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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Commerce touts N.C. to DNC visitors

With 35,000 delegates, dignitaries and media representatives as well as the eyes of the world converging on Charlotte for the 2012 Democratic National Convention next week, the N.C. Department of Commerce is seizing the opportunity to showcase the state's assets as a travel destination and business location.

"Attention will be fixed on Charlotte and North Carolina," said Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges. "We want people to see beyond the headlines, appreciate the unique travel experiences the state offers, and showcase North Carolina as a special setting where visitors, residents and businesses thrive."

The engagement began before attendees arrived in Uptown Charlotte, where the main event will unfold. On VisitNC.com, the state's official travel site, a Group Tour [microsite](#) directs delegations to points of interest on routes to and from Charlotte. Working with travel industry partners across the state, the Department has also devised itineraries for day trips, which could double as overnight stops before or after the convention. In addition, the Department is providing personalized, one-stop concierge service to group organizers.

Attendees flying into Charlotte Douglas International Airport experienced images of lighthouses, mountain vistas, history and culture in a narrated welcome video. The video, which starts with a warm welcome by Governor Bev Perdue, will also play in all nine of North Carolina's official interstate Welcome Centers and in the Visitor Info Center in Uptown Charlotte. The message is posted on YouTube with a feature link on VisitNC.com/DNC.

Projections for the immediate economic impact from the convention run as high as \$200 million. Minges also sees long-



Oskar Blues CEO Dale Katechis (center) receives a North Carolina state flag from N.C. Representative Trudi Walend (center left) and N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll (center right). Local elected officials, Transylvania Partnership leaders, and regional economic developers joined other members of the Oskar Blues' management team for the presentation.

Oskar Blues CEO welcomed to North Carolina

On Aug. 28, Oskar Blues CEO Dale Katechis returned to Brevard from the company's headquarters in Colorado to serve as keynote speaker at the Transylvania Partnership Annual Meeting. Katechis updated the meeting participants on the company's plans to be in production and distribution with its new East Coast facility in Brevard by mid-December 2012. A large turnout of elected officials and business leaders attended to extend a warm welcome to Katechis and his management team. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll and N.C. Representative Trudi Walend made a special flag presentation on behalf of the state.

[The man who made canned craft beer cool](#)
(CNBC, Aug. 29)

term value in the Department's efforts to showcase the state by reaching out to the 15,000 media attendees as well as delegates and leaders.

"For more than a year we have been working to use this convention to inspire a wealth of human interest and lifestyle stories, and we've worked to put the North Carolina travel experience in front of these media outlets," Minges said. "We know that the news media will be largely focused on the action at the convention during the DNC, but our proactive media outreach is already broadening awareness and understanding of North Carolina as a place of uncommon scenic beauty and diverse appeal for leisure and group travel."

During the DNC media preview event in June, the Department distributed a customized tourism press kit with story starters, including a feature release on [North Carolina's "Presidential Past"](#) and other ideas for coverage before, during and after the convention. National media outreach has resulted in coverage by The Associated Press, The New York Times and other outlets.

The Department is also:

- Distributing 25,000 copies of the 2012 Official North Carolina Travel Guide with a custom cover featuring the Charlotte skyline to welcome convention delegates.
- Distributing information on business relocation opportunities and meeting with corporate executives during their time in the state.
- Creating a temporary visitor center in partnership with Visit Charlotte. The center creates a physical presence for promoting both travel and business at Visit Charlotte's Uptown Visitor Center and the information desk at the Charlotte airport. The Division has staff present at the Uptown location to assist travelers during the Convention.
- Promoting business and tourism in US Airways Magazine's September special section on North Carolina and the Charlotte region.



(Left-right) Jones Lang LaSalle Managing Director Kris Bjorson, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, Ernst & Young Indirect Tax Manager Chris Knezevic, and Duke Energy



N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll presents City of Sanford with a certificate. (Left-right) Commerce Director of Community Investment Vickie Miller, Haven Executive Director Kenosha Davenport, State Senator Bob Atwater, Sanford Mayor Cornelia Olive, Brick Capital Executive Director Kate Rumely, Carroll, and Sanford Planning Director Bob Bridwell

Community Investment honors 26 local governments at CDBG-R capstone event

On Aug. 30, the Office of Community Investment within the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance honored 26 local governments for their achievements in the Community Development Block Grant-Recovery Program funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The capstone event celebrated the essential partnerships and successful outcomes of CDBG-R, which expended nearly \$11.5 million dollars to create and retain jobs by installing 66,660 linear feet of public infrastructure, developing three neighborhood facilities, and providing 240 quality affordable housing units across North Carolina. The event was held at the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center in Raleigh

Commerce Assistant Secretary for Energy and Community Assistance Jon Williams opened the event; Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll and Community Investment Director Vickie Miller presented achievement certificates to the nine local government representatives present. Presentations of success stories were made by the Town of Fairmont, Town of Mount Olive, City of Sanford, and the County of Stanley. CDBG-R was a single cycle program and closes on Sept. 30. Learn more by reviewing the CDBG-R Project Achievements report at www.nccommerce.com/cd.

Currituck County featured on ThriveNC.com

Currituck County will be featured prominently on the ThriveNC.com home page starting this week. The Currituck County Economic

N.C. economic developers woo Chicago site selection consultants

On Aug. 28, around 25 site selection consultants gathered at a luncheon at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Chicago to hear an update on current business conditions in the state from N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and around 25 state economic developers. With 2012 project activity and company announcements remaining strong, Crisco detailed the many ways North Carolina is meeting the challenging economy and providing companies the competitive advantages they need to thrive in the state.

"Since 2009, the beginning of the current administration, businesses have pledged to create more than 100,000 jobs and invest more than \$23 billion in the Tar Heel state," Crisco said during his remarks. In addition, luncheon guests [viewed a video overview of the state's](#) business climate.

The [Friends of North Carolina](#) sponsored the event. Participating partners were: Burke Development Inc., Cabarrus Economic Development, Charlotte Regional Partnership, Chatham Economic Development Corporation, North Carolina's Eastern Region, North Carolina's Northeast Commission, Piedmont Triad Partnership, Randolph County Economic Development Corporation, RowanWORKS, Smith Anderson, Surry County Economic Development Partnership, The Research Triangle Park, and Winston-Salem Business Inc.



Lake James Cellars Winery, a Green Business Fund grant recipient, [received a grant](#) to help the building become energy efficient.

Recovery act grants produce a more energy-efficient North Carolina

North Carolina is more energy-efficient than it was in 2009. Homes, schools, college campuses, businesses and government facilities are using less energy, saving on utility bills and generating more power from renewable sources as a result of grants distributed by the N.C. Energy Office and funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

North Carolinians can learn more about the impact of these initiatives at [an updated website](#) launched by the Energy

Development Department is the latest organization to take advantage of The N.C. Department of Commerce's many sponsorship opportunities on its highly visible website for business decision makers, [ThriveNC.com](#).

Other locations and regions across the state can take advantage of this opportunity to reach 10,000 unique visitors each month through a prominent section on the [ThriveNC.com](#) homepage. Featured regions can display a logo with an introductory message about the benefits of their region and a link to the organization's website. It's a great way to stand out as one of the regions helping North Carolina Thrive. For more information about this and other marketing opportunities available to our ThriveNC partners, please contact David Rhoades in the N.C. Department of Commerce's Marketing Division at drhoades@nccommerce.com or (919) 715-6556.



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges, Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center Chairman of the Board of Directors Charles Jones and Secretary Keith Crisco

Commerce helps honor Core Sound Waterfowl Museum

On Aug. 30, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges were guests at the Taste of Core Sound Dinner at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center in Harkers Island. The Down East area recently received the coveted National Scenic Byway Designation. The byway's Down East showcases Outer Banks maritime culture with little impact from current-day tourism. A heritage center built by Down East communities reinforces an experience of place with stories, objects, and exhibits. [Learn more.](#)

Office, a division of the N.C. Department of Commerce. The site includes details of more than 30 projects throughout the state. The impact of these programs has been widespread.

"Someone you know, a building or business you've visited or an activity you've participated in has probably benefited from an Energy Office Recovery Act grant," said Governor Bev Perdue. "This unique website tells the stories of these projects and how they not only are making us more energy-efficient, but saving tax dollars when energy costs are uncertain and growing."

Through the federal Recovery Act, North Carolina received \$106.6 million for energy-related projects along with \$132 million for the state's Weatherization Assistance Program. Of those dollars, \$20.9 million, from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, were directed to local governments, public schools and community colleges (an additional \$37.7 million went directly to designated local governments through a population-based formula). The State Energy Program provided \$75.9 million for grants that ranged from workforce development and assistance to commercial, industrial and non-profit groups to support for state and local government energy-efficiency initiatives. [Read more.](#)



BBC Travel highlights ECU

BBC Travel's Ethical Traveler noted that for some, traveling is a calling - not just to see the world, but to build a career. And as the ideas of responsible and sustainable tourism have taken hold, so too have university degree programs designed to give students the skills to influence how tourism is managed, with the goal of benefiting local communities, preserving their cultures and protecting their environment.

One of the spotlighted academic programs that can turn a passion into a full-time job was East Carolina University. Like other programs, ECU focuses on "economic, environmental, and sociocultural viability" - or what the university calls the "triple bottom line of sustainable tourism." ECU also houses the Center for Sustainable Tourism, which promotes sustainable practices in North Carolina, runs workshops on issues such as renewable energy and climate, and conducts research on race, ethnicity and social inequity in tourism.

[Ethical Traveler: Getting a degree in sustainable travel](#) (*BBC Travel*, Aug. 22)

\$3.4M in rural center grants to create nearly 350 jobs, provide clean water

The N.C. Rural Economic Development Center has awarded 24 grants totaling \$3.4 million to create jobs, provide clean water and assist with economic development in rural counties.



McComas to chair ports authority

On Aug. 29, Governor Bev Perdue announced that Representative Daniel F. McComas, a Republican from New Hanover County, will be named chairman of the N.C. State Ports Authority. McComas will resign his house seat effective Sept. 2, to take the new position.

"The ports are a critical component to the economy of North Carolina," said Perdue. "Representative McComas' appointment demonstrates my commitment to the continued success and growth of the North Carolina State Ports Authority. I want the best person in the job, no matter what side of the aisle he or she sits on." [Read more.](#)



Full Frame added as PGA-eligible festival

The Producers Guild of America has added Durham's Full Frame Documentary Film Festival to its list of official festivals for awards-qualifying films.

The internationally renowned festival that takes place in the Bull City each spring was joined by the South by Southwest Film Festival and the AFI-Discovery Channel Silverdocs Documentary Festival as new additions to the organization's official festivals.

Among other exhibition methods, theatrically released documentaries that have screened in competition at these festivals will now be

The grants will create 349 jobs and aid projects in 16 counties.

The center's board of directors approved the grants on Aug. 22. The grants were made possible by appropriations of the N.C. General Assembly and state clean water bonds. The board awarded 18 grants worth \$2.6 million for projects that directly lead to job creation. Economic infrastructure grants enable new business locations or expansions through water and sewer improvements, broadband expansion, natural gas line extensions, construction of access roads and other infrastructure improvements. Building reuse grants prepare vacant buildings for use by job-generating businesses, support the expansion and renovation of occupied buildings if that work leads to new, permanent jobs in the manufacturing sector, and enable construction of health care facilities that create jobs. [Read more.](#)

700 to be hired for call center in Greensboro

The nearly 700 jobs lost when NCO Customer Management Inc. announced the pending closure of its call center in Guilford County in March are now due to be replaced in that same location following a corporate reorganization and the securing of new contracts, according to company officials.

Two new major clients have been secured for the call center at 4336 Federal Drive, said Stephen Kidder, the general manager of the facility. Though the center has a Greensboro address, it is located within the High Point city limits.

[700 to be hired for call center in Greensboro](#) (*Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Aug. 31)

Chemtex International receives USDA loan guarantee

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a loan guarantee for Chemtex International on Aug. 22. USDA Undersecretary for Rural Development Dallas Tonsager informed a large and responsive audience that the agency had approved the \$99-million loan guarantee requested of Chemtex for its planned production facility in Clinton. Once completed, the plant is likely to be the first commercial-scale facility in the nation producing ethanol from energy grasses.

The \$170-million plant, targeting to begin production in 2014, will produce 20 million gallons of biofuels annually derived from non-food feedstocks such as Miscanthus, Switchgrass, and other biomass purpose-grown energy crops. [Read more.](#)

eligible for the Outstanding Producer of Documentary Theatrical Motion Picture award. [Read more.](#)

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 - Sept. 4, 2012

New projects assigned:	275
Projects announced:	79
Jobs announced:	9,787
Capital investment announced:	\$2.28B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	824
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	13,362

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Convention center study gains steam](#) (*The High Point Enterprise*, Sept. 3)
- [GTCC will retrain workers for free](#) (*The News & Record - Greensboro*, Sept. 3)
- [N.C. community colleges receive grant money for back-to-work initiative](#) (*News 14 Carolina*, Aug. 30)
- [A look at the economic impact of honeybees](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Aug. 29)
- [New company wants to put 80 people to work this year](#) (*Gaston Gazette*, Aug. 28)
- [Sanford company wins \\$4.5m contract to make parts for F-16 fighter jets](#) (*Fayetteville Observer*, Aug. 28)
- [Oxygen Biotherapeutics relocating R&D function to North Carolina from California](#) (*Business Wire*, Aug. 28)
- [Local company recognized for creating American made furniture](#) (*Shelby Star*, Aug. 27)

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