

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



Gov. Bev Perdue outlines her new aerospace initiative during the N.C. Aerospace Executive Forum on May 21 in New Bern

Perdue announces new aerospace initiative

Gov. Bev Perdue announced a new state aerospace initiative during the third annual N.C. Aerospace Executive Forum on May 21 in New Bern. Speaking to a group that included more than 100 aerospace executives and economic development partners from around the state, Perdue asked N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco to develop three working groups of aerospace professionals to focus on workforce preparedness, the supplier network and recruitment of new industry.

U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan and Crisco delivered welcoming remarks during the forum. Kimberly Gavaletz, vice president of joint strike fighter autonomic logistics global sustainment at Lockheed Martin, delivered the keynote address. Facilitated breakout sessions focused on finding the right workforce, finding military-related business opportunities and finding research collaboration partners.

Following the forum, participants were invited to take a tour of the Fleet Readiness Center East at the Marine Corps Air Station in Cherry Point. An opening reception celebrating North Carolina's aerospace industry and sponsored by the Friends of North Carolina organization took place the evening before at the Hilton New Bern.

[Perdue announces statewide aerospace initiative](#) (The Sun-Journal - New Bern, May 21)

Vitacost to add 300 jobs in Lexington

Gov. Bev Perdue announced May 20 that [Vitacost.com](#) Inc., a leading online retailer and direct marketer of health and wellness products, will expand in Davidson County. The company plans to invest \$6.7 million and create 228 jobs over the next three years. The project was made possible in part by a \$450,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Melissa Smith was the developer on this project.

"Competition for jobs is fierce around the country and around the world," Perdue said. "So it is particularly rewarding when a company recognizes our exceptional business climate and tremendous workforce by continuing to invest and grow in our state."

Vitacost.com, headquartered in Boca Raton, Fla., currently operates a call center and a manufacturing and distribution facility in Lexington. In addition to selling brand name items such as New Chapter, Atkins, Twinlab and Kashi, the company makes and sells its own products including Nutraceutical Sciences Institute (NSI), Cosmeceutical Sciences Institute (CSI), Smart Basics and Best of All. The expansion of the facility in the Lexington Business Park will allow Vitacost to increase its manufacturing and distribution capabilities to meet growing demand.

The Lexington plant currently employs 168 people. While individual salaries will vary by job function, the overall wage for the 228 new jobs will average more than \$30,000 a year plus benefits, which is higher than the Davidson County average of \$29,640. [Read more.](#)



[Hagan, Perdue speak at aerospace business event](#) (News 14 Carolina, May 21)



U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan (left) speaks with N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and participants at the N.C. Aerospace Executive Forum in New Bern.

Textiles maker to bring 127 jobs to Caldwell County

Gov. Bev Perdue on May 19 announced that Advanced Textile Solutions Inc., a regional company specializing in fabric products for the military, automotive, aerospace and marine markets, will open a new plant in Caldwell County. The company plans to create 127 jobs and invest \$500,000 during the next three years in Sawmills. The project was made possible in part by a \$127,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Joe Holbrook was the developer on this project.

"North Carolina is strongly committed to the aerospace and military sectors and remains very attractive to companies seeking the ideal location to serve those strategically key markets," Perdue said. "Our state's skilled workforce, custom training programs and top-rated business climate create the perfect platform for businesses to succeed, grow and create new jobs and investment."

Advanced Textile Solutions is a sister company of American Technical Solutions Inc., headquartered in Walkertown. The company produces custom-sewn fabric products for a variety of markets. The new facility will produce military apparel and gear, and products for commercial aircraft seating. [Read more.](#)

Dr. Harvey Seim of the University of North Carolina addresses a group, including N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, at the North Carolina Wind Energy Breakfast May 25 in Dallas, Texas.

Commerce participates in Wind Energy event

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, State Energy Office Director of the Green Economy Larry Shirley are participating in [Windpower 2010](#) this week in Dallas, Texas. Windpower is the premiere wind energy event in North America, with approximately than 20,000 executives in the wind power industry and more than 1,000 exhibitors.

Commerce and the [N.C. Solar Center](#) sponsored a North Carolina Wind Energy breakfast May 25 for approximately 90 wind power executives from around the U.S. Other event sponsors were 3Tex advanced textiles manufacturer, N.C.'s Southeast, Parker Poe law firm and Kimley-Horn & Associates engineering and land planning firm. Crisco, and Shirley offered remarks on outlining the growth of green energy in the state. Featured speaker Dr. Harvey Seim, a professor of marine sciences at the University of North Carolina, outlined his recent nine-month study assessing the feasibility of installing wind turbines in North Carolina's sounds and off the state's coast.



Scott Daugherty, right, meets with state executive agency staff members at the N.C. Dept. of Commerce offices in Raleigh.

Small business commissioner outlines goals

Scott Daugherty, the state's new small business commissioner, held a liaison meeting April 27 with 20 staff members from North Carolina's executive agencies. Daugherty will work to integrate a variety of state-funded resources to assist small businesses. He will also establish a Commission for Small Business to coordinate the efforts of public, private, state and federal service providers. The liaison group is expected to meet quarterly to discuss regulatory, financing and other issues that affect the economy. See our In SYNC feature with Scott Daugherty below.



N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco joins the board of N.C.'s Southeast Region

N.C.'s Southeast board visits with Commerce leadership

On May 18 the board of directors of N.C.'s Southeast Region met with N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll. The board presented their priorities for southeastern North Carolina and participated in a Q&A session with the Commerce leadership.



National Energy Technology Laboratory Project Manager Otis Mills Jr., left, and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll shake hands after releasing \$6 million in ARRA funds.

Energy Office dispenses ARRA funds

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's State Energy Office awarded more than \$6 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for energy efficiency improvements in state and university buildings in the state. The document releasing the funds was signed at a celebration including members of



(Left-right) Fiserv executives Lance Beck and Steve Olsen receive a commemorative plate and North Carolina flag from N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll during the ribbon-cutting ceremony

Fiserv recognizes governor, One NC Fund at ribbon-cutting

On May 18, Fiserv held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its state-of-the-art financial services center in Hickory. Fiserv executives recognized Gov. Bev Perdue, Hickory Mayor Rudy Wright, Catawba County Commission Chair Kitty Barnes, Golden Leaf Senior VP Mark Sorrells, Catawba EDC Chair Tony Rose, the N.C. ESC and the N.C. Community College System for recruiting their new facility to North Carolina.

['Hip, hip, hooray' Cheers greet call center's 250 jobs](#) (Hickory Daily Record, May 19)



(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll, N.C. Sustainable Energy Association Executive Director Ivan Urlaub, Semprius VP of Photovoltaics Bob Conner

NCSEA holds economic outlook event

On May 17 the N.C. Sustainable Energy

the Commerce's Office of Science and Technology, Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll and Otis Mills Jr., project manager at the National Energy Technology Laboratory, a division of the U.S. Dept. of Energy. Mills was in North Carolina for a week-long monitoring visit to document how recovery funds are being spent in the state.



Manager of International Tourism Marketing Heidi Walters (right) meets with tour operators and industry partners during the International Pow Wow trade show in Orlando.

Tourism participates in International Pow Wow

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Division of Tourism's Director of Tourism Marketing Wit Tuttell and Manager of International Tourism Marketing Heidi Walters attended the U.S. Travel Association's Pow Wow in Orlando, Fla., May 15-19. Working with industry partners from the Outer Banks VB, the Asheville CVB and Biltmore, the group met with more than 40 tour operators and journalists. This international travel tradeshow brings more than 5,000 international tour operators, journalists and destinations from all over the world to the U.S. for three days of intensive pre-scheduled business appointments with more than 1,000 U.S. travel destinations and businesses from across the nation.



International Trade Division receives Export-Partner-of-the-Year award

Association (NCSEA) held an economic outlook event at N.C. State University. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll presented Gov. Bev Perdue's 2010 agenda for North Carolina. Association members from across the state participated, and several organizations, including the N.C. Dept. of Commerce Business ServiCenter, exhibited.

Recovery Act funds aid energy efficiency and promote green job growth

Gov. Bev Perdue on May 18 announced that an additional \$4.9 million in federal Recovery Act funding for energy efficiency block grants has been awarded to 58 projects in 52 local governments to help save on utility and fuel bills and create jobs. The grants mark the last distribution of money from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program in North Carolina, for a total of about \$11.9 million to 104 local governments, public school systems and community colleges.

"Investing in green energy and creating green jobs is one of my top priorities," said Perdue. "These federal recovery funds will create jobs, reduce energy consumption and save taxpayers money on county and municipal utility bills."

The grants program is administered by the State Energy Office, part of the N.C. Dept. of Commerce, to encourage energy conservation and economic investment in counties, municipalities, community colleges and public schools. A total of \$7.2 million is available to local government agencies and \$6.3 million to public schools and community colleges. [Read more.](#)

Study: Rock slides added \$197M in costs

Rock slides that shut down two mountain roadways in North Carolina and Tennessee this fall cost businesses and taxpayers \$197 million beyond money spent on repairs, according to a study released May 17.

Clean up from the rock slide on Interstate 40 in Haywood County near the Tennessee line cost the state and federal taxpayers \$12.9 million. But there were other costs associated with detours around the roads, including extra fuel, pavement damage and pollution, said a study commissioned by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

[Study: Rock slides added \\$197M in costs](#) (The Asheville Citizen-Times, May 18)

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's International Trade Division (ITD) received the 2010 Export-Partner-of-the-Year award from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce in recognition of its work in increasing exports that sustain and create jobs in North Carolina. ITD has been very proactive in helping North Carolina businesses that wish to take advantage of global market opportunities.

ITD works closely with the N.C. Export team, which includes export service providers such as the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), Small Business Administration (SBA), N.C. Dept. of Agriculture, and the U.S. Commercial Service. The team meets once a month and coordinates export development activities to assist clients who wish to grow their business through international sales. The "Certificate of Appreciation for Achievement in Trade" was presented to ITD Director Jean Davis by Ro Khanna, deputy assistant sec. of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, on May 19 at a luncheon organized by the N.C. World Trade Association.

Metal Craft to expand in Rocky Mount

Metal Craft Inc., a full-service industrial contractor providing general contracting and plant maintenance services, will expand its existing operations by moving into the 35,000-square-foot former Lee Tractor building in Rocky Mount. The company plans to invest nearly \$700,000, retain 11 existing jobs and create 40 new jobs.

N.C. mentioned in Area Development

The latest edition of Area Development magazine mentions North Carolina's life sciences cluster, and the N.C. Biotechnology Center in particular. The article notes that the industry has grown faster in North Carolina than the national average, and that the sector has grown five times faster than private sector businesses.

[Biotech, Medical Devices, and Life Sciences Sectors Strong Despite Economy](#) (Area Development, May, 2010)

BD adds new facility in Mebane

BD Diagnostics has opened a facility in Mebane that will manufacture medical instruments designed to speed testing and diagnosis of cancers in women. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco participated in a ribbon cutting at the new plant on May 20.

[BD Diagnostics opens Mebane manufacturing facility](#) (News 14 Carolina)

State unemployment rate declines in April

The state unemployment rate declined to 10.8 percent in April, down from 11.1 percent in March, according to figures released N.C. Employment Security Commission May 21. The new figures showed that non-farm employment rose by 7,500 jobs. Sectors showing improvement included professional and business services, and government jobs, however the leisure



In SYNC: Scott Daugherty

Scott Daugherty was appointed this year by Gov. Bev Perdue to serve as North Carolina's first Small Business Commissioner, a position that reports to N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. His key responsibilities in this new role include:

- Building an effective collaborative partnership among state supported business assistance resources.
- Organizing a state Small Business Commission.
- Serving as the chief advocate for and policy advisor to the governor and General Assembly on small business-related issues.
- Managing N.C. State University's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), and the Business ServiCenter and Small Business Ombudsman functions of Commerce.

For Daugherty, the biggest challenge for small to mid-size companies as the economic recovery continues is access to capital to support business growth opportunities. To address this issue, the governor asked Daugherty to lead an Access to Credit initiative in collaboration with the Commissioner of Banks and the N.C. Bankers Association. This initiative aims to increase bank participation in federal guaranteed lending and improve the quality of loan proposals submitted to participating banks.

When asked what advice he would give to anyone wanting to start a business, Daugherty says, "Seek independent advice and counsel from one of our great resources such as the Small Business Centers, Women's Business Centers or the Business ServiCenter."

In addition to his duties as small business commissioner and director of the SBTDC, Daugherty is also the assistant vice chancellor for extension, engagement and economic development at N.C. State. In his

and hospitality, trade, transportation and utilities sectors showed declines.

[State unemployment rate drops again...](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, May 21)

Raleigh ranks No. 1 for quality of life

Portfolio.com/bizjournals has ranked Raleigh No. 1 on its list of major markets that offer the best quality of life in the U.S. The study compared the 67 largest metropolitan areas in 20 categories. Markets with healthy economies, moderate costs of living, light traffic, impressive housing stocks and high-powered educational systems, had the highest scores.

[Quality of life? Raleigh ranks No. 1 among large U.S. metros](#) (Triangle Business Journal, May 24)

Durham and Raleigh make list of 'Cities Surviving the Recession'

Durham and Raleigh are named on a new list of "20 Cities Surviving the Recession," compiled by MainStreet and Yahoo Finance. The list highlights metropolitan areas "where the recession is ending - and you might be able to find a job." Others on the latest list include Washington, D.C.; Austin, Texas; Huntsville, Ala.; Boston; San Francisco; and Salt Lake City.

[20 Cities Surviving the Recession](#) (Yahoo Finance, May 11)

Commerce participates in Regional Rural Convening

Partners for Rural America, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)-Rural Development and the regional State Rural Development Councils (North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina and Maryland) hosted the 2010 Southern Regional Rural Convening, May 11- 12 at the Harris Conference Center in Charlotte.

The meeting was the last of four regional meetings across the country as a response to USDA-Rural Development's call to establish regional action plans and collaborations. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's director for Rural Development Programs, Mark A. Roberts, served on the regional planning team. Others from Commerce who participated were Olivia Collier from the Appalachian Regional Commission, Annette Davis-Giddens and Charlie Thompson from Rural Development, Libby Smith from Policy, Research and Strategic Planning, and Ravin Gore, Division of Community Assistance.

Participants heard from keynote speakers USDA Deputy Undersecretary Cheryl Cook, MDC Senior Fellow Ferrel Guillory and Southern Growth Policies Board Executive Director Ted Abernathy. Participants also discussed the meeting's four tracks: Workforce Development, Economic Development, Broadband, and Energy. Each track was facilitated independently with groups devising a plan of action that is being collapsed into a regional strategic plan to be presented to USDA-Rural Development officials by June 30. The Commerce team will follow the action plan developed for the Southern region.

spare time Daugherty enjoys travel, cooking and reading about presidential and military history. Read the [News & Observer Tarheel of the Week article](#) on Scott Daugherty.

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 (B&I) 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 - May 24, 2010

| | |
|---|----------|
| New projects assigned: | 179 |
| Projects announced: | 39 |
| Jobs created: | 5,566 |
| Capital invested: | \$574.6M |
| Industry visits by existing industry staff: | 522 |
| Calls to the Business ServiCenter: | 9,928 |

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Spirit to cut ribbon on new plant July 1](#) (ENC Today, May 24)
 - [N.C. jobless rate dips to a 12-month low](#) (Winston-Salem Journal, May 24)
 - [Green, clean technology to build touted in Asheville-based partnership](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, May 24)
 - [NASCAR icons don't forget their roots](#) (The News & Record - Greensboro, May 24)
 - [Data centers, like textile mills, go where power is](#) (The News & Record - Greensboro, May 24)
 - [Roughly 325 businesses in the area rely on defense contracts](#) (The Star News - Wilmington, May 24)
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