



Custom Package Company to Create 94 Jobs in Richmond County

Governor Pat McCrory, N.C. Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III, and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. (EDPNC) announced August 11 that Direct Pack, Inc. will locate a new East Coast facility in Richmond County, creating 94 jobs over the next five years. The company plans to invest \$12.75 million in the City of Rockingham.

"Innovative companies like Direct Pack recognize that nothing compares to the many advantages North Carolina offers a growing business," said **Governor McCrory**. "From our workforce to our outstanding business climate, all the ingredients a company needs to reach new heights are right here."

Since Governor McCrory entered office, North Carolina has added more than 300,000 net new jobs.

Direct Pack, Inc., a subsidiary of PMC Global, Inc., is a leader in customized thermoformed packaging for all food applications such as agriculture, food service, supermarket chains and food processors. Headquartered in Azusa, California, the company operates California facilities in Sun Valley, Salinas and Ontario as well as one in Bloomfield, New Jersey.

"Direct Pack is a company alive with entrepreneurial spirit," said **Secretary Skvarla**. "We welcome the leaders and employees of this company as they join North Carolina's collaborative business community."

"Direct Pack is excited to partner with the State of North



Sue Moreland (far right) of ARC's Program Operations Division facilitates a team training in North Carolina.

North Carolina's Team Approach Wins Applause in National Publication

An outreach and educational effort by North Carolina's Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) office was recently featured in the federal program's national electronic newsletter.

The publication notes that in fiscal year 2015, ARC invested over \$101 million in 466 development projects to create jobs and strengthen the economy across the Appalachian region, which follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi.

Most ARC investments begin at the state level, where state leaders and program managers work directly with communities to identify effective investment opportunities.

ARC's newsletter swung its spotlight on a special training session recently held for the state's four economically [distressed counties](#) as defined by the federal program for fiscal year 2017 - Clay, Graham, Rutherford, and Swain. Held in Asheville on July 26, more than 30 community leaders came in teams representing each county. The county teams assessed local and regional plans, prioritized strategies and promising project ideas reflective of [ARC's Strategic Plan](#), then presented them for review. This energetic peer exchange encouraged the teams to think critically about project design and outcomes, and develop stronger proposals that will be strategic, collaborative, sustainable, and impactful.

Carolina and Richmond County," said **Craig Snedden, Direct Pack's President**. "We feel Rockingham is ideally situated to service both our existing East Coast customer partners and our plans for future domestic expansion."

The project was made possible in part by a performance-based grant from the One North Carolina Fund of up to \$300,000.

In addition to [North Carolina Commerce](#) and [EDPNC](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Richmond Community College](#), [Richmond County Board of Commissioners](#), and [Richmond County Economic Development](#).

[Read more.](#)



(Left-right) Joshua Gross, LightHeart Gear, Ltd; Adam Cohen, ENO, Inc.; Sean Halas and Deja Lizer, Watershed, LLC; Liz Isley, EDPNC; James Frinak, ENO; and Glenn Jackman, EDPNC.

State's Export Team Helps N.C. Companies Showcase Outdoor Gear Products in Germany

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) recently showcased a group of North Carolina companies at the OutDoor Show in Friedrichshafen, Germany, a large trade show for the outdoor gear industry. The event provided an opportunity for the companies to meet with potential distributors, retailers and joint venture partners.

The sales and marketing opportunity was organized and managed by EDPNC's [International Trade Division](#) with support from the U.S. Small Business Administration's State Trade Expansion Program (STEP).

More than 21,000 visitors from over 92 countries attended the show, considered to be the leading trade fair in Europe for the outdoor sector. North Carolina companies in attendance included LightHeart Gear from Fletcher as well as Eagles Nest Outfitters (ENO) and Watershed, LLC both located in Asheville. All three companies are active in the Outdoor Gear Builders Association of Western North Carolina. This was the first time each company exhibited at OutDoor.

EDPNC Business Development Manager Glenn Jackman and STEP Program Director Liz Isley led the effort to facilitate North Carolina exports and to assist the companies in forging new partnerships in the outdoor gear market.

Olivia Collier of the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Rural Economic Development Division and ARC's Program Manager in North Carolina helped convene the event.

Information about the grants and tools available to North Carolina counties that fall within the ARC region is [available online](#).



Mount Fuji, the iconic symbol of Japan.

Join State Delegation for SEUS/Japan Conference

North Carolina economic developers and business executives aiming to increase opportunities in Japan still have time to register for the 39th Annual Southeast U.S./Japan Conference, being held in Tokyo, Japan September 20-22, 2016.

The conference is one of the state's best opportunities each year to reach Japanese executives for business development purposes. A [preliminary agenda is available for review online](#).

North Carolinians interested in joining the state's delegation may contact David Rhoades, State Conference Coordinator at (919) 814-4611 or [by email](#). The [conference application is available online for download](#).



Entrepreneur Michael Penney addresses attendees at the Vet2Biz event August 13.

BLNC Showcases Available Services at Veterans Employment Event

Business Link North Carolina (BLNC), the unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) that provides information and referrals to available business resources participated in

For more information on how the state's export team can assist companies in your area generate new revenue from international markets, visit edpnc.com. A [list of upcoming trade events](#) is also available online.

NCWorks @ Work: Grants Help Companies Train Workers to Stay Competitive

If you're a client of Perigon International Inc., then you're benefitting from the training the company recently implemented through an NCWorks grant.

The 33-year-old engineering and design firm builds virtual simulations of what various buildings and manufacturing plants can look like, so clients can review facilities before construction ever begins.

To maintain its edge in serving clients, the company applied for and received an NCWorks Incumbent Worker Training Grant (IWTG) in December 2015. This grant program provides up to \$10,000 for employers to address skills gaps among existing workers. The funding helped the company train its employees in 3-D modeling software, improving the skills of its workforce and expanding the services it can offer to clients.

"It allows us to keep our working staff sharp and ahead of the curve on the tools we need to compete and do it in a cost-effective and judicious manner," said **Dean Norwood, president and chief operating officer of Perigon**.

Working with Charlotte Works - a member of the NCWorks initiative - Perigon applied for and received three grants of nearly \$29,000. Perigon has trained 17 employees in the use of various 3-D modeling software programs for plant piping, equipment, and steel models. Perigon also trained an employee in electrical power systems software and another earned a human resources certificate.

"It's enabled HR to become a strategic partner in the company by finding and funding training," said **Teri Carter, manager of accounting and human resources**. Carter said she plans to apply for a fourth grant to provide additional 3-D training that will allow the company's engineers to expand their expertise to better serve the pharmaceutical industry.

Harvey Mason, founder and chief executive officer of Perigon, said the training provided through the ITWG program boosts his company's competitiveness. "We sell this to our customers. It's important for them to see the value we bring to them because the quality of our time spent and our work is increased." Mason also noted that the models his engineers produce are used for processes such as determining clearances, precision fitting, and reducing material waste.

"The detailed drawings have to be within tolerances of a quarter of an inch - sometimes smaller," said Mason. "In the old days, you would have to do manual calculations. Now with the computer, you can order to the exact measures and have no piles of construction waste."

Mason also appreciates the benefits the training offers to Perigon's employees.

In addition to improving employee confidence in tackling new programs, the grant also helped Perigon improve its retention rate. **Roger Carithers is a design group leader** who's a 29-year veteran of Perigon and participated in all the training. He compared the effect of the training on his job to trying to build a

Reboot: Boots2Business, held August 13 at the National Guard Headquarters in Raleigh.

The day-long conference featured a variety of speakers addressing issues important to military veterans entering the business world such as entrepreneurship, small business challenges and venture financing.

The BLNC team shared information about the services BLNC offers to North Carolina business owners. BLNC offers one-on-one phone consultations to hundreds of individuals interested in establishing a business start-up, small business owners in need of general support, and small-business entrepreneurs interested in moving to North Carolina.

This week (Wednesday, August 17), the BLNC team will continue its outreach to veterans by participating in the North Carolina Veterans Business Association's [Procurement Summit](#) at N.C. State's McKimmon Center.

[BLNC.gov website](http://BLNC.gov).

N.C. in the News

- [Business Buzz: Event helps homeless vets find jobs](#) (*Fayetteville Observer* - August 14)
- [NCSU gets \\$45 million grant for plant research](#) (*News & Observer* - August 12)
- [Mayne Pharma Group Builds Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Complex In Greenville, North Carolina](#) (*Area Development* - August 12)
- [94 new jobs coming: Packaging firm expands operations to Richmond County](#) (*Richmond County Daily Journal* - August 11)
- [State official praises rail hub](#) (*Rocky Mount Telegram* - August 4)

About Us

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.](#)

backyard shed.

"You can get the materials and try to put it together on your own, but if you had someone to tell you what to do and show you the proper steps, you could get it done faster with a better finished product," said Carithers.

Carithers also thinks the training has made him and his team more efficient and effective in their work and sees long-lasting results. "We've seen positive results from the training and want to go through more of it," said Carithers. "Our goal is to be the ones sharing technology with our clients, not the clients sharing it with us. We've become more valuable to the company and it's given us the confidence to go out and be leaders in this industry."

NCWorks @ Work is a SYNC series highlighting success stories from North Carolina's integrated workforce development system. More information about [NCWorks is online](#).

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