



**2025**

*Western North Carolina  
Regional Networking Luncheon*

**Funding the Future: Recovery  
Resources for Hurricane Helene**

**May 9 • DoubleTree Hotel Asheville-Biltmore**

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# AGENDA

- Noon – 12:30 pm    **Luncheon Buffet**
- 12:30 – 12:40 pm    **Opening Remarks**  
**Clark Duncan**  
Executive Director  
Economic Development Coalition for Asheville & Buncombe County  
*NCEDA Board of Directors*
- Burton Hodges**  
Executive Director  
Transylvania Economic Alliance
- 12:40 – 12:50 pm    **Special Welcoming Remarks**  
**The Honorable Kevin Corbin**  
Senator  
North Carolina General Assembly
- 12:50 – 12:55 pm    **Legislative Update & Speaker Introduction**  
**Brittany Brady**  
President & CEO  
Henderson County Economic Development Partnership  
*NCEDA Vice President*
- 12:55 – 1:40 pm    **Panel Discussion / Audience Q&A**  
**Erica Anderson**, *moderator*  
Deputy Executive Director  
& Director of Economic & Community Development  
Land of Sky Regional Council
- Scott Hamilton**  
President & CEO  
Golden LEAF Foundation  
*NCEDA Past President*
- Desiree Kennedy**  
Program Officer  
Governor’s Recovery Office for Western North Carolina (GROW NC)
- The Honorable Lee Lilley**  
Secretary  
North Carolina Department of Commerce  
*NCEDA Board of Directors*
- 1:40 – 1:45 pm    **Closing Remarks / Adjourn**  
**Clark Duncan**

## SPEAKERS



**Erica Anderson** serves as Deputy Executive Director and Director of Economic & Community Development at the Land of Sky Regional Council in Asheville. With over 15 years at the Council, she leads initiatives advancing economic resilience, infrastructure, and community development. She assumed her current role in 2023 after more than a decade directing economic and community development. Erica is a graduate of Colorado State University.



**Scott Hamilton** is President & CEO of the Golden LEAF Foundation, overseeing grantmaking, investments, and daily operations. Prior to joining Golden LEAF in 2019, he served as Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Commission and led AdvantageWest, a regional economic development partnership in Western North Carolina. Scott has held leadership roles with NCEA and the North Carolina Economic Development Board. He earned his degree from UNC Greensboro and completed additional training at UNC, Georgia Tech, and Oklahoma.



**Desiree Kennedy** was appointed by Governor Josh Stein to serve as a Program Officer in the Governor's Recovery Office for Western North Carolina in February 2025, where she oversees the Housing, Children and Families, and Economic Recovery portfolios. Prior to this role, she held senior leadership positions on national presidential campaigns, served as Deputy Chief of Staff to a US Representative, and led corporate and government affairs initiatives in the private sector. Desiree holds degrees from Nova Southeastern University and The George Washington University and earned a certificate in Health Care Economics from Harvard Business School Online.



**The Honorable Lee Lilley** is North Carolina's Secretary of Commerce, appointed by Governor Josh Stein in 2025. Secretary Lilley previously served as Director of Economic & Pandemic Recovery for Governor Roy Cooper, where he led statewide recovery efforts and economic initiatives. He has also served as Director of Legislative Affairs in the Governor's Office and held senior roles at McGuireWoods Consulting and in the US House of Representatives. Secretary Lilley is a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill and serves on its Board of Visitors.