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## **Creative Gift Packaging expands in Rutherford County**

**Forest City, NC** – The Rutherford County Economic Development Commission is pleased to announce that Creative Gift Packaging headquartered in Rutherford County, NC is expanding their warehouse, online fulfillment center, call center and distribution operation to 650 NC Hwy 120 off of US 74 in Mooresboro, NC. Creative Gift Packaging plans to maintain their retail and classroom activity at 763 US Hwy 221A.

Creative Gift Packaging is a local company that has become a leader in the decorative craft industry, currently shipping orders to every state in the US along with exporting to the United Kingdom and Canada. The company got its start in 2000 when Angie Bridges needed high quality supplies for her gift basket business. She began to offer the surplus supplies for sale on eBay. She reinvested the money from her eBay sales and expanded her list of craft supplies. The business kept growing and Angie Bridges and her husband Josh, along with other family members are now completing their sixth expansion. The new warehouse location will also serve as a Call Center and Shipping Hub for the online sales division.

Josh Bridges, company CEO, said that the company explored many options and ultimately determined that the best opportunity for their expansion was to lease an existing building for their warehouse, online order fulfillment center, call center and distribution center. Josh stated that: “Rutherford County Economic Development helped us in our building search. Finding the right building at the right price kept us from relocating outside the county. Our company is now poised for continued growth and expansion due to the efforts of the Business Expansion and Retention Program – Work, Grow, Thrive! In addition, the Rutherford County Economic Development Commission introduced financing options, and continues to work with service providers to meet our needs for future fiber demand.”

As a result of this expansion, Creative Gift Packaging began warehouse and distribution operations in January, 2014 at the Highway 120 location with 10 employees plus another 3 employees at their existing retail operation. As a result of this latest expansion, four new jobs were created. The company has invested time, energy and effort in their new facility with assistance and support from the building owner and through the Small Business Administration, NC Department of Commerce Western Region, and NC Department of Commerce Broadband Division.

County Commission Chairman Bill Eckler stated, “When a local company is able to expand and create new jobs, that’s definitely great news for Rutherford County. When the Business Retention and Expansion program was put in place, we were hopeful that existing businesses would know that we put a lot of importance in assisting their long term success.”

The mission of the Rutherford County Economic Development Commission is to retain and recruit new jobs to the county for both industrial and commercial development. Rutherford County has a population of 63,000 and is centrally located between Charlotte, NC, Asheville, NC and Greenville, SC. With strong infrastructure in roads, water, sewer and fiber the county is well positioned for growth as the economy has improved.