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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



(Left-right) NCEDA Professional Development co-chair Jenny Mizelle (Town of Holly Springs), NCEDA Economic Developer of the Year Mark Pope (Lenoir County EDC), and NCEDA Professional Development co-chair Pat Mitchell (Ashe County Government)

NCEDA holds 45th annual meeting in Asheville

On June 15 the N.C. Economic Development Association held its 45th annual meeting in Asheville. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll presented the Commerce Update to the approximate 300 NCEDA members in attendance. [View the presentation.](#)

Mark Pope of the Lenoir County Economic Development Corporation was named NCEDA Economic Developer of the Year, and was elected to the Board of Directors for a term of three years. Tom Johnson of Rutherford County Economic Development Corporation was also named NCEDA Economic Developer of the Year.

[Asheville businesses may see more lending under new state fund](#) (The Citizen-Times - Asheville, June 16)

Perdue announces 200 jobs with Compass Group USA

Governor Bev Perdue announced June 20 that Compass Group USA Inc., a hospitality and support services company, will move some corporate jobs from several regional headquarter operations to Charlotte.

The company plans to create 200 jobs over the next four years with an \$8.5 million capital investment in Charlotte. The project was made possible in part by a state grant from the Job Development Investment Grant program.

"Compass Group PLC is the 17th largest employer in the world," Perdue said. "The fact that international corporations, which clearly have a choice as to where they do business, continue to bring these kinds of projects to North Carolina proves that our investment in education and job training is paying off."

Compass Group USA and its subsidiaries provide dining and support services to corporate clients, educational and healthcare facilities, and sports and entertainment venues in the United States and Canada. Compass Group USA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Compass Group PLC, which is based in London and traded on the London Stock Exchange. Compass Group PLC employs over 428,000 associates worldwide and currently employs more than 1,000 people in its Charlotte headquarters.

While individual wages for the 200 jobs will vary by job function, the overall average for the new jobs will be \$52,500 a year, not including benefits. The Mecklenburg County average annual wage is \$51,584. [Read more.](#)

[Hospitality firm to create 200 jobs in Charlotte](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, June 20)

N.C. cited as a 'winner' in nation's economic realignment

North Carolina was cited as a winner in a recent *USA Today* article examining each state's gross domestic product to determine how the country's economic output has shifted



(Left-right) NCEDA Professional Development co-chair Jenny Mizelle (Town of Holly Springs), NCEDA Professional Development co-chair Pat Mitchell (Ashe County Government), NCEDA Economic Developer of the Year Tom Johnson, and Mary Taylor (Rutherford County Economic Development Corporation).



N.C. Department of Commerce Existing Industry Specialist Rick Hill (center) talks to attendees who stopped by the North Carolina booth at the International Airshow.

North Carolina showcases growing aerospace industry at airshow

As part of the N.C. Department of Commerce's ongoing program to market the state to aviation and aerospace decision makers, the Department is leading the state's presence this week at the International Air Show in Le Bourget, France. The International Air Show is known as the world's largest aerospace trade show, and more than 135,000 aerospace executives representing global aerospace and defense manufacturers are expected to attend. Secretary Keith Crisco and other Commerce officials have already held several high-level meetings with company executives this week and the state delegation will continue its work through the show's conclusion on June 23.

Joining the North Carolina air show exhibit are several sponsoring organizations that are taking advantage of the state's platform to market their own products and services. Sponsors this year include Cabarrus Economic Development, C.R. Onsrud, Monroe Economic Development, North Carolina's Eastern Region, North Carolina's Global TransPark, Piedmont Triad Partnership, TIMCO Aviation Services as well

within its borders. The data, recently released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, reflect both population growth and income increases — in short, the economic weight of each state. North Carolina was ranked No. 9 on the list. [Read more.](#)

AKG to create 76 jobs in Orange County

Governor Bev Perdue on June 16 announced that AKG of America, a manufacturer of heat exchanges and cooling solutions, will expand their current facility in Orange County. The company plans to create 76 jobs and invest \$3.3 million during the next three years in Mebane. The project was made possible in part by a \$100,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"Manufacturers in North Carolina like AKG and those looking to move here know that they will find the workers they need to thrive: a trained, educated workforce," Perdue said. "Our investments in education and job training are a critical part of our top-ranked business climate."

AKG is a global company that manufactures heat exchanges and cooling solutions for OEM customers around the world. With 11 manufacturing sites around the world, the Mebane facility serves as the company's North American headquarters and sales office. Currently, AKG employs 311 people in Mebane. This project will add an additional 42,000 square feet to the current manufacturing plant, and create 76 jobs over three years and more than 90 jobs over five years.

Salaries, which include production and professional jobs, will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$42,710 plus benefits. The Orange County average annual wage is \$33,852. [Read more.](#)

[Mebane chosen for AKG expansion](#) (*The Times News* - Burlington, June 16)

2011 N.C. Economic Index released

The N.C. Department of Commerce has released its 2011 N.C. Economic Index. The index is a tool designed to assist state leaders and economic development professionals with identifying, understanding and capitalizing on North Carolina's strengths, addressing its weaknesses, and developing future economic opportunities. [Read the report.](#)

as Magellan Group, Liquip International - Beta Fluid Systems, and Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development.

NCSU takes leading role in developing Smart Grid

It takes up enough space to cover a billiards table, but next year it will fit inside a backpack.

The electronic contraption, only in its first generation, was named this year by experts at Massachusetts Institute of Technology as one of the 10 most important technology innovations of 2010. MIT ranked the "smart transformer," created by the FREEDM Systems Center in Raleigh, alongside recent advances in cancer genomics and synthetic cells.

The digital transformer will form the electronic guts of the vaunted Smart Grid, the automated power network that is expected to replace the nation's aging mechanical power grid in the coming decade. Relying on semiconductors rather than brainless mechanisms, the device controls energy flow in both directions, managing interconnections with solar-powered rooftops and plug-in electric cars, while minimizing energy waste.

"Think of it as an Internet router for the electrical grid," said Stephen Cass, special projects editor at MIT's Technology Review. "This contribution fits into that transformational ideal in that it will enable other changes."

The solid state transformer is one of several dozen Smart Grid-related projects under way at the 3-year-old FREEDM Center, which is headquartered at N.C. State University and coordinates research among five U.S. universities. The acronym stands for Future Renewable Electric Energy Delivery and Management, a research consortium formed in 2008 with an \$18.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

The rising profile of the FREEDM Center is a major reason why the Triangle has come to be regarded as a national Smart Grid hub. But there also are nearly 60 local companies involved in developing software, components, utility meters or some other aspect of the smart electricity network.

[NCSU takes leading role in developing Smart Grid](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, June 20)

N.C. officially claims Blackbeard's ship

North Carolina has quietly decided that the cannon-laden shipwreck just off Fort Macon is absolutely that of Blackbeard the pirate's flagship, the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, ending 15 years of official uncertainty. No more caveats, not in news releases, scholarly presentations by state archaeologists or on museum exhibits about the ship like "Blackbeard's Queen Anne's Revenge 1718," which opened last weekend at the [N.C. Maritime Museum](#) in Beaufort. "We have now changed our position, and we are quite categorically saying that it's the *Queen Anne's Revenge*," said Jeffrey Crow, deputy secretary for the Office of Archives and History of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, which oversees the efforts to recover and display the remains of the ship.

[N.C. stops equivocating: It's Blackbeard's boat](#) (The News &

Saveur features N.C. barbeque

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development's New York media mission led to a cover story on North Carolina barbecue in *Saveur* magazine's June/July issue. Working from the Lexington Tourism Authority's pitch sheet, the public relations team sold the idea, then worked with the TDA's director, Robin Bivens, to organize a trip for *Saveur*'s reporter. The results are a "BBQ Nation" spread featuring Grady's Bar-B-Q in Dudley and the Pit in Raleigh plus an "East vs. West" article exploring the state's barbecue traditions along the 200-mile stretch from Ayden to Advance. *Saveur* has a monthly circulation of 331,378, and the coverage is valued at \$14,500.

[East Vs. West: North Carolina pulled pork](#) (*Saveur*, June/July)

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 21, 2011

New projects assigned:	171
Projects announced:	83
Jobs created:	7,583
Capital invested:	\$1.32B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	806
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	9,616

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [State explores energy options](#) (*Washington Daily News*, June 21)
- [Conservation easement protects Asheville-area land visible from Blue Ridge Parkway](#) (*The Citizen-Times* - Asheville, June 20)
- [Gov. Perdue signs 4 military friendly bills into law](#) (WITN - Washington, June 20)
- [Pittsburgh-based PNC bank to buy RBC for \\$3.45B](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, June 17)



Video Game Developers Roundtable: Epic and Insomniac discuss the Triangle game hub

Chad Dezern, studio director for Insomniac Games in Durham, and John Farnsworth, director of operations at Epic Games in Cary, discuss the advantages of setting up shop in the Triangle during the first North Carolina Video Game Developers Roundtable. The roundtable was hosted by the N.C. Department of Commerce at Durham's American Underground on May 24. [See the video.](#)

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