

sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



(L-R) Geoff Durham, President & CEO, Durham Chamber; Wendy Jacobs, Chair, Durham Co. Commissioners; Secretary Copeland; Eamon Fitzmaurice, Plant Controller, AveXis at the announcement event held yesterday at the N.C. Biotechnology Center.

Gene Therapy Firm AveXis to Expand in Durham County Adding 200 Jobs

AveXis, Inc., a leading gene therapy company developing treatments for rare and life-threatening neurological diseases, will create 200 jobs as it expands its manufacturing center in Durham County, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced Monday (February 18). The new center was first announced in May of last year. AveXis will invest an additional \$60 million in the facility.

"North Carolina's expertise in the life sciences continues to lead the nation," said Governor Cooper. "Pioneering companies like AveXis keep our state at the forefront of promising new approaches like gene therapy, which opens up new ways for us to tackle tough diseases."

A Novartis company headquartered in Bannockburn, Illinois, AveXis' initial product candidate, AVXS-101, now known as ZOLGENSMA, is an investigational gene replacement therapy for the treatment of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) Type 1. ZOLGENSMA addresses the genetic root cause of SMA Type



Joe Cascone (left), Vice President, Manufacturing Science & Technology for Mayne Pharma with Secretary Copeland on February 5.

Biotech In Focus as Secretary Copeland Visits Mayne Pharma

North Carolina Commerce Secretary Tony Copeland was in Greenville earlier this month to visit Mayne Pharma, an Australia-listed specialty pharmaceutical company focused on applying its drug delivery expertise to commercialize branded and generic pharmaceuticals.

The company opened its new oral-dose commercial manufacturing facility in Greenville in April of last year. The facility is a 126,000 square-foot plant that employs state-of-the-art containment design and engineering to meet or exceed standards established by regulators. This facility represents a quadrupling of the company's manufacturing capacity in the United States. The Greenville plant specializes in complex dosage forms including potent compounds, Schedule II-V controlled substances, inherently unstable compounds and products with poor bioequivalence.

The company's roots in North Carolina date to its acquisition (in 2012) of Metrics Contract Services, which was founded in Greenville in 1994. Metrics began as a laboratory providing analytical chemistry services to pharmaceutical companies.

Link: [Mayne Pharma | Global Locations.](#)

1, a deadly neuromuscular disease with limited treatment options.

"Our primary focus is to bring gene therapies to patients suffering from devastating rare neurological genetic diseases, such as SMA, genetic amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and Rett syndrome. Continued investment in our infrastructure in North Carolina will allow us to manufacture multiple gene therapies simultaneously, helping us reach more patients, faster," said **Andy Stober, Senior Vice President of Technical Operations and Chief Technical Officer, AveXis**. "Gene therapy manufacturing requires a highly skilled team, and Research Triangle Park is an ideal location for our continued expansion as it enables us to recruit top talent, including through partnership with local schools and colleges."

"Life science companies like AveXis understand the many advantages our state offers biomanufacturers" said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "I'm pleased to see a growing number of gene therapy companies join North Carolina's established industry cluster, taking advantage of the world-class talent and educational resources available here."

The North Carolina Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. (EDPNC) led the state's support for the company's expansion.

The North Carolina Biotechnology Center provided technical due diligence for this project, one of several recent projects that adds depth to the state's biotech industry cluster in the emerging area of gene therapy.

AveXis will create a variety of positions in Durham County, including scientists, engineers, analysts, manufacturing and operations personnel. Salaries for the new positions will average \$72,952, which is higher than the current Durham County average wage of \$68,731.

A Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) with the potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$1,447,500 will help the project locate in the state. Payments will be spread over 12 years, pending certification, and over that time the project will grow the state's economy by an estimated \$1.3 billion.

The Utility Account could receive an additional \$483,000 to help the state's rural communities finance necessary infrastructure upgrades to attract future business.

Partnering with the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [EDPNC](#) on this project were the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), the [North Carolina Biotechnology Center](#), [Durham County](#), and the [Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce](#).

[Read more.](#)



The new apprentices left to right: Mason Hege, Daniel Mize, Clifton Banner, and Garry Krantz at the January 30 signing ceremony.

CCCC partners for Southern Industrial Apprenticeship Program

Central Carolina Community College has joined with Southern Industrial Constructors and 3M to begin the new Southern Industrial Apprenticeship Program.

Drew M. Goodson, CCCC Dean of Career and Technical Education, said he is extremely excited about the Apprenticeship Program CCCC and Southern Industrial Contractors have worked to create. "The student apprentices will take evening classes while continuing to work and receive on the job training, ultimately resulting in a Diploma in Industrial Systems and Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Journeyman's certification," said Goodson. "Both Southern Industrial and the 3M Plant in Pittsboro, where the apprentices will work, are outstanding industry partners and I'm so proud to work with them on the college's first adult apprenticeship. Companies are concerned about the skills gap in many industries and CCCC will continue to seek innovative solutions to help educate and train the next generation."

On Our Radar

- [Course: Community Development Academy UNC School of Government - March 12-14; April 2-4](#)
- [Annual Report Randolph County EDC](#)
- [Hurricane Florence Recovery: Resilient Recovery Loan Thread Capital](#)

N.C. in the News

- [Grady-White Boats named 2018-2019 Pitt County Industry of the Year \(Daily Reflector - via Pitt Co. Development Commission - February 9\)](#)
- [In push to hire 2,000 in Raleigh, Infosys announces partnership with NC State \(Triangle Business Journal - February 7\)](#)
- [\[Opinion\] RIoT executive director's 'State of the Region' and a call to action \(WRAL](#)



Secretary Copeland delivers keynote remarks at the NCWorks Commission meeting February 13 in Pinehurst.

Strong Support for Workforce Development Heard at NCWorks Commission Meeting

A strong message of commitment to build and support the state's workforce was delivered at the February 13 meeting of the NCWorks Commission. The Commission met at the Pinehurst Resort for a strategic planning session, followed by its regular quarterly business meeting.

"Today's meeting will help create a road map toward our vision of building a job-ready workforce that can strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure we can adapt to a changing economy," said Governor Cooper in a pre-recorded video message. "Our new mission, developed from my NC Job Ready initiative, is clear: we're here to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow. We can do this by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership and work-based learning to prepare workers, and supporting local innovation as well."

Commission Chair Tom Rabon said that Governor Cooper's commitment to workforce development is strong and that all successful workforce programs involve collaboration, which the Commission represents.

Caroline Sullivan, executive director of the North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE), delivered a presentation on the state's new Work-Based Learning Navigator. The only site of its kind in the country, the Navigator is a free online marketplace that breaks down "walls" between employers and educators to encourage more work-based learning opportunities. The platform was developed by Fidelity Investments and NCBCE, an education non-profit that operates out of the Governor's Office.

Link: [Navigator website.](#)

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SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

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