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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Governor Bev Perdue and Sequenom CFO Paul Maier during the Oct. 12 announcement that the company plans to build a state-of-the-art molecular diagnostics clinical laboratory in Wake County.

Sequenom to create 242 jobs in RTP

Governor Bev Perdue announced Oct. 12 that Sequenom Inc., a company committed to improving healthcare through revolutionary genetic analysis solutions, plans to build a state-of-the-art molecular diagnostics clinical laboratory in Wake County. The company plans to create 242 jobs and make a capital investment of \$18.7 million in the Research Triangle Park. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Vivian Powell](#) was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs is my top priority, and Sequenom is a cutting-edge company working on the forefront of biotechnological innovation," Perdue said. "They have selected North Carolina as the place to launch the latest advancement in testing for Down Syndrome because our history of strategic investment in education and job training guarantees they have the workforce they need to succeed."

Sequenom Center for Molecular Medicine® (Sequenom CMM), a subsidiary of Sequenom, Inc., is a CAP accredited and CLIA-certified molecular diagnostics laboratory developing a broad range of diagnostics with a focus on prenatal diseases and conditions. These genetic tests provide better patient management alternatives for obstetricians, geneticists and maternal fetal medicine specialists. The MaterniT21 test, which is expected to launch in the coming months, is meant to advance prenatal screening for trisomy 21, the most common cause of Down Syndrome. The company was founded in 1994 and employs more than 280 employees. Sequenom is headquartered in San Diego, Calif.



Commerce names Williams assistant secretary for energy

N.C. Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco has announced that Jonathan S. Williams will serve as the department's new assistant secretary for energy. Williams comes to the post following two years as chairman of the N.C. Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission.

"Jon will lead a quality team in the [Energy Division](#) as we grow jobs in the energy sector and serve energy efficiency needs throughout the state," said Crisco. "He has the critical leadership skills needed to continue the momentum we've built in establishing North Carolina as a national leader in the [green energy economy](#)."

Williams will be responsible for developing and implementing policies focused on growth and expansion of energy resources and jobs, implementing sound energy conservation strategies, developing renewable energy resources and industries, and continuing to foster the conventional energy resources in the state. Williams replaces Jennifer Bumgarner, who was recently named southeast portfolio manager for the San Francisco-based Energy Foundation. The change is effective Nov. 1. [Learn more](#).

While individual wages for the 242 jobs will vary by job function, the overall average for the new jobs will be more than \$53,721 a year, not including benefits. Wake County's average annual wage is \$44,980. [Read more.](#)



N.C. Center for Biotechnology President Norris Tolson and Governor Bev Perdue prior to the Sequenom announcement.

Obama talks jobs in Asheville, Greensboro

President Barack Obama said Oct. 17 he would offer his jobs bill to Congress in "bite-sized pieces" with the hopes of getting it passed starting next week.

He landed at the Asheville Regional Airport just before 11 a.m. to start a two-day bus tour promoting his plan to put 2 million people to work.

"I am going to get a chance to hear from folks about how they are doing," he said. "What direction do they want to take the country? I am going to be doing some talking but mostly listening. Because there doesn't seem to be a lot of listening going on in Washington these days."

The president also visited Greensboro Technical Community College and other sites in Greensboro today (Oct. 18).

[In Asheville, Obama pledges new push on jobs](#) (*The Citizen-Times* - Asheville, Oct. 17)

[Obama renews call to pass jobs bill](#) (*The News & Record* - Greensboro, Oct. 18)



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco at the 2011 Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C.

N.C. companies make pitches at Army expo in Washington

About a dozen companies from North Carolina exhibited at last week's 2011 Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C. According to the *Fayetteville Observer*, North Carolina was the only state with its own pavilion at the expo, which is billed as the largest defense-related expo in the nation. Partners for the North Carolina pavilion were the N.C. Department of Commerce, Fort Bragg Regional Alliance, N.C. Defense Business Association, N.C. Military Foundation and Wake County Economic Development.

[North Carolina companies make pitches at Army expo in Washington](#) (*The Fayetteville Observer*, Oct. 12)



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll with JobLink award winner William Mott

Durham JobLink Career Center holds 2011 awards ceremony

On Oct. 11, the Durham JobLink Career Center held its 2011 Awards Ceremony. N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll served as the keynote speaker



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, Governor Bev Perdue and First Gentleman Bob Eaves with Lenovo officials in Beijing.

Perdue, Commerce meet with Chinese companies

Governor Bev Perdue, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and other Commerce staff are currently in China to meet with various companies. On Oct. 18 the group attended the Innovation Reception, sponsored by Lenovo, in Beijing.

Workforce holds Partnership Conference

The 24th annual N.C. Workforce Development Partnership Conference was held Oct 12-14 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. The event was attended by nearly 800 workforce professionals and was hosted by the Division of Workforce Development through the Workforce Development Training Center. Highlights included a motivational opening session by speaker Judson Laipply, a panel of state leaders discussing findings and implications of [The State of the N.C. Workforce Report](#), and a closing session in which teen authors and performers with Authoring Action, a Winston-Salem non-profit organization, shared their unique insights and reactions to current issues.



N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll tours the N.C. Solar Center before presenting at "Solar Exchange East 2011" by Siemens.

and gave remarks about the crucial role the JobLink Career Center has played in Durham's economic development. City of Durham Mayor Bill Bell presented the awards recognizing youth and adults that have excelled through the JobLink Career Center programs over the last year.

RayLen, Cypress Bend take top honors at State Fair wine competition

The 12th Annual N.C. State Fair Wine Competition, held Oct. 5-6 in Raleigh, had 444 wines competing in the commercial division. RayLen Vineyards & Winery, in Mocksville, won the N.C. Winegrowers Cup (Best of Show) with its Cabernet Sauvignon. Cypress Bend Vineyards, in Wagram, took home the N.C. Muscadine Cup (Best of Muscadine) with its McNeill white muscadine wine. This marks the second cup for Cypress Bend, which has now won twice in the last three years. Childress Vineyards, in Lexington, received the most awards in the competition with 34 medals. The commercial competition was open to all North Carolina wineries, and the judges awarded 343 medals overall with 28 double gold, 26 gold, 128 silver, and 161 bronze medals. Best of Show in the amateur wine competition was awarded to Daisy King, from Pinnacle, for her Blackberry Dessert wine. [View the complete list of winners](#); to find out more about North Carolina's wineries, visit [VisitNCWine.com](#).

Wireless research center receives funding from GoldenLEAF

Wake Forest Mayor Vivian Jones announced Oct. 10 that the [Wireless Research Center of North Carolina](#) has been approved for a \$962,000 grant from the [Golden LEAF Foundation](#). The grant is in addition to the nearly \$1.2 million committed by the Town of Wake Forest over the next three years and will be used to fund test equipment that will permit a major expansion of the services that can be provided.

Mayor Jones made the announcement during a morning press conference at Town Hall that

N.C. solar industry builds momentum

From a new "Mayberry Solar Farm" in rural Mount Airy to a growing energy cluster in Charlotte to Siemens Energy selecting N.C. State University to hold "[Solar Exchange East 2011](#)", the solar industry is building momentum across North Carolina. In the N.C. Sustainable Energy Association's "[2011 N.C. Clean Energy Data Book](#)" more than 800 solar projects are registered renewable energy projects in North Carolina. These projects are creating hundreds of construction jobs across the state and restoring millions of dollars of tax base in communities.

[Solar farm opens](#) (*The Mount Airy News*, Oct. 13)

[Turning green into gold](#) (*The Greater Charlotte Biz*, October)

N.C. set to present at Solar Power International 2011

The N.C. Department of Commerce is participating in Solar Power International 2011, which runs through October 20. The event is known as the largest, most comprehensive trade show and conference in the solar industry. More than 20,000 professionals from businesses that represent all aspects of the industry are gathering this week in Dallas, Texas, for the four-day event.

North Carolina's green energy industry has been experiencing an upswing in recent years. Anchored in support from the N.C. Solar Center, a singular partnership among the State of North Carolina, N.C. State University and the sustainable energy industries, the solar industry is realizing growth and success throughout the state. Governor Bev Perdue announced 629 green power jobs in a span of four months during the spring and summer of 2011. [Read more.](#)

Inmar to add 120 jobs by year end

Inmar, a leading provider of solutions that connect trading partners through consulting, software services and operations, on Oct. 13 announced that it will hire 120 new associates for its Winston-Salem headquarters operations by the end of the year. The company is filling a variety of positions in information technology, accounting, customer service and operations. Openings range from entry level to experienced management positions.

Inmar, which has been in business for more than 30 years, is making the additions in response to continued growth in key divisions of its business, particularly pharmaceutical services and promotions services. In addition to the 120 positions just announced, Inmar has 40 open positions currently listed on the company [website](#).

"We have enjoyed steady, measurable growth for the last several years," says David Mounts, CEO for Inmar. "However, the expansion of our business has now accelerated to the point where we must significantly increase our workforce in order to meet growing client demand."

Inmar currently has nearly 800 employees in the Piedmont Triad with more than 4,500 employees across the United States, Mexico and Canada.

included U.S. Representative Brad Miller, State Senator Neal Hunt, State Representative Marilyn Avila, and Golden LEAF President Dan Gerlach.

Gerlach said the award acknowledges the WRC as an incubator and hub for innovation for the Town of Wake Forest, the State of North Carolina, and beyond.

"The Wireless Research Center of North Carolina is taking a highly specialized capability and using it to spur economic growth across North Carolina for both large and small businesses," he said.

Located in Wake Forest, the WRC is a non-profit organization enabling research, development and testing of current and next generation wireless antenna technologies. According to its founder and director, Gerry Hayes, the center will serve as a regional, national and international destination for antenna development and related research and testing that requires specialized facilities coupled with applied and theoretical expertise. [Read more.](#)

September Economic Overview released

North Carolina economic growth has been slow over the last few months, and the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has risen half of one percentage point over the past three months. During this time there has been a slight decrease in the number of people working or actively looking for work in North Carolina. If this negative trend continues, it raises long-term concerns for the ability of these workers to quickly return to the workforce and become productive members of the economy. Thus, it also is concerning for the economy's overall growth (State GDP) potential. Nationally, the larger trend is economic stagnation, which may be the best characterization of North Carolina's economy as well. [See the overview.](#)

Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development 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, 2011

N.C. Science Festival among *USA Today's* '10 Great Places'

The N.C. Science Festival is among *USA Today's* "10 Great Places to See Science in the Works." The April event is the only state-wide festival on the list, the others being in specific cities. Stretching from the Blue Ridge to the Outer Banks, the festival includes "The Truth About 2012" in Elizabeth City and the opening of the Nature Research Center, part of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh.

[10 great places to see science in the works](#) (*USA Today*, Oct. 7)

Initiative aims to make WNC the leader in clean energy

Clean energy is America's future, and Western North Carolina is at the forefront. To support these efforts, economic development, government, business and education leaders have come together to make the region a clean energy cluster.

Called the EvolveEnergy Partnership, the initiative launched on Oct. 17 at an event at Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville. The event included the results of an economic study on the clean energy industry in Western North Carolina.

Land-of-Sky Regional Council in partnership with [AdvantageWest](#) is leading the 31-county effort. The coalition also includes the High Country Council of Governments in Boone, Isothermal Planning and Development Commission in Rutherfordton, the Southwestern Commission in Sylva and Western Piedmont Council of Governments in Hickory. It also includes the counties of the former Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments in Winston-Salem.

A national consulting firm, AngelouEconomics, researched the clean energy industry in Western North Carolina and worked with project partners in creating a strategy for developing the clean energy cluster.

"The Western North Carolina region offers a unique mix of assets that, if properly applied, can support a highly competitive environment for clean energy businesses and enhanced economic activity," the report says. [Read more.](#)

New projects assigned:	309
Projects announced:	131
Jobs announced:	12,128
Capital investment announced:	\$2.486B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,212
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	14,513

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [What makes a quality STEM program?](#) (WRALtechwire, Oct. 17)
- [Masonboro Island lovers raise funds for N.C. reserve](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, Oct. 16)
- [Mary Lou Surgi has winning recipe for entrepreneurs at Asheville's Blue Ridge Food Ventures](#) (*The Asheville Citizen-Times*, Oct. 15)
- [New Boeing plane has local connection](#) (*The Star-News* - Wilmington, Oct. 13)
- [The Carolinas: An East Coast Engine for Growth](#) (*Business Facilities*, October)

(919) 733-4151

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Building Location:
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:
4301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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