

AN NC CHAMBER EVENT

Education & Workforce Conference

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DURHAM, NC

Secretary Machelle Sanders North Carolina Department of Commerce

In February 2021, Governor Cooper appointed Secretary Machelle Baker Sanders to lead the North Carolina Department of Commerce, enlisting her experience as former Administration Secretary, strong background as a business leader and her extensive knowledge of what it takes to build a globally competitive workforce. Secretary Sanders' vision for North Carolina's post-pandemic economic restoration is to work with partners to attract better paying jobs, support small businesses, and stimulate our state's innovation and entrepreneurial economy. Her bold and purposeful leadership aims to ensure North Carolina's diverse state is an inclusive one that works for all people.



Sanders brings 30 years of strong management and leadership experience to Commerce as a seasoned pharmaceutical and biotechnology executive, previously serving as vice president of manufacturing and general manager of Biogen's largest manufacturing facility in Research Triangle Park. She's also held leadership positions overseeing manufacturing, global quality assurance and quality control functions at Biogen, Purdue Pharmaceuticals, and Diosynth-Akzo Nobel.

A graduate of North Carolina State University, Sanders holds a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry and a Master of Health Administration from Pfeiffer University. As a native North Carolinian and mother of twin daughters, she is passionate about improving the status of women in our state. She is a member of the International Women's Forum and OnBoard NC. Some of her work includes creating a Women's Innovation Network at Biogen and the Lady Cardinals STEM Program for High School students while at North Carolina Department of Administration. After all, as Sanders puts it, "Improving the status of women in North Carolina is not just a woman's issue – it is a family, poverty, and economic issue."

Sanders is also a strong supporter of diversity, equity and inclusion, believing that "you can't be what you can't see." She previously served as the Chair of the North Carolina Commission on Inclusion, North Carolina Complete Count Commission, and the Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental, and Health Equity Task Force. Additionally, she serves on the Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs (ICCHP), Commission of Indian Affairs, and the North Carolina State University Board of Visitors.

Secretary Sanders' experience and passion to improve the lives of North Carolinians uniquely positions her to lead North Carolina's portfolio of work in economic, community, and workforce development.