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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and Lieutenant Governor Walter Dalton present an official State of North Carolina plate to Baldor Electric VP of Operations Bill Ramsbey.

Baldor Electric to create 166 jobs in Cleveland County

Governor Bev Perdue on Jan. 3 announced that Baldor Electric Company, a North American leader in industrial electric motors, will expand their operations in Cleveland County to accommodate growing demand for wind-powered technology. The project is projected to create 166 jobs, and the company expects to invest \$17 million in the plant. The project was made possible in part by a \$400,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Uconda Dunn](#) was the developer on this project.

"North Carolina has a strong commitment to developing and growing the green energy economy," said Perdue. "Our terrific business climate and skilled workforce make North Carolina an excellent location for companies who share our vision of a sustainable energy future. We thank Baldor Electric for their continued commitment to that vision and to our state."

Baldor Electric Company is the North American leader in industrial electric motors and is headquartered in Fort Smith, Ark. The company began manufacturing electric motors in Kings Mountain in 1983. ABB Ltd. based in Zurich, Switzerland, acquired Baldor in January 2011 as part of their strategy to become a global leader for movement and control in industrial applications. The combining of the two companies allowed ABB to increase its presence in North American markets while facilitating the sale of Baldor's products globally



(Left-right) Asheville Chamber of Commerce Senior VP/Executive Director of the Economic Development Coalition Ben Teague, Linamar Division Headquarters Human Resources Director Julie Mannebach, and N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll thank participants at the Homecoming Job Fair.

Employers promote 1,250 new jobs at Asheville 'Homecoming Job Fair'

On Dec. 29, the 6th annual "Homecoming Job Fair" was held in Asheville. The Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Coalition of Asheville-Buncombe County served as the lead sponsors for the event. The *Citizen-Times* of Asheville reported on Dec. 30 that the job fair included 3,000 attendees and that 2,700 booth maps were distributed. The paper also published that 1,250 new positions would be filled in the first quarter of 2012 as a result of the job fair.

There were 84 employers exhibiting at the fair, including 24 manufacturers. Advanced manufacturer Linamar, which plans to hire 400 workers, experienced a strong turnout at the job fair and had a team of HR executives from Asheville, Detroit and Toronto at its booth. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll participated in the job fair and thanked the employers, Economic Development Coalition staff, personnel from the Division of Employment Security's Asheville and Hendersonville offices and the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board.

Perdue announces 162 new jobs with Infinisource

through ABB's worldwide distribution network. The addition of Baldor's 6,800 North American employees brings the number of ABB's employees on this continent to approximately 17,000.

The average annual payroll for the project is estimated to exceed \$7.3 million. Salaries will vary by job function. The overall annual wages will exceed the Cleveland County annual average wage, which is \$32,344. [Read more.](#)



(Left-right) Business North Carolina Publisher Ben Kinney, Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Mercer of Mercer Design Group, N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll at a "Small Business of the Year" event in Winston-Salem

Business North Carolina names 'Small Business of the Year'

On Dec. 9, Business North Carolina magazine held an event in Winston-Salem honoring its "Small Business of the Year." The event was sponsored by BB&T, and N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll served as keynote speaker. "Small Business of the Year" DeFeet International Inc. CEO Shane Cooper and his wife were honored during the event by *Business North Carolina* Publisher Ben Kinney and Carroll. They also recognized the runners-up: Mercer Design Group, Rhino Assembly Corp. and Something Classic Corp. All four companies are profiled and their inspirational stories told in the December issue of the magazine. [Read the stories.](#)

Study: N.C. second in incentives oversight

A new report released by a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that wants corporate incentives to be more accountable and effective ranks North Carolina's incentives program second in the nation in terms of accountability and job-creation effectiveness.

[Study: NC second in incentives oversight](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Dec. 14)

Governor Bev Perdue announced Dec. 28 that Infinisource Holdings Inc., a nationally known benefits administrator focused on small to mid-market firms, will move its headquarters and start a new division in Charlotte. The company plans to create 162 jobs over the next five years with a \$500,000 capital investment in Mecklenburg County. The project was made possible in part by a Job Development Investment Grant. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Ron Leitch](#) was the developer on this story.

"Creating jobs is my top priority, and our top-ranked business climate that we have built over the years has convinced another major company not just to do business in North Carolina, but to call it home," Perdue said.

Infinisource, an August 2011 acquisition of Infinisource Holdings Inc. (an Accel-KKR portfolio company), has more than 200 employees between its offices in Ohio, Florida and its regional headquarters in Michigan. Established in 1986, Infinisource is a leading benefits administration provider, serving more than 17,700 clients in the United States.

The company's expansion and corporate headquarters relocation in North Carolina will enable the launch of a division dedicated to Human Capital Management SaaS technology, which will help employers manage their payroll, HR, benefits administration, talent management, time and attendance, and compliance from a single cloud deployed platform. In addition, Infinisource will consolidate other business elements-including sales, implementation, customer service and information technology-in Charlotte. [Read more.](#)



N.C. Department of Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson (center) with two members of the CIPA delegation in Raleigh on Dec. 14.

Commerce hosts Chinese delegation

N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco on Dec. 14 welcomed more than 20 members of a Chinese delegation led by Hua Yu and Dr. Wansong Sun. In his opening remarks, Crisco recalled his recent China business development trip and discussed the



Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Film and Sports Development Lynn Minges unveils the 2012 N.C. Travel Guide.

Tourism unveils 2012 travel guide

On Dec. 13, the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development formally unveiled the "The Official 2012 North Carolina Travel Guide," a 174-page handbook featuring unique North Carolina experiences. The Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development will distribute 600,000 copies of the printed guide. The publication represents a \$1.3 million investment by division's travel partners in print and online advertising and cooperative marketing efforts. Attractions and accommodations are listed for free.

A press conference, held jointly with the Wilmington and Beaches Convention & Visitors Bureau, took place on Johnnie Mercer's Fishing Pier in Wrightsville Beach. The pier is featured on the cover of the new guide. Assistant Secretary of Tourism, Marketing, and Global Branding Lynn Minges spoke at the event as did Kim Hufham, President & CEO of the New Hanover County Tourism Development Authority.

Hitachi Metals announces decision to expand in N.C.

Governor Bev Perdue announced on Dec. 21 that Hitachi Metals North Carolina, Ltd., a leading manufacturer of ferrite magnets, will expand operations at its China Grove plant. The project will create 65 full-time jobs and the company expects to invest approximately \$60 million in the plant over the next four years. The project was made possible in part by a \$153,700 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Uconda Dunn](#) was the developer on this project.

Hitachi Metals North Carolina, a subsidiary of Hitachi Metals, currently employs 65 people at its China Grove facility. The company's ferrite magnet manufacturing base will produce neodymium magnets engineered primarily for use in hybrid and electric vehicles. The new plant will support the company's efforts to expand its magnet supply capacity to meet an increase in global demand. [Read more.](#)

UPM Raflatac continues to expand and add jobs in Henderson County

Governor Bev Perdue on Dec. 21 announced that UPM Raflatac, a leading global supplier of pressure sensitive labelstock, will expand in Henderson County. The company

growing commercial ties between North Carolina and China. The Investment Promotion Agency (CIPA) delegation of China was briefed on trade and investment opportunities in North Carolina by Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson and James Ku of the N.C. China office. Economic developer [Margie Bukowski](#) was present to answer questions on statutory and discretionary incentives. The CIPA delegation also toured the Hamner Institute for Health Sciences in the Research Triangle Park and the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering in Greensboro.

N.C. wins Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge Grant

Governor Bev Perdue announced Dec. 16 that North Carolina won a Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

North Carolina was among nine winners chosen from 37 applicants competing for a share of \$500 million. While the exact amount of the grant will be announced later, the state's application was for approximately \$70 million. North Carolina's grant will allow the state to strengthen efforts to ensure that all children are able to start kindergarten with a strong foundation for future learning. [Read more.](#)



(left-right) Leadership Triangle Board Chair Blake Strayhorn, N.C. Department of Commerce Market Researcher Meihui Bodane, and Leadership Triangle Chair Emeritus and President/CEO of Capitol Broadcasting Company Jim Goodmon

Bodane receives Goodmon Award

plans to create 51 jobs and invest \$11.5 million during the next three years in Henderson County. The project was made possible in part by a \$150,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Bill Payne](#) was the developer on this project.

UPM Raflatac produces pressure sensitive labelstock that is designed to meet the needs of demanding applications in a vast array of end-uses. A subsidiary of Finnish-based UPM, the company has operated in Henderson County since 1985 and currently employs 342 in North Carolina. The grant will help the company expand its current production capabilities. [Read more.](#)

Pate Dawson Company to create 49 jobs in Iredell County

Governor Bev Perdue on Dec. 20 announced that Pate Dawson Company, a foodservice distributor, will locate a new facility in Iredell County. The company plans to create 49 jobs and invest \$8.5 million over the next three years in Statesville. The project was made possible in part by a \$150,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Ron Leitch](#) was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs is my top priority, and Pate Dawson's choice to locate this facility in Iredell County is a testament to our excellent workforce and strong business climate," Perdue said. "One of the best ways to grow jobs is help home-grown companies, like Pate Dawson, expand their operations right here in North Carolina."

Based in Goldsboro, Pate Dawson Company is a fifth-generation, family-owned company with a 126-year history in North Carolina. The company currently employs more than 390 at its distribution facilities in Goldsboro and Greensboro. Pate Dawson delivers food products to chain account restaurants and more than 1000 independent restaurants throughout the Southeast.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$47,531, plus benefits. The Iredell County average annual wage is \$36,348. [Read more.](#)

Tourism partners keep 1-800-VISITNC operators informed

Officials from [North Carolina's Northeast Commission](#) and its partners visited the N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Tourism's 1-800-VISITNC Call Center Dec. 5. The group updated the operators on the region's variety of historic, cultural and recreational opportunities. From the historic plantations and the legend of Blackbeard to golfing and the world famous beaches of the Outer Banks, the northeast region is full of places and events that celebrate North Carolina's heritage. The Northeast Commission promotes economic development and travel and tourism for the sixteen northeastern North Carolina Counties. Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges welcomed the group to the Call Center, and Commission President and CEO Vann Rogerson thanked the operators for their hard work and explained the importance of their efforts to the hundreds of tourism businesses in the northeast. Tourism partners from across the state frequently visit the Call Center to keep the operators informed about attractions, accommodations and events.

Meihui Bodane, market researcher in the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Labor and Economic Analysis, received a Goodmon Award on Dec. 13, 2011 from Leadership Triangle. The award recognizes community leaders who are regionally minded. Bodane participated in the 2011 Leadership Development Class.

Yadkin Valley launches tourism plan

Thousands of visitors drive through Yadkin, Surry, Caldwell and Wilkes counties on their way to the mountains. Now the counties have launched a major new program meant to position the Yadkin Valley as a destination for tourists to stop and visit. The counties are members of the [Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Partnership](#), which last month unveiled a new logo, visitor brochure, website, visitor kiosks and signs that are part of the effort to promote the upper Yadkin Valley as a place where visitors can enjoy recreation, cultural heritage and wineries. The corridor runs for nearly 130 miles along the Yadkin River. Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges said the initiative will be a prototype for other rural counties working on economic development. The Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Partnership was established in 2005 with the four counties seeking to increase recreation opportunities and draw tourists through the Wayfinding Program. According to one study, the corridor could generate between \$4 million and \$6 million a year in economic impact once it is fully developed.

Registration opens tomorrow for Governor's Conference on Tourism

Online registration for the 2012 N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism -- March 11-13 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Concord -- opens Jan. 4. Take advantage of a special early registration rate of \$399, or save even more with an additional discount of \$25 per person for three or more from the same organization.

This year, help the Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development pick the breakout topics that you're most interested in. During registration, you'll have the opportunity to choose your top three from 14 different topics. Indicating your preferences early will allow Division staff to schedule adequate space for sessions and to repeat sessions as necessary. Topics include: Capitalizing on the Retirement Boom; Making the Most of the Opportunity -- In Print and Online; Going Green without Going Into the Red; The Butler Did It -- Right: Customer Service Strategies for Tourism; Emerging Trends in Travel Marketing; Effectively Using North Carolina's

The Division of Tourism's 1-800-VISITNC Call Center is housed at the N.C. Correctional Institution for Women in Raleigh, and it operates in partnership with the Departments of Transportation and Correction. Under Division management, the Call Center employs inmates to answer the phone; provide detailed information about visiting the state and traveling by rail in North Carolina; and fulfill consumer and industry requests for The Official North Carolina Travel Guide and other information. Using well-trained inmates who make \$1 to \$3 per day allows the Division to provide personalized customer service for potential visitors at an affordable rate and provides inmates with marketable job skills.

To discuss presenting tourism information about your county at the Call Center, contact Theresa Smith at tsmith@nccommerce.com or (919) 715-5900.

N.C. is one of fastest growing states in U.S.

Building and maintaining a vital workforce for global companies depends in part on a location's ability to attract talent. New figures released Dec. 21 confirm North Carolina's appeal as a great place to live and work.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau as reported by WRAL-TV, North Carolina added over 120,000 residents between April 2010 and July 2011. Only four other states had higher population growth rates. In addition, the top five states account for more than half of the growth in population nationally. [Read more.](#)

AAIPharma to build lab, technology center

AAIPharma Services Corp. is building a 40,000-square-foot laboratory and technology center at its Wilmington headquarters and is adding jobs, according to CEO Patrick Walsh.

"We have around 25 jobs posted already," Walsh said. "We'll be looking at expanding in the lab services sector in the next three to six months."

The contract research firm for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries employs a total of 450 people, the majority of them at its headquarters and other facilities near the Wilmington International Airport.

[AAIPharma to build lab, technology center](#) (*The Star News* - Wilmington, Dec. 29)

November Economic Overview released

The N.C. Department of Commerce has released its Monthly Overview of North Carolina's Economy for November 2011. North Carolina economic growth has remained sluggish over the last few months. This month saw a decrease in unemployed workers as workers found holiday positions. The decline in unemployment led to the State unemployment rate falling for the first time since March. The housing market has improved since October 2010, showing declines in foreclosure filings and increases in existing home sales and housing authorizations. Nationally, the real GDP estimate for the third quarter of 2011 looks higher than the second quarter rate,

Research; Creating Fascinating Social Media Messages; Straight from the Horse's Mouth-- Understanding the Needs of Media Today; Tourism Issues for the Upcoming General Assembly; Project Runway: Tailoring Press Materials for the Digital Catwalk; Leveraging Partnerships with AAA; The Dating Game: Competing for the Attention of Top Media; Sports 101: A Tourism Engine for Your Community; and Making Exit 49 an Entrance.

Be sure to take some time to visit the area "Where Racing Lives" during your stay in Concord. Visit the [Governor's Conference website](#) for frequent updates, including a link to online registration, the conference agenda and hotel information. To learn more about becoming a sponsor, contact Heidi Walters at hwalters@nccommerce.com or (919) 715-6702.

Galloway Ridge at Fearington adds jobs to Chatham County

Galloway Ridge at Fearington, a continuing care retirement community located just eight miles south of Chapel Hill, is undergoing a \$102 million dollar renovation and expansion. It will include an on-site primary care clinic, and an expanded Duke Center for Living Fitness Center, plus 66 independent living, 14 additional assisted living and 24 skilled nursing apartments as well as a 15 unit Memory Care Wing in Chatham County. Galloway Ridge at Fearington will create over 50 new jobs and add to the economic stability of the region.

Gary George Designs, Inc., chooses High Point for new manufacturing facility

Gary George Designs Inc. will open a new manufacturing operation in North Carolina. The New York-based company, which specializes in contemporary upholstered furniture for residential, hospitality and contract customers, will open a framing / upholstery facility in High Point.

The company participates in the High Point Market and has showroom space in the International Home Furnishings Center.

"Creating glamorous comfortable upholstery furniture is paramount to my collection," said Gary Buxbaum, president. "Showing our furniture at the High Point Market is so important. Now having our furniture made in High Point will only enhance our collection's reputation. The 'High Point brand' has impressive cachet in all sectors of the furniture industry and with the general public."

As the company ramps up its local manufacturing operations, it could hire as

though concerns about a European recession could affect U.S. interest rates. [Read the overview.](#)

SBA Deadline for Economic Injury Disaster Loans in N.C. is Jan. 20

The U.S. Small Business Administration is reminding businesses in North Carolina that working capital loans are still available to small businesses economically impacted by the severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that occurred on April 16, 2011.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans, up to \$2 million, are available at 3 percent for private non-profit organizations of all sizes and 4 percent for small businesses, with terms up to 30 years. The loans are intended to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other expenses that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. To be considered for this assistance, disaster victims need to apply by the deadline. These EIDLs are available to businesses and non-profits in the following counties: Alamance, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Currituck, Dare, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gates, Granville, Greene, Guilford, Halifax, Harnett, Hertford, Hoke, Hyde, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Martin, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Orange, Pamlico, Pender, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Sampson, Scotland, Tyrrell, Wake, Warren, Washington, Wayne and Wilson.

To obtain disaster loan information and application forms, call the SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 (800) 877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing) or send an e-mail to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Loan application forms can also be downloaded from www.sba.gov. Completed applications should be mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, Texas, 76155.

Interested business owners and organizations may visit the [SBA's secure website](#) to apply for disaster loans.

Davidson County receives CDBG

The N.C. Department of Commerce has awarded Davidson County a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$750,000 to loan to the Lolly Wolly Doodle Company to renovate a vacant industrial building. The company has pledged to create 38 full-time jobs and invest more than \$1,500,000 as a result of the project.

many as 25 local employees. The company worked with developer [Melissa Smith](#) with the N.C. Department of Commerce and the High Point Economic Development Corporation.

"We are gratified by the faith in High Point that Gary George Designs is showing by adding manufacturing operations here," said Loren Hill, president of the High Point Economic Development Corp.

[Furniture maker to open facility in High Point, hire 30](#) (*The Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Dec. 19)

[Furniture maker to open High Point plant](#) (*The News & Record* - Greensboro, Dec. 17)

Download the AccessNC app for your new device

Did you get a new tablet or phone over the holidays? Why not [download the AccessNC app](#) for iPhone, iPad, Android or BlackBerry Touch? AccessNC is North Carolina's newest digital tool for business real estate site selectors and economic developers. The AccessNC mobile app is a free download based on the [AccessNC Buildings and Sites property search on ThriveNC.com](#). It uses similar search criteria, offering listing details on available properties from all across the state. With AccessNC, you have portable, convenient, 24/7 access to available buildings and sites throughout North Carolina. So, now you can conduct building and site searches and share detailed, accurate information with the people who need it on the fly, anywhere, anytime.

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Rise in N.C. economic index may indicate recovery](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Jan. 3)
- [Progress Energy CEO to speak at N.C. economic forum](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Jan. 3)
- [Nature Conservancy acquires Hoke County land to replenish longleaf pines](#) (*The Fayetteville Observer*, Jan. 3)
- [Behind the scenes: Luring 'Iron Man 3' to Port City took Marvel-ous effort](#) (*The Greater Wilmington Business Journal*, Dec. 23)
- [Is automotive sector really recovering?](#) (Autobody Online, Dec. 22)

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