

SPONSOR COMMENTS

As the chairman of the Nash UNC Health Care board of commissioners, I am pleased to share that our community hospital is making great strides in quality of care, patient and family experience, and financial sustainability. We are excited to be a part of the growth occurring in this region, and are well positioned to take care of the growing population.

Our hospital has renewed its commitment to provide high quality, patient-centered health care services to our community. In partnership with our medical staff, new protocols and improved processes have led to significant improvement in our quality of care measures.

Our Emergency Department, one of the busiest in the state with almost 70,000 patient visits a year, instituted a number of new processes to reduce wait times and to keep patients and their family members comfortable and better informed. Patient experience surveys prove that our hard work is making a difference.

We are strengthening relationships with our community, having hosted or participated in more than 30 community events already this spring. Our leadership is committed to consistent communication and stronger connections with our partners in health care, and with the public that we serve. The partnerships and relationships resulting from these efforts will serve to improve the social determinants of health in our region.



The Nash UNC board approved a financial improvement plan last year, and we are proud to say that we have improved our projected fiscal year performance by approximately \$15 million over prior year. This improvement reflects a lot of hard work to reduce expenses and grow volume and revenue, and was achieved while investing in our staff to bring wages to market averages. We remain a very financially stable hospital, and will work to continue our improvement as hospitals in general will bear a substantial share of the burden as our industry seeks to make health care more affordable.

Looking toward the next three to five years, our Board of Commissioners recently approved a strategic plan that defines our organization's short- and long-term priorities for fulfilling our community's health care needs. We are proud of what we have accomplished thus far, and excited to continue to improve the level of care we provide to our growing community.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Batts,
Chairman of the Board of Commissioners,
Nash UNC Health Care



Construction on the new Triangle Tyre facility in the Kingsboro CSX Select Megasite will begin in the fall.

REGIONAL REPORT: NASH AND EDGEcombe COUNTIES

A NEW SET OF TIRES

Triangle Tyre's new facility is anticipated to bring a \$580 million investment to Edgecombe County.

Construction for Triangle Tyre's first manufacturing facility outside China is just a few months away with a project set to bring 800 jobs to the area in the next four years.

The facility, part of Triangle Tyre's subsidiary Triangle Tire USA, will be located in the 1,449-acre Kingsboro CSX Select Megasite in eastern North Carolina. Kingsboro CSX's water, sewer, natural gas and electricity infrastructure is completely installed, and the site is construction ready. Triangle Tyre will begin constructing its facility this fall.

REGIONAL REPORT: NASH AND EDGECOMBE COUNTIES

"We've been working on the site for 18 years, and it is one of the older, if not the oldest, construction-ready sites in the state," says Norris Tolson, CEO and president of the Carolinas Gateway Partnership.

In late 2017, the Chinese tire manufacturer staked its claim on 400 acres in the megasite. The manufacturing facility, to be built in two phases, will take up nearly a third of the site when construction is complete in 2023. Representatives with Triangle Tyre USA did not return requests for comment.

Tolson says the manufacturer considered locations across the entire Southeast. The convenient location and the readily available workforce won the project for North Carolina.

"We were very competitive," Tolson says. "Anytime a company like Triangle Tyre wants 400 acres on a site, you hope they look at you. The site was available and ready to build on, and it met the company's criteria. It provides

good access in and out of the area, and the community has a readily available workforce."

The company will invest nearly \$580 million in Edgecombe County and create 800 jobs in the two phases of construction. The first phase will manufacture tires for passenger cars and trucks and is expected to begin production in 2020. Phase 2 will focus on production of large commercial vehicles such as earth-moving equipment.

This project was the state's most lucrative economic development announcement in 2017, according to a report by the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina. Gov. Roy Cooper called the project "the largest-ever manufacturing investment in rural North Carolina."

Tolson says Triangle Tyre will offer a variety of jobs, including corporate executives, research and development personnel, line workers, quality control, logistics and maintenance in Edge-

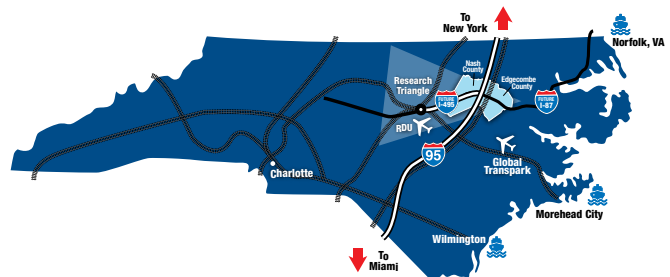
combe County. Salaries will average about \$56,000 plus benefits.

The Kingsboro Megasite is located five miles east of Rocky Mount and six miles west of Tarboro. It sits adjacent to U.S. 64 and within eight miles of Interstate 95. A new CSX Intermodal terminal under construction on the nearby CSX railroad is an added value for corporations such as Triangle Tyre, which depend on transportation infrastructure to ship raw materials in and ship products out.

Founded in 1976, Triangle Tyre is headquartered in the Shandong province of China and focuses on tire-technology innovation, manufacturing and the global tire market, according to a report from Cooper's office. In 2016, Triangle Tyre launched Triangle Tyre USA as a wholly owned subsidiary and established its U.S. headquarters in Franklin, Tenn.

Triangle Tyre's annual manufacturing volume in China is more than 22 million

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CAROLINAS GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP



tires, and the company anticipates the North Carolina facility will produce 6 million additional tires when it reaches full production. Its products are exported to more than 180 countries and regions.

An incentives package worth \$152 million from state and local governments includes a Job Development Investment Grant authorizing a potential reimbursement of up to \$20.1 million over 12 years if requirements are met, according to Gov. Cooper's office. The report estimates the project will contribute \$2.4 billion to the state's economy over the next 12 years. The incentives also include a performance-based grant from the One North Carolina Fund for up to \$16 million.

Tolson hopes the Triangle Tire USA manufacturing plant will serve as a catalyst for other businesses and industries looking for an expansion site. He says interest in Nash and Edgecombe counties is already picking up.

"We are getting a lot of attention from site selectors and we anticipate lots of growth," Tolson says. "Edgecombe and Nash had the vision and foresight to make a large piece of land available. Things are coming together well, and we see a tremendous opportunity going forward."

Tolson predicts that by the end of 2020, local businesses and industries will need 3,500 people ready to go to work.

Carolinas Gateway is working with community colleges to develop a solution through the Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline for Eastern North Carolina, a collaboration among eight colleges across 10 counties. The colleges will offer curriculum designed to equip the area's workforce with the modern manufacturing skills industries look for when seeking new locations or expansion opportunities. RAMP East will also be available to develop programs for companies to train their employees.

"We believe all of this bodes well for eastern North Carolina and will generate more activity east of I-95," Tolson says. ■

— Teri Saylor is a freelance writer based in Raleigh.

JOIN US IN WELCOMING THE NCDMV

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HEALTH CARE TURNAROUND

Nash UNC Health Care is on the mend.



The Nash Heart Center continues to bolster cardiology services, evidenced by the four national awards for excellence in heart care it received in the last year.

Lee Isley knew he had his work cut out for him when he stepped onto the campus of Nash UNC Health Care as its new CEO in January 2018.

It was a challenge he fully embraced, and the 18 months he has served at the helm have been a labor of love.

When Isley came on board, the hospital had not posted an operating profit since 2012 and reported a \$25.6 million loss last year. The 18% patient satisfac-

tion rate was at an all-time low, according to board chair Jeffrey Batts. The nursing shortage was so acute that the hospital was plugging the holes with contract nurses at a major expense.

Nash UNC earned a dismal "D" rating in 2017 from Leapfrog, a nonprofit that grades U.S. hospitals on certain safety factors. The latest scores for spring 2019 show it has improved to a "C."

After making significant changes, Nash UNC is on track to cut its operating loss to \$11 million this year and start making money in the next couple of years.

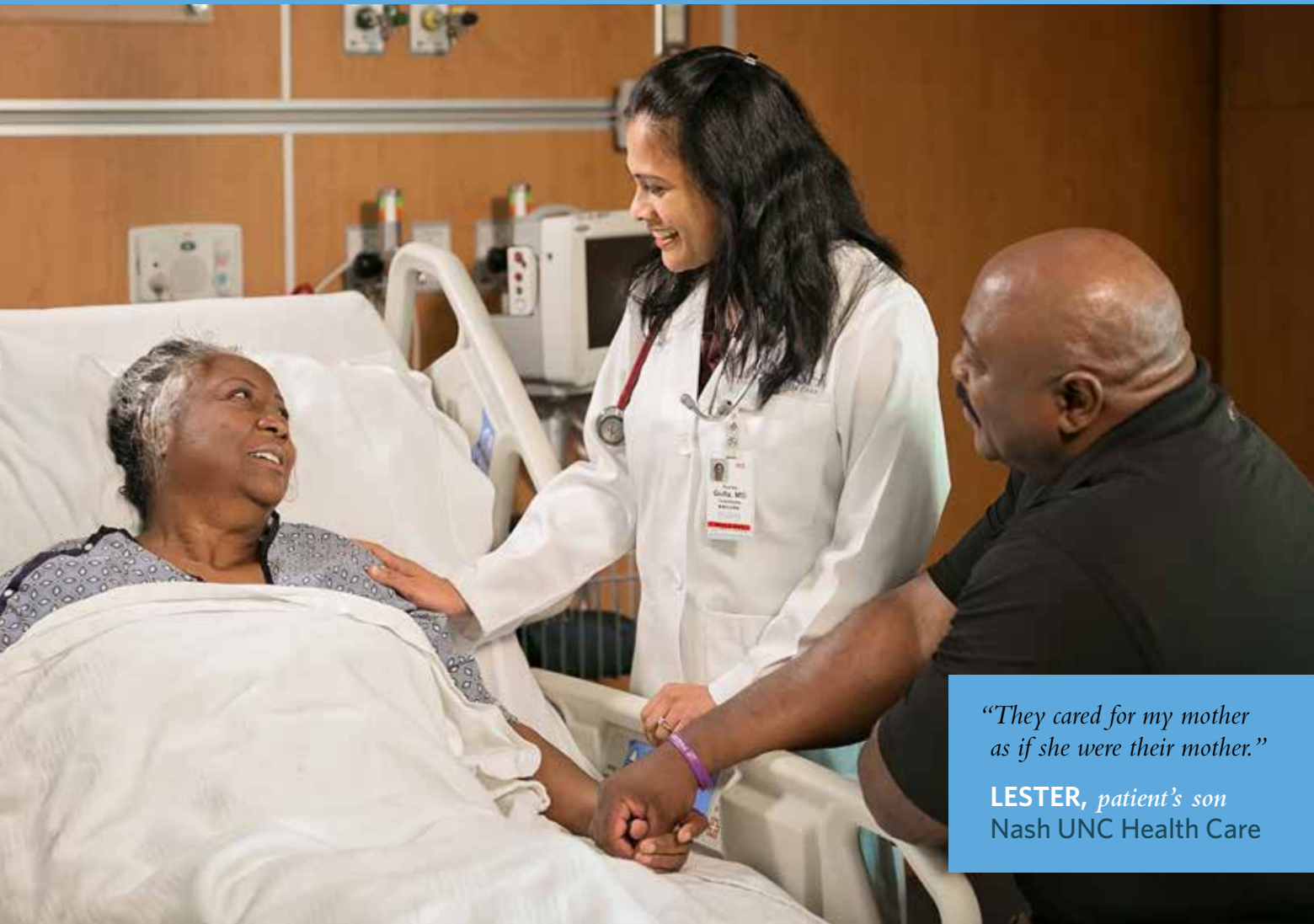
"I will tell you I am not a maintainer," Isley says. "When I came here,

there were opportunities, and I wanted to come in, find those opportunities and maximize them for the health system and for the community."

That was what the 14-member board of commissioners was hoping for when it saw a crisis looming at the hospital. The first decision the board made was to replace then-CEO Larry Chewning. It brought in Ian Buchanan, senior vice president for operations at UNC Health Care in Chapel Hill, as an interim CEO prior to Isley.

"When things started going south two or three years ago, the board said, 'This is not us,'" Batts says. "We have a better hospital and better people than this."

“They went ABOVE and BEYOND.”



*“They cared for my mother
as if she were their mother.”*

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REGIONAL REPORT: NASH AND EDGECOMBE COUNTIES



One of the busiest in the state, the Nash UNC Health Care emergency department sees more than 70,000 patients per year.

Nash UNC is a Rocky Mount-based nonprofit medical authority that comprises four licensed hospitals with a total of 345 beds. The complex is made up of Nash General Hospital, Nash Day Hospital, Coastal Plain Hospital and Bryant T. Aldridge Rehabilitation Center.

The authority, which includes the state-of-the-art Mayo Surgery Pavilion, Nash Heart Center, Nash Women's Center, Emergency Care Center and Danny Talbott Cancer Care Center, sprang from humble beginnings in 1971, when Nash General Hospital began admitting patients as the first all-private-room hospital in North Carolina.

Isley came in with 30 years of experience in health care administration. Prior to coming to Nash UNC, he was CEO of the Granville Health System in Oxford for 12 years.

His first action was to meet with the board and develop a short-term strategy that would lead to financial stability, quality care and positive patient experience. This included improving salaries — starting with the nursing workforce — to deal with the labor shortage.

By April 2017, many of the hospital's nurses had left for higher-paying jobs, driving the nursing shortage to 17.4%. To fill those gaps, management brought 80 contract nurses on board at an annual cost of \$9 million, Isley says. The hospital raised salaries to market standards, but that was not enough to build the nursing staff up to the level the hospital needed, so the leadership team built a partnership with Nash and Edgecombe community colleges to build a nursing workforce from the ground up.

"We established nursing scholarships that pay for 25 students to earn their associate degrees," Isley says. In exchange for free education, the students commit to work at Nash UNC Health Care for two years after graduating.

"It is a way to create a pipeline for nurses and to get a supply entering the workforce," Isley says. In just two years, the hospital has gone from using 80 contract nurses to fewer than 10, a savings of \$5 million.

In 2014, Nash Medical Center signed a management agreement with UNC Health creating a partnership that's been

beneficial, says Batts, who is a partner in the Batts, Batts & Bell law firm. The partnership included the hospital's adoption of the Epic System, which medical centers use to access, organize, store and share electronic medical records.

"UNC has been a great partner for us," he says. "Epic went live last September, and it has had a direct impact on documentation and quality of care."

Nash UNC Health Care, with 1,600 employees, is the fourth-largest employer in Nash and Edgecombe counties, according to a 2018 analysis by the Carolinas Gateway Partnership. Average annual patient volume includes 13,000 admissions and 70,000 emergency-room visits, making it one of the busiest ERs in the state.

Batts is excited about the busy hospital's turnaround. While the facility is still operating at a loss, its financial picture is improving, he says. And with 340 days of operating revenue on hand, the hospital is on solid ground.

"We see the needle moving in the right direction," he says. ■

— Teri Saylor is a freelance writer based in Raleigh.

CONSTRUCTING CAREERS

Corning's hefty presence in North Carolina expands into Edgecombe County.



An \$89 million distribution center for Corning Inc. is set to bring more than 100 jobs to Edgecombe County once it's completed in 2020. The state-of-the-art warehouse will be instrumental in distributing a special kind of material called valor glass.

Corning Inc., a 168-year-old material-science company, is increasing its footprint in North Carolina by adding a distribution center in Edgecombe County.

The \$89 million project will create 111 jobs to support operations at the large, state-of-the-art warehouse, ac-

ording to Joseph Dunning, corporate sustainability manager.

Corning, a Fortune 500 company, touts itself as one of the world's leading innovators. It has 70 manufacturing facilities worldwide, in addition to research centers in North America, Europe and Asia that employ a total of 50,000 people. Its three core technologies are glass science, ceramic science and optical physics. Sales totaled \$11.4 billion in 2018.

Corning started construction on the warehouse last October, and officials anticipate it will be up and running in

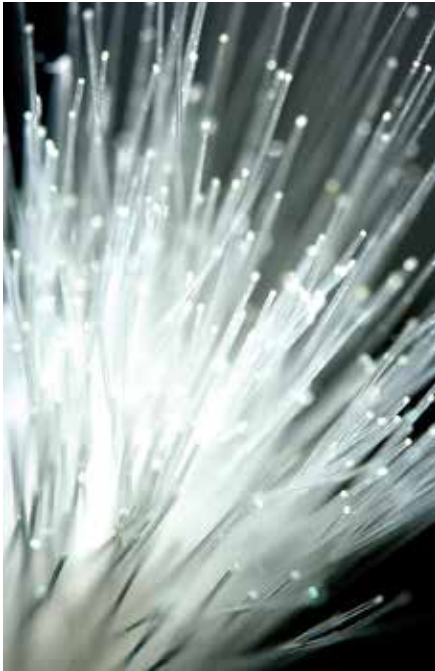
2020, but there's no exact timeline.

"Construction has begun," Dunning says. "We expect progress on the facility and infrastructure to be paced with market adoption of valor glass." Valor is a type of glass mainly used in pharmaceutical packaging and requires special Food and Drug Administration approval.

The company will coordinate with Edgecombe Community College and NCWorks, an online resource for job seekers and employers, to hold job fairs and fill positions locally. Annual wages will average \$33,771.

The new distribution center will be lo-

REGIONAL REPORT: NASH AND EDGECOMBE COUNTIES



Corning Inc. is a material-science company specializing in glass science, ceramic science and optical physics.

cated next to the Kingsboro CSX Select Megasite, a 1,449-acre industrial park in Edgecombe County. The 18-year-old site is located adjacent to U.S. 64 and eight miles from Interstate 95. The new CSX Intermodal terminal, currently under construction, will also aid its transportation needs.

“The site is a great asset because Corning will be a distribution center here and it will take advantage of both trucking and rail capabilities.” says Norris Tolson, CEO and president of the Carolinas Gateway Partnership. Corning looked at a variety of locations for its new warehouse within and outside North Carolina. In addition to the Kingsboro Megasite’s convenient location, other advantages factored into the company’s decision, Dunning says.

“We chose Edgecombe County because of the benefits it offered, such as its educational system, a highly skilled and dedicated workforce, good infrastructure, quality of life, and the busi-

ness-friendly environment that makes it especially welcoming for Corning,” Dunning says.

Founded in 1851, Corning’s global headquarters is in Corning, N.Y., but the company has had a presence in the Tar Heel State for more than a half century after establishing its first North Carolina plant in Wilmington in 1966 to produce electronic resistors for radios, televisions and other electronic devices. In 1978, Corning built a second plant on a nearby site to manufacture fiber optics. Today, it has grown into one of the largest optical fiber-manufacturing plants in the world.

Over time, Corning has developed a significant presence across the state. In addition to the new distribution center in Edgecombe County and manufacturing plants in Wilmington, the company also operates a large fiber optical-manufacturing plant in Concord and two of the world’s largest fiber-cabling facilities in Winston-Salem and Hickory.

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In Durham, Corning's life sciences and pharmaceutical technologies-manufacturing center is getting a \$189 million expansion set to create more than 300 jobs. The Durham site manufactures laboratory tools and products as well as glass packaging for drug storage and delivery. The Edgecombe distribution center will support these products as well as other Corning products manufactured in North Carolina and elsewhere.

Combined, Corning's recent investment in the Edgecombe distribution center and Durham plant expansion will total \$275 million and add more than 400 jobs in North Carolina.

For training, Corning will leverage the North Carolina Community College System, known worldwide for its customized training and other programs that support business development, according to Dunning.

"Specifically, Corning plans to work with Edgecombe Community College to recognize workforce needs, build curriculum and become a vital partner in honing the skills of the local workforce," he says.

According to a report by the North Carolina Economic Development Partnership, each of the Corning projects will be supported in part by state Job Development Investment Grants, resulting in an additional \$1.16 billion to North Carolina's economy over the next 12 years. Under the JDIG agreements, the company could receive as much as \$3.2 million over 12 years for the Durham County expansion and \$1.2 million over the same period for the Edgecombe County plant. State payments, which factor in tax revenue generated by the new jobs, only occur after the company meets its annual job creation and investment commitments.

While Corning has no immediate plans to expand in the Edgecombe County area beyond the distribution center, the company constantly evaluates opportunities that align with market demand for its products, Dunning says. ■

— Teri Saylor is a freelance writer based in Raleigh.

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