



Leadership North Carolina Class 32

Duke Energy Economic Development Session
February 4-6, 2025

Speaker Directory

Mr. Brian Clark

Executive Director
North Carolina Ports
2202 Burnett Boulevard
Wilmington, NC 28401
(910) 763-1621
brian.clark@ncports.com

Brian E. Clark has served as Executive Director of the North Carolina State Ports Authority since January 1, 2021. Under Clark's leadership, North Carolina Ports has completed several critical infrastructure improvements including the opening of a new South Gate container complex, the integration of new terminal and gate operating systems, container berth renovations, expansion of the turning basin, air draft improvements, and the addition of three neo-Panamax cranes. In addition, Clark is overseeing the container terminal master plan aimed at increasing the capacity at the Port of Wilmington.

During Clark's tenure, the Port of Wilmington's container terminal was recognized as the #1 most productive port in North America and the 44th most productive port in the world by the World Bank Group and S&P Global Market Intelligence.

In June of 2022 Clark was appointed by United States Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to the Maritime Transportation System National Advisory Committee (MTSNAC).

Clark has more than twenty-five years of experience in the maritime industry, having worked in senior positions in port operations in several US locations. Prior to his tenure at North Carolina Ports, Clark served as Managing Director for APM Terminals in Port Elizabeth, NJ. In addition to his time at Port Elizabeth, Clark worked as Project Director for APM Terminals in Mobile, AL, and served in various operations role with APM Terminals and Sea Land Services, Inc. in his early career.

Clark is a graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy. He is also a graduate of Duke University Fuqua School of Business Executive Education Program.

Clark resides in Wilmington, NC, with his wife, Jennifer, and three children, Madison, Paige, and Gavin.

Mr. Doug Vogt

Chief Operating Officer
North Carolina Ports
2202 Burnett Boulevard
Wilmington, NC 28401
(910) 763-1621
doug.vogt@ncports.com

Doug Vogt was appointed Chief Operating Officer of the North Carolina State Ports Authority in November 2020.

Vogt's extensive experience further improves the operational excellence at the Port of Wilmington, Port of Morehead City, and Charlotte Inland Port. Specifically, he directs and coordinates the activities of all terminal operations. He also oversees the execution of the infrastructure investment plan.

Vogt has more than twenty years of experience in the maritime industry having worked in senior positions in port operations in several US locations. Most recently, Vogt served as VP of Operations, Maintenance and Equipment for Tropical Shipping in Riviera Beach, FL. In addition to his time with Tropical Shipping, Vogt worked in various positions with NYK Line in Atlanta, GA, as well as with APM Terminals in Long Beach, CA, and Maersk Container Service Corp. in Charlotte, NC.

Vogt is a graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy. He also earned his MBA at the University of Scranton with specializations in both Operations Management and Human Resource Management.

He relocated from Jupiter, FL, to Wilmington, NC with his wife, Julia, and two daughters, Ruby and Charlotte.

Mr. Jonathan Graham

Chief Financial Officer
North Carolina Ports
2202 Burnett Boulevard
Wilmington, NC 28401
(910) 763-1621
jonny.graham@ncports.com

Jonathan Graham was appointed Chief Financial Officer of the North Carolina State Ports Authority in May of 2024.

Prior to his role as Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Graham served as the Head of Finance, Global Projects for APM Terminals, a top 5 global port operator and an A.P. Moller-Maersk company, where he led global investment and technical transformation programs, including automation, decarbonization, and asset digitization.

Mr. Graham is a seasoned finance executive with more than 20 years of experience in the industry. He started his career with A.P. Moller-Maersk, serving in various lead accounting and finance roles. He has also served in senior financial management roles with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Pacific International Lines, and Ports America. While Graham has lived and worked around the globe, including Africa, Asia, Central America, and North America, he was born and raised in North Carolina. He attended the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he double majored in Business Administration and Finance/ Management. He also completed an International Marine Terminal CFO and Project Management Program with APM Terminals Finance Management and participated in an Advanced Development Program at Cranfield School of Management.

Ms. Laura Blair

Alumna LNC Class 19

Vice President of Administration and External Affairs
North Carolina Ports
2202 Burnett Boulevard
Wilmington, NC 28401
(910) 763-1621
laura.blair@ncports.com

Laura G. Blair was appointed to Vice President of Administration and External Affairs for the North Carolina State Ports Authority in March of 2016, after joining the Ports in March 2008.

As Vice President of Administration and External Affairs, she works closely with the Executive Director and Board of Directors and is an integral part of the Authority's planning and development team. Ms. Blair oversees human resources, communications, and public affairs functions for the Authority, managing administration as well as strategic internal and external communications. She also leads the Authority's work with members of local governments as well as the State of North Carolina and the Federal government.

Prior to joining the Authority, Ms. Blair spent nearly a decade serving in various staff capacities in the North Carolina Congressional delegation. She served as the district director for policy and economic development in the office of U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre. She also served as a legislative assistant in the U.S. Senate, specializing in federal appropriations, agriculture policy, rural economy, and hurricane redevelopment.

Ms. Blair holds a master's degree from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a member of the American Society for Public Administration, a member of the North Carolina Chamber Infrastructure Economic Development Committee, and the North Carolina Water Resources Congress Executive Committee. She is a graduate of Leadership North Carolina.

Mr. Dan Gerlach

Owner
Dan Gerlach LLC
5616 Alpine Drive
Raleigh, NC 27609
(252) 326-1191
dangerlachnc@gmail.com

Dan Gerlach is an experienced leader in the government, nonprofit, philanthropic, and education sectors, including 25 years in North Carolina serving as senior fiscal advisor to the NC governor, president of a \$1 billion foundation, founding director of a public policy research organization, and interim leader of a research university.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and English from the University of Notre Dame and a Master's of Public Administration from Syracuse University.

Through Dan Gerlach LLC, he now strives to provide strategic counsel on finance, public policy, and other issues.

Mr. Christopher Chung

Chief Executive Officer
Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina
150 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1200
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 447-7788
christopher.chung@edpnc.com

In 2015, Christopher Chung joined the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) as Chief Executive Officer. He brings more than 27 years of state-level economic development experience to the role, including positions with Missouri Partnership and Ohio Department of Development (now "JobsOhio"). He received his bachelor's degree and did graduate work in public policy at The Ohio State University.

Chris is the recipient of many awards and recognitions, including Business North Carolina Economic Development Executive of the Year (2024), Raleigh News & Observer Tar Heel of the Month (2022), and Triangle Business Journal CEOs of the Year (2018). His professional affiliations include US Department of Commerce – National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, US Department of Commerce – United States Investment Advisory Council, Carolina Public Press – Board of Directors, North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation – Board of Directors, and University of North Carolina at Charlotte – Board of Visitors.

Chris resides in Raleigh, NC, with his wife Emily and daughters Elizabeth and Caroline.

Dr. Gary A. Lanier

Director

Columbus County Economic Development Commission & Columbus County Planning

127 West Webster Street

Whiteville, NC 28472

(910) 640-6608

glanier@columbusco.org

Dr. Gary Lanier is the director of the Columbus County Economic Development Commission; a position he has held since 2010. Since 2014, Gary has also served as the county's planning director. His entry into the economic development profession came after a 30-year career in engineering and manufacturing management with Black & Decker, Eaton Corp., and Hubbell Power Systems. Gary holds a BS in Engineering Operations from North Carolina State University, where his outstanding scholarship earned him the JW Joseph Award. He also holds an MBA from Western Carolina University and an Ed.D in adult and community college education from NC State. Gary currently serves as President of the North Carolina Economic Development Association where he also served as a board member from 2014 – 2020. He has served on the board of directors of North Carolina's Southeast for many years and is Chairman of the Southeastern Economic Development Commission. A longtime Scout Leader, Gary is on the executive board of the Cape Fear Council of the Boy Scouts of America and is a Vigil Honor member of the Klahican Lodge of the Order of the Arrow. Gary and his bride of nearly 40 years, Emily, have two grown sons.

Ms. Nicole Thompson

President and Chief Executive Officer

Downtown Durham Inc.

307 West Main Street, Suite 102

Durham, NC 27701

(919) 682-2800

Nicole@downtowndurham.com

Nicole has been the President and CEO of Downtown Durham, Inc. since 2017 and has been working tirelessly with her team to maintain and improve downtown Durham's vibrancy and growth. She began her career in economic development while working for the Institute of Minority Economic Development in downtown Durham in the early 90s, well before downtown's amazing transformation, but she remembers a very unique and entrepreneurial community full of potential and spunk, something that is still true today. Since then, she has worked in economic and community development on the state government, local government, and the nonprofit/community levels in North Carolina, Virginia, and Colorado. She has experience in leading economic development efforts and growth in both rural and urban areas. Prior to coming to Durham, Nicole spent four years in Colorado, where she was the Executive Director of the Leadville-Lake County Economic Development Corporation. While in this position, she worked to advocate for responsible and strategic economic growth and development in Lake County. She instituted the first county-wide economic development strategic plan for Lake County and established the Leadville Main Street Program. Nicole graduated from the University of Richmond with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Urban Studies and received a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—GO HEELS!!!!

Mr. Chris Coudriet

County Manager
New Hanover County
230 Government Center Drive
Wilmington, NC 28403
(910) 798-7184
ccoudriet@nhcgov.com

New Hanover County Manager Chris Coudriet serves as chief administrator of county government and maintains responsibility for administering all departments under the general control of the five-member Board of Commissioners.

The county manager's work includes the development of the county's annual budget. In addition, the manager and his executive leadership team are responsible for aligning the operations of the county to the adopted strategic plan and advancing the county's mission and vision through five key focus areas: superior education and workforce, superior public health and safety, intelligent growth and economic development, strong financial performance, and effective county management.

Mr. Coudriet has served as the county manager since July 2012. Prior to his appointment, he served as assistant county manager for New Hanover County for four years and as county manager in Franklin and Washington counties, NC. He has more than twenty-five years of public administration experience, with fifteen years as a county manager or assistant county manager in North Carolina. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from East Carolina University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Mr. Coudriet has served in several leadership positions with the National Association of Counties (NACo), including vice-chair of the Public Health and Healthy Communities Subcommittee and vice-chair of the Resilient Counties Advisory Board. He is on the NACo International Economic Development Task Force and the NACo Healthy Counties Advisory Board. He is also a member of NACo's Information Technology Standing Committee and the International Economic Development Committee. Recently, Mr. Coudriet received a Presidential Recognition Award from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) for his contribution as a member of the opioid settlement working group, also known as the 555 committee, which helped NCACC and the North Carolina Department of Justice to maximize North Carolina's share of a \$26 billion national settlement fund to ensure resources reach communities as quickly, effectively, and directly as possible.

A native of eastern North Carolina, Chris and his wife, Leigh, have two adult children, and split their time between downtown Wilmington and Wrightsville Beach.

Brian Eckel

Partner
Cape Fear Commercial
102 Autumn Hall Drive, Suite 210
Wilmington, NC 28403
brian@capefearcommercial.com

Brian Eckel is the co-founder of Cape Fear Holdings, where he and his business partner, Vin Wells, lead the company's three divisions, including Cape Fear Commercial, Cape Fear Development, and Cape Fear Construction Group.

At the forefront of Cape Fear Development, Eckel has played a pivotal role in completing over 3,700 multifamily units and developing \$1.1 billion in assets, with a primary focus on mixed-use multifamily projects. The development team's portfolio spans a wide range of product types, including office, industrial, self-storage and mixed-use, reflecting their adaptability and commitment to addressing the unique needs of each market.

Brian also co-founded Cape Fear Construction Group to maintain the highest standards in their development projects. This division ensures top-tier outcomes while continuing to collaborate with trusted general contractor partners for projects outside their direct portfolio.

Cape Fear Holdings has earned a reputation for attracting and retaining elite professionals across its divisions. This commitment to building an expert team is exemplified by the over \$4 billion in closed transactions led by the brokerage team and nearly 4 million square feet managed by the management team.

The company's success is built on Eckel and Wells's shared vision of excellence, innovation, and commitment to the community.

The Honorable Dane Scalise

County Commissioner
New Hanover County
230 Government Center Drive
Wilmington, NC 28403
(910) 798-7259
dscalise@nhcgov.com

Dane Scalise was first appointed to fill a vacancy on the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners from April 17, 2023 to December 2, 2024. He was then elected to serve a four-year term from December 2, 2024, to December 4, 2028.

Commissioner Scalise is a husband, father to two young sons, small business owner, lawyer, and insurance broker. He grew up in Morganton, NC. He is a graduate of Freedom High School, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the University of North Carolina School of Law. He and his wife moved to Wilmington in 2012.

From 2016-2020, Commissioner Scalise served the people of North Carolina as Deputy Commissioner of the North Carolina Industrial Commission. He is a past fellow of the American Council of Young Political Leaders (2024), North Carolina Leadership Forum (2023), North Carolina Institute of Political Leadership (2021), and E.A. Morris Fellowship for Emerging Leaders (2017).

Commissioner Scalise believes in the importance of pro bono service and has volunteered with Community Legal Project, Compass Center for Women and Families (formerly The Women's Center),

Durham City Attorney's Office, Durham County District Attorney's Office, Habitat for Humanity, Legal Aid of North Carolina, and North Carolina for Military Employment (NC4ME), among others. He has also served on numerous boards and committees, including New Hanover County Bar Association (past president), Old Wilmington Riverfront Celebration, Inc., d/b/a Wilmington's Riverfest, Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, and Wilmington Downtown, Inc. (past chair).

Ms. Lisa Wurtzbacher

Assistant County Manager
New Hanover County
230 Government Center Drive
Wilmington, NC 28403
(910) 798-7161
lwurtzbacher@nhcgov.com

Lisa Wurtzbacher began serving as an assistant county manager for New Hanover County on May 9, 2022. Lisa's current responsibilities focus heavily on public safety functions, including overseeing the county's Fire Rescue, Emergency Management, 911, Engineering, and Building Safety departments. She also oversees the county's tax department and manages many of the county's economic development projects. Lisa is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where she received both her bachelor's and master's degree in accounting. She is also a North Carolina CPA.

Lisa started her public service career in the New Hanover County Finance Department in 2010 and served as the county's chief financial officer for ten years. Prior to coming to New Hanover County government, Lisa's career was spent in the private sector at the multinational professional service firm of Ernst & Young, where she worked on auditing and advisory projects for a wide variety of publicly traded and private clients.

In her prior role as the New Hanover County Chief Financial Officer and her current role as assistant county manager, she has played a key role in bringing a wide variety of economic development projects to life, including water and sewer infrastructure projects, industrial business park projects, and public-private partnerships, all aimed at bettering New Hanover County by bringing tax base and high paying jobs to New Hanover County.

Lisa is a native of New Hanover County and is fortunate to have also raised her two children with her husband in New Hanover County.

Mr. Prudencio IV Martinez Mengel

Director of Latino Outreach and Recruitment
Lenoir Community College
231 North Carolina Highway 58
Kinston, NC 28504
(252) 233-6850
pmartinezmengel76@lenoircc.edu

**Alumnus LNC Class 30
Member, LNC Board of Directors**

Prudencio IV Martinez Mengel is the Director of Latino Outreach and Recruitment at Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC. In this role, he supports innovative educational opportunities for the Latino community, ensuring access to quality programs in both English and Spanish. Prudencio holds a B.S. in Biology from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez and an M.A. in International Studies from East Carolina University, with a focus on contemporary Latin American issues, cross-cultural communication, and economic development. He is an active member of several Latino leadership organizations in North Carolina, including the NC Governor's Advisory Council for Hispanic and Latino Affairs and LatinxED. Prudencio is dedicated to fostering community unity and empowering the Latino community through education and workforce opportunities in North Carolina.

Mr. Guy Gaster

Director

North Carolina Film Office

150 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1200

Raleigh, NC 27601

(919) 447-7800

guy@filmnc.com

It seems entertainment has long been a part of Guy Gaster's life. What started out in the sports world has since transcended to the film and television industry. A native of North Carolina, Gaster has spent time in both the state's eastern and western halves before going across the country for college at Arizona State University where he majored in Marketing with a minor in Mass Communication.

Upon graduation, Gaster took jobs in the sports marketing world, helping provide the on-field and in-game entertainment for Major League Baseball's Arizona Diamondbacks and then oversee those aspects and ticket sales for athletic contests at Florida State University and Louisiana State University.

But family and his love for his home state brought Gaster back to North Carolina. In 2010, he was hired as the Production Services Executive for the North Carolina Film Office (NCFO), part of the state's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development with the Department of Commerce. In Fall 2014, Gaster was promoted to Director of the NCFO, now part of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. At the NCFO, Gaster is a key figure in recruiting productions to come and film in NC, highlighting the state's vast variety of locations, well-trained work force, any available incentives, and overall film friendliness.

Gaster resides in Raleigh and enjoys absolutely spoiling his teenage niece and nephew.

Ms. Heather McWhorter

Director

UNCW Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

803 South College Road

Wilmington, NC 28403

(910) 962-2655

mcwhorterh@uncw.edu

Heather McWhorter, MS, PE, ECM, is passionate about empowering individuals and communities to succeed through entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainability. As the director of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), she focuses on collaboration for maximizing entrepreneur success. CIE nurtures emerging startups and accelerates the entrepreneurial ecosystem in southeastern North Carolina as a vibrant hub of innovation and a central facility that offers educational events, UNCW connections, and a state-of-the-art incubator space.

Heather has many other roles to support entrepreneurs such as: the Leland Economic Development Committee (with a focus on entrepreneurs), Southeastern NC Biotechnology Advisory Committee, and UNCW Esports Advisory Council. And she has many accomplishments supporting entrepreneurs and innovators when serving roles such as Regional Director of the UNCW Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), the statewide Director of the SBTDC Business Launch Initiative, and a variety of entrepreneurial/innovation leadership roles at Penn State University, where she also received several degrees in Engineering. But the best is yet to come . . .

Mr. David Zucchini

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist and Author
Durham, NC
David.zucchini@nytimes.com

David Zucchini is an author and journalist, reporting for The New York Times. He has been awarded two Pulitzer Prizes, for dispatches from apartheid South Africa and for the book *Wilmington's Lie: The Murderous Coup of 1898 and the Rise of White Supremacy*. He is also a four-time Pulitzer Prize finalist. Mr. Zucchini has reported from more than 40 countries and is the author of the books *Thunder Run* and *Myth of the Welfare Queen*.

Ms. Sharon Decker

Alumna LNC Class 1

President, Carolinas Operations, Tryon Equestrian Partners
Tryon Resort/Tryon International Equestrian Center
25 International Boulevard
Mill Spring, NC 28756
(828) 863-1136
sadecker02@gmail.com

Sharon Decker is President, Carolina Operations for Tryon Equestrian Partners, whose properties include Tryon Resort and Tryon International Equestrian Center, one of the premier equestrian centers in the world. Decker has proven that her extensive experience and impressive background are an ideal fit to execute the vision for this innovative and groundbreaking development.

As President of Carolina Operations, Decker is managing development of the Tryon Resort brand. In addition to ongoing expansion at Tryon International Equestrian Center, Decker is spearheading the multi-use development of the 1600 acre Tryon Resort located in the Foothills of Western North Carolina. She also manages the day-to-day operations associated with running this organization, which includes

an extensive spring, summer, and fall equestrian competition calendar and a year-round event schedule of entertainment and family fun.

A graduate of University of North Carolina Greensboro, Decker began her career with Duke Power Company, now formally recognized as Duke Energy, where she was named the first female vice president in the company's history. Since that time, she has held significant leadership roles in public, private, and non-profit corporations, with a focus on economic development and job creation, new business start-ups, historic preservation, and rural community development.

In one of her most recognizable positions, Decker, a North Carolina native, was appointed Secretary of Commerce for the state of North Carolina in 2013 by Governor Pat McCrory, serving the state government for two years. During her time as Secretary of Commerce, Decker oversaw the creation of The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, responsible for marketing the state of North Carolina on a global scale. She also took a large leadership role in developing the Rural Division of the Department of Commerce, dedicated to creating and aiding economic growth in the rural areas of the state. Decker also serves on the board of Coca-Cola Bottling Consolidated, Culp, Inc., and The Weisiger Group (Carolina Cat).

Sharon is a lay pastor in the Presbyterian Church, USA, a student of contemplative prayer and meditation, a wife, and mother of four adult children. Her daily goal in life is to "be love" in all places and to encourage and equip others to do the same. Her life goal is to make North Carolina a State where all people have the opportunity to thrive.

The Honorable Jocelyn Mitnaul Mallette

Secretary

North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

4001 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699

(984) 204-8334

jocelyn.mitnaul.mallette@milvets.nc.gov

Jocelyn Mitnaul Mallette is the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. As a third-generation service member, Jocelyn was honored to accept Governor Josh Stein's nomination to serve in this role. As Secretary, Jocelyn leads the Department in its mission to support the military community in North Carolina, including the active-duty personnel and their families, installations, and adjacent communities; and to support the State's veterans and their families. The Department provides access to a full spectrum of resources that further enhance North Carolina's military and veteran friendly environment—from collaborative opportunities for business development to access to healthcare.

As the daughter of Goldsboro natives, Jocelyn received her congressional nomination to the United States Air Force Academy from North Carolina Congresswoman Eva Clayton. After graduating from the Air Force Academy, Jocelyn served for ten years in the United States Air Force. First, she served as an Admissions Officer at the Air Force Academy. Then, her academic coursework in Arabic helped her secure a mission critical assignment as an intelligence officer, during which she briefed pilots in South

Carolina and in Germany. Jocelyn cross-trained into the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps after graduating from the University of North Carolina School of Law.

Jocelyn served as a prosecutor and general practice attorney in the JAG Corps at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. After her ten years of active-duty military service, Jocelyn started her civilian career as an attorney by clerking for the Honorable Barbara A. Jackson of the North Carolina Supreme Court. Following her clerkship, Jocelyn spent six years at the international law firm of McGuireWoods, where she represented Fortune 500 companies in complex commercial litigation. After a three-month sabbatical—which included one month of living in Mexico City with her family and homeschooling her children—Jocelyn and her husband embarked upon a new adventure. They took a leap of faith and leveraged their decades of experience in the public and private sectors to start a federal government contracting business, which her husband now owns and operates full-time.

As an active member in her community, Jocelyn currently serves as the Chair of the Advisory Board of the Southeast Raleigh YMCA. She also is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and the Junior League of Raleigh.

She is married to Harold A. Mallette, who is a licensed architect, and she is the proud mother of two hilarious and lively toddlers.

Ms. Linda Parsons

President and Chief Executive Officer
Moore County Chamber of Commerce
160 West New York Avenue, Unit 3
Southern Pines, NC 28387
(910) 692-3926
lparsons@moorecountychamber.com

Linda Parsons is the President and CEO of the Moore County Chamber of Commerce, a role she has held since September 2014. With a career spanning 25 years in the chamber industry, Linda began her journey with the Moore County Chamber in 2005 as Vice President, where she demonstrated a deep commitment to fostering economic growth and community development.

The Moore County Chamber of Commerce represents over 640 businesses and organizations and their over 40,000+ employees. Linda guides the Chamber efforts in key areas including Membership Development, Community and Business Development, Workforce Development, Marketing, Advocacy and Strategic Planning. The Chamber has been a two-time runner-up for the National Chamber of the Year and has achieved a 4- star accreditation from the US Chamber of Commerce, an honor achieved by only a few hundred Chambers of the 7,000+ Chamber of Commerce in the country. Currently the Moore County Chamber is the seventh largest Chamber of Commerce in the Research Triangle Region.

Linda serves as a board member for a variety of local and state organizations, including the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Public Education Foundation, Moore County Economic Development Partnership, the Carthage Century Committee, the Moore County Schools Business Advisory Council (Chair), Partners for Children and Families (Chair), the FirstHealth of the Carolinas Physicians Board, the Sandhills Community College Childcare Advisory Board, and the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce Child Care Coalition. Previously she served on the Carolinas Association of Chamber of Commerce

Executives Board, Keep Moore County Beautiful Board, the Southern Pines Sister Cities Board, the United Way Allocation Committee, Sandhills Community College Business Advisory Committee, University of North Carolina at Pembroke Business Advisory Committee, the Moore Historical Society, and Girl Scouts of Coastal Carolinas. Linda is also actively involved in the community, volunteering her time with additional community organizations.

Prior to her tenure at the Moore County Chamber, Linda served as the Program Manager for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. She also held the role of Deputy Director for two Ohio Governors at the State and Local Government Commission, where she gained extensive experience in public policy and organizational leadership.

Linda is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Politics in Government with a triple minor in History, Sociology, and Anthropology. Linda is also a graduate of the University of Georgia's US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organizational Management, a four-year program for Chamber of Commerce professionals. Linda also holds the North and South Carolina Chamber Executive Certification.

Linda is married to Reagan Parsons, Town Manager of Southern Pines. She is an avid gardener, cook, reader and enjoys traveling.

Mr. Scott Dorney

Executive Director, Headquarters
North Carolina Military Business Center
Post Office Box 1748
Fayetteville, NC 28302
(910) 678-0190
scott@ncmbc.us

Scott Dorney has served as the Executive Director of the North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC) since December 1, 2004. An entity of the State embedded in our community colleges (with 17 offices statewide), the NCMBC is a unique business development and technology transition organization that grows the defense economy by expanding federal contracting and supporting retention of transitioning military personnel and recruitment of defense contractors to North Carolina. Since opening in January 2005, the NCMBC supported businesses across the state in winning over 6,067 contracts for not less than \$18 billion, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue for the State of North Carolina.

Originally from Allentown, PA, Scott graduated from The Citadel in Charleston, SC, in May 1977. He also earned a Masters in International Affairs Degree from Columbia University in New York, NY in 1988. Prior to joining the NCMBC in 2004, Scott served six years as the Chief Officer for Support Services for the City of Fayetteville. In this capacity, he directed Human Resources and had management responsibility for other departments, including Risk Management and Information Technology.

Prior to joining the City of Fayetteville, Scott served nearly 22 years on active duty as a commissioned officer in the United States Army. A Field Artillery and Foreign Area Officer, his numerous assignments included two tours in Greece, three years as an attaché at the US Embassy in Cyprus, and as an artillery

officer in the Persian Gulf War. His final assignment was at Fort Bragg, where he served as the Civil Military Operations staff officer for XVIII Airborne Corps and as Deputy Garrison Commander.

Scott has been very involved with the community since moving to North Carolina in 1995. He currently serves as a Governor-appointed member of the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology and Innovation. He previously served on boards of the USO of North Carolina, the North Carolina Defense Business Association, and the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, as Chair of the Cumberland County Business and Education Partnership, and as President of the Fayetteville Area Society for Human Resource Management.

An avid sailor and cyclist, Scott has been married to his wife, Lee, since 1977. Lee has served over 30 years as a Family Nurse Practitioner, retiring at Fort Bragg and now working for Doctors on Demand. Scott and Lee have two daughters. Amanda is a graduate of FTCC and lives and works near Fort Liberty. Amy is a graduate of NC State University and an Environmental Engineer, and serves as a Divisional Senior Manager for Environmental Health & Safety with Walmart Inc.

Class 32 Duke Energy Economic Development Session Planning Committee

The following members of LNC Class 31 make up the planning committee for the Class 32 Duke Energy Economic Development session.

Kristie Aldridge *Wake*

Vice President, Strategic Communications & Marketing
North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives
kristie.aldridge@ncemcs.com

As a North Carolina native, Kristie Aldridge is proud to work for North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives, the wholesale power supplier and trade association for the state's 26 local, not-for-profit co-ops that provide electricity and opportunity to rural and suburban communities from the mountains to the coast.

In her role as Vice President of Strategic Communications & Marketing, she leads teams responsible for cooperative-specific market research; the monthly development, publication, and distribution of Carolina Country magazine; and corporate communications, including community outreach, public relations, and crisis management.

As a product of the Wake County Public School System and NC State University, and as the spouse to an elementary school principal, Kristie believes in the power of public education and in solutions that support the increasing scope and complexity of demands on teachers while better aligning pay and appreciation for the profession.

Although limited in capability, Kristie's (very distant) retirement dreams include stand-up comedy and a couple of Golden Retrievers.

Vivian Bolanos *Henderson*

VP Business Banker II
First Citizens Bank
vivian.bolanos@firstcitizens.com

Born and raised in Ecuador, Vivian Bolaños got the chance to visit Texas as an exchange student during high school. Realizing her opportunities would be greater in America, she kept in close contact with her host family and was able to move to the United States, settling in Hendersonville in 2000.

"I knew if we came here, we were going to have better opportunities," explains Vivian, who attended law school at the University Estatal of Cuenca in Ecuador. "When we moved, we had nothing. My husband and daughter couldn't speak any English, but people gave us an opportunity and took a chance on us."

Vivian first worked at Roper Insurance Agency and as a GED instructor for Spanish-speaking students at Blue Ridge Community College. She then became vice president business development officer for First Citizens Bank where she developed business relationships in Henderson, Transylvania, and Buncombe County. Today, she is VP of business banking and focuses on business and commercial lending in several different markets.

Along the way, Vivian has become a committed community advocate and volunteer. She has served as a board member for the United Way of Henderson County and Safelight and currently she serves as a Board Member for Pardee UNC Health Care, Blue Ridge Community College, Foundation for Health and Leadership Innovation, Western Women's Business Center, and Dogwood Health Trust. Vivian has been married to Hernan Ortega for 27 years and they have 2 daughters, Camila and Isabella.

Trey Cash *Greene*

Economic Development Director
Greene and Lenoir County Governments
j.trey.cash@gmail.com

Trey Cash is a strong advocate for rural eastern North Carolina. His roots in a family farm provided a wealth of experience, cultivating crops like tobacco, sweet potatoes, and cucumbers alongside a diverse array of peers. Trey's commitment to learning shines through his educational journey, encompassing studies at Wilson Community College, earning a BS from Western Carolina University, and achieving an MBA from Fayetteville State University.

Trey's dedication extends beyond professional pursuits, deeply woven into his community engagement. He is currently working in Economic Development for Greene and Lenoir County. He plays an active role on the Boys and Girls Club of the Coastal Plain Corporate Board, contributing to opportunities that shape the lives of young individuals. For over 16 years, Trey has been a dedicated volunteer firefighter, embodying a selfless commitment to safeguarding his community. Moreover, his involvement on various local boards in Greene and Lenoir County underscores his devotion to enhancing the lives of those around him.

Trey Cash exemplifies the spirit of service and empathy, using his diverse experiences and education to drive positive change. His actions extend far beyond himself, reflecting a genuine desire to uplift his community and create a brighter future for rural eastern North Carolina.

Jody Donaldson *Wake*

Chief Marketing & Communications Officer
North Carolina Department of Public Safety
jody.donaldson@ncdps.gov

Jody Donaldson is an accomplished leader, communicator, and entrepreneur with more than 25 years of experience in public safety, strategic marketing, and community advocacy. As the Chief Marketing & Communications Officer for the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS), Jody leads communications, public affairs, and media relations across key divisions, including the State Highway Patrol, State Capitol Police, National Guard, Emergency Management, Alcohol Law Enforcement, and Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention.

Jody's career reflects a commitment to excellence in crisis communication, leadership, and strategic thinking. As one of only 35 Credentialed Public Information Officers nationwide, certified by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Jody is recognized as a leading expert in public safety communication. He previously served as the Regional Chief Marketing & Communications Officer for the American Red Cross of the National Capital and Greater Chesapeake Region, where he led crisis communications and community engagement initiatives. Before that, Jody served as a special agent with the Federal Bureau

of Investigation, gaining expertise in crisis response and community partnerships. He started his career with the Fairfax County Police Department, where he served as a spokesperson and hostage-crisis negotiator, honing his skills in communication, conflict resolution, and public engagement.

A lifelong learner, Jody holds a master's degree from The George Washington University and a bachelor's degree from George Mason University. He has completed the Executive Development Leadership Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is a Certified Public Manager (CPM).

In addition to his public safety leadership, Jody is the author of *The Progress Zone: Unlocking Your Full Potential* and a multi-unit franchise owner of Alloy Personal Training, with three locations under development in the Raleigh, NC, area. His entrepreneurial vision reflects his mission to empower others to unlock their full potential and achieve their personal and professional goals.

Through his leadership, innovation, and dedication, Jody continues to shape public safety dynamics, inspire progress, and build stronger, more connected communities in North Carolina and beyond.

Pat Eglinton Wake

SVP, Senior Director, Operational Risk

First Citizens Bank

pat.eglinton@firstcitizens.com

Pat is a native North Carolinian, born and raised in the Eastern North Carolina town of New Bern. Pat moved to Raleigh in 2003 through his educational journey with NC State (Go Pack!), where he obtained a Bachelor's degree and an MBA.

Pat joined First Citizens Bank in 2007. The focus of his nearly 16-year career with this company has been supporting the development and deployment of risk management programs across complex matrix organizations. His career includes leadership roles in a variety of business lines, including retail banking, enterprise fraud, enterprise risk framework design and implementation, and operational risk programs. Pat currently leads the operational risk management and corporate insurance programs for FCB, a Top 20 US Bank.

Beyond his day job, Pat is passionate about people development and community engagement. He is enthusiastically engaged in several trade association efforts centered at both, including engagement on the Boards of the North Carolina Bankers Association and American Bankers Associations (ABA) emerging leader, mentoring, and financial literacy initiatives. Pat is also a Board member on the ABA's Risk Management School and Risk Management Association (RMA) Operational Risk Council.

Outside of work, Pat is a tried-and-true Eastern North Carolinian. Beyond smoking and visiting establishments that serve ENC-style BBQ, Pat enjoys spending his free time at Carter Finley Stadium as well as the Crystal Coast with his beautiful wife of 10 years, Joanna, and two young boys, Carter (5) and Asher (3).

Steven Martin, Program Chair Wake

President & CEO

Constellation Quality Health

smartin@constellationqh.org

Steven is the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Constellation Quality Health. An experienced and empathetic leader, Steven previously served as a Vice President within Atrium Health's Quality Division. His responsibilities included the comprehensive oversight for accreditation, medical staff services and quality, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (Patient Non-Discrimination), and the Insurance and Payor Quality of Care Complaint process.

He served as a member of the Joint Commission's Health Systems Liaison Advisory Council and as Deputy for the COVID-19 Surge Operations Leadership Group at Atrium Health. His additional prior leadership roles include Vice President for Business Development/Senior Consultant at Courtemanche & Associates, Inc., and Director of Quality Management at Carolinas HealthCare System. Steven also served as a Hospital Surveyor with The Joint Commission.

Steven holds a Master's in Health Administration from the Medical University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Wofford College. His credentials include Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) and Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ). He is an alumnus of Leadership North Carolina Class 31 and serves as the LNC Class 32 Program Chair.

Greg McNamara, Co-Chair Wake

Business Development Manager | Senior Associate
LS3P Associates LTD.

gregmcnamara@ls3p.com

Greg was motivated to make a difference in the lives of others by his parents and by their many contributions to his hometown. In high school, a mission trip shined a light on the needs of others and transformed his shy disposition into one that thrives in the company of others.

Near the end of college, he decided to move across the country to participate in a year of service as the coordinator of emergency services in a church basement in Portland, OR. Upon returning to North Carolina, Greg began working with the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce where his ability to convene others led to the creation and expansion of programs focused on civic leadership.

Greg is very involved in the Triangle community including board service with the Wake County Community Foundation, Rebuilding Together of the Triangle, and the WakeMed Foundation. He also serves as the Chair of the Programs Committee for the Urban Land Institute and on the Executive Committee for the American Cancer Society's Discovery Ball.

In 2013, Greg married his wife, Megan, and over the last ten years the two of them have moved four times around the Triangle. They are the proud parents of two daughters, Mackenzie and Cameron. Their two dogs, Zoe and Leo, are named after characters from their favorite TV Show, The West Wing—a show they have watched in its entirety countless times!

Shannon McSwiney Wake

Director, Marketing & Communications
Delta Dental of North Carolina

smcswiney@deltadentalinc.com

Shannon McSwiney serves as Director, Marketing and Communications at Delta Dental of North Carolina, where she oversees all marketing, advertising, and communications efforts across the state. Shannon is a marketing and communications professional with more than 25 years dedicated to developing award-winning brands and driving growth through meaningful customer engagement strategies. Her career has spanned the engineering, real estate, and technology spaces and now includes health care.

A significant part of her career was focused in the residential and commercial real estate space, leading marketing and customer experience across the mid-Atlantic region where she served as Vice President of Marketing for the largest developer of master-planned communities in the US and was responsible for oversight and implementation of national marketing programs for the region. She led the research, envisioning, marketing, and go-to-market strategies for two of the leading master plan developments in the Triangle market. Shannon is dedicated to delivering an enhanced customer experience through her work, and digging into consumer research and data analysis to understand the factors that drive purchase decisions is a key area of interest.

Shannon is a 2017 recipient of the Triangle Business Journal Women in Business Award, she holds a master's degree in organizational leadership from the DeVos Graduate School of Management at Northwood University, a bachelor's degree in marketing/management and advertising from Northwood University, and a Master's in Residential Marketing from the National Association of Home Builders. Shannon is excited to be a new board member with the WakeEd Partnership where she can collaborate with other dedicated community members on initiatives designed to improve and advocate for the public education system in Wake County – an area of interest that was re-ignited during her participation in LNC. She is a past board member of Launch Holly Springs, a program dedicated to supporting low-resource entrepreneurs in building successful businesses.

Shannon and her husband Mike call Fuquay-Varina home with their two kids, Sean and Logan, and mini-schnauzer, Pepper.

Kevin Price *Chatham*

President & CEO

National Institute of Minority Economic Development

kprice@theinstitutenc.org

Kevin J. Price currently serves as the third president and chief executive officer of the National Institute of Minority Economic Development in Durham, NC. The Institute is a 37-year-old nonprofit “think and do tank” focused on addressing economic development issues impacting women and minorities. Under Kevin’s leadership, the Institute has tripled in size, including the 2020 merger with the NC Community Development Initiative, which was rebranded as Institute Capital, one of the oldest minority-led community development financial institutions in the state. During the height of the pandemic, the Institute and ICAP helped create RETOOLNC and gave away \$21 million in grants to minority and women-owned businesses.

Price’s career has been steeped in community economic development for over 30 years. He joined The Institute as a veteran business leader in healthcare, supplier diversity, faith-based affordable housing, community development, and commercial banking. Prior to joining The Institute, Price led supplier diversity at Novant Health, where he grew their diversity spend by more than 500% resulting in over \$1

billion in spend, collaborated with the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, and launched a \$5 million loan guarantee program for diverse suppliers.

Kevin serves on several nonprofit boards, including being appointed by Governor Cooper to the Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental and Health Equity Task Force. He is a US Army veteran. After service, he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree from UNCG and MBA/MHA from Pfeiffer University. He is married to Michelle Y. Price, and they have three young adult children.

Ciara Rogers Wake

Partner / Lawyer

Waldrep Wall Babcock & Bailey, PLLC

crogers@waldrepwall.com

Ciara L. Rogers is an attorney and educator who cares deeply about her community. She intuitively sees the needs of others, finds resources and commonalities, and advocates for those who are often underrepresented among us.

Ms. Rogers is a partner at Waldrep Wall Babcock & Bailey, PLLC, a full-service business law firm with offices in Raleigh and Winston Salem. She is also the director of the Stubbs Bankruptcy Clinic at Campbell University's School of Law in downtown Raleigh. She regularly represents debtors and creditors in bankruptcy and insolvency proceedings.

In addition to her legal work, Rogers is passionate about giving back to her community. She volunteers with her church, Southeast Raleigh Table, and supports youth in foster care through community outreach and educating others about the need for people to support those youth in a variety of different capacities.

Ciara holds a juris doctor from North Carolina Central University School of Law and a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Averett University in Danville, VA. She has served on the boards of the Twin Rivers YMCA, Promise Place Sexual Assault Resource Center, International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation, and Carolinas Chapter, and she volunteers with other worthwhile local and national organizations.

Ciara lives in Raleigh with her son and can often be found loudly cheering at his track meets.

Dr. Deb Thomas, Co-Chair Mecklenburg

Associate Vice Chancellor for Research

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

deborah.thomas@charlotte.edu

Deborah (Deb) Thomas is the Associate Vice Chancellor of Research at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is honored and excited to have the opportunity to serve and support faculty, staff, and students in endeavors to advance the quality, diversity, and growth of research that improves our social, cultural, and economic communities. She joined UNC Charlotte in August 2018 as Chair of the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences from the University of Colorado Denver, where she was a faculty member in geography and environmental sciences and department chair. She was also a founding faculty member of the Colorado School of Public Health, holding a dual secondary faculty

appointment in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health for more than 10 years. She is passionate about public higher education and translational research from local to global.

With a background specializing in disasters/hazards and environmental health and expertise in the social science application of geographic information science (GIS) and technology, she is an interdisciplinary scholar and educator. She has explored vulnerability/resilience/equity as related to natural and human-induced hazards, public health, and environment, commonly emphasizing the role of technology, particularly GIS, in assessing and evaluating the intersection of human-physical systems and the built environment. Her interests and curiosity in the connectivity between disciplinary fields with a dedication to work that has the potential to improve people's lives guide and inform her current role.

Kim Shaw Durham

Executive Director

The Triangle Nonprofit & Volunteer Leadership Center

kim@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com

With a career spanning over 30 years in the nonprofit sector, Kim is a staunch believer in their value and the impact they can have on communities. Her commitment is reflected in her active involvement on various boards and initiatives. Kim champions civic engagement's potential to foster change, no matter one's age.

Kim's passions extend far beyond boardrooms and executive roles. Her heart is dedicated to canine companions, and she is a fervent rescuer of shelter dogs – her furry family consists of two cherished pups.

A self-professed political junkie, Kim's passion for political discourse is matched only by her fervent loyalty to the UNC Tar Heels. Graduating in Political Science and Speech Communications, her respect for the power of words began early on – she even dreamt of becoming a presidential speechwriter during her youth! She is also particularly concerned about the environment and the need for strong action to address this issue—the future of our planet is at risk.

Laughter, and the occasional light-hearted prank, are also part of her approach to life. And though patience might not be her strong suit, she can be quite dogged in her pursuit to get answers and find solutions—it is especially rewarding when, by working together, a creative solution is found that is a totally new approach.

Kim's interests span further to include a passion for jazz and blues, coupled with an affinity for classic films. She likes to experiment in the kitchen—rarely following a recipe—and enjoys good wine!