

# Economy lauded for growth

## N.C. earns 'state of the year' award

BY KATHERINE HOLLANDER  
STAFF WRITER

After a long drought, North Carolina's economy received national recognition for its 2004 growth.

Southern Business & Development magazine released its annual Top 100 issue this past month and named North Carolina state of the year.

Mike Randle, editor and publisher of the Alabama-based magazine, said North Carolina made key business decisions that deem the state worthy of its top ranking.

"There's nothing arbitrary about it," Randle said. "You make deals and you turn points. North Carolina made the right deals."

The per capita point system has not always been easy for North Carolina to overcome. In the past, the state hardly stood out on the list and garnered a low score of 160 in 2003.

The most recent ranking reflects a 300 point jump from the previous year.

"North Carolina's point jump in 2004 is the largest in the 13-year history of running this feature," Randle said.

Randle said several large business investments led to North Carolina's success. Some of these

investments include a new \$29 million call center for Verizon Wireless in Wilmington, Credit Suisse First Boston's \$100 million global financial center in the Research Triangle Park and Merck & Co. Inc.'s \$300 million vaccine plant in Durham.

But the most influential investment for North Carolina is a new Dell Inc. manufacturing facility in Winston-Salem, Randle said.

Dell spokeswoman Michele Blood said the company was impressed by the opportunities North Carolina offers.

"The quality and heritage of the workforce in the Triad area is impressive," Blood said.

Blood said Dell hopes to employ 700 people within the first year and 1,500 within the first five years.

Blood also said she believes North Carolina will benefit from the job opportunities at the factory and could see an increase in suppliers.

"It is never a guarantee, but suppliers tend to follow the manufacturing facilities," she said.

Randle said he believes this is only the beginning for North Carolina's success.

However, he expressed some concern. Even though the state brought in \$2.8 billion in investments in 2004, Randle said there

is room for improvement.

Due to skepticism and lack of information, Randle said North Carolina has missed out on key business opportunities in the past.

In 1993 N.C. legislators passed on an investment opportunity with Mercedes-Benz that later grossed \$6 billion for Alabama.

"North Carolina cannot afford to miss opportunities like that again," he said.

With the new recognition, state officials remain positive about North Carolina's progress.

Gov. Mike Easley said in a press release that he attributes the high ranking to the state's low cost of business, quality workforce and positive business environment.

"We will continue to make the necessary investments in education, worker training and infrastructure to bring quality jobs and businesses to our state," he said in the release.

Randle also has some advice for continued success.

"In order to continue this economic run, North Carolina must educate its people," Randle said.

"The success of the state is up to its people and the state should take advantage of this critical jump-start year."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## NBA DRAFT

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same thing to the table. We know how to run a team. We can shoot. We can penetrate. We can pass. We do all those things."

With two Tar Heels still on the board and the Bobcats with a second first-round pick, one reporter asked Felton who he'd like to see his new team select. One name — May — was predictable. The other — Hakim Warrick of Syracuse — might not have been.

And both May and Warrick were available when the Bobcats' second pick rolled around at 13.

In a move perhaps aimed as much at ticket sales as at winning basketball games, Charlotte selected May — and reunited the reigning Most Outstanding Player of the NCAA Tournament with Felton.

"The way we play together, you don't really see that among a point guard and another big man," May said. "For me to get the opportunity to do that again, to get some of those passes from Ray, to get me going and help start my career off, is going to be tremendous."

The combination of May and Felton in Charlotte certainly can't hurt the second-year Bobcats on the court, but it's at the ticket office where the team might feel the most immediate impact.

"It will help bring some more faces to the franchise that the people in North Carolina, the people who support that franchise, can go out and see," May said. "They know the face and they'll know the people that they are going to see."

One suddenly fervent Charlotte fan will be Roy Williams, who attended several games during the Bobcats' inaugural season, even taking his wife to the Charlotte Coliseum on New

Year's Eve.

Williams said Tuesday that he won't demand free season tickets from May or Felton — he'll buy his own. "But they'd better be good seats," he added.

Many onlookers may have been surprised that McCants' name was called so quickly after May's, but the 6-foot-4 shooting guard wasn't among them.

"I knew there was a great chance (the Timberwolves would make the pick)," McCants said. "I had a good workout and a great talk with (general manager) Kevin McHale and Coach (Dwayne) Casey, and I thought it went really well."

After exchanging hugs with his family and friends in attendance, McCants approached Stern on the Madison Square Garden stage.

But the commissioner, gazing absent at something in the distance, didn't even notice the draftee's approach. With a wry grin on his face, McCants tapped Stern on the shoulder and shook his hand theatrically.

Watching the replay on the ESPN monitors minutes later, McCants couldn't help but laugh.

The only disappointment of the evening for the North Carolina faithful came at the conclusion of the draft, when the final pick came and went without a team calling the name of Jawad Williams or Jackie Manuel.

Williams started 36 games for the Tar Heels during his senior year, averaging 13.1 points per game. Manuel, a two-time member of the ACC's All-Defensive team, broke his foot during the Chicago pre-draft camp and was not expected to be drafted.

Despite the fact that none of the seniors who endured the catastrophic 8-20 season three years ago were selected by an NBA team, the evening had to be

## FORMER UNC BASKETBALL PLAYERS



At No. 2, Marvin Williams is UNC's highest draft pick since 1986.



Raymond Felton His No. 5 pick marks the 4th time two Heels have gone top five.



Sean May, picked 13th by the Charlotte Bobcats, will stay in state with Felton.



Rashad McCants is the first Tar Heel ever picked by the Minnesota Timberwolves.

considered a success for North Carolina.

Said Roy Williams, "This is a night where these four young men have realized their dreams, and that's a thrill."

Contact the Sports Editor at [sports@unc.edu](mailto:sports@unc.edu).

## PRESIDENT

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needed, and not a day longer," he said.

Bush also said sending more troops — a strategy some critics have suggested to speed up the Iraqi rebuilding process — isn't an option unless the commanders in Iraq say it's necessary.

"If our commanders on the ground say we need more troops, I will send them," he said. "But our commanders tell me they have the number of troops they need to do their job."

Though Bush said he is opposed to setting a deadline and employing more troops, he named a few new tactics the United States is using to expedite the process of building

democracy in Iraq.

The United States is partnering coalition units with Iraqi units, embedding coalition transition teams inside Iraqi units and working with Iraqi ministries of interior and defense.

The President also said that organizations like NATO are getting involved in the effort to help rebuild Iraq, and that 17 countries, including Italy, Germany and the Ukraine, have sent troops through the NATO mission.

"Whatever our differences in the past, the world understands that success in Iraq is critical to the security of our nations," Bush said.

Bush's second visit to North Carolina since his re-election comes at a time when support for the war and Bush's decision to

keep U.S. forces abroad is low in the state.

The (Raleigh) News & Observer and WRAL conducted a statewide survey that found 49 percent of N.C. residents polled don't believe the war has been worthwhile, while only 42 percent say it has.

Bush spent the afternoon before the speech meeting with 33 families of soldiers who died in the war. All told, 89 troops from Fort Bragg have died since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Currently, 9,300 troops from the base are employed in Iraq.

The patriotic-themed event, which featured the 82nd Airborne Division All-American Chorus singing "God Bless the USA" before the speech, seemed to build morale for the troops who attended.

"I think (Bush) just wanted to let the military know he appreciates us," said Capt. Richard Hobart. "We appreciate everything he's done."

Bush's dogged determination makes him a forceful leader in a defining period, said Fort Bragg acting commander, Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packet.

"We've got a tenacious bulldog that is leading the charge here." Troops and the president agreed they must fight until what was started in Iraq is finished.

"Our strategy can be summed up this way," Bush said. "As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down."

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## CARRBORO

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he said, will be maintaining all the initiatives already in place, including the town's fiscal state.

"We've taken some much-needed steps to get the town's financial house in order," he said.

Nelson is not the only official who won't be joining the board again next year. Mayor Pro Tem Diana McDuffee also said she will probably not seek another term.

"We've set a good course," she said. "I think it's time to let some others carry it forward." But McDuffee said that even if she is not serving as an elected official, she still has every intention of staying involved with the town.

Alderman Jackie Gist will be one of two running for re-election

— despite some initial debate.

Gist said that after seeing how many aldermen would be leaving and the big projects that will face the new board of aldermen, she started to considering running again.

"I really felt that my 16 years of experience would be good for the town," she said. "I just want to make sure the town will be OK."

Gist said Alderman John Herrera also has announced his intention to run for re-election, but he could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

Incumbents won't be the only ones seeking a spot on the board.

Catherine DeVine, a founding organizer of the Carrboro Music Festival, said that she is "99 percent" sure she will run and that she will make her official announcement before July 9.

Another resident who has indi-

cated interest in running said he is still considering.

James Carnahan, chairman of the Village Project and the town's planning board, said he will decide later in July but added that he is interested in Carrboro's progress.

"I'm very interested in how the town continues its progress in becoming a sustainable community," he said.

A group of residents recently annexed into Carrboro earlier this year also might have candidates come forward for the fall elections.

Katrina Ryan said there has been discussion among some of those residents but could not comment on who might run.

Elections will be November 8.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

## CHAPEL HILL

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this Friday in Hillsborough while Harrison said he expects to make an announcement after July 4.

Resident Robin Cutson and transportation board member Laurin Easthom also have said they will run.

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