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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



(Left-right) N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Gov. Bev Perdue, U.S. Rep. David Price and IEM CEO Madhu Beriwal at the ribbon-cutting ceremony

IEM headquarters now open

On Aug. 17, Gov. Bev Perdue joined U.S. Rep. David Price, IEM CEO Madhu Beriwal and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco in cutting the ribbon on IEM's new headquarters in Research Triangle Park. In December, IEM, an international risk management consultant, announced it would move its headquarters to North Carolina and is expected to create over 400 new jobs.

IEM's decision to move to North Carolina continues the strong growth of North Carolina's defense-related economy. Federal defense spending increased in North Carolina by 10 percent during the past year, exceeding \$4 billion in fiscal year 2009.

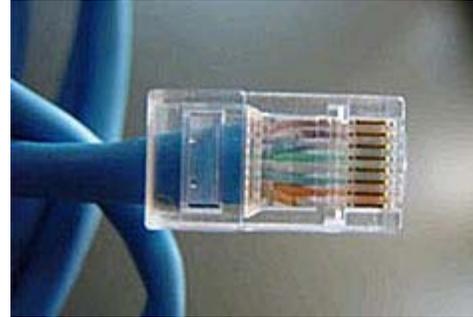
IEM consults federal and local governments and private clients on risk management ranging from natural disasters, to terrorist attacks, to overseas military conflicts.

[Price, Perdue turn out for IEM ribbon-cutting](#) (The Herald Sun, Aug. 18)

N.C. unemployment drops to 9.8 percent

North Carolina's unemployment rate dropped to 9.8 percent in July, marking the first time the rate has been in the single digits in more than a year.

Still, North Carolina's rate remains higher than the national



Perdue announces \$115M to expand broadband access

Gov. Bev Perdue on Aug. 18 announced that North Carolina has received \$115 million in five federal recovery grants to extend broadband connectivity in North Carolina. Combined with previous grants, North Carolina has received over \$255 million for broadband this year. Perdue has joined North Carolina's congressional delegation in personally advocating for North Carolina's grant applications in Washington, D.C., during the past year.

These funds will create jobs and help spur economic development through expanded access to high-speed Internet in underserved areas. These grants are part of the second round of Recovery Act funding for broadband projects from the U.S. Depts. of Commerce and Agriculture. North Carolina has already received over \$140 million in recovery broadband grants.

"Increasing broadband access will create new jobs up front and provide a boost for local economies to create even more jobs and a better quality of life in the near future," said Perdue. "These improvements are especially important in rural and underserved areas of North Carolina." [Read more.](#)

[State gets second broadband grant](#) (the News & Observer - Raleigh, Aug. 19)

Commerce Partners program offers new opportunities to 'thrive'

average of 9.5 percent, and there are still more than 440,000 people without work throughout the state.

"Job growth across all sectors continues to be a challenge," said Lynn Holmes, chairman of the N.C. Employment Security Commission, which released the new seasonally adjusted state rate this morning. "We experienced job growth in some sectors but had a large loss in government due mostly to declines in local school employment."

[N.C. unemployment drops to 9.8 percent](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Aug. 20)

Commerce participates in Plug in the Future conference

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll and N.C. Office of Urban Development Director Liz Parham joined Garner town officials, business owners and citizens for the Plug in the Future conference Aug. 10 at Garner Historic Auditorium.

Sponsored by the Garner Chamber, the half-day conference focused on the ConAgra land and facility donation and the redevelopment of Garner's historic downtown. Ken Atkins, executive director of Wake County Economic Development, moderated the two sessions. Each session ended with a question and answer segment with the audience.

ConAgra is scheduled to vacate its Garner facility by the end of 2011, leaving behind two parcels of land in a prime location near the I-40 and Hwy 70 intersection. In addition to the factory and the land, the company is donating to the town \$2.5 million for a community center and \$500,000 to market the building.

[Plug in the Future conference explores Garner's future](#) (The Garner Citizen, Aug. 17)

Main Street program kicks off in Roanoke Rapids

Exposure to and experience from the Main Street Center in Raleigh is now coming to Roanoke Rapids as the local [Main Street program](#) officially kicked off Aug. 18. Roanoke Rapids received the designation as a Main Street program community in September 2009. Recently the the Roanoke Avenue Business Alliance, which spearheaded the effort to obtain the designation, hired Main Street Director Charles Williams.

Main Street, a national program overseen in North Carolina by the N.C. Dept. of Commerce, allows designated communities to have access to grants and other funding sources in order to revitalize downtown historic districts.

[Main Street program kicks off in the city](#) (Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald, Aug. 19)

Onslow Bay considered for first N.C. wind farm

The federal government has received the first formal application for a potential wind-energy project off the North Carolina coast.

Apex Wind Energy is requesting to lease 213 square miles of ocean, all more than 20 miles off the coast, to explore the

Momentum continues to build around the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's new Thrive Partners program. This program offers to Commerce partners marketing and advertising opportunities that have been evaluated and selected based on their ability to effectively and efficiently reach our target audiences with a unified North Carolina message and to do so at value pricing that none could attain alone.

This month in the energy sector, participants can partner with Commerce to exhibit at [the Solar Power International/Exhibit](#), Oct. 12-14 in Los Angeles. This show is the largest solar conference and expo in North America, and a must for regions working to attract this growing sector and its manufacturing supply chain.

Other opportunities include online advertisements on the home page and key industry sector pages of [www.thrivenc.com](#), and the ability to piggyback on upcoming Commerce [advertisements in Site Selection magazine](#). There are also specific programs within the industry sectors including: aviation and aerospace, alternative energy, biotechnology and life sciences, financial services, information technology and automotive.

Please review these opportunities, pass along your feedback, and direct any questions you may have to Assistant Sec. for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges at [lminges@nccommerce.com](#). We look forward to working with you this year to position North Carolina as a globally preferred business location.

Continental Teves to hire 100 in Fletcher

With the outlook for car production up despite the recession, auto parts manufacturer Continental Teves said Aug. 17 it will hire an additional 100 people to work at the company's Fletcher plant.

"We are trying to get the word out that we are hiring," plant manager Bobby Nelon said. "As depressed as employment is in western North Carolina, we want people to know there are jobs out there."

Continental Teves' Fletcher plant employs about 330 people making brake parts. The company has hired about 40 people since announcing in July 2009 plans for a \$30 million plant expansion.

Plans now call for adding another 100 workers, at a rate of 10-15 people a month.

[Continental Teves brake caliper plant in Fletcher hiring 100 workers](#) (The Asheville Citizen-Times, Aug. 18)

area's feasibility for a wind farm.

The Onslow Bay area was selected because of its lack of environmental and other conflicts and its strong, sustained winds, according to the July application to the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy, Management, Regulation, and Enforcement.

[Onslow Bay looked at for first N.C. wind farm](#) (The Star-News - Wilmington, Aug. 19)

Rural Center to hold northeastern entrepreneurship conference

The N.C. Rural Economic Development Center will offer an intensive daylong seminar Oct. 21 in Windsor. Energizing Entrepreneurship Express (E2) is designed to help rural leaders in northeastern North Carolina promote entrepreneurship in their communities.

The upcoming seminar will be held at the Cashie Convention Center. It will train community-based teams of four to seven rural leaders each to build support networks for entrepreneurs. Participants are expected to include professionals from economic development organizations, chambers of commerce and Small Business Centers at local community colleges. [Learn more.](#)

BRAC task force hires regional economic developer

The BRAC Regional Task Force has hired an economic and business developer to recruit companies to the region. Alfred J. "Fred" Papa was named economic development liaison on Aug. 9. He will serve the 11 counties that are part of the task force, working to capitalize on Fort Bragg's growth from base realignment.

Papa most recently was director of economic development for Warren County and has more than 25 years of total experience. He will spearhead recruitment of defense-related companies and coordinate with economic developers in each of the 11 counties. His responsibilities include client lead generation, marketing and coordination of client visits.

[BRAC task force hires regional economic developer](#) (The Fayetteville Observer, Aug. 18)

USA Today looks at growth in military towns

Jacksonville and Fayetteville were both mentioned in a recent *USA Today* article on economic growth in military towns. According to the article, rising pay and benefits in the armed forces have lifted many military towns into the ranks of the nation's most affluent communities. Jacksonville, home to Camp Lejeune, had the 32nd-highest income per person in 2009 among the 366 U.S. metropolitan areas, according to Bureau of Economic Analysis data. The town also had the top income per person of any North Carolina community.

[Rising pay, benefits drive growth in military towns](#) (USA Today, Aug. 17)

Duke Energy opens Kings Mountain support facility

Officials held a groundbreaking Aug. 19 for Duke Energy's support facility, a centralized location planned for the company's generation departments.

"Essentially for our power plants," said Duke Energy spokeswoman Rita Sipe. "We are excited this project is going to be officially under way."

The 150,000-square-foot facility will serve as a corporate training center with available parking for up to 900 vehicles.

[Duke Energy bringing new jobs to area](#) (The Gaston Gazette, Aug. 19)

N.C. gains 9,600 jobs through stimulus

North Carolina ranks No. 19 in the nation for the number of jobs that have been created since the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, according to a report by Onvia.

The Seattle business-consulting firm reports that stimulus-funded projects created 9,617 N.C. jobs.

[N.C. gains 9,600 jobs through stimulus](#) (The Charlotte Business Journal, Aug. 19)

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 - Aug. 23, 2010

New projects assigned:	285
Projects announced:	85
Jobs created:	11,283
Capital invested:	\$2.18B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	843
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	15,396

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Poultry plant eyes Nash County site](#) (Rocky Mount Telegram, Aug. 20)
- [Company to add 40-plus Charlotte jobs](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Aug. 20)
- [Sompo Japan America Bringing Jobs To Charlotte](#) (FOX-TV Carolina, Aug. 20)
- [Two telecommunication groups in Triad receive stimulus grants to extend broadband connectivity state](#) (Winston-Salem Journal, Aug. 19)

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