Power is a fleeting thing. Just ask anyone who has worked for General Electric Co., the cream of the international corporate crop for decades. Now, the struggling organization is valued 30% less than industrial rival Honeywell Corp., which will soon make Charlotte its home base. Likewise, the churn of power is evident in our second annual listing of the state’s most influential leaders.

A year ago, Cary technology executive Tim Sweeney was little known outside the video-game industry. Now, his company’s Fortnite game is an international phenomenon that could morph into a major social-media network. Epic Games, which had revenue topping $3 billion according to press reports, raised another $1.25 billion in capital in October.

Sweeney was an easy addition to the Power 100, compiled after securing ideas from dozens of N.C. businesspeople and our staff’s multiyear experience of tracking the state’s economy. We didn’t include those who spend little time here or political leaders. Other newcomers include Carolina Panthers owner David Tepper, Lowe’s CEO Marvin Ellison and Duke University President Vincent Price.

A majority of the Power 100 are holdovers from last year. Influential people are rarely in a hurry to hand over their reins. But there is an inevitable changing of the guard, particularly as North Carolina’s technology industry blossoms with promising companies led by Michael Chasen, Abhishek Mehta, Todd Olson and others. Leaders of traditional industries that built North Carolina in the 20th century exert a fraction of their previous influence.

It’s a subjective list, and we know that some deserving folks aren’t on it. In addition to corporate power, we looked for those making an impact on the broader community, including behind-the-scenes operators. No doubt some of the missing are glad to remain under the radar, while others would love to be cited. Just tell us who they are — we are all ears. If we are doing our job, that’s never going to change.
JENNIFER APPLEBY
MARKET MAKER
55, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER, WRAY WARD
CHARLOTTE
When civic ventures such as planning for a new downtown public library or developing branding for the new Charlotte Regional Business Alliance are underway, the leader of one of Charlotte’s largest marketing companies is often at the table. The Penn State graduate joined the agency as senior art director in 1993 and has been the top executive since 2001. It’s one of Charlotte’s largest woman-owned businesses.

ROB BARNHILL III
FAMILY TRADITION
47, CEO, BARNHILL CONTRACTING
ROCKY MOUNT
The third-generation leader of the family-owned business was named to his post last year, succeeding his father, Robert Barnhill Jr., whose work earned him a place in the N.C. Business Hall of Fame. Grandfather Robert Sr. formed the company in 1949, spinning off an enterprise started with surplus World War II equipment. Rob III has worked for the builder of highways, airports, commercial buildings and infrastructure since 1998. A key company project is Wilmington’s $83 million, 13-story River Place mixed-use development.

EDWARD BROWN III
WHEELER DEALER
69, CEO, HENDRICK AUTOMOTIVE GROUP
CHARLOTTE
The Harvard MBA didn’t exactly unwind when he retired as a top investment banking executive with Bank of America. In 2010, Brown joined privately held Hendrick, which owns 96 dealerships and posts annual revenue of $9 billion. He also chairs Atrium Health, the state’s biggest hospital system. He shepherded the hiring of Gene Woods as CEO in 2016 and presided over last year’s aborted merger of Atrium and UNC Health Care, which could have resulted in a system with 90,000 employees. Still, he keeps mission focus. “We take care of all God’s children,” he told BUSINESS NORTH CAROLINA.

JEFFREY BROWN
ONLINE BY DESIGN
45, CEO, ALLY FINANCIAL
CHARLOTTE
Ally’s online-only banking strategy is thriving, with deposits growing at a double-digit pace for 35 consecutive quarters, now topping $100 billion. Earnings increased 30% in the first nine months of 2018 despite slowing car sales. The former Bank of America executive, who has led the company since 2015, received total compensation of $8.8 million in 2017.

CARL ARMATO
NOVANT SAVANT
54, CEO, NOVANT HEALTH
WINSTON-SALEM
Armato oversees a 27,000-employee system where $4.6 billion in annual revenue and higher profit enabled thousands to receive annual bonuses, including the boss, whose compensation tops $3 million. Inspired to work in health care because of his experience as a Type 1 diabetic, Armato joined Novant in 1998 and became CEO in 2012. He’s led steady growth to its current roster of 14 medical centers and more than 1,500 physicians, mostly in the Charlotte and Triad areas.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Affordability. There are significant differences among our community members, which have translated into a discrepancy in opportunities. We’ve seen that social determinants of health, like housing and education, have a direct impact on quality of life. Our challenge is to provide for our communities through affordable health care, but also partner with organizations to improve access to affordable housing and education. The business community has an opportunity to partner to address these disparities and make our communities stronger.

Did your lifelong experience with Type 1 diabetes motivate you to spend your career in health care?
My journey with diabetes is one of the main drivers for a career in health care, and I have not shied away from talking about it. If we want to truly improve our country’s health care system, we must be compassionate caregivers and draw upon our own experiences. Managing a lifelong condition such as diabetes provides a unique perspective to running a health system beyond numbers on a spreadsheet or discussions in the boardroom.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I live on a farm. I have always been an outdoors person, and I own horses, chickens and even feed deer on my farm. I get a lot of joy from being outside with my animals, including my golden retriever.

Key 2018 accomplishments?
Over the past several years, we’ve taken significant and intentional steps to care for and engage our own team members. It’s important to me that Novant Health is a great place to work in addition to being a great place to receive care. We’ve increased our team-member engagement rankings from around the 40th percentile in 2015 to the 87th percentile in 2018.
When Ashburn first asked her father, Oscar Wong, for a job at his brewery, he turned her down, citing lack of experience. She figured out how the business world worked, then joined the family company in 2011 and became president four years later. She has kept the state’s largest craft-brewer, now topping 40,000 barrels a year, on a steady expansion path amid exploding competition. Ashburn, who has a journalism degree from UNC Chapel Hill, was a semi-finalist for the coveted James Beard Foundation brewer award last year.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Education. Can we carry through from K-12 to fill current and emerging employment needs from trade to tech? And how can we best inspire and prepare future generations to tackle climate, agriculture and health?

Share an insight about your community.
Ashevillians share a pursuit for quality of life. The Asheville community pulled through decades of debt from the Great Depression and rebuilt itself into a thriving city that offers natural wonders and deep connections to craft — in art, music, food and beverage.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I jumped out of an airplane once, and I’ve played dozens of volleyball tournaments from Michigan to New York to Florida. Three of them were in mud.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Highland’s brand refresh, launched in February, aligned our brand with our beer and ignited our team to continue creating a path in N.C. brewing. We’re celebrating our first 25 years this year.

What advice do you offer newcomers?
I ensure that we share our 10 core attributes, which our management team developed and believes in. As a small, family-owned company, alignment in values is more important here than at a large corporation because we see each other daily, and we can feel the effects of each person’s work.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
I most enjoy seeing our beer bring people together — whether to celebrate or commiserate, great beer makes it easier.

The Michigan native is an arts advocate, serving on the boards of the UNC School of the Arts and the Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. He’s also the immediate past chair of Winston-Salem Business Inc. and chairman of the local United Way annual campaign. Berlin, whose clients have included Lowe’s Cos. and Wake Forest University, was Business North Carolina’s 2018 Legal Elite winner in environmental law.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Having a competitive workforce and complementary environment, and involving the most people in the process.

Share an insight about your community.
We are blessed with deep talent and an exceptionally cooperative spirit, but most of all, the most charitable people one could imagine.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I am an avid marble collector.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Signing the first major tenant [medical-device maker Cook Medical] for the redevelopment of the Whitaker Park tobacco manufacturing plant.

What have you learned from your work as chair of Winston-Salem Business Inc.?
Jobs and economic progress solve a myriad of problems.
It’s been seven years since the first Republican speaker of the N.C. House since 1895 left the N.C. General Assembly, where he served for 35 years. But his lobbying influence is stronger than ever. Brubaker represents more than 20 companies and trade groups, including beer, cable TV, drug-industry associations and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, state filings show. The Randolph County farmer is former chair of the American Legislative Exchange Council, which promotes conservative legislation at U.S. statehouses.

When Wilmington officials recently asked Carroll about plans for his $250 million mixed-use local project called The Avenue, his response was simple: “We like to build and keep stuff forever.” That dictum has fueled his company’s accumulation of a $2.5 billion real-estate portfolio. Last year he did sell, for about $28 million, a 340-acre site in eastern Guilford County that will house Publix Super Markets’ new $400 million refrigerated distribution center. It was one of the state’s biggest economic-development wins in 2018. Greensboro College, his alma mater and a frequent recipient of his generosity, recently awarded him an honorary doctorate.

George W. Vanderbilt probably didn’t fore-
NAMED THE BANKING INDUSTRY’S MOST POWERFUL WOMAN IN 2018 BY AMERICAN BANKER. BESSANT HAS HELPED BOFA RETAIN ITS LEADERSHIP IN MOBILE BANKING. SHE ATTENDED COLLEGE AIDED BY A SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDED BY A BUSINESSMAN IN HER HOMETOWN OF JACKSON, MICH. AFTER ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN BANKING, SHE CREATED A SIMILAR FUND FOR RURAL STUDENTS SEEKING DEGREES AT HER ANN ARBOR ALMA MATER. SINCE 2010, SHE HAS LED THE BANK’S TECHNOLOGY AND OPERATIONS UNIT, OVERSEEING NEARLY 95,000 EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS IN MORE THAN 35 COUNTRIES. HER ADVOCACY OF LGBTQ RIGHTS AND NORTH CAROLINA’S FINANCIAL-TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY HAVE DRAWN PRAISE. UNC CHARLOTTE GAVE HER HER HIGHEST HONOR LAST YEAR, THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD, REFLECTING HER VARIOUS CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS.

WHAT IS NORTH CAROLINA’S KEY CHALLENGE?
Workforce transformation. North Carolina has a rich history of transforming our workforce as industry has changed from tobacco to furniture to banking. As technology increases the pace of change, what it takes to maintain a cutting-edge workforce must include a strong ecosystem of academia, local and state government, and industry partners. Our competitive workforce must be magnetic for companies seeking to move here and to our existing companies.

WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT?
I have many proud moments, and I hope to have many more. I can tell you this: They came from hard-fought effort, collaboration and teamwork. Being part of great teams has resulted in some of my most rewarding moments.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU SHARE WITH NEWCOMERS?
Focus on brilliant performance and execution. Be curious, and challenge the status quo. Seize new opportunities and bring your unique perspective to the table. Always be candid and transparent.

WHO HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR CAREER?
No one person has had the biggest influence on my career. I take the best and worst from lots of people and try to be the composite of what I’ve learned from them.

WHAT IS SOMETHING PEOPLE DON’T KNOW ABOUT YOU?
I like taking on things that don’t come naturally to me — a photography expedition to Cuba, competing as a dancer in Charlotte’s version of Dancing With the Stars and summiting Africa’s Mount Kilimanjaro, the world’s tallest freestanding mountain, just this year.
ADRIENNE COLE
CRAVEN SUCCESS

47, PRESIDENT AND CEO, GREATER RALEIGH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
RALEIGH

Alma maters
MEREDITH COLLEGE, B.A.
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY, MASTER'S

Cole burst through the glass ceiling in 2017 by becoming the first woman to lead the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce in the organization's 129 years. Since then, the Triangle's largest nonprofit business membership organization has announced more than 20 corporate relocations and expansions totaling more than $250 million in capital investment and creating more than 5,000 jobs.

What is North Carolina's key challenge?
There is an opportunity to shift the conversation from the rural/urban divide to rural and urban opportunities. North Carolina is an amazing state with thriving urban centers, micropolitan regions that bridge urban and rural, and truly rural areas with rich histories rooted in agriculture, commercial fishing, tourism and manufacturing. The task is how we collaborate across regions to promote economic development, engage the right partners and develop strategies that maximize local strengths.

Tell us something intriguing about Raleigh.
Raleigh has an amazing energy, this innovative vibe that is hard to describe, and you really can't understand until you visit. It extends beyond Raleigh to include Durham and the rest of the Triangle. It's an intangible optimism and spirit of creativity that drives our people and our businesses. This community knows the value of human connection and the necessity of collaboration for success. We are a city and a region not without challenges, but we know we have the tools, voices and energy to find new solutions.

What is something people don't know about you?
I'm a North Carolina native. I grew up in New Bern [in Craven County] and started my career in Pamlico County. Having a career that has taken me from rural communities to urban has shaped my perspective on all we do at the chamber.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
Can I say everything? The opportunity to work with our members, the business community, elected leaders and our nonprofit partners. I get up excited every day— I love that no day is the same. Each day represents an opportunity to positively impact our community, our region and even the state.
Bare-knuckle brawls with big N.C. hospitals quickly became old hat for the pediatrician who left the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to join the state’s largest health insurer in 2017. In the College Station, Texas, native’s first month on the job, Blue Cross ended a six-month contract dispute with Asheville-based Mission Health. In mid-2018, citing concerns over increased customer costs, Conway opposed the failed Atrium Health/UNC Health Care combination. Recent efforts include partnering with Bethesda, Md.-based Aledade to support independently owned physician clinics. In January, Blue Cross unveiled a plan with five large N.C. health care systems to shift much of their business to “value-based” care and away from fee-for-service payments. The state will be a national leader if the effort succeeds, Conway says.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge over the next decade?
The skyrocketing cost of health care, including for the employers and individual customers who pay for much of that care. We have to figure out how we can control, or even lower, health care costs while improving outcomes, increasing access and simplifying the whole system.

What has been your biggest surprise about the state since you moved here?
How committed people are to working together to solve our health challenges. Last year, we announced that we were investing $50 million into community health initiatives. We are focusing on four areas: the opioid epidemic, early childhood development, social determinants of health and access to primary care. In every space, there are organizations and people who want to work with us to tackle these challenges.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I’m still a practicing pediatrician. I do it on the weekends as much as I can. I love the work and caring for children and families. It is meaningful to me to be able to serve in that way, and I think it gives me a unique perspective on our health system too.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
For the first time since Blue Cross N.C. entered the current individual market more than 25 years ago, we were able to lower rates. Our individual Affordable Care Act rates went down by an average of 4.1% statewide, or a $120 million reduction in health care costs for 2019. The reduction was made possible in large part due to new provider arrangements that make both parties responsible for the total quality and cost of care.
lion for the Vidant Health cancer center in Greenville. Like the pinhead-sized black seeds that grow into chest-high tobacco plants, the former state budget adviser sees to it that foundation coffers expand. Last year, the group awarded grants totaling $73 million.

LYNN GOOD
GOOD WORKS
59, PRESIDENT AND CEO, DUKE ENERGY
CHARLOTTE
The Ohio native kept her cool as Duke weathered hurricanes, coal-ash spills and changing renewable-energy signals from Washington and Raleigh. Critics on the left say the CEO for the last five years is too cautious on alternative sources, while conservatives press Duke to stick with low-cost coal. Thrilling downtown Charlotte boosters, she OK’d a new center-city office tower. Meanwhile, the company’s nearly half-owned $7 billion natural-gas Atlantic Coast Pipeline keeps running in the ditch over environmental concerns. One of the few female CEOs in the Fortune 500, she got $21.4 million in 2017 compensation.

JAMES “JIMMY” GOODMON JR.
CAPITOL CAPTAIN
42, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CAPITOL BROADCASTING
RALEIGH
Big shoes? Father Jim Goodmon was president of Capitol Broadcasting for more than 40 years. Now, his son has gained the title, overseeing flagship WRAL-TV, real estate, a private-equity group and an expanding digital-media presence. Jimmy whetted his skills in jobs ranging from early-morning cameraman to radio and television sales. Did he inherit the entrepreneur gene from “Big Jim,” who expanded the family’s media company while making a huge impact on Triangle civic affairs and sports? Details at 11.

JIM GOODNIGHT
DATA DYNASTY
76, CEO, SAS INSTITUTE
CARY
Revenue growth has slowed at the software company the industry legend founded with John Sall in 1976. But the private company, which employs more than 14,000, remains a dominant force in data analytics, with sales topping $3.2 billion in 2017. Fortune magazine ranks it as the 10th best workplace because of its lavish benefits. Forbes estimates the Salisbury native’s net worth was about $8 billion in early January, down from $9 billion a year earlier.

PAUL COZZA
SHIP SHAPE
57, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NORTH CAROLINA STATE PORTS AUTHORITY
WILMINGTON
Alma maters
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT, B.A.
FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY, MBA
Since the veteran shipping-industry executive arrived in 2014, the state-controlled authority has overseen $200 million in infrastructure upgrades, including deepening the turnaround basin for bigger ships. The payoff was a 38% increase in containers and an 18% gain in general cargo in the 2018 fiscal year. In February, thanks to new perishables capacity, Wilmington unloaded its first refrigerated shipment from Guatemala.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Staying ahead of the pending growth we will see. This includes all aspects of infrastructure. Investment in the state’s transportation resources will keep us competitive and ahead of the states around us. Continued growth and opportunities will come to the Southeast, so let’s make sure we are ready.

Share an insight about your community.
The Cape Fear region is a great place to live, work and play. We have a terrific mix of young families, a growing educated student population with UNC Wilmington, and an expanding entrepreneurial business community, and we are an attractive area for retirees and tourism. What a great combination.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I started my career in the Army as a helicopter pilot.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
We continued to expand N.C. Ports’ presence with a growth of 38% in our container segment. Also, we tripled our volume of refrigerated commodities imports and exports in the last three years.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Learn our business, get involved, improve your skills and be passionate about what we do.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
Getting a chance to meet people from around our state. This was not home for us originally, and the opportunity to be part of N.C. and help our business community is a great thing. For my family, this is our long-term home.
ED FRITSCH

TAking tHe HIGH ROAD

60, CEO, HIGHWOODS PROPERTIES
RALEIGH

Alma mater
UNC CHAPEL HILL, B.S.

Fritsch has led the office real-estate investment trust since 2004. Over the last decade, its total return far outpaced eight publicly traded REIT rivals. The payoff for Fritsch: more than $4 million in annual compensation. Last year he handed off the president’s title to Tom Klinck, who joined the company in 2012. As of October, Highwoods’ development pipeline totaled $658 million, with 96% of space preleased. Most of its current projects under development are in Atlanta, Nashville and Raleigh. The largest is a $285 million Nashville headquarters building for technology-services firm Asurion. Investment firms BlackRock and Vanguard Group own more than a quarter of its shares.

What are North Carolina’s key challenges?
Workforce and branding. Our state is at full employment across all pay scales and areas of expertise, so we need to stay honed on training and teaching all those seeking a trade or education. In addition, we need to ensure we are doing all we can to keep our high-school, college and technical-school graduates here at home to lead, form and support existing, new and relocated businesses.

From a branding perspective, there is a delta between how we perceive ourselves versus how those outside our state perceive us. To change that, we need improved unity and less divisiveness. North Carolina is the place to live, raise a family, attend school, work and play. North Carolina provides a business-friendly environment, favorable cost of doing business, high quality of life, in-line cost of living and plentiful community amenities that are second to none. We need a fortified, forward-looking branding effort.

Share an insight about your community.

The Triangle area is one of the best communities on the globe. It is an economically diverse business community and not dependent on any one business sector, plus we have the ballast of state government. We have amazing universities, world-class health care, terrific interstate access, exceptional community leaders, a tremendous park system, an ever-improving airport, superb recreational areas, a hardworking workforce and a hockey team that will one day bring the Cup back home.

What is something people don’t know about you?
During my high-school years, I was an N.C. State fan. Watching the men’s basketball team capture the national championship in 1974 was epic in our Knightdale neighborhood and at our high school.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
I’m a firm believer in Malcolm Gladwell’s rule that it takes 10,000 hours to achieve mastery. As folks join our team, we strive to ensure they either have a strong appetite to put the time in to be successful in their field of work or bring a true level of expertise.
notched national education rankings of 13th-best undergraduate school among 312 national universities and colleges and 27th-best overall, according to U.S. News & World Report. Wake’s endowment now tops $1.2 billion.

**GREG HATEM**
**EMPIRE BUILDER**
**58, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, EMPIRE PROPERTIES**
**RALEIGH**
The developer has had a large hand in revitalizing downtown Raleigh through his real-estate and culinary ventures. Empire Properties, founded by the N.C. State University grad in 1995, owns 75 buildings with more than 1.1 million square feet of space in downtown Raleigh and Durham. The Empire Eats restaurant division operates eateries including The Raleigh Times Bar, Sitti and The Pit. In May, it acquired Raleigh’s oldest restaurant, The Mecca.

**WAYNE HOLDEN**
**GOOD WORKS GUY**
**62, PRESIDENT, CEO, RTI INTERNATIONAL**
**RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK**
Forbes magazine in 2018 picked RTI simultaneously as one of the nation’s best places for women to work and one of the best midsized workplaces. Innovative research helps the nonprofit gross about $900 million annually and has expanded its workforce to nearly 5,000. Among its highest-profile projects is an $18 million Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation contract to develop a commode that turns waste into germ-free ash and water, alleviating a major disease threat in underdeveloped countries. Holden, who has a doctorate in psychology from the University of South Carolina, joined the group in 2005.

**FRANK HOLDING JR.**
**HOLDING PATTERN**
**57, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, FIRST CITIZENS BANCSHARES**
**RALEIGH**
The Wharton MBA completed his 10th year as chairman and CEO of the nation’s largest family-owned bank by continuing the bank’s traditional steady growth, buying small banks in Florida, South Carolina and Wisconsin. Acquiring Tampa, Fla.-based HomeBanc in May swelled First Citizens to more than 550 locations in 19 states. Holding’s father and family patriarch Frank Holding Sr. died at age 89 in May. The junior Holding chairs the boards of dominant health insurer Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina and the NC Chamber Foundation.

**MAURICE “MO” GREEN**
**SPREADING SOME GREEN**
**51, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION**
**WINSTON-SALEM**

**Alma mater**
DUKE UNIVERSITY, B.A., J.D.

In his third year heading one of the state’s biggest foundations, the former superintendent of Guilford County Schools announced a focus on key areas for its grantmaking: advancing public education, fostering a sustainable environment, promoting social and economic justice, and strengthening democracy. Green now leads a staff of about 16, very different from his Greensboro job from 2008-15 overseeing 10,000 workers and an annual budget of more than $660 million. The foundation, named after the youngest son of tobacco baron R.J. Reynolds, has made donations topping $650 million since its formation in 1936.

**What is North Carolina’s key challenge?**
In a more demographically diverse state, a key challenge will be educating residents to function well in an ever-changing, more technological environment.

**What is the most important role for foundations in helping build the N.C. economy?**
Foundations can serve two important and complementary roles to build North Carolina’s economy. They can provide resources to support innovation and help ensure that all North Carolinians are able to enjoy economic opportunity under just and fair rules.

**What is something people don’t know about you?**
I enjoy reading novels, especially crime fiction and suspense thrillers.

**Key 2018 accomplishment?**
The successful launch and implementation of All for NC, a new framework for grantmaking and learning. All for NC has three major strategies: a State-Level Systemic Change strategy; a Community-Based Strategy; and an Exploratory, Visionary Ideas Strategy. Through this new framework, the foundation will continue to invest millions of dollars annually into improving North Carolina.

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**
The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all North Carolinians. I enjoy working with the foundation’s trustees and my colleagues to help ensure that the foundation fulfills that wonderful mission every day.
VIVIAN HOWARD
KINSTON KINGPIN

40, RESTAURANT OWNER, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV PERSONALITY
KINSTON
Her acclaimed documentary series A Chef’s Life wrapped up after five seasons, but the Kinston restaurateur will be back in front of the camera later this year in another yet-to-be-titled PBS show. Her first cookbook, Deep Run Roots, has racked up numerous awards since its release in 2016. After Hurricane Florence battered eastern N.C. in September, Howard launched a T-shirt fundraiser for rural Jones County.

DALE JENKINS
BRIDGE GAPPER

62, CEO, MEDICAL MUTUAL HOLDINGS
RALEIGH
The head of a large, physician-owned medical malpractice insurer and chairman of UNC Health Care, Jenkins earns praise from often-conflicting hospitals, doctors and others. He had a key role in the proposed partnership between UNC Health Care and Atrium Health that fizzled under pressure from state lawmakers. While the deal to create a $14 billion, locally controlled behemoth was abandoned, health care disruption is here to stay, he says.

MICHAEL JORDAN
HOOPS HONCHO

55, MAJORITY OWNER, CHARLOTTE HORNETS
CHARLOTTE
Rebranding the Charlotte Bobcats back to the original Hornets ahead of the 2014-15 season seems to be paying off: In February 2018, the Hornets were worth $1.05 billion, up 35% from the previous year, according to Forbes. Jordan paid a reported $175 million for his stake in 2010. Challenges remain, with attendance down from its peak in 2015-16 and disagreements over retaining or trading star player Kemba Walker. In recent years, Jordan has made big donations to the National Museum of African-American History in Washington, D.C., and to establish medical clinics in underserved areas of Charlotte. Last year, he gave $2 million to his hometown of Wilmington for Hurricane Florence recovery efforts.

STAN KELLY
CORE PLAYER

61, CEO, PIEDMONT TRIAD PARTNERSHIP
GREENSBORO
After leaving a banking career of more than 30 years, Kelly has a key role in reinvigorating the state’s third-biggest metro area. Recent successes include a $400 million Publix Super Markets distribution center in Greensboro that will employ 1,000

JIM HANSEN
CHAMBER CHAMP

40, REGIONAL PRESIDENT, EASTERN CAROLINAS MARKET, PNC FINANCIAL SERVICES
RALEIGH
Alma maters
N.C. STATE UNIVERSITY, B.S.
UNC CHAPEL HILL, MBA

Hansen oversees PNC’s operations in the eastern half of the Carolinas, where predecessors including Planters, Centura and RBC have operated banks since the 19th century. He also chairs the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce and is chair-elect of the Research Triangle Regional Partnership. Pittsburgh-based PNC, which gained a foothold in North Carolina after acquiring Royal Bank of Canada’s U.S. business in 2012, was the sixth-largest bank in the state based on market share as of June 30, with deposits topping $8.3 billion. Hansen grew up in Winston-Salem.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
The opportunity gap between rural and urban areas, talent, branches and investments throughout the state and we must find economic success for all North Carolinians. This requires access to educational opportunities starting with high-quality pre-K education, followed with the ability to find a good job wherever someone wants to live.

What was your proudest moment in 2018?
There are many this year, including working with [other N.C. business leaders] to open up 3,500 more pre-K seats; serving as the chair of Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce board; and opening a PNC branch at N.C. State. But one moment stands out: PNC provided a mortgage-free home in eastern N.C. to a military veteran and war hero.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Build relationships throughout the company. Do what’s right for the customer long-term. Be curious, and look to lead whether it’s in your title or not.

Share an insight about your community?
Most know that the Research Triangle region works well together and is an education hub. What people may not realize is that our many unique industries built around leadership in tech and entrepreneurship are starting to converge in many ways in this new economy, such as the intersection of biopharma, data analytics and cloud computing to serve the health care industry. This is exciting for our region’s future.

What is something people don’t know about you?
With a few of my [UNC Chapel Hill] Kenan-Flagler MBA classmates, I shared in the enjoyment of eating some scorpions cooked by a street vendor in Beijing.

What was your favorite travel experience in 2018?
With children who are 13 and 9, travel is a great family adventure. Our favorite trip was to the Southwest, exploring Sedona, Ariz., the Grand Canyon and southern California.
GREG KEITH
SHOOTING STAR
63, PRESIDENT AND CEO,
THE KEITH CORP.
CHARLOTTE

Alma mater
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY, B.A., J.D.

T he developer made news in December by buying 105 acres in Research Triangle Park from GlaxoSmithKline. The project could include either a single corporate headquarters or a multibuilding development. Before he and his father, Graeme, started their firm in 1989, the younger Keith was known for his basketball skills: he averaged 30 points a game as a high-school senior, then later played at Georgia and Wake Forest. More recently, he’s gained fame as the father-in-law of professional golfing star Webb Simpson. Keith Corp. has developed more than 23 million square feet of real estate, topping $2.5 billion in value, in 34 states.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
The political climate.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I love to read.

Who has had the biggest influence in your career?
Jesus Christ. My personal relationship with Christ influences everything I do in my business, as well as personal life, each and every day.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Celebrating the ongoing success of The Keith Corp. as we begin our 30th year in business in 2019.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Be creative, and think outside the box. Be a problem solver!

JOHN KANE
RAISING RALEIGH
65, FOUNDER AND CEO,
KANE REALTY
RALEIGH

Alma mater
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY, B.A.

Kane’s projects in Raleigh span from the redeveloped North Hills to downtown’s warehouse district to Peace, a retail and residential project on the edge of downtown that will be anchored by a Publix grocery store. His company opened the Stanhope apartment complex near N.C. State University in 2015, setting a new standard for the campus neighborhood. The Dillon, a 17-story mixed-use project, held its grand opening in October; that same month, the Raleigh News & Observer reported Kane had submitted a rezoning petition for an adjacent tower. Also in the works are a 20-story office tower at North Hills, expected to open in 2020, and the Walter Tower, a 33-story building that will include a boutique hotel and apartments. Before entering the capital city, Kane started his development career by organizing an investor group to buy a shopping center in Greenville. He serves on the executive board of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina and is immediate past chairman of the Research Triangle Regional Partnership.

What are North Carolina’s key challenges?
Addressing the needs of our rural counties and providing adequate transportation options for the urban areas.

Share an insight about your community.
The continued growth of Wake County is a phenomenon that is a blessing and a challenge.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I was born in Roxboro.

What is a key accomplishment in the last year?
Completing the Dillon project in the warehouse district, completing Park Central at North Hills and starting the Peace project at Peace and West streets in downtown Raleigh.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
The recycling and re-creation of areas in our market that need to be repurposed.
after building and selling two medical-records software companies for a combined $1.2 billion, McConnell started his golf business by taking over Raleigh Country Club for about $6 million in 2003. McConnell Golf now owns or manages 14 courses from Knoxville, Tenn., to Myrtle Beach, S.C. The business employs more than 1,000 people.

What are North Carolina’s key challenges?
Building infrastructure to keep up with growth in population, and finding ways to bring better jobs to rural N.C.

What is the most interesting issue in the golf business right now?
Figuring out which clubs will survive in a saturated market and how can we grow the game to attract new participants.

What is something people don’t know about you?
My business success began by my being fired by another employer. That created my desire to become an entrepreneur.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
We renovated the golf course at Charlotte’s Providence Country Club, which was well-received by members. [The course was acquired in 2016.] McConnell Golf invested nearly $5 million in capital projects at our clubs in 2018.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
I enjoy working with our employees, enhancing the properties and seeing members smile, having fun at our clubs while creating memories.
of a $78 million Morganton campus. He also is a director at the N.C. Coastal Federation and Durham-based Trill AI, an artificial-intelligence startup.

MARY MACK
HOT SEAT

56, SENIOR EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, WELLS FARGO
CHARLOTTE

Wells Fargo welcomed 34-year industry veteran Mack to her new job as chief of community banking in 2016 amid one of banking industry’s nastiest scandals. Since then, the bank has agreed to pay more than $4 billion in settlements related to setting up fraudulent accounts and levying improper loan and mortgage charges. The most recent settlement involved $575 million to be paid to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Davidson College graduate has overseen a corporate mea culpa that has included firing more than 5,000 people, eliminating sales goals that prompted employee abuse, and setting up technology to flag bad behavior. Called the “No. 1 Woman to Watch” in U.S. banking by American Banker, she oversees more than 107,000 bank employees.

JAMES “CHIP” MAHAN III
HOLDING PATTERN

67, CEO AND CHAIRMAN, LIVE OAK BANCHARES
WILMINGTON

Long considered a banking industry innovator, Mahan has had better years. Live Oak’s shares sunk 50% in the last five months of 2018 after the bank said it will hold on to more of its loans rather than selling them. While analysts branded it a riskier strategy, the Washington & Lee University graduate says it will produce more predictable earnings. Mahan also hired former Goldman Sachs partner Huntley Garriott as the bank’s president.

TODD MANSFIELD
FERTILE CRESCENT

60, CEO, CRESCENT COMMUNITIES
CHARLOTTE

In 2018, the ex-Disney executive handed over the ownership keys to Japan’s Sumitomo Forestry, which invested more than $750 million including debt assumption. Founded by Duke Energy in 1963 to manage timber and real estate. Crescent was owned by private-equity groups since 2010. Backing from a capital-rich company provides more firepower to expand in Atlanta, Dallas, Nashville and other cities. Its flagship Charlotte project, the 26-story Ally Charlotte Center, is expected to open in 2021.

PIERRE NAUDÉ
COASTAL CLIMBER

60, CEO, NCINO
WILMINGTON

Alma mater
UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY, B.S.

S
ince the South African moved to the U.S. in 1987, he’s focused on financial technology. As nCino’s CEO since 2012, he’s joined co-founder Chip Mahan of Live Oak Bancshares to develop one of the nation’s fastest-growing fintech companies. Making the loan-making process more efficient has helped attract $150 million in capital from Wellington Management, Insight Venture Partners, Salesforce Ventures and others. nCino’s payroll has more than tripled to about 600 in the last three years. Most of them work in Wilmington.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
In my travels around the country, I’ve found that many people outside of North Carolina vastly underestimate our great state. This is an issue not with North Carolina, but with branding and perception. A key challenge will be to change that perception, which will help us attract innovative companies due to our great quality of life, favorable business climate and access to strong talent.

What is your proudest moment?
When I see individuals at nCino do great things, I feel an incredible sense of pride in the company we’ve built. If you create a culture where people can thrive and grow, it doesn’t matter what educational or social background they have. The only thing that matters is what they can accomplish today, and how we as a company can give them the tools and support to succeed. Our people combined with our culture has been a sort of grand social experiment, and it has created extraordinary results.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Embrace our culture of empowerment, take informed risks and pursue your dreams.

Share an insight about your community.
Wilmington isn’t actually a “beach town.” Rather, it’s a great, medium-sized city that happens to be near the beach. As such, it offers the infrastructure, talent and resources to build a successful, innovative company.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I came to America from South Africa when I was 29 with my wife and our 8-month-old baby. I started out as a programmer and business analyst, and those skills helped me establish myself and find my purpose. I’ve traveled all over the world, but I’ve found that nothing compares to the energy, drive and opportunity in America.
MICHAEL MARSCICANO
STRONG FOUNDATION

62, PRESIDENT AND CEO, FOUNDATION FOR THE CAROLINAS
CHARLOTTE

Much of what happens in Charlotte civics crosses the desk of the top exec at a $2.5 billion foundation. He gained his post in 1999 after 10 years of leading the city’s arts council. Key initiatives include renovating the Queen City’s historic Carolina Theater and promoting more affordable housing. Marsicano, who received $673,000 in compensation in 2016, according to the foundation’s latest filing, has a Ph.D. from Duke University.

MIKE MCGUIRE
MIKE’S MAGIC

59, CEO, GRANT THORNTON INTERNATIONAL
CHARLOTTE

The chief whip-cracker for a 59-office network of accountants was named one of the country’s best executives to work for by job-recruiting website Glassdoor, based on anonymous surveys in which 92% of his staffers gave him a pat on the back. CEO since 2014 and a fixture of Charlotte civic affairs, McGuire heads a company that also made best-place-to-work lists, got high marks for corporate equality and women execs, and not least, for how well it minds its clients’ business. Revenue in fiscal 2018 increased 3.4%, topping $1.8 billion.

ABHISHEK MEHTA
DATA DENIZEN

41, CEO, TRESATA
CHARLOTTE

Tresata might be the most valuable N.C. startup you’ve never heard of: In October, a $50 million investment by New York-based private-equity firm GCP Capital Partners valued the company at $1 billion. Mehta co-founded Tresata in 2010; the software firm uses data analysis to help companies solve business problems. Last spring, Tresata committed $2 million to UNC Charlotte to encourage health care entrepreneurship. The New Delhi, India, native also created hackathonCLT, which in its sixth year brought together more than 1,000 techies to study solutions to the city’s economic-mobility problem.

RICHARD MOORE
CENTURY MARKER

58, CEO, FIRST BANCORP
SOUTHERN PINES

In his 6 1/2 years as CEO, the former state treasurer has built the state’s largest community bank with a series of acquisitions, aided by President Mike Mayer, who helps lead day-to-day operations. A key effort last year was integrating Asheville-based ASB Bancorp. The bank has more than 100

TOM NELSON
WALLED IN

56, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, NATIONAL GYPSUM
CHARLOTTE

Alma maters
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, B.S.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, MBA

This marks Nelson’s 20th year leading the second-largest U.S. maker of gypsum wallboard, with 18 plants, including a 45-employee Wilmington site that reopened last year. The company was acquired in 1995 by his father-in-law, C.D. Spangler Jr., who died in July at age 86. His wife, Anna Spangler Nelson, is on the UNC System Board of Governors. If you see Nelson at Taco Bell or KFC, there’s a reason: He’s on the board of the Yum! Brands restaurant company. Closer to home, he’s on the Atrium Health Board of Commissioners.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Increasing third-grade reading proficiency, an educational milestone that greatly impacts whether a young student will succeed in school and the workforce. Studies have shown that students who can’t read on grade level by third grade are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than proficient readers. Laying the foundation for reading proficiency starts with participation in a high-quality pre-K program, such as NC Pre-K. A group of North Carolina CEOs will be asking for continued increased funding to allow more eligible children to have access to NC Pre-K and will recommend changes needed to break down the barriers to expansion.

What is something people don’t know about you?
In 1992, I was one of 15 people selected for a White House fellowship, which began under President George H.W. Bush. During the fellowship, I was assigned to the Defense Department, where I served as an assistant to the secretary of defense for special projects. There, I worked for some remarkable leaders, including Defense Secretaries Dick Cheney and William Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Colin Powell.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Reopening our Wilmington plant was very gratifying. In only six months, our engineering and manufacturing teams had the plant ready for production with new equipment and advanced technology. During this process, National Gypsum created many new lucrative jobs at the plant.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Come with your ideas and energy, and a willingness to serve our customers and be a contributor to our collaborative culture. Many come to us looking for a job, and they end up staying for a career.
branches, $5.2 billion in assets and $4.3 billion in deposits. After gaining more than 40% in 2017, the bank’s shares declined about 10% last year, much less than the industry average. Such outperformance means less pressure for Moore to return calls from larger rivals itching to expand in North Carolina.

DAVID MORKEN
BAND LEADER
49, CEO, BANDWIDTH
RALEIGH
What stock-market slump? Bandwidth shares traded above $40 in early January, more than double its IPO price of $20 per share in November 2017. Morken, a Marine veteran with a law degree from Notre Dame, co-founded the communications software company in 1999 and is chairman of spinout Republic Wireless. President John Murdock and board member Henry Kaestner, a co-founder, recently resigned, but that hasn’t slowed Bandwidth’s expansion plans: A securities filing in January showed the company is adding 30,000 square feet at its Centennial Campus headquarters at N.C. State.

WARD NYE
ROCK STAR
56, CEO, MARTIN MARIETTA MATERIALS
RALEIGH
Last year’s Hurricane Florence in the Carolinas and record rains in Texas — Martin Marietta’s biggest state in sales — tested the leader of the construction-materials giant that operates in 27 states, the Bahamas and Canada. Shares declined more than 20% with an expected windfall from increased infrastructure spending failing to materialize. Still, the stock has more than doubled since Nye became CEO in 2010. A graduate of Duke University with a law degree from Wake Forest, Nye is leading the search to replace NC Chamber CEO Lew Ebert, who resigned last year.

TODD OLSON
SOFTWARE SAVANT
43, CEO, PENDO
RALEIGH
The Carnegie Mellon University grad worked for several software companies before founding Pendo with three colleagues in 2013. The software firm has raised $106 million from investors since 2015 and has more than 800 customers, including nearly 300 added in the fiscal year that ended in January 2018. With Red Hat, Realtor.com and others as clients, the Raleigh company plans to add nearly 600 employees to its downtown workforce of 171 over the next five years, part of a $34.5 million investment.

VINCENT E. PRICE
BLUE DEVIL BOSS
61, PRESIDENT, DUKE UNIVERSITY
DURHAM

Alma maters
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY, B.A.
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, MASTER’S, PH.D.

The former provost of the University of Pennsylvania became Duke’s 10th president in 2017, succeeding Richard Brodhead. Price leads one of the nation’s most selective schools — the class of 2022 had an 8.6% acceptance rate, and Duke is tied for No. 8 on U.S. News & World Report’s list of top U.S. universities. Duke has made significant investments in Durham’s downtown business district, where it has 4,000 employees. He also led last year’s launch of an undergraduate program in Kunshan, China.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Economic empowerment. We are fortunate in North Carolina to have been among the leaders of the digital revolution, and cities like Durham are thriving. But we will have to work hard to ensure that the benefits of this success are felt by everyone who calls our state home.

Duke and other institutions of higher education have a responsibility and an opportunity to help improve the lives of our neighbors through research, health care and community engagement.

What has been your biggest surprise about the state since you moved here?
My wife, Annette, and I were told to expect incredible friendliness and a strong sense of community, and we’ve found both in great supply. We weren’t entirely prepared for the natural beauty of the state. We’ve loved exploring the mountains and the beaches, which are just a couple of hours from our front door in Durham. Few places have such a wealth of natural beauty within such ready reach.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I thought at one point I might pursue theater — among my first loves were writing and acting.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
I’m very excited about what we’re doing to engage with our city. I’ve often said that Duke wouldn’t be Duke without Durham, and we are recognizing that this can be a truly reciprocal relationship. Through our community health initiatives, our redevelopment of the Chesterfield cigarette factory into a cancer-research center and our innovative collaborations with Durham Public Schools, Duke is striving to be an even more engaged citizen of the city.
TOM PASHLEY
PINING FOR SUCCESS
49, PRESIDENT, PINEHURST RESORT
PINEHURST
There’s nothing stuffy about what the Duke MBA is doing at North Carolina’s most famous golf venue. Last year, Golf Magazine rated its redesigned No. 4 course as the nation’s best new course open to the public, while the company’s new craft-beer parlor opened in the village’s former steam plant. Pashley has worked at Pinehurst since 1997, serving as president since 2014.

RON PAULUS
GOING PUBLIC
56, CEO, MISSION HEALTH
ASHEVILLE
The physician with a Wharton MBA concluded Mission’s $1.4 billion in annual revenue was too small to compete, so his top-rated system agreed to sell to for-profit HCA Health Care for $2 billion, including $430 million in capital spending. N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein approved the plan in mid-January. Paulus could lead Nashville, Tenn.-based HCA’s regional expansion. After six years on the UNC Asheville board, he stepped down last year.

ART POPE
“ART” OF THE DEAL
62, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, VARIETY WHOLESALERS
HENDERSON
Proving size doesn’t always matter, the parent of Roses and Maxway discount stores won a notable legal victory in October when the family-owned business prevailed in a federal trademark-infringement dispute with retailing giant Walmart. The matter, with more than $30 million at stake, involves branding of a grilling-products line. The former state representative and budget director also chairs his family foundation, which last year committed $10 million to his alma mater, UNC Chapel Hill, half earmarked for cancer research. Pope has a law degree from Duke University.

MICHAEL PRAEGER
MAKING HIS PAYMENT
53, CEO, AVIDXCHANGE
CHARLOTTE
Now leading one of the fastest-growing technology companies in the country, Praeger helped found Charlotte-based unicorn AvidXchange in 2000. The accounts-payable automation company was valued at $1.4 billion in mid-2017 and has attracted $540 million in capital since 2015. AvidXchange in December announced plans to expand its corporate headquarters in Charlotte by adding more than 1,200 jobs. Prior to founding AvidXchange, the Georgetown and MIT

NIDO QUBEIN
CAN-DO KING
70, PRESIDENT, HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
HIGH POINT
Alma maters
HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY, B.A.
UNC GREENSBORO, MASTER’S
What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
To attract more big industries to our megasites, create an abundance of jobs and show the world North Carolina’s “can-do” spirit. As co-chair of the Piedmont Triad Partnership, we work diligently every day to promote the Carolina Core region and leverage the collective force of our communities.

Share an insight about your community.
The city of High Point and the Triad region are entrepreneurial and innovative communities. As honorary chairman of the Wyndham PGA tournament, I marvel at the dedication and support so many provide to ensure the success and impact of this international event. As chairman of High Point’s Downtown Transformation Board, I’m blessed to see the major transformation taking place in center city, including a collaborative think tank for the furniture industry, a baseball stadium, a children’s museum, an events center and new furniture ventures. The stewardship and philanthropy of High Pointers continue to carry us forward.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I start my day at 4 every morning, drink some Turkish coffee, read and study, and then walk for an hour. Consequently, I’m in bed by 9 p.m.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Raising $58 million in philanthropic funds for High Point’s downtown revitalization and securing an additional $50 million investment for apartments and a hotel. And, of course, announcing two more academic schools [engineering and undergraduate sciences] and several new buildings at High Point University.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
Leading a premier life-skills university and partnering with faculty and staff to prepare our graduates for the world as it is going to be. As a “God, family, and country” school, we nurture students toward a growth mindset and encourage them to invest one-third of their life in earning, one-third in learning and one-third in serving.
Being the nation’s 10th-biggest residential real-estate firm wasn’t enough for Riley, who formed a joint-venture of his 47-office business with Pittsburgh-based Howard Hanna Real Estate Services, the third-largest and leading home seller in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Size matters in capital and raising awareness, says Riley, who joined the business in 1992 and became CEO in 2015. He and the Tate family retain equity in the combined firm.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
Infrastructure, including transportation, sewer, water, air quality, school performance and open space. Growth is a beautiful thing but has to be tied tightly with proper planning and funding. Few generations can create something special. Most states and cities are rehabbing, rebuilding, and reinvesting. We just have to do it right from the start and learn from others’ mistakes so that future generations look back and say we had our act together.

Share an insight about your community.
Having served on many nonprofit boards, we are a caring people, and we are all-in for doing the right things for all people.

What has been your biggest surprise about the state since you moved here?
I grew up in Lancaster, Pa., and served and chaired the planning commission for many years. The push and pull between the Amish and tourism, business development and growth — all the while preserving the beauty — was a constant give-and-take and arm-wrestle. It was no different then than the competing issues we are facing here.

What was your proudest 2018 moment?
Working with [Raleigh-based nonprofit] Best NC to reform, step-by-step, some of the building blocks to move our public schools ahead. Two examples include promoting leadership development for principals and mentoring for teachers.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
Giving back to the community is, and always will be, at the root of our legacy. We concentrate on public education, United Way agencies and the arts, because they ensure that home values appreciate and newcomers will continue to come. We make a difference in people’s lives with, in most cases, the biggest thing they possess: their home. It is a huge responsibility, and we’ve been involved in 22,000 transactions stretching from the Triangle down to Seneca, S.C. That’s my passion internally and externally: making a difference in the lives of our clients and team members.
BILL ROPER
FILLING THE VOID
70, INTERIM PRESIDENT, UNC SYSTEM
CHAPEL HILL
Maybe pain keeps him young. The CEO of UNC Health Care took a battering last year for promoting a partnership with Charlotte-based Atrium Health — critics accused him of selling out. Alas, the proposed combination fell apart. When UNC System President Margaret Spellings decided to move on after three years in Chapel Hill, the board picked Roper to take charge, starting in March. It showed the respect the University of Alabama-trained physician has built over his 21 years at UNC. He sits on the boards of DaVita and Express Scripts.

SEPIDEH SAIDI
PROJECT MANAGER
56, CEO AND PRESIDENT, SEPI
ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION
RALEIGH
An Iran native who moved to Raleigh in 1978, the N.C. State University graduate has built a company with more than 310 people at offices in the capital, Charlotte and Wilmington. Much of the firm’s business involves projects with the N.C. Department of Transportation, where she worked for 12 years before starting her firm in 2001. Saidi is the sole female on the RDU Airport Authority and a member of the NC Chamber’s board.

JUDE SAMULSKI
GENETIC CONDITION
65, DIRECTOR, GENE THERAPY CENTER, UNC CHAPEL HILL
CHAPEL HILL
In 1993, UNC Chapel Hill’s $430,000 grant enticed Samulski from the University of Pittsburgh. Since then, the molecular biologist has become a research superstar, studying the use of transplanted normal genes to fight genetic diseases. He holds more than 200 patents, and in 2016 sold Bamboo Therapeutics, created to advance his work, to Pfizer Inc. The deal could eventually be worth more than $600 million. That same year, Samulski met with Pope Francis at a blessing of children suffering from rare neurological diseases.

STEVE SHOWFETY
HIGH FLYER
71, PRESIDENT, KOURY CORP.
GREENSBORO
For two decades the East Carolina University graduate has led the developer whose interests include Four Seasons Town Centre mall and Grandover Resort & Conference Center, which completed a $10 million renovation last year. He also helps keep Piedmont Triad International Airport aloft, serving as chairman since 2014. Sign-

GERALD ROACH
WAKE RUNNER
60, MANAGING PARTNER, SMITH ANDERSON
RALEIGH
An alma mater WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY, B.A., J.D.

Leading the largest Triangle-based law firm and advising on mergers and capital raisings totaling billions of dollars is his day job. But Roach also exerts influence as chairman of the board of trustees at Wake Forest University, where his wife, Stephanie, and two children also are graduates. He’s also leading a multimillion-dollar fundraising campaign at White Memorial Presbyterian Church.

What is North Carolina’s key challenge?
The state is a national leader in economic growth, and that is going to continue over the next decade. Our challenges are to take advantage of that growth in a way that benefits rural counties as well as urban ones, provide infrastructure for growth, and have business leaders involved in promoting bipartisanship to enable N.C. to put its best foot forward.

Share an insight about your community.
The Triangle is remarkably diverse and inclusive. I would like to think the friendly Southern culture and N.C.’s progressive attitude over the last 75 years bring out the best in everyone. We need to continue to promote discourse and not discord.

What is something people don’t know about you?
I used to officiate football. I love to water ski. I like chick flicks.

Key 2018 accomplishment?
Does being a new grandfather count? Working as a team to raise $20 million at church to address the needs of future generations of our members and our communities.

What advice do you share with newcomers?
Have a good heart. Build relationships. Know what you don’t know. Seek other views. When feasible, make decisions incrementally. Focus on excellence rather than success. Attitude and outlook matter.

What do you enjoy most about your work?
The people I work with inside and outside the firm and the platform Smith Anderson provides to be involved in other interests that matter.
ing discounter Spirit Airlines was a high-light last year for PTI, which says it has a $2 billion annual economic impact.

**JIM SHUFORD**

**TAPE TITAN**

**52, CEO, STM INDUSTRIES**

**HICKORY**

**STEPHEN SHUFORD**

**STICKING WITH IT**

**50, CEO, SHURTAP TECHNOLOGIES**

**HICKORY**

In December, the family-owned business formed in 1880 announced plans for a $31.4 million Shurtape manufacturing and distribution plant that will create 100 jobs in Catawba County. It’s the latest expansion for a fifth-generation business that is the world’s second-largest tape maker, trailing only 3M Corp. The company’s 1,500-plus global employees make hundreds of kinds of tape, including Duck. The Shufords’ philanthropy includes an $18 million pledge to UNC Chapel Hill for business education.

**ANDREA SMITH**

**EFFICIENCY CZAR**

**51, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, BANK OF AMERICA**

**CHARLOTTE**

Smith’s job was created in 2015 because she was overseeing so many different projects involving efficiency, security, real estate and procurement. Last year she was given even more responsibility, including marketing, communications and data analytics. She’s also stayed active civically, chairing the Charlotte Chamber in 2017 and co-chairing the My Future NC Commission, which is pressing for improved public education across the state.

**HARRY SMITH JR.**

**BOARD GAMER**

**48, REAL-ESTATE INVESTOR**

**GREENVILLE**

Smith left his day job in 2014, two years after selling his Washington, D.C.-based Flanders air-filtration company. His key influence today lies in his role as chairman of the 28-member UNC System Board of Governors, where he has pushed for improved graduation rates and more efficient operations. Smith succeeded Asheville lawyer Lou Bissette in July, his term runs through 2020. Marred by infighting, increased politicization, debate over the removal of the Silent Sam Confederate statue at UNC Chapel Hill and the resignations of Carol Folt and Margaret Spellings, the board has faced more public scrutiny. Tension between Smith and East Carolina University Chancellor Cecil Staton over a student-housing project and other issues continues to simmer.

**DAVID STEVENS**

**SUNNY OUTLOOK**

**60, MID-SOUTH DIVISION PRESIDENT, SUNTRUST BANKS**

**DURHAM**

This year’s N.C. Bankers Association chairman worked for 29 years at Wachovia and Wells Fargo before jumping to Atlanta-based SunTrust in 2010 to lead its central N.C. region. He was promoted to his current post in 2014, overseeing business in the Carolinas and Tennessee. The Elon University graduate is also an NC Chamber director. SunTrust had 118 N.C. offices and $8.5 billion in deposits as of June 30, ranking fifth in the state.

**BEN SUTTON JR.**

**ATHLETIC SUPPORTER**

**60, FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN, TEALL CAPITAL**

**WINSTON-SALEM**

Few have had more influence on collegiate athletics than the Murfreesboro native who helped build ISP Sports and, later, IMG College into a business valued at $2.4 billion. He left IMG in 2015 and two years later formed a private-equity group whose investments include Winston-Salem’s minor-league baseball team and other sports-related businesses, an energy-beverage company, and a Napa Valley winery. A graduate of Wake Forest University School of Law, Sutton’s family foundation has given $40 million to his alma mater and other area nonprofits.

**TIM SWEENEY**

**EPIC SUCCESS**

**48, CEO, EPIC GAMES**

**CARY**

The University of Maryland graduate created video games and wrote software as a Baltimore teenager, then opened his business in 1991. Epic, which officially moved to Cary in 1999, struck gold with Fortnite, a shooter game that grossed an estimated $2.4 billion in 2018. Fortnite’s success prompted a company valuation of almost $15 billion in its most recent capital raising, according to The Wall Street Journal. Forbes estimates the boss’ net worth to be $1.8 billion. Chinese giant Tencent owns more than 40% of Epic.

**STEVEN TANGER**

**HE’S DEALIN’**

**70, CEO, TANGER FACTORY OUTLET CENTERS**

**GREENSBORO**

Nearly 189 million shoppers annually visit Tanger’s 44 outlet centers, where occupancy rates have topped 95% for more than 25 years. Unlike traditional malls, outlet stores haven’t faced the massive up，“people love a bargain, and in tough times, people need a bargain,” the company said in a November presentation. The UNC Chapel Hill graduate succeeded his late father, Stanley, as CEO in 2009. His name recognition will rise upon completion of an $85 million, 3,000-seat Gate City performing-arts center bearing his name. It is scheduled to open in 2020.

**DAVID TEPPER**

**THE NEW BIG CAT**

**61, OWNER, CAROLINA PANTHERS**

**CHARLOTTE**

The manager of $14 billion in assets took his eyes off CNBC and Bloomberg long enough last year to buy the Carolina Panthers for $2.3 billion. While the team’s late-season collapse stunned fans, Tepper didn’t take a wrecking ball to his new business, retaining Coach Ron Rivera. He also hired two veteran sports-business executives to run the team, knowing that NFL honeymoons are notoriously short.

**MIKE WALDRUM**

**CRITICAL CARETAKER**

**56, CEO, VIDANT HEALTH**

**GREENVILLE**

The University of Michigan MBA has pushed back hard against efforts by State Treasurer Dale Folwell to cut charges to members of the giant State Health Plan. He’s organized grassroots support for the not-for-profit $1.7 billion institution, which operates a regional medical center and seven community hospitals. He’s also criticized Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina for using its influence to hurt N.C. hospitals. A critical-care physician, he came to North Carolina in 2015 after leading university hospitals in Tucson, Ariz., and Birmingham, Ala. He chairs the N.C. Healthcare Association board.

**ANDY WARLICK**

**TEXTILE TITAN**

**61, CEO, PARKDALE**

**CASTONIA**

To hear him tell it, America’s manufacturing system is broken, which is why many textile companies have offshore or disappeared. But privately held Parkdale thrives with about 30 plants and distribution centers in the U.S., South America and Mexico. Warlick, who assumed the mantle in 2000 from textile legend Duke Kimberl, his father-in-law, credits innovation and automation. He’s also shown a conscience, pioneering zero landfill manufacturing and use of biodegradable materials. The Citadel grad is a minority owner of Michael Jordan’s Charlotte Hornets.
Michael Smith  
**TOWER POWER**  
50, President & CEO, Charlotte Center City Partners  
**CHARLOTTE**

Alma maters  
UNC Chapel Hill, B.S.  
Northwestern University, MBA

In downtown Charlotte, cranes reign: In its 2018 annual report, the center-city booster group reported 5.1 million square feet of office space, 8,363 housing units and 2,276 hotel rooms planned or under construction. A spate of announcements near the end of the year, including new towers planned by Duke Energy and Lincoln Harris, and emerging development along the 9.3-mile light-rail extension will accelerate the growth. At the helm of the downtown organization is Smith, who has held the position since 2005 and received $482,000 in compensation in 2016, the group’s most recent filing shows. With this month’s NBA All-Star Weekend and the Republican National Convention in 2020, Smith and his organization will be busier than ever.

**What is North Carolina’s key challenge?**
How we maintain the values and essence that have drawn us all to this state while growing exponentially. This is a first-world problem, but it will require intentionality. These are the challenges we normally face at the city-planning level, but we now must consider them at a statewide level as they present themselves in our approach to public education, inclusive economic development, affordable housing, congestion and natural-resource conservation.

**What is something people don’t know about you?**
Live music shows recharge my soul. I am constantly seeking out live music in a variety of settings—from breweries to intimate music halls to outdoor venues.

**Key 2018 accomplishment?**
This decade will be center city’s most prolific for residential, office and hotel construction. We will deliver more housing than the previous three decades combined and will increase our office supply by 42% and our hotel-room inventory by 73%.

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**
I am able to bring my faith and belief system to work every day. This is mission-based work for me. It is a calling. I have an amazing board—some of the best minds in our city—and a talented staff that is the best in their respective fields. Because we are in the city-building business, everybody brings their A-game to our work.

Jim Whitehurst  
**MIXING RED AND BLUE**  
51, President and CEO, Red Hat  
**RALEIGH**

Since joining the major distributor of open-source software and technology, Whitehurst has helped grow Red Hat’s revenue from more than $523 million in February 2008 to nearly $3 billion for the fiscal year ending Feb. 2018. Red Hat is being acquired by tech giant IBM in a deal valued at about $34 billion, the third-biggest in U.S. tech history. The Harvard MBA previously served as chief operating officer at Delta Air Lines.

Fred Whitfield  
**GETTING BUZZED**  
60, President, Charlotte Hornets  
**CHARLOTTE**

Charlotte has been selected to host this month’s 2019 NBA All-Star Weekend thanks in part to the Hornet head honcho and his push to repeal HB2, which required transgender people to use the bathroom of their gender at birth. Controversy over the so-called “bathroom bill” had caused the NBA to rescind its selection of Charlotte as the site of the 2017 All-Star Weekend in favor of New Orleans. The weekend is taking place during the Hornets’ 30th anniversary season and is expected to have an impact of about $100 million. Whitfield, an N.C. Central University law school grad who has been president since 2006, has overseen the team’s rebranding and arena renovations.

Eugene Woods  
**WARD DEALER**  
54, CEO, Atrium Health  
**CHARLOTTE**

While state officials blocked the combination of the state’s biggest health care system with UNC Health Care, the Penn State MBA stayed busy in his third year in North Carolina by changing the not-for-profit’s name, settling a federal antitrust lawsuit without admitting wrongdoing, unveiling a $1 billion capital-projects plan, buying a Macon, Ga.-based hospital group and battling a couple of physician groups that disagreed with system policy. A former chairman of the American Hospital Association, Woods joined Best Buy’s board last year.

Randy Woodson  
**PACK ATTACK**  
61, Chancellor, N.C. State University  
**RALEIGH**

As N.C. State’s profile rises amid demand for technology and life-sciences workers, so does Woodson’s. He’s the highest-paid chancellor in the UNC System at $664,387 and last year received a contract extension through June 2023. Fundraising is a big part of Woodson’s job leading the system’s largest institution, which in mid-December said it had raised more than $1.4 billion toward a $1.6 billion capital-campaign goal. Woodson has a Ph.D. in plant physiology from Cornell University. He was provost at Purdue before coming to N.C. State in 2010.
There’s influence, and then there’s serious influence: These senior business leaders are no longer as active in day-to-day affairs but still wield enormous clout.

**John Atkins**
Durham architect, civic activist in various Triangle area projects

**Don Beaver**
Hickory nursing-home kingpin owns Charlotte’s minor-league baseball team

**Smoky Bissell**
Veteran developer who sold his Ballantyne office park for $1.2 billion to Northwood investors

**Erskine Bowles**
Charlotte investment banker; director at Facebook, Morgan Stanley

**Frank Daniels Jr.**
Veteran newspaper executive; part owner of business North Carolina

**Dick Daugherty**
Retired IBM executive and longtime promoter of Research Triangle Park

**Paul Fulton**
Ex-Sara Lee president; leads group favoring more higher-ed spending

**Allen Gant Jr.**
Chairman and former CEO of Triad textile giant Glen Raven

**Boyd George**
CEO of Hickory-based Alex Lee, owner of Lowes foods and merchants distributors

**Jim Goodmon**
CEO and chairman of Capitol Broadcasting, owner of WRAL, Durham Bull and American North Carolina campus

**Johnny Harris**
Charlotte developer and civic leader, heir to the Morrison land fortune

**Bob Ingram**
Former CEO of Glaxo Wellcome; private-equity investor in health care

**Leon Levine**
Founder of Family Dollar stores; now a prominent philanthropist

**Bobby Long**
Sold his life-insurance business; backs many Triad projects and events

**James Maynard**
Founder of Golden Corral restaurant chain; private-equity investor

**Hugh McColl Jr.**
Retired CEO of Bank of America; Charlotte’s most famous leader

**Jim Melvin**
Ex-banker and former Greensboro mayor; heads Bryan Foundation

**Wendell Murphy**
Leading pork producer; former state senator; N.C. State University booster

**Mack Pearsall**
Lawyer who has held key civic leadership roles in rocky mount, Asheville

**Russell Robinson**
Law-firm founder who has represented many key business leaders

**O. Temple Sloan Jr.**
Founder of General Parts, bought by Advance Auto for $2 billion in 2014

**O. Bruton Smith**
Created public companies for his car dealerships, NASCAR speedways

**Sherwood Smith Jr.**
CEO of Carolina Power & Light for 17 years; led $442M capital campaign at UNC Chapel Hill

**Fred Stanback**
Headache powder heir and best man at Warren Buffett’s wedding; major donor to environmental groups

**Mike Weaver**
Greensboro contractor, developer, investor and philanthropist

**Jerry and Steve Wordsworth**
Rocky Mount brothers sold their food distributor to Berkshire Hathaway in 2012, had more than 15% stake in Carolina Panthers

**Smedes York**
Former Raleigh mayor, veteran contractor and real-estate investor

**Bob Young**
Founder of Red Hat; early investor and former CEO of drone-equipment supplier PrecisionHawk