

sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



(L-R) Governor Cooper with Bill Monteith, Senior Vice President, U.S. Manufacturing for Collectis at the March 7 announcement at the State Capitol.

Collectis Chooses Wake, Latest Confirmation of N.C.'s Biotech Leadership

Collectis, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company is planning to create up to 200 jobs as it locates its U.S. commercial-scale manufacturing facility in Wake County, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced March 7.

The company is developing immunotherapies based on gene-editing, the latest validation that North Carolina's biotech industry cluster is continuing to grow its leadership in emerging areas of the life sciences.

"North Carolina is proud to be a national leader in life sciences," said **Governor Cooper**. "The groundbreaking work that Collectis will produce in North Carolina will continue to strengthen our role in biopharmaceuticals, as well as have a major impact in the battle against cancer. We are particularly proud that North Carolina was the company's top pick for its manufacturing facility."

Founded in 1999, Collectis harnesses the immune system to target and eradicate cancers. With teams in Paris and in New York, the company uses gene editing to develop cost-effective, "off-the-shelf" allogeneic product candidates from healthy donor



Vibrant communities are the goal for the new Downtown Strong initiative.

24 Communities Chosen to Participate in New Downtown Strong Initiative

Twenty-four communities located in smaller, rural counties across the state have been selected by N.C. Commerce to participate in *Downtown Strong*, a new initiative of the N.C. Main Street & Rural Planning Center. The program will provide downtown revitalization expertise to selected incorporated rural communities.

Since 2018, representatives of Governor Roy Cooper's *Hometown Strong* initiative visited North Carolina counties to better understand how rural communities could actively reinvigorate their local economies. From the input provided by these *Hometown Strong* counties, as well as insights from the North Carolina towns, cities and counties that work on a regular basis with N.C. Commerce, the Department has identified leadership development and education, building local government capacity, and downtown revitalization as keys to successful economic development in North Carolina's rural communities.

"Downtowns are the heartbeat of rural North

T-cells that would be immediately available for patients across all geographies.

"Collectis intends to build the world's first manufacturing facility in North Carolina that will put together gene editing and cell therapies," said André Choulika, Chairman and CEO of Collectis. "This state-of-the-art facility will reflect our cutting-edge advances in manufacturing sophisticated gene-edited cell therapies at a commercial scale. We benchmarked several locations within North Carolina and in other states and selected Raleigh which combined multiple advantages, including a strong state support and willingness to welcome world-class innovative companies. Collectis' priorities are very much aligned to North Carolina's and we are pleased with this partnership to write this new page of our history."

"Once life science companies like Collectis understand the advantages that North Carolina offers to biomanufacturers, they're eager to locate here," said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "This industry cluster is very important to us and we're delighted that another strong partner will be taking advantage of the world-class talent, educational resources and important infrastructure elements available here."

Collectis' expansion in Wake County will be facilitated, in part, by a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) of up to \$1,999,500, spread over 12 years. Over the course of the grant term, the project will grow the state's economy by an estimated \$1.4 billion.

As much as \$666,500 could flow into the state's Industrial Development Fund - Utility Account, since the company chose to locate in Tier 3 Wake County. The Utility Account helps rural communities finance necessary infrastructure upgrades to attract future business.

Partnering with [N.C.Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of N.C.](#), on this project were the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), the [North Carolina Biotechnology Center](#), [Wake County Economic Development](#), [Wake County Board of Commissioners](#), the [Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce](#), the [City of Raleigh](#), [Capital Area Workforce Development](#), [Dominion Energy](#), and the [French-American Chamber of Commerce of the Carolinas](#).

[Read more.](#)



Governor Cooper addresses N.C. Main Street Conference attendees in Salisbury last week.

Carolina," said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**.

"Downtown Strong will help small communities regain their economic vibrancy and position them to retain and recruit new businesses, create jobs and spur investment."

Downtown Strong will assist towns that are not yet part of the formal North Carolina Main Street program, or that have needs outside of the traditional Main Street program. The program will help communities either prepare for the Center's Downtown Associate Community program, or to prosper on their own. Services will utilize the successful framework of the Main Street America program: downtown economic development strategies implemented through four key areas of focus - economic vitality, design, promotion and organization actions.

"We're excited to be able to offer this service to rural communities across the state," added **Kenny Flowers, Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development**. "The Main Street program has a proven track record of success, and Downtown Strong will incorporate components of that successful model into downtown revitalization initiatives for smaller North Carolina communities."

Experienced downtown revitalization experts will work directly with the communities, in collaboration with the N.C. Commerce Regional Prosperity Zone planners, to provide each town with a thorough downtown assessment and to craft a downtown implementation plan. Towns will also receive training and education, as well as opportunities for networking.

[Read more, including the roster of 24 communities.](#)



Dr. John Hardin addresses attendees at the Digital Empowers Charlotte conference on Wednesday, March 13.

Conference Explores How to Harness Technology to Bring Greater Access and Equity to Individuals and Communities

Building a stronger future for communities with innovations and partnerships was an

N.C. Main Street Conference Marks Record Attendance; Communities and Champions Win Recognition

More than 700 people attended the 2019 edition of the North Carolina Main Street Conference, breaking attendance records for the state's premier gathering for downtown revitalization. The conference was held April 12-14 in Salisbury.

Fourteen communities received awards for excellence in downtown revitalization during the conference, bestowed at the North Carolina Main Street and Small Town Main Street Awards Ceremony. The ceremony, held Wednesday evening, featured Chief Deputy Secretary for the North Carolina Department of Commerce Liz Crabill and Assistant Secretary of Rural Economic Development Kenny Flowers presenting the awards in categories that included economic vitality, design, promotion and organization.

"We are pleased to recognize these important projects around the state," said **Kenny Flowers, Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development**. "They demonstrate the kind of vision that local governments and their economic development partners, private developers, business owners, and private citizens need to improve their downtown districts and grow the local economy."

"This year's award-winning projects represent some of the state's best downtown revitalization success stories," said **Liz Parham, Director, N.C. Main Street & Rural Planning Center**. "The projects being recognized are notable building rehabilitation projects, extraordinary public art projects, creative promotional activities, and public-private partnerships formed to make significant downtown changes and improvements."

Thursday morning, forty-three North Carolina Main Street Champions were recognized for their commitment to downtown improvements and strong communities during a Recognition Ceremony. Champions received honors for contributions to their Main Street programs and downtown districts in 2018.

With the addition of this year's awardees, 721 N.C. Main Street Champions have been named by the North Carolina Department of Commerce over the past 19 years.

"Every city and town needs a Champion - someone that will step up and invest time and money in the community, improve the quality of life and grow economic vibrancy throughout the state," said **Anthony M. Copeland, N.C. Secretary of Commerce**. "Commerce is so pleased, each year, to recognize those individuals that are making a difference in their communities."

The North Carolina Main Street program helps small towns create vibrant central business districts by preserving their historic fabric and building on their unique characteristics using local resources.

[See the list of winning towns for this year's N.C. Main Street Awards.](#)

[Review the N.C. Main Street Champions.](#)

agenda topic of the [Digital Empowers Charlotte conference](#), held March 13 in at the headquarters of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont in Charlotte.

Dr. John Hardin, Executive Director of Commerce's Office of Science, Technology & Innovation, provided the conference's opening keynote address. Dr. Hardin set the stage for the meeting, defining innovation and explaining why innovation is important for all sectors, regions, and populations in North Carolina, helping produce goods and services that are new, highly valued, and hard to replicate and outsource. Hardin also explained how innovative companies typically pay higher wages and have higher growth rates, helping to grow a region's economy.

Digital Empowers, a partnership between the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and Tata Consultancy Services, explores how to harness technology to bring greater access and equity to individuals and communities through collaboration. Conference partners included the [Charlotte Regional Business Alliance](#), [NC TECH Association](#), [Queen City Fintech](#), and UNC Charlotte's [Office of Research & Development](#).



SYNC Readers Offered Discount for Upcoming Manufacturing Conference

SYNC readers can save \$400 off the full conference registration fee for the upcoming Manufacturing & Technology 2019 conference, produced by *Industry Week* and being held April 1-3 in Pittsburgh.

The conference offers a one-stop experience for manufacturing executives and brings together decision-making peers engaged with manufacturing's digital transformation.

Register using promo code **BETH19**.

[Conference information.](#)

[Register online.](#)

On Our Radar

- [Rankings: Top Metros and Micros; also, magazine's Governor's Cup Announced \(Site Selection - March 2019\)](#)
- [Iredell County recruiting CEO leaving](#)



[state for new job](#) (Charlotte Business Journal - March 7)

- [Upcoming Event: Emerging Biotechnologies in Agriculture](#) (Triangle Chapter of the British American Business Council • April 2, NCSU Hunt Library â€” Duke Energy Hall)
- [Upcoming Event: The Legacy of Charles Cannon | N.C.'s Textile Industry, Past and Present](#) (N.C. Museum of History • April 7, 2-5pm)

N.C. in the News

- [STEMS jobs survey about Triangle's strength is right-on, says NCSU economist](#) WRAL TechWire - March 6)

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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