

# sync<sup>TM</sup> Highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



## Tosaf USA Announces First U.S. Facility in Gaston County

Governor Pat McCrory, N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker and the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina announced December 12 that Tosaf USA, Inc. is planning to locate its first U.S. manufacturing facility in Gaston County, creating 75 jobs in five years and investing approximately \$13.1 million over the next three years in Bessemer City.

"That Tosaf USA would choose North Carolina for its first U.S. manufacturing plant says volumes about what we have to offer," said Governor McCrory. "Tosaf USA found hardworking employees, a great quality of life and the infrastructure needed to be successful."

"We are excited about our entry into the U.S. market and about establishing our operations in North Carolina," said Amos Megides, chairman of the Board of Tosaf Compounds, Ltd. "I personally appreciate North Carolina's assistance in our search for the best location for our new facility."

The parent company of Tosaf USA, Tosaf Compounds Ltd., is based in Israel and specializes in the manufacturing and marketing of advanced polymers and compounds. The company's products are used by plastic molders and processors serving a wide range of industries including automotive, medical, electrical and packaging. The Bessemer City facility will be its first entry into the U.S. market.

"Foreign investment is crucial to growing North Carolina's economy," said Secretary Decker. "When companies such as Tosaf USA choose to locate here, it continues to position our



## Overland Contracting Headquarters Means New Jobs for Wake County

Overland Contracting Inc., an engineering, procurement and construction company will open its headquarters in Garner with an \$8.4 million investment in facilities to support the company's professionals.

The announcement included word that 89 new jobs will be coming to Wake County over the next three years.

"It is great to have a new company headquarters in North Carolina that leads construction projects in the energy, water and telecommunications industries," said Governor Pat McCrory. "I know they will love our quality of life and with their completed infrastructure projects they'll enhance our citizens' lives as well."

Overland Contracting's parent company, Black & Veatch, is among the Forbes "500 Largest Private Companies in the United States." Black & Veatch currently employs nearly 200 workers located between Wake and Mecklenburg Counties.

"Employees with Overland Contracting Inc. are building vital infrastructure that improves local communities," said Secretary Sharon Decker. "Their work constructing electric generation, transmission and distribution systems, water and wastewater treatment facilities or telecommunications structures may generate greater economic development in the future."

The company's leadership and management team will operate out of the new Garner Headquarters. New employees will include

state as a good place to do business across the globe."

In addition to the N.C. Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C, other partners that helped with this project include: N.C. Community Colleges, Gaston College, Norfolk Southern, Duke Energy, the City of Bessemer City, Gaston County and the Gaston County Economic Development Commission.

[Read more.](#)



*JPS staffers and family members, including CEO Ben Hamrick (far left) get ready to run a 5K race held recently in Asheville*

## CPAs Place Value on Work/Life Balance

Ben Hamrick knows that wallyball teams, group hikes and volunteer days aren't how people typically picture an accounting firm. Hamrick, President and CEO of Johnson Price Sprinkle PA of Asheville, has overseen a transformation at the 46-employee firm that includes encouraging work/life balance, healthy behaviors, and group activities.

"It's created a culture shift for us. CPA firms aren't usually thought of as 'fun' places, but we've introduced some things that end up being a little more lighthearted," Hamrick says of participating in WorkHealthy America. The healthy workplace initiative helped JPS to reduce tobacco use while encouraging more physical activity and healthy food choices during the work day. The firm achieved WorkHealthy's Excellence Recognition, the highest national standard for healthy workplaces in 2014. The company also earned *BusinessNC* magazine's third-place ranking among small-to-medium-sized businesses for "2014 Best Employers in North Carolina." Employees surveyed as part of that ranking cited reimbursements for gym or YMCA memberships as a favorite perk.

Other changes that earn a thumbs-up from JPS employees include working with local caterers to make healthy, labeled options available at all catered meetings and events, choosing tobacco-free venues for off-site events, and paid breaks for physical activity during work hours.

Among Hamrick's favorite changes, he says, may be the wallyball games over at the local YMCA. "You can find a senior audit manager and a tax intern both diving for the ball during a Friday afternoon match," he says. "This sense of 'team' translates to the workplace and only strengthens the

project construction positions and operational associates to handle procurement, finance and human resources.

"With our existing business presence in North Carolina, this new OCI location will provide an opportunity to further enhance our capability to provide client services in the region," said Ralph Dyro, Vice President, Real Estate & Facilities Management for Black & Veatch. "We believe the city and state economy, as well as our strong presence in the communities where we live and work, will result in many benefits to the area."

The N.C. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Partnership of N.C. partnered with the Town of Garner, Wake County Economic Development, NC Community College System and Wake Technical Community College to make this project possible.

[Read more.](#)



## Winterville Named Official Retirement Community

The N.C. Department of Commerce announced December 11 that Winterville has been designated a North Carolina Certified Retirement Community. The N.C. General Assembly established the program in 2008 to designate communities that offer unprecedented quality of living desirable to retirees.

"This designation will be a valuable economic development tool for the town of Winterville and its residents," said N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker. "The people of Winterville recognize the valuable contributions that retirees can make to the overall enhancement of their community."

To gain certification, a local government must submit an application that includes a comprehensive community survey and assessment tool that reflects the city's readiness for retiree attraction. Ratings criteria include:

- Demographics
- Housing/technology
- Healthcare
- Local economy
- Leisure/cultural opportunities
- Services for retirees

cohesive group."

Hamrick's enthusiasm is creating ripple effects throughout his network. He has introduced WorkHealthy to the North Carolina Association of CPAs' headquarters, of which he is past chair. The 22-employee association recently began its own workplace transformation.

[Video Link](#). N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker speaks about the importance of health as an economic driver.

***Healthy Places Change Lives** is a partnership between the N.C. Department of Commerce and Prevention Partners, a nonprofit based in Chapel Hill. Prevention Partners guides schools, workplaces, hospitals and clinics to address the leading causes of preventable disease. The non-profit's Healthy Together NC initiative aims to reach at least 10 organizations in all 100 counties of the state by 2025. Learn more at [ForPrevention.org/HealthyTogetherNC](http://ForPrevention.org/HealthyTogetherNC)*



## Governor McCrory Announces \$640,448 in Innovation Grants for 13 North Carolina Businesses

New innovation grants will assist thirteen North Carolina companies in bringing new, cutting-edge products to the marketplace. Governor Pat McCrory and North Carolina Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced the One North Carolina Small Business Fund recipients December 3 along with awards adding up to \$640,448.

"These grants will help leverage public investment in research, producing new companies, products and jobs for future generations of North Carolinians," said Governor McCrory. "We want to get research and development to the commercial market."

One North Carolina Small Business Fund grant recipients must have been awarded a highly competitive federal grant first, either a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant or a Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) award. Federal funders of these awards for this round of grantees include the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Army, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the National Aeronautics & Space Administration, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The state matches up to half the federal money, with a \$50,000 maximum per grant. The budget for this program is \$2.5 million for FY2015.

"The One North Carolina Small Business fund is a great way to jumpstart technology-based economic development," said Secretary Decker. "Someday these companies could develop the products that make our quality of life even better."

Community/education/military

Winterville, which submitted its application in July, was recognized for its many local amenities that are attractive to retirees. Communities with this official designation receive marketing and promotion assistance from Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

The N.C. Department of Commerce accepts applications for the Certified Retirement Community Program in January and July of each calendar year.

For more information on the program contact [Andre Nabors](#) at VisitNC.



*The N.C. Pavilion at the BIO International Convention in San Diego last June*

## North Carolina Pavilion at BIO 2015 Invites Sponsors

Life science companies and other organizations interested in reaching this industry sector are invited to team up with North Carolina's top industry players at the 2015 BIO International Convention. The state will again mount an exhibit pavilion at this important trade show, organized by the N.C. Biotechnology Center.

This year's conference will be held in Philadelphia, June 15-18 2015.

Joining the North Carolina Pavilion offers many benefits and in most cases is more cost effective than staging a private booth. The North Carolina Pavilion has a prominent location on the exhibit hall floor and its 1,500-square-foot design includes video screens, a presentation area and a conference room. Sponsorship provides networking opportunities with the hundreds of company leaders, international delegates and state dignitaries that stop by each year.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities, contact Sarah Bernart, Marketing Manager at the N.C. Biotechnology Center. Bernart can be reached at (919) 549-8833.

[BIO 2015 N.C. Pavilion Website](#).

Grant recipients include:

- **GridBridge, Inc. of Raleigh:** \$50,000 for a modular bidirectional power converter that offers versatile storage battery configurations necessary for the next generation of advanced battery and energy systems.
- **BioMarck Pharmaceuticals of Durham:** \$40,466 for aerosol N-terminal peptide inhibitors that prevent and reverse Acute Lung Injury and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndromes (ARDS), providing the first therapy for a condition that affects more than one million people each year.
- **Keona Health of Chapel Hill:** \$50,000 for a call management system for diagnosing issues involving the elderly or persons with dementia.
- **Dignify Therapeutics LLC of Durham:** \$50,000 to develop the first drug for bladder control of patients with spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis and similar diseases that hamper bladder function.
- **EpiCypher, Inc. of Durham:** \$50,000 for developing a new protein process technology for cell research, enabling new detection methodologies for diverse human diseases such as cancer and immunodeficiency disorders.
- **Indexus Biomedical LLC of Morrisville:** \$50,000 for a new diagnosis and monitoring test for HIV, available at primary health providers' offices and enabling earlier HIV detection and treatment.
- **Polarean, Inc. of Durham:** \$50,000 for a new compact Magnetic Resonance Imaging system providing local medical diagnosis in drug trials.
- **Triangle BioSystems Inc. of Durham:** \$49,982 to create wireless and implantable neural microsystems, capable of recording and stimulating the central nervous system, muscle tissues, and others systems.
- **Seatox Research Inc. of Wilmington:** \$50,000 to develop a less expensive, faster system for the detection of marine neurotoxins that cause paralytic and shellfish poisoning, thus improving the safety of the nation's seafood.
- **Asklepios BioPharmaceutical, Inc. of Chapel Hill:** \$50,000 for conducting preclinical and clinical development of gene transfer therapies to prevent cognitive decline in patients with Alzheimer's Disease.
- **HealthSpan Diagnostics, LLC of Chapel Hill:** \$50,000 to create a new blood test that evaluates kidneys for transplant suitability.
- **Mycosynthetix Inc. of Hillsborough:** \$50,000 for development of new fungal therapies to address infections from soil transmitted parasitic worms such as hookworm.
- **Cell Microsystems of Chapel Hill:** \$50,000 to explore the feasibility of new technologies for the isolation of single cells for broad applications in health, forensics, and basic research.

For more information about the One North Carolina Small Business Fund, including how to apply and qualify for the grants, visit the N.C. Board of Science and Technology's website at [www.nccommerce.com/sti](http://www.nccommerce.com/sti)

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## Happy Holidays!

This is our last edition for 2014. SYNC will be back in your inbox on January 6.

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## Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce.

Jan. 1 - December 15, 2014

<b>Projects announced:</b>	96
<b>Jobs announced:</b>	15,609
<b>Capital investment announced:</b>	\$2.6B

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## N.C. in the News

### This Week's Highlights

- [High on the Hog: From Eastern N.C. to Tokyo](#) (*News & Observer* - Dec. 14)
- [Gov. McCrory eyes advanced manufacturing, aerospace for N.C. job growth in 2015](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal* - Dec. 11)
- [McCrory envisions economic boom for NC in 2015](#) (*WSOC-TV* - Dec. 10)
- [UNC Charlotte economist predicts growth for NC economy next year](#) (*Charlotte Observer* - Dec. 9)
- [Map: Where your Christmas trees come from](#) (*Washington Post* - Dec. 8)
- [Outgoing N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker outlines future plans](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - Dec. 2)
- [Okuma Opens Aerospace Center of Excellence \(in Charlotte\)](#) (*Aerospace Manufacturing and Design* - Dec. 1)

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