



2026 EMERGING EXECUTIVES FORUM

February 4-5 • Kinston

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Meeting Locations

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

Agenda

Wednesday, February 4

Afternoon

ARRIVAL / HOTEL CHECK-IN

Noon – 4:30 pm

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Noon – 1:30 pm

Lunch at Farmer and the Dail (Snow Hill)

Lunch Sponsor: **Greene County Economic Development Partnership**

2 – 3 pm

Simply Natural Creamery Tour (Snow Hill)

Tour Sponsor: **Greene County Economic Development Partnership**

3:30 – 4:30 pm

NC Global TransPark Tour (Kinston)

5:30 – 7 pm

WELCOMING RECEPTION

Reception Sponsor: **North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives**

7 pm – Until

DINNER / DRINKS ON YOUR OWN

Thursday, February 5

8:30 – 9 am

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION / BREAKFAST

9 am – 12:45 pm

GENERAL SESSION

9 – 9:10 am

Welcoming Remarks

ANNA WALKER

Economic Development Manager – North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives
NCEDA Board of Directors / Emerging Executives Committee Chair

JAMES CARTER

Talent Development Program Manager – City of Charlotte
Emerging Executives Committee Vice Chair

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

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

UTILITIES SITE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- **Courtney Bird**
Senior Economic Development Manager – Duke Energy
- **TBD**
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 ADJOURNS

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