

# sync<sup>®</sup> NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



*N.C. Commerce Secretary Tony Copeland (left) presents the Order of the Long Leaf Pine to Ted Brinn.*

## Employment Security Leader Ted Brinn Honored with Long Leaf Pine Award

Ted Brinn, most recently N.C. Commerce's Assistant Secretary for Employment Security, was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine last week for his many years of honorable state service. N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland presented the award at a ceremony marking Brinn's retirement from the agency.

Brinn's retirement was effective September 1. Secretary Copeland has named Lockhart Taylor the division's Interim Assistant Secretary.

Brinn joined the Employment Security Commission in 1980 as a Rural Manpower Manager in Washington, N.C., helping agricultural employers find skilled workers. In 1982, he was promoted to Unemployment Insurance (UI) Field Tax Auditor based in Greensboro, eventually rising to serve at every level of UI tax audit supervision and management before being named Chief of Tax Operations in 2012. The next year, Brinn stepped up to serve as Chief Deputy of the division, and was named Assistant Secretary of Employment Security in April 2016.

Since 1963, North Carolina's governors have reserved their highest honor, The Order of the Long Leaf Pine award, for persons who have made significant contributions to the state



### Showcase Advanced Manufacturing in Your Area

Commerce has launched a survey seeking local examples of 'factories of the future' for an upcoming campaign highlighting the manufacturing sector in North Carolina.

Every October, the national and state spotlight focuses on manufacturing, and the importance this cross-industry sector plays in our economy and our local and regional growth strategies. This year, Commerce's Communications team will publish information and hold events during the week of October 2 featuring manufacturing's key role in North Carolina.

"We're aiming to highlight examples of clean, modern manufacturing plants that can counter the outdated stereotypes that still persist regarding manufacturing as a career path and engine for a modern economy," said Beth Gargan, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs.

To contribute an example from your community, visit the [online survey](#) or contact Communications Director David Rhoades at (919) 814-4611 or by email at [drhoades@nccommerce.com](mailto:drhoades@nccommerce.com).



### Global Foods Company to Invest \$100M and Create 250 Jobs in North Carolina

Smithfield Foods announced August 22 that it will build a new distribution center and expand its blast cell cold storage capabilities at its processing facility in Tar Heel, North Carolina. In a news release, Smithfield

and their communities through their exemplary service and exceptional accomplishments. Persons named to The Order become North Carolina "Ambassadors" with their names and award dates recorded on a roster maintained by The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Society.



N.C. Commerce Secretary Tony Copeland (far left) and Governor Cooper (center) with members of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs.

## Governor Cooper, Secretary Copeland Attend Indian Affairs Meeting

Governor Roy Cooper and N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland attended the September 1 meeting of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs held in Raleigh.

In his remarks to the group, **Governor Cooper** offered strong support for the Commission's work and highlighted areas of his agenda that are particularly relevant to that work, such as the key importance of education, health care, and affordable housing. Governor Cooper also detailed his work on substance abuse and the opioid addiction crisis.

The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs was created in 1971 by the North Carolina General Assembly in response to the requests of concerned Indian citizens from across the state. The Commission consists of 21 representatives of the American Indian community, two representatives appointed by the General Assembly, one representative or their designee appointed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Administration, the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources and the Commissioner of Labor.

More information about the Commission is [available online](#).

## New Report on the North Carolina Economy Published

The Labor & Economic Analysis team at the Department of Commerce published a new report last week on the North Carolina economy in 2016. A report looks at several key economic indicators for the state, including population and labor force growth, unemployment and wage trends, industry and GDP changes, and projected employment.

Key trends identified in the state include:

- Labor force and general population growth rates are strong, but slowing. North Carolina's 2016 population growth rate (1.1%) is down from its 2.4% peak prior to the Recession, but has consistently remained higher than the U.S. over that time. Mecklenburg and Wake Counties accounted for 41% of the state's net 2016

announced its intention to invest \$100 million and add approximately 250 new jobs, and indicated additional employment opportunities would also be created by its logistics partner.

"This expansion reflects the promising new era we're experiencing at Smithfield," said **Kenneth M. Sullivan, president and chief executive officer for Smithfield Foods**. "It supports our continued growth and helps us better serve our customers by providing additional capacity and optimizing our distribution footprint."

Smithfield will begin construction of the new distribution center immediately. The new distribution center will be 500,000 square feet with 47,000 pallet positions. The blast cell cold storage expansion, announced earlier this year, is already underway and will increase the facility's capacity by 140 million pounds. Both projects will be complete by the fall of 2018, according to the company.

Local economic development sources report this is the largest jobs and investment announcement in Bladen County in well over 20 years.



## Napoleon Wallace Named Deputy Secretary

Napoleon Wallace, a finance and community economic development executive, will serve as Commerce's Deputy Secretary to oversee the Divisions of Workforce Solutions and Rural Economic Development. Wallace had previously been serving as the Assistant Secretary for the rural division.

N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland announced the appointment August 21.

Wallace will direct the Workforce division's efforts to strengthen workforce programs and streamline the delivery of services to jobseekers and employers. In his new role, he will also support NCWorks, a collaborative

population increase. Labor force growth in North Carolina (8%) has outpaced the U.S. (4%) since 2007 - ranking 6th among the 50 states for labor force growth rate since the recession.

- We're aging rapidly. In 2016, 15% of North Carolina's total population was 65 or older - and is projected to be 21% by 2034.
- Unemployment continues to decline. North Carolina's average annual unemployment rate fell by 0.7 percentage points (to 5.1%) in 2016 versus a national decline of 0.4 (to 4.9%).
- Job growth is strong. North Carolina added 99,000 net new jobs over the past year to reach an annual average of over 4.26 million jobs, an increase of 2.4%.

More information about the findings, including a link to download the entire report, can be found [online at nccommerce.com](http://online_at_nccommerce.com).

program bringing N.C. Commerce and workforce partners together to connect workers with job opportunities.

Wallace has been leading Commerce's support for North Carolina's rural communities since April, and will continue in this role. The Rural Economic Development Division features a team of rural specialists that help communities make the necessary preparations and infrastructure investments to attract business and economic growth.

Before joining Commerce, Wallace served as a Social Investment Officer at the Kresge Foundation in metropolitan Detroit. The foundation, a \$3.6 billion private philanthropic organization, works to expand opportunities in America's cities. Earlier in his career, Wallace served on the Executive Staff at Self-Help, the financial and policy advocacy organization headquartered in Durham. Mr. Wallace is a native of Pitt and Beaufort counties.

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## N.C. in the News

- [N.C. Commerce secretary talks Toyota-Mazda possibilities](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - August 31)
- [Housing summit hosts officials, industry leaders for ideas, suggestions](#) (*News-Herald* - Morganton - August 30)
- [N.C. Railroad to invest in rail spur for new \\$60M Triad plant](#) (*Triad Business Journal* - August 24)
- [Under secret code name, Toyota-Mazda set off race for 4,000-job plant](#) (*Detroit Free Press* - August 18)

### About Us

*SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)*

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# (919) 814-4600

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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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