

## Jobs, Grant Money Coming to Area

Written by Steve Frank

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Gov. Bev Perdue had good economic news for the area yesterday in two announcements. The Governor announced that Woodgrain Millwork Inc, a leading producer of wood millwork, will locate a new facility in Caldwell County. The company plans to create 170 jobs and invest more than \$8 million over the next five years in Lenoir. The project was made possible in part by a \$635,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund. Woodgrain Millwork is a family-owned company headquartered in Fruitland, Idaho, according to the state release, with Woodgrain's millwork product lines including moulding, doors, and windows. The company currently employs more than 180 people at its facilities in Richmond and Union counties. Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$29,981, plus benefits, just above the Caldwell County average annual wage. "The decision to open a facility in Caldwell County was based on the access to a workforce with wood manufacturing experience from the furniture industry as well as the strategic location within our southeast distribution coverage area," said Kelly Dame, CEO of Woodgrain Millwork, Inc. "The expansion of Woodgrain Millwork with this state of the art facility is a direct result of our partnership with the various North Carolina State Agencies.

The Governor also announced yesterday that the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service has awarded more than \$3.3 million in grants to 11 AmeriCorps programs across the state for the 2012-2013 program year. "North Carolina AmeriCorps programs help make a positive difference in our communities," said Gov. Perdue. "I am proud of AmeriCorps members for the services they provide by mentoring our youth, assisting the elderly, increasing literacy rates and helping to end homelessness. With these grants, North Carolina can continue its efforts in giving back to its citizens while investing in the future." AmeriCorps members serving with these organizations will assist in community outreach and education efforts, provide conservation services, participate in mentoring programs and work in other service activities. Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, a 425,600 grant to fund Project Conserve: Members address critical conservation needs in Western N.C. by conducting environmental education and outreach activities, recruiting and coordinating volunteers for local conservation projects, and providing direct service to support key conservation initiatives. The program offers services in Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Cleveland, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey counties.