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Growing Gaston

LOCAL STRENGTHS, GLOBAL SUCCESS

OPERATING AT A HIGH LEVEL

Building a high-performance organization

It seems simple enough to say the term out loud: A high-performance organization.

But what exactly does that mean? And how do we get there?

At Gaston County, the process of injecting the necessary elements into the existing culture is well underway. It has been just over a year now since Dr. Kim Eagle took the reins of the County leadership, bringing with her a group of goals for strengthening an already outstanding organization.

Ted Abernathy at Economic Leadership, LLC, laid out the following 12 elements that are essential to a high-performing organization. These lessons can apply not only to County government, but to ED organizations looking to grow stronger:

- Operates with a strong strategic plan
- Has a strong, strategically engaged board
- Rigorously measures results and

adjusts based on information

- Are creative risk-takers
- Board members build strong alliances and networks to improve the organization
- Are efficient with funding and resources to meet expectations
- Matches resources and expected results
- Has high-performance staff leadership
- Invests sufficiently in staff development
- Operates effectively within the broader ecosystem
- Is respected within their community
- Both board and staff are continuously learning

Beyond that, having overarching goals from the manager of innovation and continuous improvement, as well as advocacy for the work, are critical to the organization's success.

Throughout the process, the County will use data to inform not only its decision-making process, but to evaluate the success of its work and

see what can be improved upon.

Dr. Eagle encouraged all of the employees at the County to be willing to think outside the box – looking at ways other municipalities and county governments achieve tasks, as well as those in the private sector, to bring forward new ideas of how the County government can better serve its citizens. COVID-19 – for all of its challenges – has also spurred some of this innovative thinking, as departments and employees have reached for creative solutions to continue to serve the community in the midst of never-before-seen obstacles. The goal is for the County to model this structure that local ED organizations can then mirror.

In the near term, this means creating an environment where those employees tasked with needing to fill dual roles – that of employee and parent to children doing virtual learning – can thrive rather than just merely survive. No one has all the answers to this crisis, and many challenges ahead are yet unforeseen. But by creating a nimble and flexible organization, with the right tools to respond to these ever-changing circumstances, Gaston County can continue to ensure that it is well-positioned not only to meet existing needs, but ready for new challenges.

MADE IN GASTON: UCS INCORPORATED

Whether you play sports or watch sports, there's a chance you have encountered equipment made right here in Gaston County. From track and field to gymnastics, strength-and-speed to athletic facility furnishing and climbing centers, UCS Incorporated has been manufacturing the highest quality athletic equipment for 53 years and producing the UCS/Spirit vaulting poles for 33 years.

UCS is a leading international brand in track & field, providing equipment for four Olympic Games, numerous USA Track & Field (USATF) championships, worldwide and regional championships and more than 75 NCAA Track & Field Championships. In 1987, UCS began production of the Spirit vaulting poles which have been used to set over 75 world records including the new men's world record and every women's world record ever recorded. UCS was the exclusive supplier for the 1994 World Cup Soccer venues across the United States, supplying not only all the [goals](#), but it also designed and produced team

benches and revolutionary new weather-and-crowd [protective shelters](#) for the players and coaches. In February 2015, UCS was named the official equipment supplier of USA Track & Field through 2020.

From USATF-branded landing pads to crossbars, hurdles and toe-boards, UCS provides an unprecedented level of assistance for athletes of all ages. Championship professional sports teams from the Los Angeles Lakers of the NBA to the Carolina Panthers of the NFL have installed [UCS Strength and Speed](#) equipment in their weight rooms. UCS supplies a variety of sporting equipment to numerous high schools, universities and professional sporting organizations throughout North Carolina and across the United States.

Since its inception in 1967, UCS has never wavered from its primary mission: to provide innovative products that feature superb design, exceptional engineering, superior materials, precision hand craftsmanship, and rigorous quality

control. UCS manufactures, assembles, and finishes all of its equipment in state-of-the-art facilities in Gaston County, North Carolina and Nevada. The UCS team constantly strives to offer the most durable and best performing products in the market. UCS equipment improves the competitive experience for athletes, coaches, and spectators alike – and is all “Made in the USA.”

With the cancellation of many spring sports and the such as track and field, gymnastics and the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo as a result of COVID-19, UCS was challenged to adapt their operations to ensure their continued success. The Gaston County facility continues to produce mats for special needs programs and even retooled their sewing shop to produce face masks. Company officials report that equipment orders are on the return and the company is poised to begin hiring once again. To learn more about UCS and their products or to inquire about employment opportunities, visit their website, www.ucsspirit.com/.

Getting to know the EDC board: Robert Browne

Robert Browne currently serves as the Chairman of the Board for the Gaston County Economic Development Commission. He is Executive Vice President and Chairman of the Board at Beam Construction Company, Inc. in Cherryville, where he has worked for more than 30 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from North Carolina State University and has been a licensed professional engineer since 1988.

Robert shares his passion for Gaston County through service on numerous Boards including the Greater Gaston Development Corporation, Gaston County Health and Human Services, Gaston Together, and also with Gaston Vision 2020. He previously served on the Boards for Habitat for Humanity of Gaston County, the Community Foundation of Gaston County, Gaston Regional Chamber, and the Gaston County Board of Health.



Gaston County
Economic
Development
Commission
Board
Chairman
Robert
Browne.

Dymax announces new facility at GTP

On Monday, April 6th, the Gaston County Economic Development Commission announced that Dymax Corporation will purchase approximately 16 acres in the Gastonia Technology Park. Dymax Corporation plans an initial investment of up to \$21.5 million to construct and equip an advanced manufacturing operation and create approximately 59 jobs within five years. The proposed average annual wage is \$59,814.

Dymax Corporation is a leading solutions provider of integrated rapid and light-cured formulations and equipment for the consumer and automotive electronics, aerospace, defense, and medical

markets. Dymax is experiencing steady and significant growth, and our expansion from our Northeast roots into North Carolina opens doors to outstanding labor, technical and logistic resources,” said Aaron Mambrino, President of Dymax North America. “The combination of available resources and solid support from state and local official made North Carolina a great choice.”

The Gaston County Economic Development Commission would like to thank our partners who were instrumental in this successful industry location: The Gaston County Board of Commissioners, the Gastonia City Council, KRM Development,

Cushman & Wakefield, the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Allen Tate Relocation and Gaston College.

For the local press release:

http://www.gaston.org/clientuploads/2020_Local_Press_Release_for_MAX_4.06.pdf

For the NC Commerce release:

<https://www.nccommerce.com/news/press-releases/advanced-manufacturer-invest-215-million-gastonia>



GET INVOLVED WITH GCAM

The Gaston County Association of Manufacturers (GCAM) is a monthly meeting hosted by the Gaston County EDC. The purpose of the association is to discuss strategies, principals and practices for improving productivity, reducing waste, enhancing quality while maintaining customer focus.

The meeting consists of plant managers, operation managers and human resources managers to speak on challenges, common goals and to promote development. Membership is open to all companies

within the county. There are currently more than fifteen companies active in GCAM including Advance Drainage Systems (ADS), American & Efird, CTL Packaging, Dixon Quick Coupling, Hunter Douglas, Lanxess Corp., and Stabilus to name a few.

If you are a local company interested in joining or would like additional information, please contact Richard Randall, Existing Industry Manager, at Richard.Randall@gastongov.com or by phone at 704-825-4046.



Moving ahead at Apple Creek

In an effort to remain competitive in the recruitment of new advanced manufacturing jobs and investment to the County, the continued development of shovel-ready industrial sites is essential.

On May 26, the Gaston County Board of Commissions approved the low bid submitted by Neill Grading & Construction for site work at the Apple Creek Corporate Center that will include the construction of vital infrastructure for future development. Within two short weeks following approval of the low bid, the contractor has mobilized and began earthwork activities at the project site.

Construction activities are expected to proceed at an accelerated pace to prepare sites for the recently announced GNT USA project and a yet-to-be-announced project that has also selected Apple Creek Corporate Center as their location of choice. Local officials held an official groundbreaking ceremony at the site on June 23. We look forward to keeping you updated on the progress at the site as the full project is anticipated to be completed by next June.



Groundbreaking was held at the Apple Creek Corporate Park on June 23. Work clearing land is now well underway.



For more information on available buildings or sites, please visit Gaston.org, or call the Gaston County EDC at (704) 825-4046.