

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



(Left-right) N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Workforce Solutions Roger Shackelford, Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll, Director of Governance and Strategic Planning Beth Lucas, N.C. Commission on Workforce Development Chairman Don McCorquodale, Lucas' sister Jean Sohmer and Lucas family friend Eddie Nix

Lucas honored for service to N.C.

Governance & Strategic Planning Director Beth Lucas in the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Workforce Solutions was honored Nov. 7 by the N.C. Commission on Workforce Development during its quarterly meeting in Raleigh. Lucas, who will retire in December, was recognized by the Commission for her outstanding service to the department and the State of North Carolina. Deputy Commerce Secretary and COO Dale Carroll delivered The Order of the Long Leaf Pine certificate from Governor Bev Perdue to Lucas at the conclusion of the meeting. The certificate is presented to outstanding North Carolinians who have a proven record of service to the state.

Gluten-free bakery to locate in Rockingham County

Governor Bev Perdue on Nov. 7 announced that Kalo Foods LLC, a baker of gluten-free gourmet food products, will locate its operations in Rockingham County. The company plans to create 21 jobs and invest nearly \$650,000 over three years in Stokesdale. The project was made possible in part by a \$70,000 grant from the [One North Carolina Fund](#). The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Melissa Smith](#) was the developer on this project.



The North Carolina pavilion at BIO 2012 in Boston

N.C. readies state pavilion for BIO 2013

North Carolina will be flying high at the 2013 BIO International Convention April 22-25, in Chicago. The state's [newly designed pavilion](#) features large signage in the shape of North Carolina, hung above interactive exhibits and conference rooms. The pavilion will be located close to the entrance of McCormick Place, which will host the event.

North Carolina organizations supporting this year's pavilion will receive access to BIO's partnering system for all participating companies. Supporters will choose from three levels of traditional exhibits that feature video monitors or a partnering-focused package that has the benefit of the conference without the responsibility of an exhibit. The N.C. Department of Commerce is a headline partner of the pavilion.

At all levels of partnership, the [N.C. Biotechnology Center](#), organizer of the pavilion, will handle shipping and set-up. The 2,800-square-foot North Carolina pavilion is designed to give companies an easy entry to the show, which is expected to attract 17,000 life sciences industry leaders from all over the world.

For more information on becoming a partner of the pavilion, contact N.C. Biotechnology Center Marketing Events Manager [Kelly Doherty](#) or visit the [pavilion partnership website](#).

Kalo Foods was created in 2011 to develop and market a unique line of gourmet gluten-free products and mixes. The company was founded by Michael Cusato, a service-disabled veteran of the U.S. Air Force, and Gerald Cusato, a U.S. Army veteran. Kalo's products, which include artisan pizzas and pie crusts, cookies, brownies, and mixes, are sold under the Geralbaldi and Kalo brands. The company plans to sell these items in the Triad area market as well as through its website.

Through use of the One N.C. Fund, more than 60,000 jobs and \$11 billion in investments have been created since 2001.

Other partners that helped with this project include: N.C. Community Colleges, Rockingham County, N.C. Rural Economic Development Center, Town of Stokesdale and the Rockingham County Partnership for Tourism and Economic Development. [Read more.](#)

[Kalo Foods to open plant in Stokesdale](#) (*Winston-Salem Journal*, Nov. 7)



Orange County embarks on multi-million dollar construction project funded by quarter-cent sales tax

The Orange County Board of County Commissioners has unanimously voted in favor of awarding the bid and approving a construction contract for the second phase of the Buckhorn-Mebane water and sanitary sewer system.

J.F. Wilkerson Contracting of Morrisville submitted the winning bid of \$4,016,546. This contract is being funded by the quarter-cent sales tax initiative, which passed the November 2011 voter referendum.

"Our unanimous decision represents our commitment to the voters and proof we are serious and ready to move forward with economic development in Orange County," said Commission Chair Bernadette Pelissier.

The County has been working in partnership with the City of Mebane for the past several years to bolster the utility service in the area. The first phase was Gravelly Hill Middle School, followed by the neighborhoods and churches located in the Buckhorn Road area and now infrastructure will be added to the economic development district.

"The addition of a water and sanitary sewer system will increase the economic development prospects for Orange County--by adding office, light industrial, manufacturing, and retail opportunities in turn, diversifying the County's tax base," said Steve Brantley director of Orange County's Economic Development Department.

Rural center begins New Generation Communities workshops

On Nov. 27, the N.C. Rural Center will hold the first of a series of "New Generation Communities" workshops addressing one of the most important issues facing rural North Carolina: how to transform communities into places in which youth and young adults can thrive.

Part of the New Generation Initiative launched by the Rural Center in 2011, the Nov. 27 workshop, entitled "Getting Started in Youth and Young Adult Engagement," will lay the groundwork, from understanding what it means to be a welcoming community for young people to proven strategies and activities for successful engagement. It will combine expert presentations, moderated discussions and group activities in a fast-moving half-day format.

The free workshop will run from 9 a.m. to noon and be offered at the Rural Center and by video conferencing at [five additional locations around the state](#). Webcasting also is available. Register online by Nov. 21.



In SYNC: Cindy Messer

N.C. Department of Commerce Economic Developer Cindy Messer is a proud native of Western North Carolina, where she still resides in Waynesville in Haywood County. Upon receiving her B.S. degree at Western Carolina University, she began her career in public service as assistant public works director for the Town of Waynesville. From there, Messer acted upon an opportunity to become assistant planning director for Haywood County. During that time, she returned to WCU for her MPA degree and obtained a real estate broker license.



Fall color pitches generate \$1.5 million in media coverage

North Carolina's fall color garnered \$1.56 million worth of media coverage in September and October as a direct result of pitches made by the N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development's public relations team. Outreach efforts included news releases, pitches, media interviews, and fresh photography, and the resulting reports were published in everything from TV network media sites to community newspapers. Building on the expanded "fall color" theme that the Division launched in 2011, media coverage encompassed North Carolina's full spectrum: celebrated foliage displays, well-crafted reds and whites at wineries, and colorful events devoted to woolly worms, water fowl and other subjects. Stories appeared in such media outlets as [Boston Business Journal](#), [CNN](#), [Fayetteville Observer](#), and [News of Orange County](#).



Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa, N.C. Research Campus Founder David H. Murdock and David H. Murdock Research Institute Analytical Sciences Lab Manager Sarah Schwartz at the institute in Kannapolis

Ecuadorian president visits N.C. Research Campus

President Rafael Correa of the Republic of Ecuador and a delegation of ministers spent Oct. 30 touring each of the 16 university and corporate research programs at the N.C. Research Campus in Kannapolis. President Correa and his delegation of more than 60 Ecuadorian government officials met with David H. Murdock, founder of the NCRC, and the campus' lead scientists.

While employed at the county, Messer was fortunate enough to become engaged in enough economic development activities to realize a passion for generating job growth and assisting with community preparedness. In 2003, she became the N.C. Department of Commerce's economic developer in the southwestern region. Two years later, Messer accepted the opportunity to serve in her current position as western regional manager. This past spring she received the "40 Under Forty" award recognizing her as one of 40 of the most promising young leaders in the greater Asheville area. Messer attributes that honor to her work at Commerce in helping create jobs that provide the ability for local citizens to work in their hometowns.

Some of the economic development projects that Messer recruited that continue to grow and expand since locating in WNC are Ice River Springs, a Canadian water bottling operation in Burke County, and MVP, an Italian manufacturer of pressure vessels, now in McDowell County. She also had a project management role in Snap-On Tools' workforce expansion in Cherokee County. All told, the projects managed by Messer during her tenure at Commerce represent 5,160 jobs and \$372.4M in investment for WNC.

Despite the difficult economy, this year the western region has thrived as a destination for relocation and expansion. Some projects Messer managed in 2012 that have chosen WNC as their new home include Carolina Prime Pet, Oskar Blues Brewery and Fendrich Industries. "Companies repeatedly choose North Carolina because of our pro-business climate, quality workforce, and customized training provided through the North Carolina Community College System," Messer said.

Outside of work Messer enjoys investing time in her husband, Dennis, and their three children, Kinzie (5), Tanner (3), and Tucker (1). She and her family are outdoor enthusiasts who love to hunt, horseback ride and camp. They also raise and train hunting dogs and bulls for competitive bull riding.

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.

President Correa is looking at the research, scientific instrumentation and collaborative environment of the NCRC as a model to implement in the development of Yachay, a planned city of science and technology being built in Ecuador's northern province of Imbabura. Yachay broke ground this year and will grow into a center similar to the NCRC where research and innovation from both universities and companies will be tapped as an economic booster and job creator. [Read more.](#)

[Research Campus in Kannapolis a model for Ecuadorian president's dream city](#) (*Independent Tribune* - Concord and Kannapolis, Oct. 31)



DNC event pushes Charlotte hotel revenue to four-year high

Boosted by the Democratic National Convention, Mecklenburg County hotels generated more revenue in September than any month in at least four years, according to recently released tax receipts. The county's hotels rang up about \$61 million in sales in September, an 82 percent increase compared with the same month in 2011. In the last four years, the previous best month for the lodging industry was in March, when revenue was about \$48 million.

The convention also affected regional and statewide numbers. The Charlotte Economic Development Region - comprised of Alexander, Catawba, Cleveland, Iredell, Rowan, Anson, Cabarrus, Gaston, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Stanly and Union counties - saw hotel demand increase 12 percent in September over September 2011 and average daily room rate increase 37 percent over the same time period. The state saw room demand increase more than three percent from September 2011 to September 2012, and room rates increase nearly 12 percent. [View North Carolina's September lodging report.](#)

During the DNC in early September, the region's hotels were almost completely full, with many charging two or three times as much as regular rates. The county's restaurants and bars also did well, though their boost in sales wasn't as pronounced. They sold about \$228 million of meals and drinks, based on receipts from the 1 percent prepared food and beverage tax. The DNC was the largest convention in the city's history. As many as 35,000 people came to Charlotte for up to five days, organizers said, and the host committee said it contracted with area hotels for roughly 75,000 hotel room nights. Some hotels booked were in outlying counties, which aren't part of the Mecklenburg data.

[DNC event pushes Charlotte hotel revenue to four-year high](#) (*The Charlotte Observer*, Nov. 2)

Jan. 1 - Nov. 13, 2012

New projects assigned:	351
Projects announced:	116
Jobs announced:	14,295
Capital investment announced:	\$2.99B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,047
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	17,124

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Broadband boosters excited by AT&T plan](#) (*The Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Nov. 9)
- [Research Triangle Park formally unveils new master plan](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Nov. 9)
- ['Iron Man 3' rare opportunity as N.C. relies on smaller films](#) (*The StarNews* - Wilmington, Nov. 8)
- [LKN Economic Development hiring facilitator to look for new sites](#) (*Business Today* - Cornelius, Nov. 8)
- [Peak 10 opens fourth Charlotte data center](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, Nov. 8)
- [Historic Depot wins Main Street Award](#) (*Tryon Daily Bulletin*, Nov. 7)
- [Miss Jenny's Pickles parlays '60 Minutes' spot into greater success](#) (*The Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Nov. 7)
- [Update: RF Micro purchase of Calif. company could bring 100 jobs to Greensboro](#) (*News & Record* - Greensboro, Nov. 5)
- [Welsh Paper Co. sold to L.A. firm](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Nov. 5)

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