

# sync<sup>®</sup> NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



Lowe's CEO Marvin Ellison (left) accepts a ceremonial fine china plate from Governor Cooper.

## Governor Cooper Announces More than 1,600 Jobs with Lowe's New Global Technology Center in Charlotte

**Governor Roy Cooper** announced on June 27 that Mooresville-based home improvement company Lowe's will locate a major new technology center in Charlotte, creating more than 1,600 jobs.

"Lowe's is expanding in a way that will take technology to new heights and this company knows its home state can provide the highly trained workforce it needs," **Governor Cooper** said. "We are committed to ensuring workers have the right skills to encourage companies to grow their footprint in our state with confidence."

Lowe's serves more than 18 million customers a week in the United States and Canada across more than 2,200 home improvement and hardware stores. Associates at the new center will help accelerate the company's technology transformation, serving as an epicenter for the team that will help modernize technology systems for the company. Most of the new positions will be based at the new center in Charlotte, while others will join at existing Lowe's locations where it has a strong technology team presence, including its Mooresville headquarters.

"We're excited to stand up our new global technology center here in North Carolina to continue to drive our company's growth," said **Marvin R. Ellison, Lowe's president and CEO**, who joined the company in July 2018. "Locating our new facility



John Hardin (on right) presents a North Carolina fine china plate to Jake Ring, GIGA Data Center Founder and CEO.

## Commerce Welcomes GIGA Data Center to Mooresville

June 21 marked the grand opening of a new 60-megawatt GIGA Data Center in Mooresville.

**Dr. John Hardin, Executive Director of Commerce's Office of Science, Technology & Innovation**, provided brief remarks at the event celebrating the grand opening of the data center. In his remarks, Dr. Hardin noted how North Carolina is committed to helping build out this critical modern infrastructure by providing a well-educated workforce, world-renowned higher-education institutions, a low cost of living, a low cost of power, and policies supportive of the data center industry.

As GIGA's newest data center, the facility in Mooresville occupies a former manufacturing building—vacant for more than eight years—which GIGA converted into the state-of-the-art data center fully compliant with the highest-level of data center standards for uptime requirements and long-term viability. The opening of the facility represents not only jobs and investment, but also a cascading positive economic impact on communities and other businesses throughout North Carolina. With

in the heart of Charlotte, the state's largest metropolitan area, will enable Lowe's to attract top technology talent and foster collaboration with our teams in our nearby Mooresville headquarters. This team will create technology solutions that will accelerate our commitment to becoming a best-in-class, omni-channel retailer and strengthen our associate and customer experiences."



*The announcement event was held at a facility in Charlotte's South End, future home of the Lowe's technology center.*

In conjunction with selecting North Carolina, Ellison announced Lowe's intention to locate its new global technology center in Charlotte's South End. Set to open in late 2021, a 357,000-square-foot facility will be located in a new 23-story tower, branded with Lowe's, in the bustling neighborhood immediately south of uptown Charlotte.

"For nearly 75 years, Lowe's roots in North Carolina have run deep, growing from one small hardware store into a Fortune 50 home improvement retailer," said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "Their story exemplifies North Carolina's strengths as a business location and demonstrates how our state provides everything a company might need, no matter the stage of growth or level of skill sought."

Today, Lowe's employs nearly 11,000 associates in the Charlotte area and more than 28,000 associates across North Carolina.

In addition to its \$153 million capital investment in the project, Lowe's will add a variety of technology positions, including software and infrastructure engineers, data scientists, analysts, architects, User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) professionals, and technologists with Artificial Intelligence and machine learning engineering experience.

Lowe's expects to fill the first 400 positions in the next year and plans to begin hiring for these positions immediately. While salaries will vary by role, the average wage for the new positions will be more than \$117,000.

Lowe's technology center expansion in Mecklenburg County will be facilitated, in part, by a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) and a grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

Over the course of the 12-year term of the JDIG, the project will grow the state's economy by an estimated \$6.3 billion. Using a formula that takes into account the new tax revenues generated by the 1,612 new jobs, the JDIG agreement authorizes the potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$54,090,750, paid over 12 year

The company's JDIG agreement also calls for moving as much as \$18 million into the state's Industrial Development Fund - Utility Account. The Utility Account helps rural communities finance necessary infrastructure upgrades to attract future business. Even when new jobs are created in a Tier 3 county

its new model for data centers, GIGA pushes the state of the art in the data center industry—in bandwidth capability, scalability, reliability, and security.

Organized by the Iredell County Economic Development Corporation, the event also included remarks from **Jake Ring, Founder and CEO of GIGA Data Centers**, **Don Frame, Data Center Brand Director for Lenovo North America**, **James Mallory, Chairman of the Iredell County Commissioners**, and **Miles Atkins, Mayor of Mooresville**.

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## **New Members Named for the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA)**

**Governor Roy Cooper** has appointed the following individuals to the Rural Infrastructure Authority:

- **Joyce Dickens of Rocky Mount** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Dickens is the president and chief executive officer of Rocky Mount Edgecombe Community Development Corporation.
- **Ricky Harris of Maxton** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Harris was the Robeson County manager until his retirement last year.
- **Jan Hayes of Sanford** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Hayes is the managing partner for Hayes Group Consulting, LLC.
- **Karen Kiehna of Mars Hill** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Kiehna is a grants administrator for the engineering firm McGill Associates.
- **Abdul Rasheed of Henderson** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Rasheed is the CEO of the William C. Friday Fellowship for Human Relations.
- **Commissioner Jeff Smith of Edenton** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Smith is the past chair of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.
- **Bill Webb of Ellerbe** as a representative of a tier 1 or 2 county. Webb is the senior partner with the law firm of Kitchin, Neal, Webb & Futtrell, P.A.

such as Mecklenburg, the new tax revenue generated through JDIG grants helps more economically challenged communities elsewhere in the state.

A performance-based grant of \$2 million from the One North Carolina Fund will also support the project.



Officials for Lowe's, the City of Charlotte, and Mecklenburg County join Governor Cooper at the June 27 announcement in Charlotte.

[North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [EDPNC](#) counted the following groups among their partners in this project: the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Duke Energy](#), [Mecklenburg County](#), the [City of Charlotte](#), [Charlotte Regional Business Alliance](#), [Davidson College](#), [Duke University](#), [East Carolina University](#), [Johnson C. Smith University](#), [North Carolina A&T State University](#), [North Carolina State University](#), the [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#), the [University of North Carolina at Charlotte](#), [Central Piedmont Community College](#), [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools](#), Carolinas Fintech Hub, [Road to Hire](#), [Tech Talent South](#), and [Charlotte Works](#).



## Save The Date for the 2019 Southeast U.S./Japan Conference

The 42nd Annual Joint Meeting between the Southeast U.S./Japan and Japan-U.S Southeast Associations will be held at the Westin Savannah Harbor Hotel in Savannah, Georgia October 21-23, 2019.

North Carolina is a founding member of SEUS/Japan, an association of seven southeastern states created in 1976. The state's participation aims to encourage foreign direct investment (FDI) from Japanese companies, as well as strengthen export ties for North Carolina companies selling goods in Japan.

North Carolinians interested in joining the state's delegation to the conference may contact David Rhoades, State Coordinator for the conference at (919) 814-4611 or [by email](#). Formal registration packets will be available later this month.

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## N.C. in the News

- [Minority-owned businesses are growing, but face challenges, business experts say](#) (*Winston-Salem Journal* - July 9)
- [The nation's most exciting park project is taking shape in North Carolina](#) (*Curbed* - July 6)
- [There's a new leader in charge of economic development in Gaston County](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal* - July 3)
- [Town of Ayden highlighted for booming downtown businesses](#) *WNCT-TV* - June 18)

### 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.](#)*

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**Building Location:**  
301 North Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

**Mailing Address:**  
4301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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