



**2025**

*Eastern North Carolina  
Regional Networking Luncheon*

**Economic Development  
Strong Regional Assets**

**April 17 • East Carolina University**

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# AGENDA

Noon – 12:30 pm **Registration & Networking**

12:30 – 1:00 pm **Luncheon**

1:00 – 1:10 pm **Welcome & Introductions**

**Trey Cash**

Greene & Lenoir County Director  
North Carolina Global TransPark Economic Development Region  
*NCEDA Board of Directors*

**Josh Lewis**

President & CEO  
Greenville Eastern North Carolina Alliance

**Merrill Flood**

Director of Local Community Affairs, Millennial Campus Planning  
East Carolina University

1:10 – 1:45 pm **Economic Development Strong Regional Assets Panel Discussion**

**Donna Phillips**, *moderator*

Vice President of Economic Development  
NC East Alliance

**Aaron Ouellette**

Manager, Port Centric Logistics  
Virginia Port Authority

**Mark Pope**

President  
North Carolina Global TransPark Economic Development Region

**Bryan Smith**

Economic Development Manager  
Dominion Energy

**Norris Tolson**

President & CEO  
Carolinas Gateway Partnership (Retired)

1:45 – 1:55 pm **Q&A**

1:55 – 2:00 pm **Closing Remarks**

**Trey Cash**

## SPEAKERS



**Aaron Ouellette** is the Manager of Port Centric Logistics for the Virginia Port Authority, overseeing global economic development projects focused on logistics and industrial development. Previously, he worked at the Hampton Roads Chamber. Aaron earned a bachelor's in business marketing from Radford University.



**Donna Phillips** is the Vice President of Economic Development at NC East Alliance. She connects regional industries to the STEM East Industry In Schools Initiative and supports new industry recruitment across 29 counties. Donna brings extensive experience from roles at Duke Energy, the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, and various local agencies. She holds degrees from Chowan University and East Carolina University, including an MBA in Business Administration.



**Mark Pope** is the President of NC Global TransPark Economic Development Region. Mark is a Lenoir County native and East Carolina University graduate, and has over 20 years of banking experience. He became Lenoir County's economic director in 2005, led the Wayne County Development Alliance in 2018, and has served in his current role since 2020.



**Bryan Smith** is the Economic Development Manager for Dominion Energy, serving northeastern North Carolina. He began his career with Dominion in 1985, holding positions in Customer Service and Design, Operations, Distribution Planning, Engineering and Key Accounts - prior to Economic Development. He has worked in Economic Development with Dominion Energy for over 25 years. Bryan is a graduate of Virginia Tech in Civil Engineering, and he obtained an MBA from Wake Forest University.



**Norris Tolson** is the former CEO and President of the Carolinas Gateway Partnership. He retired a few years ago and continues to serve as the Vice President of Special Projects. Norris previously served as a senior advisor at Williams Mullen, CEO of the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, and as North Carolina's Secretary of Commerce, Transportation, and Revenue. A former state legislator, he also held leadership roles at DuPont. He earned a bachelor's from NC State University.