Canadians, who spent \$123 million in the state. The majority of them come from the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. For more information about the Division's international marketing, contact [Heidi Walters](#) at (919) 715-6702.

## Service project to create 500,000 new American flag placements in N.C.

[Operation North State](#), a non-profit military support services organization headquartered in Winston-Salem, announced on March 19 its most recent project, "Create 500,000 New Placements of the American Flag throughout North Carolina by Veterans Day, November 11, 2012."

According to Operation North State's Founder and Chairman Terry Snyder, "the organization and its supporters have been monitoring approximately 40 neighborhoods throughout North Carolina for over a year. Survey findings indicate that an average of 8 percent of the homes fly the American or North Carolina state flag on a daily basis. It's Operation North State's goal to see the percentage reach 20 percent by June 2014. That's when all eyes will be on North Carolina as it hosts both the men's and women's U.S. Open golf tournaments in Pinehurst."

Operation North State encourages all North Carolinians to get involved and contact the organization either through its website, [Facebook](#), at (336) 764-5967, or [mailbox@operationnorthstate.com](mailto:mailbox@operationnorthstate.com).

## N.C. in the News

### This Week's Highlights

- [Dempsey Benton to head employment security](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, April 3)
- [Ten-digit dialing yields accidental emergency calls](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, April 2)
- [Area's top micropolitan honors 'unprecedented'](#) (*Statesville Record & Landmark*, March 29)
- [BizWeek banquet coming to Macon County](#) (*The Macon County News*, March 29)
- [New owner could triple textile maker's size](#) (*Lincoln Times-News*, March 2012)
- [Norfolk Southern on board with Charlotte airport](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, March 28)
- [DuPont looking to hire more Kinston employees](#) (*Kinston Free Press*, March 27)
- [Building bioscience](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 26)
- [Chatham Economic Development exceeds annual projections for new jobs](#) (*Chatham Journal*, March 26)
- [Why GE believes in hiring our heroes](#) (*CNBC*, March 25)
- ['Daily Show' will film in Charlotte](#) (*The Charlotte Observer*, March 24)

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#### Building Location:

301 North Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

#### Mailing Address:

4301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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