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**Register now: 2011 Economic Summit is Monday Nov 14, with Senators Tom Apodaca and Martin Nesbitt, former WCU chancellor John Bardo and moderator DG Martin**

Join regional, state and federal business leaders, entrepreneurs, economic development professionals and others with a vested interest in Western North Carolina at one of the region's most popular annual networking events, the AdvantageWest Economic Summit. Held Monday, Nov 14, at Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville, the event starts with a networking reception at 5:30pm, followed by a panel discussion revolving around the role of public-private partnerships in promoting economic development in the AdvantageWest region. Confirmed panelists thus far include Senator Tom Apodaca, Senator Martin Nesbitt and former Western Carolina University chancellor John Bardo. Longtime newspaper columnist and UNC-TV host and radio personality DG Martin will serve as moderator for the third consecutive time.

[REGISTER HERE FOR THE 2011 ECONOMIC SUMMIT](#). Registration is \$50 and open to the public. Cost includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, beverages and admittance to the panel discussion.

**SPONSORSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE.** AdvantageWest is grateful for the support we received at our past two Economic Summits and welcome sponsor contributions to the 2011 event. To learn about the benefits of sponsorship, contact [Amanda Baranski](#) at 828.687.7234.

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**You're invited to the Oct 17 launch of EvolveEnergy Partnership, an effort to build the**

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## clean energy economy in Western North Carolina.

Western North Carolina's rapidly growing clean energy industry has joined with business and community leaders to form the EvolveEnergy Partnership, created to build on existing successes and further establish WNC as a center of clean energy innovation and industry development. For more than a year, leaders connected to the region's clean energy economy have been studying this sector and developing a plan to build on Western North Carolina's success to cultivate a leading clean energy hub.

AdvantageWest, Land-of-Sky Regional Council and other members of the [Leadership Group](#) will host a special event on Monday, Oct 17, 4-6pm at Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville, to present the findings of this economic development plan and formally launch the EvolveEnergy Partnership. The presentation and celebration is free and open to the public. [REGISTER NOW](#) for this exciting event.

### DID YOU KNOW? FACTS ABOUT CLEAN ENERGY IN WNC

\* From 2005-2009, employment in WNC clean energy-related industries increased 6.9 percent despite a 7.9 percent decrease in employment across all industries. Growth in the industry in WNC outpaced the US as a whole by 4.3 percent.

\* WNC is home to 931MW of installed renewable energy.

\* WNC has more clean energy companies per capita than any other region in the state, and a clean energy company can be found in every county in WNC.

\* \$3 billion leaves the WNC region every year for the purchase of imported energy; developing WNC's renewable energy resources can significantly reduce this loss.

\* WNC is an alternative fuels leader with biodiesel, compressed natural gas, electric vehicles, and supporting infrastructure.

\* WNC boasts a vibrant green building industry with 20 percent of the state's LEED-certified buildings and a significant percentage of NC's HealthyBuilt homes.

*Learn more about the clean energy industry and the increased potential for WNC at the launch of the EvolveEnergy Partnership. [Register HERE](#).*

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## Have you voted yet? Help ASU's Solar Homestead stay in 1st place in the People's Choice Awards at the US Dept of Energy Solar Decathlon - voting ends Friday!

The US Dept of Energy Solar Decathlon continues this week in Washington DC, where students from Appalachian State University are participating in a competition that challenges participants to design, build and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient and attractive. Like the Olympic decathlon, the Solar Decathlon consists of 10 contests, each designed to gauge how well the houses perform and how livable and affordable they are. As of publication time, ASU's entry, the Solar Homestead, was holding steady at 1st place in the People's Choice Awards. Cast your vote online by 7pm on Friday, Sept 30. [VOTE FOR ASU HERE](#). To learn more about ASU's entry, go [HERE](#).

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## BREC's 'Venture Local' event on Oct 27 focuses on entrepreneurship opportunities across WNC related to the 'local' movement. Register today!

From food to fiber, energy to technology, and beyond, the AdvantageWest region is making great strides in cultivating thriving local businesses that create quality jobs. AdvantageWest's Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council presents an exciting new forum focused on these and local entrepreneurship opportunities. [Venture Local](#) will spotlight success stories, promote opportunities for new ventures, discuss best practices, and as all BREC Forums do, connect entrepreneurs with each other, investors and the resources they need to succeed. With a great lineup of speakers, the event is Thursday, Oct 27, 1-5pm at the Renaissance Asheville Hotel, followed by a farm-to-table networking reception from 5-6pm. Tickets are \$20 and the event is open to the public. [LEARN MORE AND HOW TO REGISTER HERE](#).

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## Winter Sun Farms CSA subscriptions are going fast! Sign up now to enjoy local produce all winter long and support WNC's farmers.

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Time is growing short to sign up for Winter Sun Farms, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program of Blue Ridge Food Ventures that provides members with frozen fruits and vegetables from Western North Carolina farmers throughout the winter months. In just a few short weeks, Winter Sun Farms subscribers can look forward to their monthly boxes of healthy local produce, prepared and frozen at the peak of freshness: diced, sliced or chopped vegetables, scrumptious berries, and vegetable purees ready to become instant soups or healthy dips. Pick-up sites for the 2011-2012 winter season are at Blue Ridge Food Ventures on the A-B Tech Enka campus in West Asheville; the Grove Arcade in downtown Asheville; the Artisan Gourmet Market in Black Mountain, and Hand-in-Hand Gallery in Flat Rock. [LEARN MORE ABOUT WINTER SUN FARMS HERE](#). Memberships are limited and going fast, so sign up today!

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### Creative firms in WNC partner with AdvantageWest to produce award-winning annual report and website.

With the help of regional design firms, writers, photographers, programmers, printers and others in the creative industry, AdvantageWest has won two communication awards from the Southern Economic Development Council, the oldest and largest regional economic development association in North America with members in 16 states and the District of Columbia. In both cases, AdvantageWest represented the only organization in North Carolina to have placed in the competition, winning Superior awards in its class under the categories of Annual Reports and Websites. [Learn details HERE](#).

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### Mark your calendar for these upcoming events, including the Governor's Forum on Small Town Competitiveness and classes on 'Starting Your Specialty Food Business.'

\* Oct 6, 1-4pm: Governor's Forum on Small Town Competitiveness (Location: Haywood Community College). Event brings together state and local officials, business and economic development leaders and various federal, state, local and nonprofit organizations dedicated to community economic development to discuss best practices as well as challenges faced by small towns. Also featured will be a Small Town Competitiveness Resource Fair to link up small town leaders with funding and service providers that may be helpful to local economic development. [More info HERE](#).

\* Oct 14 - DEADLINE: NC Rural Center Economic Innovation Grants Program "Intent to File" Form. Up to a maximum of \$100,000 is available to units of local government, nonprofits and educational institutions in the region's rural counties. [More info HERE](#).

\* Oct 17, 4-6pm: Launch of EvolveEnergy Partnership (*see article elsewhere in this newsletter*)

\* Oct 19-Nov 16, Wednesdays 6-9pm: Starting Your Specialty Food Business (Location: A-B Tech Enka Campus) Class is for anyone considering the idea of packaging, bottling, labeling and selling a favorite recipe, as well as for those would-be business-owners who want to study the market first to determine what the "next big thing" will be. Cost is only \$50. [Learn details and how to REGISTER HERE](#). (*Scroll down to bottom of screen for the class.*)

\* Oct 20, 2pm: AdvantageWest Board of Directors Meeting. (Location: AdvantageWest Offices). Regular bimonthly meeting of the 21-member Board of Directors. Open to the public. For more information, contact Assistant Corporate Secretary [Amanda Baranski](#), or call 828.687.7234.

\* Oct 27, 1-6pm: Venture Local Conference (*see article elsewhere in this newsletter*)

\* Nov 14, 5:30-9pm: 2011 AdvantageWest Economic Summit (*see article elsewhere in this newsletter*)

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#### Got news?

We welcome your announcements about economic development activities within the 23-county region of Western North Carolina. Submit news for consideration to the [newsletter editor](#). AdvantageWest reserves the right to modify submissions to conform to editorial guidelines, space constraints, timeliness and other circumstances.



*AdvantageWest is the regional economic development partnership serving the 23 westernmost counties of North Carolina. Chartered by the state General Assembly in 1994, AdvantageWest is a nonprofit, public-private partnership governed by a 21-member board of directors. Our program of work focuses on advanced manufacturing, entrepreneurial development, agribusiness, the green economy, and the Western North Carolina Film Commission.*

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[www.advantagewest.com](http://www.advantagewest.com)