

**North Carolina Association of County Commissioners
2006-07 Ralph W. Ketner Employee Productivity Awards Application**

County: Transylvania **Employee:** Mark Burrows **Email:** econdev@transylvaniacounty.org

County Department: Planning & Economic Development **Employee Title:** Director

County Phone: (828) 884-3205 **County Mailing Address:** Box 1578, Brevard, NC 28712

Is this project being submitted on behalf of two or more employees? **NO** **YES**

If yes, please provide below a listing of all project employees in Number 6. Employee & title as listed above should be for lead team member.

Fair Labors Standards Act Designation: In order for your project to be eligible, you MUST indicate one of the following. If you do not know, please contact your personnel director.

EXEMPT: **NON-EXEMPT:** **BOTH (if applicable to a team):**

1.	Productivity Improvement Title:	Cost Avoidance: Utilization of Retiree Resource Network Volunteers
2.	Implementation Date (must be between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006)	February through April, 2006
3.	Please describe the productivity improvement. (Please limit response to these 2 pages.)	
<p>An important step in preparing the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan for 2006-2009 was to obtain, from elected officials and community, business and professional leaders, evaluations of current economic development programs, initiatives and priorities. Rather than engage outside consultants for this work, as done with the strategic plan for 2002-2005, 20 members of the newly-organized Retiree Resource Network were selected to help design a proposed questionnaire and then to conduct individual interviews with about 70 participants. The interviews provided excellent qualitative information to supplement the quantitative results. Network members also reviewed the draft strategic plan that resulted and recommended improvements.</p>		

4. Please describe why this project was initiated or what problem it addressed:

The project was initiated in order to provide evaluations of current Economic Development activities, programs and priorities by means of a 34-item questionnaire that was administered by means of personal interviews with each of the 70 participants. After a brief training session conducted by the Network Coordinator, Bill Layton, each of the 20 Network members scheduled one-on-one interviews with 3 to 5 business and community leaders. The personal contact not only produced the quantitative data on the rating scales, but also provided valuable explanatory information that could be documented, reviewed and analyzed by the Department staff and the Economic Development Advisory Board in order to prepare the strategic plan goals and tasks. The strategic plan was approved by the County Commissioners as submitted. (The plan can be found at econdev.transylvaniacounty.org. Click on "Economic Statistics" and then "Economic Development Strategic Plan 2006-2009.")

5. Please quantify the improvement's results in terms of cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of services provided.

(Please indicate what resources were used to achieve your results, and what was done with the time savings, if any accrued).

By utilizing the Retiree Resource Network, the County was able to complete the 2006-2009 economic development strategic plan in-house and avoid the cost of external resources. A similar plan developed for the 2002-2005 period, with the aid of an outside consulting firm, cost approximately \$40,000. In addition, the Network members' experience helped ensure a high-quality finished product.

6. Please provide any other descriptive information you would like to be considered by the review committee.

In less than three years, the Transylvania County Retiree Resource Network has grown from a group of 4 or 5 retired executives to 70 volunteers. Their backgrounds are diverse, covering extensive experience in engineering, manufacturing, general management, marketing, sales, finance and accounting, human resources, small business consulting and more. The Network has provided free consulting services to between 40 and 50 companies and organizations in the County, and feedback from the Network's clients has been strongly positive.

Project Employees: Mark Burrows, Director (exempt); Trish Hamilton, Administrative Assistant (non-exempt) ; William Layton (exempt -- contract employee)

County Manager's Name:	Artie Wilson	Supervisor's Name:	Artie Wilson
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Return by June 15, 2007 via email to ncacc@ncacc.org.