

# Industry Alexander

A publication of the Alexander County Economic Development Corporation



## Assistance available to develop your company's international trade

North Carolina plays a strong role in the global economy, thanks to our central East Coast location, motivated workforce, competitive business climate and extraordinary quality of life. For these reasons and more, a wide variety of companies enjoy the advantages the state has to offer - from exporting their products to locating or expanding their operations.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce provides specialists who can help you take advantage of the many opportunities available in our expanding global economy. If you are interested in pursuing or increasing foreign sales opportunities through exporting, NC Commerce has information and experts ready to assist your company. They also assist foreign-based

companies seeking a prime business location to expand or locate in the United States.

Data shows that companies who engage in global business grow faster and achieve higher profits. The international business services professionals at NC Commerce help you take advantage of global opportunities in two different areas. The international trade business development managers offer services to help North Carolina companies export for the first time and assist those North Carolina companies who want to expand their export capability. The international investment economic development managers

focus on attracting and retaining companies from around the world.

The Department of Commerce guides companies through the steps in the site selection process and helps them to forge relationships with North Carolina government, industry, and development agencies. The International Trade Division can assist your company in preparing marketing plans, handling export operations, providing market research, identifying best market prospects, advising on finance and insurance options, and working to find customers and partners.

In 2008, the Department of

Commerce assisted 407 North Carolina companies with export development and in many cases helped these businesses position themselves for future international growth. North Carolina's total state exports grew 7.3% to \$25 billion in 2008.

NC Commerce has international offices located in Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, China, and Mexico that are staffed with individuals who can assist your company with international trade needs.

If you have questions about the Department of Commerce's International Trade services contact them at 919-733-0110. Additional resources are also available on their website at [www.nccommerce.com](http://www.nccommerce.com).



## Local industry announces expansion

Paragon Films, a manufacturer of plastic stretch film, has announced their intentions to expand their facility located in the Alexander Industrial Park. Expansion plans include the construction of over 60,000 sqft of manufacturing and warehouse space, the addition of new operation lines, and the construction of additional raw material silos. The new investment in the county will exceed \$10 million.

Paragon Films became the first company to locate in the Alexander Industrial Park in 2005 when they purchased a 40,000 sqft speculative building constructed by GL Wilson Building Company. Since then, they have seen demand for their product continue to grow, leading to the need to expand their

manufacturing capacity. Paragon Films serves customers in all 50 states as well as a number of international locations.

Paragon Films was founded in 1988 and is headquartered in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. Since their initial move to Alexander County, Paragon Films has been a strong supporter of the local community. More information on Paragon Films and their products can be found on their website [www.paragon-films.com](http://www.paragon-films.com).

The Alexander County EDC congratulates Paragon Films on their continued company growth and appreciates their decision to expand their Alexander County facility and their commitment to bring much needed new jobs to our local citizens.



PARAGON FILMS, INC.

### Need More Space?

*Industrial and commercial buildings and land options available in Alexander County are posted on our website [www.AlexanderEDC.org](http://www.AlexanderEDC.org)*

## NC ranked in top five for businesses

North Carolina was ranked number five in Forbes Magazine's annual "Best Places for Business" list. Virginia ranked first, followed by Washington, Utah and Colorado. The rankings are based on labor supply, regulatory environment, costs, growth prospects, economic climate and the quality of life. North Carolina was listed as number three for business costs, and number four for regulatory environment.

To see the complete list of state rankings and to read the entire article visit [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com) and search "the best states for business."



## Schneider Mills Set to Expand

Schneider Mills, a textile company that has been operating in Alexander County for 63 years, has announced plans to launch a new company and product line in Alexander County. Hank Byrd, President of Schneider Mills, addressed the Alexander County Board of Commissioners with details of the project at their November 23rd meeting. The new company will operate as Composite Fabrics of America, a wholly owned subsidiary of Schneider Mills. Matthew McPherson, current Director of Special Projects for Schneider Mills, will serve as President of the new company.

"Composite Fabrics of America will weave carbon fabric for the composite industry" Byrd stated. "The carbon fabric is used in a wide variety of ways [and] is utilized in conjunction with a resin treatment to make molded parts and objects."

Composite Fabrics of America will operate from an existing

manufacturing facility located at 105 Pierpoint Lane in Taylorville. Hank Byrd stated, "our outlook is to be making samples between now and the end of January and to be in production by February."

The carbon fabric will be used to make a wide variety of products including boats, car parts, canoes, paddles, bicycles, as well as a wide variety of sports and recreation equipment. The fabric is also used in the wind energy and aerospace industries and is utilized in various military applications.

The company will initially invest approximately one million dollars into the venture and provide ten new jobs to Alexander County with a potential for expanded employment as quickly as the fourth quarter of 2010.

The EDC expresses our appreciation to Schneider Mills for their continued commitment to Alexander County and wishes them the best of luck in their new venture.

## North Carolina's Data Center Corridor

A region anchored by Apple, Google, the State's Data center, and financial data centers in Charlotte will be promoted by several counties in a focused marketing effort to attract more data centers, communications firms, and high-tech industries.

Economic development officials from Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, and Iredell Counties recently released details of "NC's Data Center Corridor" to a group of site selection consultants specializing in data center locations. Each of the five counties participating and promoting "NC's Data Center Corridor" has available sites suitable for data center development.

Site Selection Magazine, a nationally recognized site selection publication, recently acknowledged the corridor as an emerging data center cluster that is attracting attention within the industry. Data Center Knowledge, a website specializing in information for the industry, recently published an article on the clustering of data centers as the

"Apple-Google Data Center Corridor". North Carolina is also the top state in which to build a data center, according to a report by Tishman Technologies Corp. North Carolina was rated highly for low energy cost, favorable labor and fiber optics infrastructure. The five-county corridor builds on these advantages

with a lack of extreme weather conditions, easy access to two major airports, and a high quality of life.

"This represents another example of how Alexander County is participating on a regional basis in an effort which has the potential to diversify our industrial base," said David Icenhour, Alexander EDC director. "Alexander County has a potential data center site which has all the infrastructure needed, and, with this regional approach, we have achieved a level of marketing that may not have been possible on our own."



## NC is named "Top Business Client"

North Carolina claimed the "Top Business Client" designation from Site Selection Magazine for the fifth year in a row. This is the eighth time in nine years that the state has the top spot in the publication's annual ranking.

Gov. Bev Perdue recently made the announcement and stated, "Business leaders know we are listening to them and working aggressively to meet their needs."

"Companies know that in North Carolina they will find top-quality talent, world-class infrastructure, a pro-business environment, and premier education institutions. North Carolina is simply a great place to do business."

"The synergy between North Carolina's research parks, corporations, communities, and economic developers at the state and local levels is a major factor in this year's top ranking," said Site Selection Editor-in-Chief Mark Arend.

Site Selection is one of the nation's premier magazines for economic development. The magazine characterizes its ranking process for "Top Business Client" as a combination of objective, actual new or expansion project announcements, and subjective input from corporate site seekers.

The remainder of the top ten included Texas, Virginia, Ohio, Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, and Kentucky.



## Local Industry Adopts Hickory Spring's EarthCare Inside Program

Alexander County based Craftmaster Furniture is adopting Hickory Springs' EarthCare Inside program for use in their furniture lines.

As part of the change, Craftmaster will incorporate environmentally friendly components from Hickory Springs throughout the their line, which includes upholstered loveseats, chairs, sofas, and sleepers. The change will include Craftmaster's branded Better Homes & Gardens and Paula Deen product lines.

Craftmaster has already begun phasing in the EarthCare Inside program as the components were part of the company's October introductions.

"As individuals and manufacturers, we all have a responsibility to do what we can to be good stewards of the environment," said Roy Calcagne, Craftmaster's

president and CEO. "With the help of Hickory Springs, we are now building a product that will help reduce our environmental impact."

The EarthCare Inside program was developed by Hickory Springs to offer furniture manufacturers a range of environmentally friendly

components, including seat cushions made from its soy-based Preserve foam, springs forged from recycled steel, webbing woven with 100% recycled Repreve yarn from Unifi and back cushion fibers fashioned from recycled content.

Preserve, the world's first bio-based foam, is a major component inside Craftmaster cushions. It replaces a portion of petrochemical-based ingredients with a reaction material made from a sustainable, renewable soy-based formula that provides cushioning quality and performance comparable to oil-based foam, the company said.

"Since our testing confirms that EarthCare Inside components perform as well, if not better, than the previous materials used, our customers can continue to count on the same level of quality and performance they've come to expect from Craftmaster," Calcagne said.

If your company has introduced "earth friendly" aspects to your product line let the Economic Development Corporation know and we will feature them in upcoming editions of the Industry Alexander newsletter.

