

# sync<sup>TM</sup>

Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Gov. Bev Perdue speaks to an employee at PAS in Washington, N.C., during a tour of the plant.

## PAS to add 239 jobs in Beaufort County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Dec. 14 announced that the [PAS Group](#), a leading developer and manufacturer of cable and panel systems for household appliances, will expand its manufacturing facility in Beaufort County. The company plans to create 239 jobs and invest \$3.2 million during the next five years in Washington. The project was made possible in part by an \$800,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Martyn Johnson was the developer on this project.

"Manufacturers worldwide are looking to North Carolina thanks to our skilled workers, custom training programs and top-ranked business climate," said Perdue. "I thank PAS for its commitment to the communities of Beaufort County. These new jobs will help hundreds of families in Beaufort County and Eastern North Carolina to get back on their feet."

The PAS Group is a worldwide manufacturer of cable and panel systems for household appliances with facilities in Germany, Poland, Turkey, Mexico and the United States. Subsidiary PAS USA Inc.'s manufacturing facility in Washington, N.C. currently employs 137. The new investment will enable PAS USA to win a new supply contract for 250,000 dishwasher panel systems with a major home dishwasher brand. Manufacturing includes injection molding, printing, high speed milling, assembly and electronic testing.



House Speaker-Designate Thom Tillis (far right) addresses members of the N.C. Travel and Tourism Board on Dec. 7.

## Tillis addresses N.C. Travel and Tourism Board

N.C. House Speaker-Designate Thom Tillis addressed the N.C. Travel and Tourism Board Dec. 7 at its December meeting, giving an overview of the challenges facing the General Assembly next year and voicing support for the state's tourism industry and its role in economic development. Tillis said the state faces a \$3.5 billion deficit during the next fiscal year and that the primary focus of the upcoming session would be "getting our fiscal house in order."

Having served on the board of the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce, Tillis said, "I know the value and importance of [tourism]." As the General Assembly reviews programs and enacts the budget for 2011-2013, Tillis said tourism is "one of the industries that we've got to take care of and, hopefully, grow and position to be a part of the front end of the recovery."

Tillis, who attended the meeting at the invitation of board member Sally Ashworth of Lake Norman, demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the tourism industry from the mountains to the coast, inviting questions from board members and encouraging the industry to make its voice heard to legislators between now and the opening of the General Assembly on Jan. 26.

## Hardin participates in



## Perdue announces new vision for state government

Gov. Bev Perdue on Dec. 9 announced her vision to restructure state government, marking the most significant change in a generation.

In a speech to Moore County officials and chambers of commerce representatives, Perdue outlined her plan, which includes a proposal to consolidate 14 high-level state government functions into eight.

"North Carolina is at a defining moment in our history," Perdue said. "We must be leaner, more nimble, more responsive to citizens and less bureaucratic as we focus our limited state resources on our core missions."

[Learn more](#) about the governor's plan.

## Americhem to bring 71 jobs to Randolph County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Dec. 13 announced that Americhem, a global provider of custom color and additive solutions for the polymer industry, will locate a new manufacturing facility in Randolph County. The company plans to create 71 jobs and invest \$22.6 million during the next three years in Liberty. The project was made possible in part by a \$225,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Bernart Torain was the developer on this project.

"Manufacturers from around the world are coming to North Carolina. They see the immeasurable value of our skilled workforce, custom-training programs and top-rated business climate," said Perdue. "Not only will Americhem's new campus in Randolph County create needed jobs, it also has the potential for future growth."

Founded in 1941, Americhem is one of the world's largest custom color and additive concentrate manufacturers. Based in Ohio, the company operates six manufacturing facilities on three continents, employing over 500 people worldwide, including 127 in Cabarrus County. Americhem will establish a campus site for multiple manufacturing facilities in Randolph County to enable it to grow its North American business.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$35,437 not including benefits. The Randolph County average annual wage is \$29,172. [Read more.](#)

## technology roundtable

The December issue of *Business North Carolina* magazine features a recent round table discussion on the state of North Carolina's technology sector and its impact on the economy. John Hardin, executive director of the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Office of Science and Technology, was one of six experts participating in the discussion.

*Business North Carolina* publisher Ben Kinney moderated the discussion, held at the offices of the N.C. Technology Association and sponsored by Balfour Beatty. Topics included technology's role in traditional North Carolina industries, technology's investment in public education as business development, supporting and nurturing home-grown technology companies, how the state recruits technology companies, and different regions' opportunities for technology companies.

The participants agreed that North Carolina long has been a technology leader, with Research Triangle Park its showplace. But components of the sector--both geographically and across sectors--must continue to mature to push the state forward. Startup companies in particular need improved access to capital and experienced leadership.

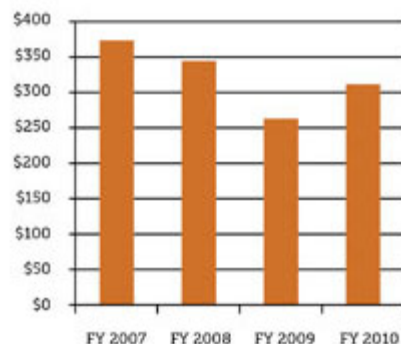
[Technology Round Table](#) (*Business North Carolina*, December 2010)

## Biotech Center forms Ag Biotech Advisory Council

[The N.C. Biotechnology Center](#) is seeking input from a panel of experts into how the state's farm industry can help drive biotech growth.

The 21-member Agricultural Biotechnology Advisory Council recently met for the first time. [Read more.](#) Learn more about the [biotech industry](#) in North Carolina.

## SBA Volume (millions)



## Capital Access rebounding



(Left-right) Duane Long and Pat Long of Longistics, Gov. Bev Perdue and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco

## Longistics launches new center in China

Gov. Bev Perdue and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco were on hand Dec. 9 for a celebration showcasing North Carolina companies in China. The celebration took place at the Morrisville office of global logistics solutions provider [Longistics](#), which announced that it will open the new Suzhou Industrial Park Internationa Commodities Exhibition Center in Suzhou, China.

The center will generate opportunities that accelerate the export of products from North Carolina and U.S.-based companies to China. Current plans call for Longistics to add 50 companies at the center within the first year of operations, and 500 companies by five years.

[Longistics charts China course](#) (*The Herald-Sun*, Durham, Dec. 10)

[Longistics Launches SIP International Commodities Exhibition Center In Suzhou, China](#) (*dBusinessNews*, Dec. 10)



## in N.C.

Government guaranteed loan volume in North Carolina is recovering from its recession low of fiscal year 2009. The Small Business Association and USDA year-end numbers for FY2010 show a solid increase in both the number of loans and loan volume.

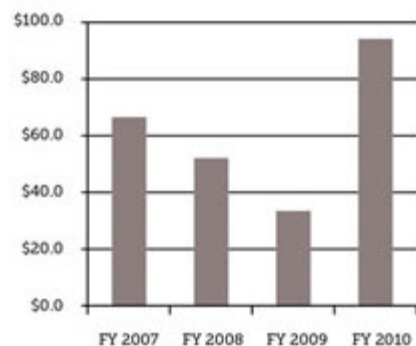
In North Carolina, SBA guaranteed loan volume represents an 18.6 percent increase over 2009, and USDA loan volume has already surpassed the pre-recession high of FY2007 with 50 loan guarantees valued at \$94.4 million.

The Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 passed in the last week of the 2010 federal fiscal year, which allowed all of the loan applications in the SBA's loan queue to receive final approval by fiscal year-end. These last-minute approvals totaled 1,939 loans across the country for nearly \$970 million.

The Small Business Jobs Act also provided funding to extend the 90 percent guarantees and reduced fees in the SBA's two largest loan programs through the end of December 2010. Under the Jobs Act provisions, SBA has permanently increased 7(a) and 504 limits from \$2 million to \$5 million, and for manufacturers and certain energy-related projects seeking 504 loans, to \$5.5 million. The Act provides the agency with enough funding to support an estimated \$14 billion in lending to small businesses.

The borrower demand for larger SBA loan limits has grown over the last several years. Lending volume for guaranteed loans greater than \$1.5 million has grown from 13 percent of total dollars approved in F2005 to 21 percent in F2010, with many loans at the \$2 million maximum. Locally, a comparison of October 2010 lending activity in North Carolina shows a dramatic 85 percent increase in SBA loan guarantee volume with a 19 percent increase in the number of loans from the same month of the previous year.

### USDA B&I Volume (millions)



(Left-right) U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, Gen. William F. "Buck" Kernan, USA (Ret.) of the N.C. Military Foundation, and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco

## Partnerships between UNC, military honored

Since August 2009, the University of North Carolina System and North Carolina-based military commands have formalized multiple collaborative partnerships to augment training, increase access to education and provide research opportunities for UNC students and faculty. These collaborations – unique to North Carolina and the UNC System – were promoted by Gen. James Lindsay, USA (Ret.) and Gen. William F. "Buck" Kernan, USA (Ret.), both founding members of the [N.C. Military Foundation](#).

On Nov. 15, N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco participated in an event to mark five historic collaborative partnerships between the UNC System and the military.

U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, UNC System President Erskine Bowles, Marine Special Operations Support Group Commanding Officer Col. Richard Anders and the N.C. Military Foundation's board of directors also participated in the event.

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## Companies to benefit from international education network

International companies have a new workforce incentive in North Carolina. Private and state agencies have joined together to create the North Carolina Global Schools Network which will provide global educational experiences to students at the local school level. The goal is to equip students for the international marketplace. According to an article in *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, 20 school districts met Dec. 3 in Raleigh to discuss the network.

"For North Carolina, the Global Schools Network is not just an educational initiative, it's an economic development initiative," said N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. "Considering our state's robust international business community, economic development in North Carolina is a global activity--and that must be reflected in how we prepare our students to compete in the global marketplace."

School districts enrolled in the program will offer learning opportunities in international languages and global awareness programs along with chances for foreign travel and exchanges. Educators would have the opportunity for professional development. [Read more](#).

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## helps your small business clients

The Commissioner of Banks, the N.C. Bankers' Association and the Commissioner for Small Business are working together on the Capital Access Network, an initiative of Gov. Bev Perdue. If your bank is interested in increasing its government guaranteed lending, CAN can help in two ways. First, we can help your staff access the training resources and programs of the SBA and USDA. Second, we have a statewide network of 65 business advisors who are available to assist your bank's clients with financing issues. Detailed information about this initiative can be found at the [CAN website](#), or by calling the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Business Link North Carolina (BLNC) at (800) 228-8443.

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## ThriveNC.com Web traffic growing

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's new website for business decision makers, [ThriveNC.com](#), is now drawing an impressive number of visitors to the site. From its launch on March 30th through December 8th of this year, [ThriveNC.com](#) experienced:

- 18,032 visits
- 53,801 page views

First-time visitors accounted for 63.92% of the traffic, while visits lasted an average of over four minutes, an important indicator of the value people are finding in the site's content.

One key feature of [ThriveNC.com](#) is a new program that offers in-state partners the opportunity to reach the site's highly targeted audience with their own messages. Early participants in the partner program have received prime placement on the site's home page and their messages have drawn 9,154 impressions and 466 clicks, each of which takes visitors over to their own sites.

To ensure a steady stream of relevant traffic to the new site, the Department launched a major search engine marketing program this fall. Early results of the keyword program are encouraging, with the month of November seeing the biggest influx of visitors since the site's launch. Well over a third of the visits to the site have come since November 1 with nearly 74% of these being new visits.

Statistical indicators forecast traffic to [ThriveNC.com](#) will continue to increase exponentially in 2011.

If your organization would like to become a Partner and benefit from [ThriveNC.com's](#) targeted traffic, contact [David Rhoades](#) at (919) 715-6556. The entire Commerce Marketing Partners Program can be reviewed online at [partners.ThriveNC.com](#).

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(Front row left-right) Diversified Opportunities Inc. Executive Director Cindy Dixon (Wilson), Johnston County Industries Inc. Executive Director Vicki Shore (Selma), Tri-County Industries Inc. President Brenda Cogdell (Rocky Mount), Martin Enterprises Inc. Executive Director Becky Renn (Williamston); (back left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Commissioner of Small Business George Millsaps, Commerce Division of Workforce Development Division Executive Director Roger Shackelford and Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll

## Commerce, EARN partner on advanced manufacturing

On Dec. 7, N.C. Dept. of Commerce leadership met with the Eastern Area Rehabilitation Network Inc. to partner on an advanced manufacturing initiative. The effort is being patterned after the critically acclaimed Marketing Association of Rehabilitation Centers Inc. custom medical kit project in western North Carolina. EARN members will use their successful track record as suppliers to companies like Ford and Electrolux to compete for component contracts in the commercial and military aerospace industry. EARN members presently represent 14 counties, 11 of which are Tier 1 counties in eastern North Carolina. Collectively they have a work force of more than 500 with approximately 400,000 square feet of production space and total revenues in excess of \$11,000,000.

## BIO 2011 N.C. Pavilion sponsorships available

The life science industry's largest U.S. convention and trade show, [BIO 2011](#), will take place in Washington, D.C., June 27-30. All-inclusive sponsorship packages for the North Carolina pavilion make it easy and affordable to exhibit at this important show.

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce is sponsoring the pavilion in partnership with the N.C. Biotechnology Center and NCBIO again for 2011.

In addition to providing the state critical marketing visibility in the biotech sector, the pavilion program offers sponsors the ability to reach an international audience of 20,000 life science professionals at a fraction of the cost of exhibiting alone. Qualifying organizations can exhibit at BIO for as little as \$1,000.

The North Carolina pavilion has secured a prominent location on the exhibit hall floor and will feature a 2,900-square-foot design with video screens and a conference room. Sponsors can also attend and invite VIPs to the exclusive North Carolina reception, being held at the Knight Conference Center in the

## Offshore wind could power N.C.'s future

North Carolina is poised to be an East Coast leader in offshore wind power. According to a report recently released by the National Wildlife Federation, "There is great potential for offshore wind power off the coasts of North Carolina, due to excellent wind speeds and large areas of shallow water that can be developed." The same shallow waters that earned the nickname "Graveyard of the Atlantic" because of the long history of shipwrecks are now prime real estate for offshore wind farms.

Combining research from UNC-Chapel Hill and the U.S. Dept. of Energy, the 62-page document estimates an offshore wind industry in North Carolina could generate power for over half a million homes and in the process create approximately 20,000 manufacturing jobs.

The Dept. of Energy predicts 50 gigawatts of offshore wind will be harvested from the East Coast by 2030. The DOE believes 5 to 10 gigawatts of that energy will come from North Carolina. [Read more.](#)



(Left-right) Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson with Nexsen Pruet's Special Counsel David Robinson.

## Commerce participates in China Seminar

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson was one of the invited panelists at a panel

Newseum.

Companies that exhibit in the pavilion will also benefit from a feature article in *Impact* magazine's special BIO 2011 edition. Pinehurst Resort has signed on to sponsor the putting green in the exhibit, and donated golf balls and a trip to raffle. [Learn more or to sign up.](#)

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## Future offshore energy meetings scheduled for January

Three coastal communities will host meetings in January to gather public input on offshore energy. The Governor's Scientific Advisory Panel on Offshore Energy will hold the meetings Jan. 10 in Wilmington, Jan. 11 in Morehead City and Jan. 12 in Manteo. The panel was established in 2009, and has studied a variety of offshore energy forms with the intent of reporting its findings by September, 2011.

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Assistant Sec. for Energy Jennifer Bumgarner told *The Virginian-Pilot* that the report will include public input.

[Future of our coast? You're invited to have a say](#) (*The Virginian-Pilot* - Norfolk, Dec. 5)

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(Left-right) Charlotte Regional Partnership President and CEO Ronnie L. Bryant, Greater Statesville Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Mike Smith, N.C. Dept. of Commerce Existing Industry Specialist Uconda Dunn, Know Borders Consulting Group President Panico Peres, N.C. Dept. of Commerce International Trade Division Business Liaison Andre Neufeld and Lincoln Economic Development Association Executive Director Barry Matherly

## Commerce joins delegation to Brazil

Focusing on the world's tenth-largest economy based on the national GDP, North Carolina and the Charlotte Regional Partnership are determined to increase the presence of Brazilian firms here. Last week, CRP sponsored a trip to Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro to meet with prospects in automotive, aerospace, chemicals and energy. Brazil has a diverse industrial sector, which accounts for one-third of its GDP value and includes everything from automotives, steel and petrochemicals to computers, aircraft and consumer durables. Building on the existing companies within the state and region, Commerce is committed to increasing business development efforts with Brazil.

discussion held Dec. 7 at the North Raleigh Hilton. The event focused on opportunities and challenges of doing business with China. The panel and speakers included attorneys, government officials, and business executives who had first-hand knowledge of working within the Chinese regulatory and business environment. The seminar provided insight and perspectives into business regulations, export issues, negotiation pitfalls, intellectual property concerns and the best ways to protect patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets. The event was hosted by Nexsen Pruet, PLLC and the National Business Institute.

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## Commerce to exhibit at the Paris Air Show

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce will mount an exhibit at the [Paris Air Show](#), one of the world's premier air and space exhibitions. The biennial show will be held June 20-26 in Le Bourget. Commerce's 675 square feet exhibit will be in the official U.S. Dept. of Commerce-endorsed U.S. International Pavilion. Sponsorships of the exhibit are available to aerospace/aviation companies and economic development organizations in the state seeking a cost-effective method to reach their target audiences at the show.

See [the Commerce page on the show](#) for sponsorship details. [Sarah Bernart](#), marketing programs manager at (919) 733-4903, and [Rick Hill](#), international business development manager at (919) 715-5742, can be contacted for more information regarding sponsorship opportunities. Commerce plans to hold dozens of meetings at the air show with CEOs and vice presidents of operations of Tier 2 and 3 aerospace suppliers that may be interested in relocating or expanding in the state, as well as international trade prospects. North Carolina's presence at the air show follows the successful exhibits mounted at the previous Paris Air Show in 2009 and at the Farnborough Airshows in 2008 and last summer.

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## Asheboro receives Commerce grant

The City of Asheboro has received a Community Development Block Grant from the N.C. Dept. of Commerce in the amount of

Charlotte Regional Partnership President and CEO Ronnie L. Bryant stated in his Dec. 6 "Monday Memo" e-newsletter that there are currently six Brazilian-owned companies in the Charlotte region, employing more than 1,000 people. This year, Providencia USA announced that it will join this group. When it opens a manufacturing plant in Statesville next year, it will have invested about \$80 million. [Read more.](#)

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## Pilot for psychological thriller being filmed in Charlotte region

20th Century Fox Television is in the Charlotte region doing pre-production work for the Showtime pilot "Homeland" and will begin shooting the psychological thriller after the first of the year. If the pilot is a hit, it would be picked up as a series that would be filmed in the region.

"We are thrilled to host a production with such heavy-hitters with proven track records behind it," said Beth Petty, director of the [Charlotte Regional Film Commission](#), who worked with those associated with the production to bring it to the Charlotte region. "Our combination of locations, crew and support services all were key factors in the decision to film here."

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## UNC grad student untangles CGI hair

For UNC-Chapel Hill alum Kelly Ward, Disney's newly released animated film "Tangled" could be considered her Mount Everest.

Everest stands 29,002 feet tall. Rapunzel's hair, for which the movie was titled, stretches a fraction of that – 70 feet – when fully unfurled.

But the technical feat of virtually rendering this flowing mound of hair for the big screen – in a form that appears both realistic, and at times, magical – was a challenge software engineers had never before attempted.

Without knowing it, Ward stumbled into base camp for that quest 10 years ago when she arrived at UNC-CH as a graduate student in computer science. [Read more.](#)

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## Enrollment, course numbers up in '12 in 6' program

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Workforce Development continues to track the progress of Gov. Bev Perdue's JobsNOW "12 in 6" initiative. The community colleges have been asked to provide monthly reports regarding the number of students enrolled, courses offered and the number of jobs created and maintained. The numbers through Nov. 30 show that 18,488 students are enrolled in the program (up from 18,079 as of Oct. 31), and 2,722 courses have been offered (up from 2,639 as of Oct. 31).

\$154,360. The grant will assist in providing public water and sewer service for a new 50,000 square feet manufacturing plant to be constructed by Allen Precision Company. The company has pledged to create 14 new full time jobs and invest more than \$2.8 million dollars as a result of this grant.

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## Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Dept. 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 - Dec. 13, 2010

New projects assigned:	422
Projects announced:	137
Jobs created:	15,287
Capital invested:	\$3.14B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,475
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	21,296

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## N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- ['Green' appliance program receives additional funding](#) (*The Kinston Free Press*, Dec. 10)
- [Company could bring 1,100 jobs to Columbus County](#) (*The Star-News - Wilmington*, Dec. 10)

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