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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Daimler trucks to hire nearly 700

Daimler Trucks North America on June 9 announced that it plans to sharply increase production and employment levels at its Mt. Holly truck manufacturing plant during the last half of 2011. In addition, over 120 shop and staff employees will be added at the company's Gastonia parts manufacturing plant.

Governor Bev Perdue issued the following statement on the announcement:

"Daimler Trucks' announcement today that they plan to hire nearly 700 new employees for their Mt. Holly and Gastonia operations is another terrific example of how our investments in education to build a trained, educated workforce have created a business climate attractive to global companies. Daimler is reaffirming and increasing its commitment to the state, knowing that they will find a workforce that is second to none."

This announcement comes a year after the company announced a major expansion at their Cleveland Truck plant in Cleveland, N.C.

[See video](#) of Daimler Trucks North America COO Roger Nielsen discussing North Carolina's workforce.



Cree CEO Chuck Swoboda (right) takes President Barack Obama on a tour of Cree's LED lighting manufacturing line in Durham. (Photo courtesy of Cree)

Obama talks jobs in the Triangle

President Barack Obama visited the Triangle on June 13 with some of the nation's leading corporate executives in tow, pledging to find ways to accelerate job growth in an economy where high unemployment continues to be a drag on the recovery.

The president heard from a high-powered business group that recommended a series of steps designed to create a million more jobs during the next two years - from deregulation, to speeding up tourist visas, to encouraging construction for energy-efficient projects.

[Obama vows to get people back to work](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, June 14)

[Execs get the administration's ear](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, June 14)

Perdue highlights education as key to N.C.'s manufacturing success

A different kind of manufacturing, fueled by North Carolina's emphasis on education, is helping drive the state's economy, Governor Bev Perdue told the Southern Growth Policies Board June 14 at its 2011 conference.

"I haven't had a conversation with a manufacturing business leader where they didn't ask about our education system in



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce WNC Regional Existing Industry Representative Bill Payne, Governor Bev Perdue, N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll and RockTenn President Michael Kiepura

Packaging maker to add 124 jobs in McDowell County

Governor Bev Perdue on June 9 joined executives from RockTenn, a leading integrated manufacturer of corrugated and consumer packaging and recycling solutions, in Marion to announce that the company will expand in McDowell County. RockTenn plans to create 124 jobs and invest \$23 million over the next 18 months, with a total investment of almost \$30 million after five years. The project was made possible in part by a \$372,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"Growing corporations need trained, educated workers, and they know they can find them in North Carolina because of our long history of investing in education and job training," Perdue said. "Those investments paved the way for RockTenn to bring new manufacturing jobs to an area hit hard by the economic recession. The company's commitment to McDowell County is another indication that the state and local economies are recovering."

RockTenn is a leading producer of corrugated and consumer packaging products, serving a broad range of market segments, in particular cosmetics, personal care, pharmaceutical, food and household goods. The company will expand its McDowell County operation by moving to a new facility in Marion. RockTenn and its subsidiaries currently employ 233 workers in McDowell County and over 1,000 throughout North Carolina. [Read more.](#)

[Company announces 124 new jobs.](#) (*The McDowell News*, June 9)

North Carolina," Perdue said. "Because manufacturing for us isn't just about furniture anymore - today it's about specialized airplane seats and aircraft components. We're not just making traditional textiles, we need folks today who can produce high-tech fabrics and lightweight components for wind turbines. Today, the jobs that come with these companies often require more than just a high-school degree."

North Carolina has been the most productive manufacturing state in the Southeast for over a decade. While the sector has been challenged by the recent recession, more than 430,000 people in North Carolina rely on a manufacturing job for their livelihoods. One in every five private sector jobs in rural North Carolina is in manufacturing.



(Left - right) N.C. Senator Harris Blake, Xinjiang Region Governor Zhang Chunxian, and N.C. Department of Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson at the welcome banquet in Cary on June 9.

Chinese delegation visits North Carolina

Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson attended the welcome banquet for the former governor of Hunan Province, Zhang Chunxian, who is now the governor of Xinjiang Region of China. Zhang Chunxian and a 19-member high-level delegation visited North Carolina from June 9 to 11 to promote investment and trade with North Carolina. China is the world's fastest growing economy and second largest export market for North Carolina products. During the first quarter of 2011, state exports to China grew by 29 percent over last year. North Carolina exports a variety of goods and services to China, including electrical machinery and food products.

Economic developers gather in Asheville

Professionals attending this week's annual



Viscotec associates, along with Morganton Mayor Mel Cohen, N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll and Tatsuo Kawada, president of Viscotec's parent corporation Sieren Group, pose for a photo in front of the company's Morganton plant.

Viscotec celebrates 10-year anniversary

On June 8, the Viscotec Manufacturing Facility in Morganton celebrated its 10 year anniversary. Tatsuo Kawada, president of Viscotec's parent company, the Sieren Group of Japan, traveled to Burke County to participate in the event. During the ceremony, Morganton Mayor Mel Cohen, Kawada and N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll planted a cherry blossom tree to commemorate the event. Viscotec employs 220 associates at the Morganton facility. The company, which is a supplier in the automotive industry to companies such as Honda and Toyota, has invested \$60 million over the past 10 years.



Email marketing reaches aerospace executives ahead of airshow

More than 27,000 aerospace executives received an email message today (June 14) outlining North Carolina's advantages for companies in this important and growing industry sector. As part of the N.C. Department of Commerce's ongoing program to market the state to aviation and aerospace decision makers, the Department's Marketing Division sponsored the special mailing to subscribers of the Aerospace Industries Association daily electronic newsletter. AIA is the premier trade association representing the nation's major aerospace and defense manufacturers.

The email message included articles and links to information

conference of the N.C. Economic Developers Association in Asheville will focus on job growth through entrepreneurship and innovation, hoping to bring the best practices back to their communities.

About 300 economic developers from around the state will meet June 14-16 at the Grove Park Inn.

[Economic developers head to Asheville for conference](#) (The Citizen-Times - Asheville, June 12)

Phillips appointed to ECU Board of Visitors

N.C. Department of Commerce Senior Economic Developer Donna Phillips has been appointed to the Board of Visitors for East Carolina University. Phillips graduated from ECU in 1991 and received her MBA from the university in 1994.

The ECU Board of Visitors is a service organization that seeks to maintain and improve the excellence and effectiveness of East Carolina University. This organization is comprised of a dedicated group of 60 volunteers who advise and assist the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor with a range of issues that help advance the university. The members of the Board of Visitors serve as key ambassadors for the university by taking the message and story of East Carolina University to their own community and region.

Lake Norman area to host world championships

The Lake Norman region expects to reap a half-million dollars in visitor spending when 250 of the world's elite wheelchair basketball athletes compete locally Aug. 7-14 in the National Wheelchair Basketball Association's International Tournament of Champions. The event, secured by Visit Lake Norman, also is expected to generate 900 hotel room-nights, said Travis Dancy, Visit Lake Norman's sports marketing manager. The agency helped organizers of the championship tournament secure host hotels in Cornelius and Huntersville. Visit Lake Norman worked in

on the state's workforce and education programs, a list of aerospace companies already located in the state, and the state's business incentives programs. The message also promoted North Carolina's exhibit at next week's International Air Show, including the opportunity to schedule an appointment with state officials attending the trade show.

June 17 deadline for updates for 2012 N.C. Travel Guide

Now is the best time for all attractions and accommodations to check VisitNC.com to view their property's listing and to verify that their information listed is correct. If your listing needs to be updated, contact your local extranet county contact. The Division's extranet fuels the database for VisitNC.com and also for the information for the listings in the Official North Carolina Travel Guide. The deadline for the extranet county contacts to update the listings for attractions and accommodations that will be used in the 2012 Official North Carolina Travel Guide is June 17. To help ensure accuracy for both industry partners and visitors, all data listings in the Division's extranet database are entered by local contacts within each of the state's 100 counties. If you have any questions regarding the 2012 North Carolina Travel Guide, contact Kathy Prickett at (919) 733-8302.

Tourism holds small-business training sessions

N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development staff spent June 8 helping small-business owners maximize their marketing potential.

According to Wit Tuttell, the Division's director of Tourism Marketing, visitors spend about \$17 billion annually and tourism employs nearly 200,000 people directly and almost 400,000 people indirectly. In order to help businesses get a piece of that pie, the Tourism Resource Assistance Center offered one-on-one training sessions on the Davidson County Community College Campus.

The event focused on strategic planning and opportunities for businesses to partner with local, state and federal agencies to advertise and increase sales.

[Training sessions held in Davidson County for small business owners](#) (News 14 Carolina, June 9)

AdvantageWest promotes Raker

AdvantageWest has promoted Matt Raker to the position of Vice President of Entrepreneurial Development & AdvantageGreen. The move comes after the resignation of Pam Lewis, who is leaving her position as Senior Vice President of Entrepreneurial Development to join the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Coalition for Asheville – Buncombe County (EDC) as Director of Entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial development and the green and clean energy jobs initiative AdvantageGreen are two main areas of job-creation focus for AdvantageWest. The other areas of focus are the advanced manufacturing segment and agribusiness. AdvantageWest also maintains the Western North Carolina Film Commission. [Read more.](#)

partnership with the Cornelius and Huntersville parks and recreation departments and area schools to secure facilities for the event.

May economic overview released

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Policy, Research and Strategic Planning has released its economic overview for May 2011. Like most of this year, national and state indicators are generally positive this month but small in scale. Both the United States and North Carolina experienced unemployment rate decreases in March compared to February. The State added 2,900 nonfarm jobs in April with the statewide unemployment rate holding steady at 9.7 percent. The positives are tempered by a dip in consumer confidence and a struggling housing market at both the state and national levels. [Read the overview.](#)

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 - June 14, 2011

New projects assigned:	164
Projects announced:	81
Jobs created:	7,467
Capital invested:	\$1.32B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	792
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	9,352

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [White House Council calls for training to fill 2M jobs, cut red tape](#) (WRAL Techwire, June 13)
- [Electronics must be recycled in North Carolina beginning July 1](#) (*The Fayetteville Observer*, June 13)
- [Behringer recognized as N.C. Main Street Champion](#) (*The Garner News*, June 8)

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