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Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



*Chiquita will locate its global headquarters in Charlotte.*

## Chiquita to relocate global HQ in Charlotte

Governor Bev Perdue announced on Nov. 29 that world renowned produce supplier Chiquita Brands International Inc., will locate its Global Corporate Headquarters in Charlotte. Chiquita expects to create more than 400 jobs over the next three years and invest \$14.1 million in the new global headquarters in Mecklenburg County. The announcement was made possible in part by a state Job Development Investment Grant and a One North Carolina Fund award. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [David Spratley](#) was the developer on this project.

"Chiquita looked across America for a place to locate its global headquarters and they chose Charlotte, North Carolina," said Perdue. "Once again this state's tremendous workforce, top business climate and accessible infrastructure attracted an internationally competitive company."

Chiquita is a leading international marketer and distributor of fresh produce, which is sold under the Chiquita and Fresh Express brands. The company is committed to improving world nutrition, as a leading international marketer and distributor of nutritious, high-quality fresh and value-added food products – from energy-rich bananas, blends of convenient green salads, other fruits to healthy snacking products. Chiquita employs more than 21,000 people and has operations in nearly 70 countries worldwide.

"Charlotte provided the most compelling economic offer and the region is an attractive community for our employees," said Fernando Aguirre, chairman and chief executive officer. "Importantly, the Charlotte airport provides improved access to international markets, customers and Chiquita operations around the world." [Read more.](#)

[Chiquita relocating headquarters to Charlotte](#) (*The Charlotte*

# Forbes

## Forbes ranks N.C. No. 3 Best State for Business

For the second year running, North Carolina was ranked number three on *Forbes'* Best States for Business list, published Nov. 22. In the full report on Best States for Business and Careers, North Carolina earned the following rankings:

- [No. 1 Best Regulatory Environment](#)
- No. 2 Best Business Costs
- No. 3 Best Labor Supply

North Carolina's Gross State Product is ranked tenth in the nation at \$407.4 billion, with a one-year growth rate of 3.4 percent. In addition, North Carolina's workforce is 36 percent more productive than the national average. [Read more.](#)



*Governor Bev Perdue presents the Governor's Award for Excellence to Tyrone Williams as N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Employment Security Lynn Holmes looks on.*

## DES employees earn Governor's Awards for Excellence

On Nov. 29, employees of the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Employment Security, received the 2011 Governor's Awards of Excellence at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh.



Avaya Inc. Executive VP Jim Chirico and N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll at the company's announcement that it will bring 135 jobs to Research Triangle Park

## Avaya to bring 135 jobs to RTP

Governor Bev Perdue announced Nov. 28 that Avaya, a global provider of business collaboration and communications solutions, will expand its operations in Research Triangle Park. The company plans to create 135 jobs over the next four years with a \$500,000 capital investment in Durham County. The project was made possible in part by a Job Development Investment Grant. the N.C. Department of Commerce's [Vivian Powell](#) was the developer on this project.

"My top priority is creating jobs, and when we see a globally competitive corporation like Avaya bringing 21st century jobs to North Carolina, we know that our history of investments in education and worker training are paying off," Perdue said. "We welcome companies like Avaya that are willing to invest in our state and position North Carolina as a leader in business."

Avaya is a leading global provider of business collaboration and communications solutions that bring people together with the right information at the right time in the right context, enabling business users to improve their efficiency and quickly solve critical business challenges. With 400,000 customers, including more than 85 percent of the Fortune 500 companies and one million customer locations worldwide as of June 30, 2011, Avaya's customers operate in a broad range of industries, including financial services, manufacturing, retail, transportation, energy, media and communications, health care, education and government. [Read more.](#)

## Perdue urges employers to hire vets and take advantage of new tax credit

Governor Bev Perdue on Nov. 22 urged North Carolina employers to help unemployed veterans get back to work by taking advantage of a new federal tax credit for hiring veterans of the Armed Forces.

"This is a win for everybody," Perdue said. "Veterans, who have supported us in times of need, get jobs; and businesses receive tax breaks and the benefit of new employees who are highly skilled, thanks to their military service. Nationally, post 9/11 veterans face higher unemployment rates than civilians. With so many military bases located here, and more service

Tyrone Williams was nominated for Outstanding State Government Service.

Hours after the April 16 tornado struck and demolished the Roanoke Rapids local office; division management contacted Williams to check on the status of the Division's office. He was able to protect thousands of sensitive documents, secure a relocation site for the staff and marshal the resources at the agency's disposal. He then took inventory of the building's remains and replenished the electronics needed to start up the office again.

Triad Stand Down Coordinators Rick Embler, Raymond Bruins, Carla Wright, Archie Barrow, Richard Johnson, Delton Mingia and Tony Mizzi were nominated for Public Service.

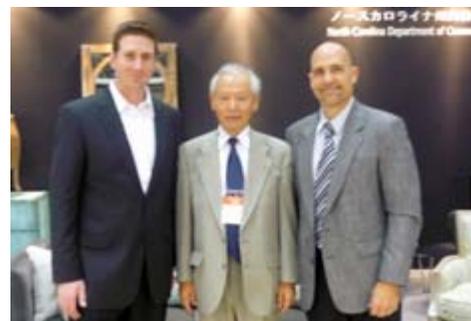
The Stand Down's mission is to help homeless veterans obtain services and opportunities so they can transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency. Various agencies comprised the Stand Down committee and worked together from the Greensboro local office to coordinate the activities.

## Perdue to keynote JSNN opening

Governor Bev Perdue and a host of other state and local officials will be on hand for the formal grand opening of the [Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering](#) building on Dec. 7 in Greensboro.

The JSNN is a joint project of UNC-Greensboro and N.C. A&T State University and is located at their shared Gateway University Research Park South Campus on East Lee Street. The ceremony will take place at 5:30 p.m.

[Governor Perdue to keynote JSNN opening](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Nov. 22)



(Left-right) Hooker Furniture and Vanguard Furniture VP of International Sales Brad Miller, N.C. Department of Commerce Tokyo Foreign Trade Representative Sumio Shibata and N.C. Furniture Export Office Director Mike Padjen

## Commerce represented at Tokyo furniture show

members coming home by year's end, the timing of this incentive to employ veterans could not be better."

President Barack Obama last week signed into law new tax credits for businesses that hire veterans as part of the American Jobs Act. According to a White House statement, the Returning Heroes Tax Credit provides businesses that hire unemployed veterans with a maximum credit of \$5,600 per veteran, and the Wounded Warriors Tax Credit offers businesses that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities with a maximum credit of \$9,600 per veteran.



## Trailer released for 'The Hunger Games'

To build excitement for "The Hunger Games" release next March, Lionsgate has released the first movie trailer for the motion picture. Filmed entirely in North Carolina, the locations included the Henry River mill town near Hildebran, the old Phillip Morris Plant in Concord, DuPont State Forest near Cedar Mountain, the Charlotte Convention Center and Big Ivy Historical Park near Barnardville. The film's economic impact on the state is approximately \$60 million. To see the trailer, [click here](#) and choose "The Hunger Games" from the list on the right of the page.

## Raleigh ranked No. 4 on Best Cities for Technology Jobs list

Increasing consumer and business demand for technology, according to a recent *TechJournal* article, is responsible for

The N.C. Department of Commerce's International Trade Division was represented at the International Furniture Fair Tokyo/Interior Lifestyle Living trade show, which took place in November in Tokyo. Fifteen countries/regions were represented among the show's 355 exhibitors. Approximately 20,000 visitors attended the show. The next IFFT show will be held on Oct. 17-19, 2012.

## October Economic Overview released

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Policy, Research and Strategic Planning has released its Economic Overview for October 2011. Most of the latest data is from September 2011. The purpose of the overview is to summarize and analyze important economic indicators.

North Carolina economic growth has remained sluggish over the last few months, and the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has risen 0.7 percentage point since the beginning of the year. This month saw an increase in unemployed workers as people started applying for holiday positions. This short bump in unemployment could be a sign that job seekers are optimistic about job opportunities. Nationally, the real GDP estimate for the third quarter of 2011 looks higher than the second quarter rate, though concern about European economic uncertainty continues to overshadow possible recovery. [View the report.](#)

## 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 - Nov. 29, 2011

New projects assigned:	371
Projects announced:	152
Jobs announced:	13,803
Capital investment announced:	\$2.798B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,333
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	16,157

high-tech industry job growth outpacing the national average at a rate of nearly four to one.

In Raleigh, the technology industry has seen 2.8 percent job growth over the past decade. Factoring into that percentage is a dramatic 8 percent job growth since 2009. These statistics have earned the capital city the number four spot on the recently published Forbes' Best Cities for Technology Jobs list. [Read more.](#)

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## Lincolnton businesses profiled on 'Rock Center with Brian Williams'

According to the [Charlotte Regional Partnership](#), one new and one old business in Lincolnton will be the focus of an upcoming episode of NBC's news magazine show "Rock Center," which airs on Mondays at 10 p.m. Reporter Harry Smith was in town recently to capture the "made in America" story of Lincolnton Furniture, which expects to hire 131 people by February. The show also will look at long-time, family-owned Kings Office Supply, which has stayed in business by adapting to changing times.

## N.C. in the News

### This Week's Highlights

- [Triangle ranked 9th among life science clusters](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Nov. 29)
- [Regional planning – key to rural economic strength](#) (USDA Blog, Nov. 28)
- [Locust celebrates opening of new city hall building](#) (*The Independent Tribune* - Concord, Nov. 25)
- [From farm to pharma: How nanotechnology bridges both worlds](#) (MedCity | Research Triangle, Nov. 18)
- [Capital City's first dual biofuels station opens with \\$.85 fuel](#) (The N.C. Solar Center, Nov. 17)

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