NORTHEAST REGION, EDENTON, NC, NOVEMBER 19, 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following is an executive summary of presentations from University and economic development partnership representatives and input provided by invited business leaders as part of the 2012 UNC System strategic planning process.

Top Regional Development Priorities
Industrial recruiting with emphasis on automotive, aerospace, biotech/life science, marine, food, alternative energy and defense sectors; tourism promotion and development; existing business support. Active initiatives focused on “last mile” broadband deployment, developing agri-biotech assets, developing energy assets (wind power, biomass), development of remotely piloted aerial launch facility and maximizing NC Center for Automotive Research assets.

Top hard skills (degree programs/technical skills) needed from UNC campuses over the next five years
Chemistry, microbiology, biology and agricultural science and technology
“Need to make sure people with military experience can get some credit for that toward degree programs.”
Network management and other highly technical information technology skills
“Plant molecular and genetic training for residents and small farmers. Undergraduate and graduate programs that are interdisciplinary connecting biotechnology with business.”

Top soft skills (global/creative/entrepreneurial) needed from UNC campuses over the next five years
Communication, work ethic and interpersonal skills
“Need to be able to communicate – in English – but have the ability to communicate across global cultures and cross-generationally.”

How the University help you grow business and/or communicate about business needs and interests
Providing internships (“these are our best jobs prospects. It’s great to be book smart, but we need to get people experience so they know what they are doing when they graduate.”). Connecting university assets/resources to businesses. Providing regional access to existing resources within the University.
“Direct internship and research applications, market analysis, business leadership and CEO development would be helpful.”
“Occasional check-ins (like this forum) are valuable. I love your emails; I don’t read them. If you can’t tell me in 2-3 sentences, you’ve lost me.”

What is your “one great idea” on the best ways the university can help businesses be successful?
“Maybe you could create a ‘nerd squad’ of computer-savvy students who could help businesses throughout the region set up websites or wireless networks.”
Incentive to forgive on student loans for location in tier 1 and 2 counties. NENC needs stronger demographics; this could help recruit people, workers, growth.