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Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



## Forbes ranks N.C. 3rd for Best States for Business

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 14 announced Forbes magazine is ranking North Carolina as the 3rd Best State for Business in America. North Carolina improved from last year's Forbes ranking of fifth. In addition, the governor announced that recent statistics from the Federal Bureau of Labor and Statistics show North Carolina is the third best state for declining unemployment and fourth in the nation for job creation.

"This shows that the hard work of the past year has paid off - our investments in education to build the workforce of tomorrow, policies that create a more business-friendly climate and our aggressive recruiting," said Perdue. "When I took office, I pledged to take any meeting and make any call to bring jobs to this state. There's nothing I love more than convincing a corporate executive of what a great place this is to live and work."

In the Forbes rankings, North Carolina scored third in Business Costs and Regulatory Environment and ninth in Growth Prospect. Forbes scored the states on six measures including business cost, labor supply, regulatory environment, economic climate, growth prospect and quality of life.

While Perdue acknowledged the need to go further in job growth, she noted four indicators that hint at North Carolina's economic recovery:

- A decline in unemployment from 11.1 percent in January to 9.7 percent now;
- Corporate profits up 10 percent;

## Perdue announces major motion picture to film in N.C.

Gov. Bev Perdue today announced that New Line Cinemas film Journey 2: The Mysterious Island, starring Dwayne Johnson and Michael Caine will start production later this month in Wilmington. The motion picture is expected to be made in North Carolina for five months, with an estimated economic impact in the millions of dollars.

"A major motion picture means more than the excitement of celebrities and special effects," Gov. Perdue said. "It means jobs - hundreds of them. This production will also bring millions of dollars in spending into our economy and millions of dollars in earned tourism promotion, when North Carolina is showcased on the big screen."

North Carolina was selected because of the state's talented and trained film professionals and the water tank at EUE/Screen Gems that will allow the production the creative tools to make this movie in North Carolina. Journey 2 is also expected to qualify for the state's 25 percent film incentive. This film is being produced by New Line Cinema (a subsidiary of Warner Bros.) in association with Contra Film, and Walden Media. [Read more](#).

## Recruitment team honored by magazine

Two North Carolina recruitment projects were recently honored in the Summer 2010 edition of Southern Business and Development magazine. The [recently announced](#) Caterpillar plant in Winston-Salem and the [Siemens expansion](#) in Charlotte were named as part of the [2010 Excellence in Manufacturing Recruitment Awards](#).

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll praised the team, and the department's many partners statewide. [Read the blog post](#).

## Auto parts maker to locate facility, bring jobs to

- A climb to fifth in the nation for personal income growth since June 2009; and
- The stabilization of the construction and manufacturing industries, which are no longer losing jobs.

In addition to some 36,700 jobs created in the last 12 months, Perdue and her team at the N.C. Dept. of Commerce have secured commitments for 30,000 new jobs since last year and \$5.6 billion in investments. [See the full story.](#)

[See the full rankings for all states.](#)

## SAERTEX USA to bring 178 jobs to Mecklenburg County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 19 announced that SAERTEX USA LLC, a manufacturer of technical fabrics for lightweight composite structures for the green energy sector, will expand its current facility in Mecklenburg County. The company plans to create 178 jobs and invest \$6.5 million over the next three years in Huntersville. The project was made possible in part by a \$110,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"Creating jobs remains my number one priority, especially in fast-growing sectors such as the green economy," said Perdue. "High-tech manufacturers continue to be attracted to North Carolina by our skilled workforce and top-ranked business climate. Today's announcement, and others like it, confirm the top national economic rankings that keep rolling in for North Carolina."

SAERTEX works primarily in the wind energy, aerospace, civil engineering, auto and shipbuilding industries by producing the reinforcing technical fabrics to create composites that are competitive with established materials such as steel and aluminum. This expansion is a result of growing demand for lighter components that save energy. Founded in 1982, SAERTEX is headquartered in Saerbeck, Germany and has locations in France, Germany, Portugal, South Africa, India, China and the U.S. The company opened its first North Carolina facility in 2000 and currently employs 126 in Huntersville. [Read more.](#)

## Siemens to expand U.S. footprint, adds 139 jobs in Wendell area

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 14 announced that Siemens Energy, Inc., a global supplier of products and services for the generation, transmission and distribution of electric power, will expand its operations in Wake County. The company plans to add 139 jobs and invest at least \$2.9 million by the end of 2014. The expansion was made possible in part by a state grant from the Job Development Investment Grant program.

"North Carolina is one of a handful of states leading the nation into recovery, and today's great news from Siemens is an example of how we're doing it," said Perdue. "Our investments in education and training have helped groom a skilled workforce and create a top-rated business climate that is attracting global companies looking for the best place to expand or relocate. Creating jobs is my number one priority."

Siemens Energy is the world's leading supplier of a complete spectrum of products, services and solutions for the generation, transmission and distribution of power and for the extraction, conversion and transport of oil and gas. Its focus is on future-oriented, innovative and efficient products and solutions to meet the increasing demand for cleaner, more

## Buncombe County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 19 announced that Reich LLC, a leading manufacturer of precision vehicle parts will locate a new production facility in Buncombe County. As part of a \$175,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund, Reich plans to create 56 jobs over three years, while investing \$28 million. The company plans to create 79 jobs and invest \$33 million over a 5-year period.

"North Carolina continues to earn top rankings for its business climate from experts at places like Forbes and CNBC," Perdue said. "But it's announcements like today's terrific news from Reich and other global manufacturers that prove we are following the right strategy to lift our state out of recession and into recovery."

Reich is an international supplier of vehicle parts and special ball bearings. They produce gears and gear parts for transmissions, fuel injection system parts, and other precision parts for cars and trucks. They also produce special ball bearings for use in power drills and office furniture. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Reich GmbH, headquartered in Mellrichstadt, Germany. The Buncombe County plant will be the company's second manufacturing facility. [Read more.](#)



*Race fans of all ages stopped by the North Carolina Welcome Center in Charlotte as they arrived for the Dollar General 300 and Bank of America 500 races at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord last weekend.*

## Welcome Center, local partners greet NASCAR fans

The N.C. Welcome Center in Mecklenburg County partnered with VisitCharlotte, the Cabarrus County CVB, the Mooresville CVB and dozens of local attractions and businesses to greet visitors at the annual fall Pit Stop on Friday. As hundreds of fans arrived in town for the Dollar General 300 and Bank of America 500 races at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord, the local tourism industry rolled out the red carpet with information and giveaways.

efficient energy production. [Read more.](#)

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## Grocery distribution center to bring 43 jobs to Davidson County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 13 announced that Save-A-Lot, Ltd., a leading discount grocery chain, will build a new distribution center in Davidson County. The company plans to create 43 jobs and invest \$24.45 million during the next three years in Lexington. The project was made possible in part by a \$125,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"Our long term strategy for creating jobs and launching North Carolina into full economic recovery is clearly working," Perdue said. "Our investments in education, training and transportation have created a skilled workforce and top-rated business climate that continue to make North Carolina an attractive location for businesses looking to expand or relocate. Job creation is my top priority and Save-A-Lot's expansion is a welcome addition of new jobs for Davidson County."

Save-A-Lot is an independent but wholly owned subsidiary of SUPERVALU INC. Based in St. Louis, it is the nation's fifth largest grocery store chain overall with nearly 1,200 value-oriented food stores operated either corporately or by licensed retailers across 39 states. Save-A-Lot operates six corporate retail stores throughout North Carolina employing 100 people. The new distribution facility will supply those stores, 11 licensee retail stores and others in the surrounding region. [Read more.](#)

[Keep good news coming on the local job front](#) (The Dispatch - Davidson County, Oct. 14)



(Top row, left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Director of Motorsports Development Derek Chen, Economic Developer Stuart Hair, Policy Development Analyst Meihui Bodane, Jim Leonard of International Market Solutions, Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Jorman Fields of International Market Solutions; (bottom row, left-right) Economic Developer Tammy Lester, Cece Leonard of International Market Solutions and Associate Economic Developer Meredith Uchida.

## Commerce sponsors textiles conference in Greensboro

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce on Oct. 13 sponsored a textile conference in Greensboro that focused on the very important markets for military and performance textile and apparel products. International Market Solutions organized the

The motorports industry supports more than 27,000 jobs in North Carolina and contributes more than \$6 billion to the state's economy each year. Ninety percent of NASCAR teams are based in North Carolina and Charlotte is home to the NASCAR Hall of Fame.



(Left - right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson, Commerce Trade Assistant Helen Ng of the N.C. Hong Kong office, and Electronic Systems Protection VP of International Sales Gary Shallo

## Commerce participates in Chinese IT Expo

[The Expo Comm China 2010](#) was held at the International Exhibition Center in Beijing from October 11-15, with more than 400 exhibitors from 13 countries displaying their cutting-edge solutions in information and communications technology.

This event showcased a wide range of technology products such as wireless equipment, 3G business applications, broadband access, optical fiber networks, and integrated voice and data processing solutions. The event brought together hundreds of equipment sellers and service providers to explore various opportunities in the Chinese market.

China is the world's fastest growing economy and second largest export market for North Carolina products. Four North Carolina companies participated in the event, and the N.C. Dept. of Commerce had a booth on the exhibit floor. Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson and Trade Assistant Helen Ng participated in the event to facilitate North Carolina exports and assist the companies with forming alliances and partnerships with Chinese buyers.

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conference. Commerce sponsored a similar conference in 2009.

This year's agenda included not only the active military market but also several non-military government agencies. Recent events such as the earthquakes in Chile and Haiti highlight the importance of government non-military markets for many of the textile and apparel products. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco spoke on the textile industry and innovation and on the military opportunities in North Carolina. Approximately 150 people attended the event. [Learn more.](#)

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## N.C. ranks No. 3 for hospitality job growth

Although much of North Carolina's economy may be struggling, the state's leisure and hospitality sector is on the rebound. Figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show the Tar Heel State has added 26,600 jobs in that sector during the past five years. The leisure and hospitality sector encompasses a broad range of industries, including restaurants, bars, hotels, motels, theaters, museums and professional sports teams. Only New York and Texas have done better. Thirty-six states and the District of Columbia have registered gains in such employment during the past five years, while 14 states have suffered declines.

[N.C. ranks No. 3 for hospitality job growth](#) (Charlotte Business Journal, Oct. 12)



(Left-right) Rick Morgan of T5 Partners, Stu Heishman of Duke Energy and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco

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## NCEDA holds fall conference

The [N.C. Economic Developers Association](#) held its fall conference Oct. 14 in Concord. The conference, titled "Don't Stand Still: Keeping North Carolina Competitive in a Global Economy," featured presentations and panel discussions from



Harry Payne, director of compliance with the N.C. Office of Recovery and Reinvestment, speaks during one of the energy workshops.

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## Energy Office conducts workshops

Last week the [N.C. Energy Office](#), in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Energy, conducted three workshops around the state for North Carolina recipients of federal Recovery Act funds for energy conservation and efficiency related projects. More than 300 recipients attended one of the three workshops, titled "Putting Your Federal Recovery Dollars To Work Now." The workshops were held Oct. 5 at UNC-Wilmington, Oct. 6 at the EPA offices in Research Triangle Park and Oct. 7 at the Appalachian State University center in Hickory.

Grant awardees were briefed by key state and federal officials on ways to effectively address various reporting and accountability requirements, such as working with the Davis-Bacon employment regulations, buy-American provisions and working with the N.C. Office of Economic Recovery and Investment. Mark Johnson, of the U.S. Dept. of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, along with Harry Payne, compliance director with the N.C. Office of Economic Recovery and Investment, were the session leaders.

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## 40-plus jobs expected in Northampton County expansion

Northampton County Commissioners are celebrating along with Hampton Farms and the town of Severn. Commissioners approved signature authorizations Oct. 4 to receive a \$500,000 grant for the Northampton County/Severn Farms Gas Line.

County Economic Development Director Gary Brown said this grant from the Industrial Development Fund through the N.C. Dept. of Commerce is just one of several the county is working on for the nearly \$1.5 million project.

When it's completed, a natural gas pipeline will run from Conway to Severn.

top professionals. Topics covered the future of energy in North Carolina, mission critical economic development projects and creative financial strategies. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Small Business Commissioner Scott Daugherty was one of the featured speakers.

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## Registration open for AdvantageWest economic summit

AdvantageWest's next Economic Summit will be held on Nov. 15 at Diana Wortham Theatre, located in Pack Place in downtown Asheville. A networking reception begins at 5:30 p.m. and a panel discussion on the economy in Western North Carolina starts at 7:15. The event targets business people, entrepreneurs, economic development professionals and others with a vested interest in business and economic conditions - especially in Western North Carolina.

Online registration is now open. Registration is \$50 and includes heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages. Space is limited and pre-registration is encouraged. [Reserve your spot.](#)

As he did at last spring's AdvantageWest Economic Summit, columnist and UNC-TV host D.G. Martin will once again serve as moderator for a panel of distinguished high-profile business and political leaders, including:

- N.C. Lieutenant Governor and Rutherford County native Walter Dalton
- Banking veteran Austin Adams, who retired in 2006 as executive VP and corporate CIO of JPMorgan Chase
- Anita Brown-Graham, director of the Institute for Emerging Issues

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## Harrah's expansion to bring jobs to Cherokee

Job-seekers in the Cherokee area may find luck at Harrah's Cherokee Hotel and Casino. A major expansion means hundreds of jobs to fill in the next year and a half. A brand new event center opened in August, and restaurants like Paula Deen's are coming soon.

Harrah's is advertising for about 160 retail, hospitality and service jobs right now, but will need many more in the future. The general manager says most jobs pay in the 10 to 12 dollar an hour range, and most of the hiring will be local.

[Harrah's in Cherokee hiring](#) (WLOS - Asheville, Oct. 7)

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## The state website wants to hear from you

The State of North Carolina is redesigning its main website ([www.nc.gov](http://www.nc.gov)) and is seeking public input. Website administrators want to hear from a wide range of people about what they want and need from the new site. The goal is to build a site that makes it easier for everyone to obtain information about and perform transactions with North Carolina state government.

Please consider taking a few minutes to answer a nine-question survey and then share this survey with your business and social networks.

The survey can be accessed [here](#). It closes at 5 p.m. on Nov. 5. If you have any questions, please contact John Black with

[\\$500,000 grant allows natural gas line expansion for Hampton Farms](#) (Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald, Oct. 9)

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## Yadkin Valley among USA Today's 10 Great Places for Local Wines

USA Today blogger Jeff Siegel, who founded [DrinkLocalWine.com](http://DrinkLocalWine.com) with Dave McIntyre, wine critic for The Washington Post, worked with USA Today for its "10 Great Places for Local Wines." The two included the Yadkin Valley region with McIntyre noting the quality of Merlots and Chardonnays.

[10 great places for local wines](#) (USA Today, Oct. 7)

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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 - Oct. 18, 2010

New projects assigned:	345
Projects announced:	103
Jobs created:	12,879
Capital invested:	\$2.73B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,121
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	18,649

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## N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [West Corp. to add 250 new jobs](#) (The Rocky Mount Telegram, Oct. 18)
- [Answering the call: Sitel's expansion in Asheville latest good news on job front](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, Oct. 18)
- [North Carolina ranks 14th in solar jobs](#) (Triangle Business Journal, Oct. 18)
- [State Departments Promote Small Business](#) (N.C. News Network, Oct. 18)

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