

June 2010

# Industry Alexander

A publication of the Alexander County Economic Development Corporation



## Alexander Industrial Park selected as Best Small Rail Site



As a part of its Progress in Motion Forum held in Raleigh on May 10 and 11th, the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) challenged local economic development agencies to identify and submit sites for recognition in the Great Freight Rail Sites in North Carolina.

Alexander Industrial Park was selected as a Best Small Industrial Site. Recognizing the rapid disappearance of rail-served sites because of our state's rapid growth, the challenge was designed to provide a learning opportunity for those with properties they think are suitable for consideration as rail industrial sites to get professional input.

Working closely with state, local and regional economic developers, NCR engaged site consultants McCallum Sweeney Consulting to evaluate rail sites submitted from across the state.

"We were pleased to have received 34 entries from local economic development organizations," says Richard Wiley, Senior Consultant for Economic Development for NCR. "The economic developers really stepped up and took advantage of this opportunity to showcase properties from their regions. Rail-served sites are extremely important to the state's economic growth. Last year numerous new industries located in

North Carolina because we had available sites with access to rail, creating hundreds of jobs."

The categories in the Great Freight Rail Sites event were Large Industrial Rail sites, Small Industrial Rail sites, Distribution Center sites and Best Presentation. The sites were judged by such criteria as proximity and access to rail lines, roads and air service, the presence of utilities such as electricity, natural gas, water, and actual usable acreage. The Alexander site is served by the Alexander Railroad Company. "Of the 34 entries, only 10 economic development organizations were presented awards," noted Alexander Economic Development Corporation Director David Icenhour. "For Alexander County to be recognized as one of the best sites in the state should signal to industries that the county is a viable location for new or expanding industry."

The Progress in Motion Forum brought together those with an interest in North Carolina's rail industry and its role in the state's transportation system and economic health. The NCR owns and manages the 317-mile rail corridor extending from Morehead City to Charlotte. For more information about the North Carolina Railroad Company visit their website at [www.ncrr.com](http://www.ncrr.com).

## Exporting can help grow business

The U.S. Export Assistance Centers of North Carolina help NC businesses to excel in international markets.

Amongst the 165 offices in 82 countries throughout the world, U.S. Export Assistance Trade Specialists in the global network assist firms to export products and services by identifying qualified international buyers and representatives, advocating on their behalf, and providing comprehensive solutions to whatever challenges they may encounter.

Another way the Center supports North Carolina businesses is by offering Trade Mission opportunities. This November, the Center is sponsoring a Canada Trade Mission in Toronto and Montreal.

As the US economy continues to improve, the Trade Mission offers a great opportunity for North Carolina firms to position

themselves to benefit from the largest, continually growing flow of trade that exists between the US and Canada. Each day, two-way trade between the US and Canada equals \$1.65 Billion in goods and services.

The event will include matching appointments with Canadian agents and distributors, a tour of the Canada Customs Niagara Falls facility, one-on-one export assistance counseling, and U.S. Commercial Service Market Briefings. Additional information about the Canada Trade Mission can be found on page three of this newsletter.

The U.S. Export Assistance Center's Charlotte Office is available to assist business in Alexander County. To see how they can assist your company contact them at 704-333-4886 or visit them online at [www.buyusa.gov/northcarolina](http://www.buyusa.gov/northcarolina).

### 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)

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## NC Small Business Commissioner

Scott Daugherty was appointed this year by Gov. Bev Perdue to serve as North Carolina's first Small Business Commissioner, a position that reports to N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. His key responsibilities in this new role include: 1) Building an effective collaborative partnership among state supported business assistance resources. 2) Organizing a state Small Business Commission. 3) Serving as the chief advocate and policy advisor to the governor and General Assembly on small business-related issues. 4) Managing N.C. State University's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), and the Business ServiCenter and Small Business Ombudsman functions of Commerce.



growth opportunities. To address this issue, the governor asked Daugherty to lead an Access to Credit initiative in collaboration with the Commissioner of Banks and the N.C. Bankers Association. This initiative aims to increase bank participation in federal guaranteed lending and improve the quality of loan proposals submitted to participating banks.

When asked what advice he would give to anyone wanting to start a business, Daugherty says, "Seek independent advice and counsel from one of our great resources such as the Small Business Centers, Women's Business Centers or the Business ServiCenter."

In addition to his duties as small business commissioner and director of the Small Business and Technology Development Center, Daugherty is also the assistant vice chancellor for extension, engagement and economic development at N.C. State University.

For Daugherty, the biggest challenge for small to mid-size companies as the economic recovery continues is access to capital to support business

## New IRS Tax Benefits for Businesses

Two new tax benefits are now available to employers hiring workers who were previously unemployed or only working part time. These provisions are part of the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act enacted into law earlier this year.

Employers who hire unemployed workers this year (after Feb. 3, 2010 and before Jan. 1, 2011) may qualify for a 6.2-percent payroll tax incentive, in effect exempting them from their share of Social Security taxes on wages paid to these workers after March 18, 2010. This reduced tax withholding will have no effect on the employee's future Social Security benefits, and employers would still need to withhold the employee's 6.2-percent share of Social Security taxes, as well as income taxes. The employer and employee's shares of Medicare taxes would also still apply to these wages.

In addition, for each worker retained for at least a year, businesses may claim an additional general business tax credit, up to \$1,000 per worker, when they file their 2011 income tax returns.

"These tax breaks offer a much-needed boost to employers willing to expand their payrolls, and businesses and nonprofits should keep these benefits in mind as they plan for the year ahead," said IRS Com-

missioner Doug Shulman. The two tax benefits are especially helpful to employers who are adding positions to their payrolls. New hires filling existing positions also qualify but only if the workers they are replacing left voluntarily or for cause. Family members and other relatives do not qualify.

In addition, the new law requires that the employer get a statement from each eligible new hire certifying that he or she was unemployed during the 60 days before beginning work or, alternatively, worked fewer than a total of 40 hours for someone else during the 60-day period. The IRS is currently developing a form employees can use to make the required statement.

Businesses, agricultural employers, tax-exempt organizations and public colleges and universities all qualify to claim the payroll tax benefit for eligible newly-hired employees.

Household employers cannot claim this new tax benefit.

Employers claim the payroll tax benefit on the federal employment tax return they file, usually quarterly, with the IRS. Eligible employers will be able to claim the new tax incentive on their revised employment tax form for the second quarter of 2010. Additional details about the HIRE Act are available on the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).



## Vocational Rehabilitation

The state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) is increasing the incentives for North Carolina businesses to provide job training to consumers of the agency's services.

The division, which assists people with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment, compensates employers for wages paid to agency-referred workers who the employers have agreed to train. Often, with training successfully completed, trainees are hired as regular employees. Federal recovery funds will reimburse the participating company 100% for the training.

The cost of recruiting, screening and training new employees is an obstacle to new hiring. Vocational Rehabilitation helps businesses

reduce these costs by hiring applicants who have received agency services like counseling, training and education to get them ready for work.

Besides pre-screening, agency professionals provide continuing, no-cost follow-up to make sure employee and job remain a good match and to ensure the company is well aware of the additional tax incentives available for hiring people with disabilities and for adapting the workplace to accommodate a specific disability. National data shows that often no accommodations are required in these situations.

To learn more about this opportunity or to partner with our local Vocational Rehabilitation office, please contact Janet Hannah at (828) 294-0120.

### Links of Interest

US Export Assistance  
[www.export.gov](http://www.export.gov)

Small Business & Technology Development Center  
[www.sbtcdc.org](http://www.sbtcdc.org)

NC Office of Economic Recovery & Investment  
[www.ncrecover.gov](http://www.ncrecover.gov)

Business Link North Carolina  
[www.blnc.com](http://www.blnc.com)

NC Small Business Center  
[www.sbcnc.nc.gov](http://www.sbcnc.nc.gov)

NC Department of Commerce  
[www.nccommerce.com](http://www.nccommerce.com)

### EDC Staff Change

As of June 30, 2010 Jason Williams will no longer be on staff with the Alexander County EDC. Jason has accepted another position within Alexander County Government. During this time of transition the EDC's emphasis on assisting existing industries will remain a top priority. If we can assist your business in any way please contact Director David Icenhour at 828-632-1161.

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# CANADA TRADE MISSION

Toronto and Montreal

November 1 - 5, 2010



## Carolinas District Export Councils' Trade Mission to Canada!



[Registration Interest Form](#)



Carolina exports bound for Canada



Each day, 365 days a year, two-way trade between the U.S. and Canada is **\$1.65 billion** in goods and services!

Carolina companies have always enjoyed a special relationship with America's largest trade partner, but this is even more the case today as new and seasoned exporters alike look for a market with excellent business conditions and financial stability.

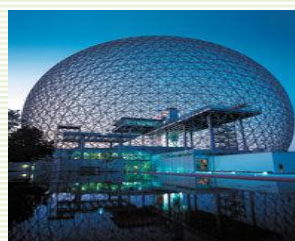
As the U.S. economy continues to improve, this is a great opportunity for Carolina firms to position themselves now to benefit directly from the largest, continually growing flow of trade in the world that exists between two countries.

Carolina Trade Mission includes: ■ Gold Key matching appointments with Canadian agents and distributors. ■ U.S. Commercial Service Market Briefings ■ Tour of Canada Customs Niagara Falls Facility ■ Networking Receptions ■ Embassy-reduced Hotel Rates ■ Interpreters if needed ■ Logistical assistance for off-site meetings ■ Advance mission promotion in Ontario and Quebec ■ One-on-one export assistance counseling before, during and after the event.

\* Early Bird Special is \$1500 if payment is received by June 30th. After June 30<sup>th</sup> registration fee is \$2000. Recruitment will remain active until 10 companies are cleared by the U.S. Consulates in Toronto and Montreal and have paid their registration fees.



Toronto, Ontario



Montreal, Quebec

### Ontario Facts

- ★ Canada's economic engine!
- ★ Accounts for 65% of US exports to Canada
- ★ 40% of Canada's GDP
- ★ 38.5% of Canada's population
- ★ One of the world's most multi-cultural cities with 140 languages.

### Quebec Facts

- ★ Canada's 2<sup>nd</sup> most important economic region.
- ★ 19% of Canada's GDP
- ★ 70% of \$250B GDP comes from service sector.
- ★ 23% of Canada's population
- ★ French is the official language
- ★ Bilingual business community
- ★ A top 15 US trade partner

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