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Successful “Clusters of Opportunity” Fundraising Campaign Announced at Piedmont Triad Partnership Annual Meeting

(PIEDMONT TRIAD, N.C.) December 11: BB&T Chief Executive Officer Kelly King, who also chairs the Piedmont Triad Leadership Group, announced Thursday night at the Piedmont Triad Partnership’s 2009 Annual Meeting that the regional “Clusters of Opportunity” fundraising campaign had substantially exceeded its \$1 million annual goal for 5 years. King announced that pledges from more than thirty investors totaled \$1,301,000 through December 10, with additional commitments expected. Assuming pledges are maintained for the five-year campaign period, the campaign will generate over \$6.5 million in new resources to promote four industry clusters in the Piedmont Triad: furnishings, logistics and distribution, nanotechnology, and regenerative medicine.

“This is a very exciting announcement,” says Don Kirkman, President of the Piedmont Triad Partnership. “These new resources will help promote the Piedmont Triad’s world-class assets in each of these sectors, which will lead to more economic development projects, jobs, and investment in our region.”

The Piedmont Triad Partnership Annual Meeting was attended by over 300 guests. The program featured remarks by 2008-09 chairman Keith Vaughan, 2009-10 chairman Jim Morgan, and a keynote presentation by North Carolina Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, in addition to the remarks and special announcement by King.

Vaughan highlighted the accomplishments of the 2008-09 year and cited some of the achievements of the Partnership’s 4-year U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant, which will conclude in June 2010. Morgan urged the attendees to become knowledgeable about the four clusters that will be supported by the new funding and to become advocates for these clusters and for regional cooperation in the Piedmont Triad.

Commerce Secretary Crisco discussed the challenges North Carolina faces in a fiercely competitive global economy. He cited the importance of international engagement and partnerships and the commitment of Governor Perdue to aggressively pursue economic development prospects all over the world. He commended the Piedmont Triad Partnership on its leadership and on the successful fundraising campaign to promote sectors in which the Piedmont Triad has differentiating and world-class competencies.

The Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP), one of seven regional economic development partnerships in North Carolina, is the economic development organization representing the 12-county Piedmont Triad region. The PTP is the lead organization for the U.S. Department of Labor-funded Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative, which supports the development of an integrated regional economic development and workforce development strategy for the Piedmont Triad. The Piedmont Triad, the nation’s 37th-largest metro region with more than 1.6 million residents, includes the counties of Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Montgomery, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin.

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