



## 2026 EMERGING EXECUTIVES FORUM

February 4-5 • Kinston

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## Meeting Locations

<b>BASE HOTEL:</b>	<b>Mother Earth Motor Lodge</b> 501 North Heritage Street – Kinston, NC 28501
<b>RECEPTION:</b>	<b>Mother Earth Brewing Tap Room</b> 311 North Heritage Street – Kinston, NC 28501
<b>FORUM:</b>	<b>Community Council for the Arts</b> 400 North Queen Street – Kinston, NC 28501

## Agenda

### Wednesday, February 4

Afternoon	<b>ARRIVAL / HOTEL CHECK-IN</b>
Noon – 4:30 pm	<b>OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES</b>
Noon – 1:30 pm	<b>Lunch at Farmer and the Dail (Snow Hill)</b> Lunch Sponsor: <b>Greene County Economic Development Partnership</b>
2 – 3 pm	<b>Simply Natural Creamery Tour (Snow Hill)</b> Tour Sponsor: <b>Greene County Economic Development Partnership</b>
3:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>NC Global TransPark Tour (Kinston)</b>
5:30 – 7 pm	<b>WELCOMING RECEPTION</b> Reception Sponsor: <b>North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives</b>
7 pm – Until	<b>DINNER / DRINKS ON YOUR OWN</b>

### Thursday, February 5

8:30 – 9 am	<b>CONFERENCE REGISTRATION / BREAKFAST</b>
9 am – 12:45 pm	<b>GENERAL SESSION</b>
9 – 9:10 am	<b>Welcoming Remarks</b> <b>ANNA WALKER</b> Economic Development Manager – North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives <i>NCEDA Board of Directors / Emerging Executives Committee Chair</i>
	<b>JAMES CARTER</b> Talent Development Program Manager – City of Charlotte <i>Emerging Executives Committee Vice Chair</i>

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9:10 – 9:20 am	<b>Lenoir County / Eastern North Carolina Welcome</b> <b>TREY CASH</b> COO – NC Global TransPark Economic Development Region
	<b>LINDA ROUSE-SUTTON</b> Chair – Lenoir County Board of Commissioners
9:20 – 9:40 am	<b>Amazon Project Spotlight</b> <b>MARTIE BUTLER</b> Economic Development Director – Richmond County
9:40 – 10:10 am	<b>Leadership Profile</b> <b>ANNA WALKER</b> , <i>interviewer</i> <b>JENNIFER LANTZ</b> Executive Director – Wilson Economic Development Council
10:10 – 10:50 am	<b>Regional Collaboration and Innovative Partnerships in Economic Development</b> <b>TREY CASH</b> , <i>moderator</i> Chief Operating Officer North Carolina Global TransPark Economic Development Region
	<b>SHAYLA DOUGLAS</b> Assistant Director – Pitt County Economic Development
	<b>DAVID LAMBERT</b> Director of Strategic Projects – NC Department of Commerce
	<b>KEVIN SZOSTAK</b> Director, Economic Development Projects Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce
10:50 – 11:10 am	<b>Networking Break</b>
11:10 – 11:25 am	<b>International Etiquette</b> <b>ROBERT VAN GEONS</b> President & CEO – Fayetteville Cumberland County Economic Development Corp.
11:25 am – Noon	<b>Successful Site Visits: Strategy, Execution, and Leadership</b> <b>KATHLEEN HENRY</b> , <i>moderator</i> Owner – KH Consulting
	<b>JOE MELVIN</b> Vice President – North Carolina’s Southeast
	<b>STEVEN PEARCE</b> Vice President, Infrastructure & Economic Development – McGuireWoods Consulting
	<b>MARVIN PRICE</b> Executive Vice President, Economic Development – Greensboro Chamber of Commerce

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Noon – 12:45 pm

## **Roundtables Session: Incentives, Compliance & Site Development 201**

### **BUILDING REUSE**

- **Bethany Davenport**  
Fiscal and Compliance Manager – NC Department of Commerce
- **Nichole Gross**  
Senior Program Manager/Lead Staff Liaison, Rural Infrastructure Authority  
NC Department of Commerce

### **ONE NC**

- **Kenny Stagg**  
One NC Program Manager – NC Department of Commerce

### **JDIG**

- **Mark Poole**  
Director, Commerce Finance Center – NC Department of Commerce

### **GOLDEN LEAF**

- **Katie Fisher**  
Program Officer – Golden LEAF Foundation

### **RURAL GRANTS: ARC, CDBG, INDUSTRIAL FUND & MORE!**

- **Hazel Edmond**  
Director, Rural Engagement & Investment Programs – NC Department of Commerce

### **UTILITIES SITE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

- **Courtney Bird**  
Senior Economic Development Manager – Duke Energy
- **Audrey Boone**  
Senior Economic Developer – ElectriCities of North Carolina Representative
- **Ann Fitts**  
Community Development Specialist – North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives
- **Patrick Pierce**  
Director, Economic and Business Development – North Carolina Railroad Company

### **DOWNTOWN MAIN STREET**

- **Liz Parham**  
Director, NC Main Street Program – NC Department of Commerce

12:45 pm

## **Transition to Lunch**

12:45 – 2 pm

### **LUNCHEON**

12:45 – 1:15 pm

## **Luncheon / Networking**

1:15 – 1:55 pm

## **Keynote Presentation**

### **ALANNA HOWARD**

CEO & Owner – Garrison Consulting Group

1:55 – 2 pm

## **Closing Remarks**

### **ANNA WALKER & JAMES CARTER**

*Emerging Executives Committee Chair / Vice Chair*

2 pm

### **FORUM ADJOURSNS**

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