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Organization of  
American States

# FINAL REPORT

## The Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship

First Edition: March 31st – April 4th  
in the United States

### #ACXchange

-  Atlanta, GA
-  Greenville, SC
-  Conover, NC
-  Kannapolis, NC
-  Charlotte, NC

A RIAC Activity towards the  
VIII Americas Competitiveness Forum



VIII AMERICAS  
COMPETITIVENESS FORUM  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
2014

# INDEX

## FINAL REPORT

- 3** About the Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship

---

- 4** Convening Institutions

---

- 5** Agenda

---

- 11** List of Participants

---

- 15** List of Contacts in the Visits

---

- 19** Testimonials

---

- 27** Survey Results

---

- 28** Website with Documentation & Power Point Presentations

---

- 29** Photos

---

- 30** The Exchange @ Twitter

---

- 31** Press Releases

---

- 33** More Information and Support

# About The Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACE) was a high-level visit and cooperative exchange that was organized by the U.S. Government and the Organization of American States through the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC).

The Exchange showcased advanced technology centers, innovation hubs and public-private partnerships and investments in urban and rural American cities: Atlanta, Greenville, Conover, Kannapolis and Charlotte. Sites visits were organized to research and development centers in the medical, agro-industrial, manufacturing, and automotive industries through the States of Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, some of which were featured in the 2012 and 2013 Signs of Competitiveness in the Americas Reports. This was the first activity under RIAC's Work Plan for 2014 to deepen the exchange of the more than 100 successful experiences that countries have shared through RIAC.

The ACE was a great opportunity for decision and policy makers in the Americas to see the results of economic development initiatives and meet high level authorities, leaders of private sector associations, public and private universities with research and innovation centers, looking to explore and expand the links between our economies and key stakeholders.

# Convening Institutions

The Exchange was convened by the U.S. Government and the Organization of American States through the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC).

The Exchange was made possible thanks to the support of the RIAC Chair Pro Tempore 2014, the Honourable Bhoendradatt Tewarie, Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development of Trinidad and Tobago; the United States Government through the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of State; and the OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development.



Organization of American States

## Financial support

Partial economic assistance was available for qualified nominated participants that requested support, particularly from smaller economies.

Financial support for this activity was provided by the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada through its Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD).



# Agenda

## Monday, March 31

Time	Activity and Location	Host
5:15 PM	<b>Group Welcome &amp; Introduction</b> Omni Hotel Cottonwood Room Atlanta, GA	<b>Walter Bastian</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce International Trade Administration
6:00 PM	<b>Opening Reception and Networking Event</b> Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Rooftop 235 Andrew Young International Blvd NW Atlanta, GA	<b>Jorge Fernandez</b> Vice President of Global Commerce Metro Atlanta Chamber  <b>Walter Bastian</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce International Trade Administration  <b>Congressman Filemon Vela</b> (D – TX 34)  <b>Congressman Beto O'Rourke</b> (D – TX 16)  <b>Tom Guevara</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Economic Development Administration  <b>Sherry Tross</b> Executive Secretary for Integral Development Organization of American States  <b>Vinai Thummalapally</b> Executive Director SelectUSA

## Tuesday, April 1

Time	Activity and Location	Host
8:00 AM	<b>Continental Breakfast</b> GCMI 575 14TH ST, NW Atlanta, GA 30318	<b>Global Center for Medical Innovation (GCMI)</b>

# Agenda

Time	Activity and Location	Host
8:45 AM	<b>Discussion: GCMI, Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC), and VentureLab</b> GCMI 575 14TH ST, NW Atlanta, GA 30318	<b>Dr. Steve Cross</b> Executive Vice President Georgia Institute of Technology
9:30 AM	<b>Group 1: Tour of GCMI</b> <b>Group 2: Overview of ATDC Incubator</b>	<b>Group 1: Tiffany Karp</b> Executive Director – GCMI <b>Group 2: KP Reddy</b> General Manager – ATDC
9:50 AM	<b>Group 1: Overview of ATDC Incubator</b> <b>Group 2: Tour of GCMI</b>	<b>Group 1: KP Reddy</b> General Manager – ATDC <b>Group 2: Tiffany Karp</b> Executive Director – GCMI
10:30 AM	<b>Group 1: Tour of ATDC</b> <b>Group 2: Discussion: The Georgia Tech University Center</b> 75 5TH ST NW Atlanta, GA 30308	<b>Group 1: KP Reddy</b> General Manager – ATDC <b>Group 2: Charles Ross</b> Director, Start Up Network
10:50 AM	<b>Group 1: Discussion: The Georgia Tech University Center</b> 75 5TH ST NW Atlanta, GA 30308 <b>Group 2: Tour of ATDC</b> University Center 75 5TH ST NW Atlanta, GA 30308	<b>Group 1: Charles Ross</b> Director, Start Up Network <b>Group 2: KP Reddy</b> General Manager – ATDC
11:45 AM	<b>Lunch</b> Hodges Room Centergy	
12:15 PM	<b>Discussion: Jobs Accelerator Atlanta Health Information Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and VentureLab</b>	<b>Marla Gorges</b> Executive Vice President Health@E12 Georgia Tech/SETAAC <b>Karen Fite</b> Director of the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership <b>Keith McGregor</b> Director – VentureLab
2:30 PM	<b>Board Bus for Greenville, SC</b>	<b>Kevin Johnson</b> Invest Atlanta <b>GCMG</b>

# Agenda

## Time

7:30 PM

## Activity and Location

**Greenville Dinner and Networking Reception**

Clemson at One  
1 North Main ST  
Greenville, SC

## Host

**Knox White**  
Mayor Greenville

**Walter Bastian**  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
of Commerce International  
Trade Administration

**Greenville Chamber  
of Commerce**

## Wednesday, April 2

## Time

9:00 AM

## Activity and Location

**Discussion:** Clemson University  
International Center for Automotive  
Research (CU-ICAR)

**1. CU-ICAR + Component Testing Lab  
(CTL) Overview**

**2. Academic Model – Automotive  
Engineering at CU-ICAR**

TD Gallery Ground Level, Partnership  
Place, 5 Research Drive Greenville, SC

## Host

**Fred Cartwright**  
Executive Director  
CU-ICAR

**Dr. Imtiaz Haque**  
Executive Director of the  
Carroll A. Campbell Graduate  
Engineering Center and  
Founding Chair of the  
Department of Automotive  
Engineering  
Clemson University

10:00 AM

**SC Department of Commerce Discussion:  
Public Private Partnerships**

**Secretary of Commerce  
Bobby Hitt**  
State of South Carolina

10:45 AM

**Discussion: A.J. Whittenberg  
Elementary School of Engineering**

**Dr. Nikolaos (Nick) Rigas**  
Director of the SCE&G  
Energy Innovation Center and  
Executive Director of the  
Restoration Institute  
Clemson University

12:30 PM

**SCE&G Energy Innovation Center:  
A Model in Public/Private Partnership**

**Dr. Nikolaos (Nick) Rigas**  
Director of the SCE&G  
Energy Innovation Center  
and Executive Director of  
the Restoration Institute  
Clemson University

# Agenda

Time	Activity and Location	Host
1:00 PM	<b>CU-ICAR Campus Tour (CGEC, CTL, ETC.)</b>	<b>Rob McDaris</b> – Manager – CU-ICAR
2:00 PM	<b>Discussion:</b> Association of University Research Parks (AURP) & Best Practices in Economic Development	<b>Eileen Walker</b> Chief Executive Officer Association of University Research Parks
4:00 PM	<b>Tour of BMW Manufacturing</b> 1400 Highway 101 South, Greer, SC 29651	<b>Kevin Byrne</b> Vice President and COO University Financing Foundation
7:30 PM	<b>Tour of BMW Manufacturing</b> 1400 Highway 101 South, Greer, SC 29651	<b>Max Metcalf</b> Communications Manager BMW
7:30 PM	<b>Group Photo &amp; Meet Upstate International Hosts for Dinner</b> Falls Park Entrance on Main Street Waterfalls of Downtown Greenville	<b>Amber Struggs</b> BMW

## Thursday, April 3

Time	Activity and Location	Host
9:30 AM	<b>Welcome</b> 301 Conover Station SE, Conover, NC 28613	<b>Mayor Lee Moritz</b> City of Conover
10:00 AM	<b>Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC) History and Its Evolution</b>	<b>Tom Guevara</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Economic Development Administration
		<b>Walter Bastian</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce International Trade Administration
		<b>Mayor Lee Moritz</b> President Catawba Valley Community College
		<b>Dan St. Louis</b> MSC Director



# Agenda

Time	Activity and Location	Host
10:30 AM	Tour of MSC	
NOON	Lunch and Networking with Businesses from MSC	
1:15 PM	Board Bus for Kannapolis, NC	
2:30 PM	Discussion and Tour of North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis 150 Research Campus Drive, Kannapolis, NC 28081	<b>Clyde Higgs</b> Vice President Business Development NC Research Campus  <b>Patrick Coughlin</b> President & CEO Cabarrus Regional Chamber of Commerce Partnership  <b>Darrell Hinnant</b> Mayor - Kannapolis  <b>Mike Legg</b> City Manager - Kannapolis
5:00 PM	Board Bus for Charlotte	
7:15 PM	Networking Reception with Community Partners, Dinner with Acting Charlotte Mayor and Industry Leaders Mint Museum Uptown 500 S. Tryon Street Charlotte, NC 28202	<i>Acting Mayor of Charlotte</i> <b>Matt Erskine</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce - Economic Development Administration  <b>Walter Bastian</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce - International Trade Administration  <b>Nancy Carter</b> Chair International Cabinet  <b>Lawrence Gumbiner</b> Deputy U.S. Permanent Representative at the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States  Other Public and Private Sector Leaders from The Greater Charlotte Metro Region

# Agenda

## Friday, April 4

Time	Activity and Location	Host
8:00 AM	<b>Tour and Discussion of EPIC/IDEAS Center</b> UNC Charlotte 8700 Phillips RD, Charlotte, NC 28223	Vice President UNC Charlotte
10:15 AM	<b>Tour and Discussion of Packard Place</b> 222 S Church ST, Charlotte, NC 28202	
11:45 AM	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	<b>Matt Erskine</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Economic Development Administration <b>Tom Guevara on behalf of Walter Bastian</b> <b>Walter Bastian</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce International Trade Administration <b>Tom Guevara</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs Economic Development Administration

# List of Participants

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# List of Contacts in the Visits

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# Testimonials



**Name:** Claudine Tracey

**Title:** General Manager of Strategic Services at the Development Bank of Jamaica

This activity has been tremendously useful. It has shown how each city, how each town has its own unique approach to building its business people, using innovation, using entrepreneurship to promote sustainable economic growth for each area. So it has been extremely useful in terms of grabbing lessons that we can implement in Jamaica.

I see possible links for collaboration with other countries. I see the potential for collaboration for our small businesses and a widening of opportunities for incubation and product testing. These opportunities can ultimately promote and facilitate greater trade between participating countries. I also see collaboration at the governmental level for further interaction and further sharing of knowledge and best practices.



**Name:** Ana Laffite Licona

**Title:** Vice Principal - Unitec, Honduras.

The exchange has been widely useful, especially in my industry -private higher education. In our UNITEC campus in San Pedro Sula we are beginning to develop a "smart city" concept, with technology and business parks revolving around the university. Therefore, understanding the integration of academia and industry through practical examples after our visits is very useful and productive, providing new ideas and helping us assess our progress to get to the next phase.

I see concrete opportunities for subsequent collaborative actions. For me, it was especially useful to make connections with members from other universities in order to promote our university's international programs.

# Testimonials



**Name:** Guillermo Fernández De la Garza

**Title:** Executive Director, Mexico-United States Foundation for Science (FUMEC)

This exchange has been very useful. There was an excellent selection of locations and the interviews with experts have been very enriching, with great interest from the people who

manage the programs visited. This open and very positive attitude is appreciated, as it will surely facilitate ongoing exchanges.

This Exchange has also been very helpful for Mexico. What I see here is precisely the possibility to build on the communications and contacts that we have had, so that we can begin to establish a set of arrangements for Mexican specialists come to see the facilities and the programs that are here, certainly looking to establish programs with future reach.



**Name:** Anne Reid

**Title:** CEO of the Barbados Private Sector Association

This Exchange has really not just fulfilled, but has exceeded my expectations. I understood it was an exchange on entrepreneurship and innovation and that information will be shared that you can pass on. However, what I'm really so

excited about and what has really exceeded my expectations is the quality of the presentations, the exposure to facilities such as I have not seen before and the networking opportunities. This Exchange was organized and information presented in a manner that made it easy to understand within a week how best to transfer the knowledge to your own nation.

The presentations focused mainly on building economic development and job creation through private-public partnerships. This information is very relevant to our island Barbados at this particular point in time. We need a new vision for the future. The knowledge gained and the exposure to the various facilities we visited makes it easier to contribute to the crafting of that vision and it gave valuable insight into the implementation process.

We saw that communities facing economic challenges didn't just get disheartened, but they got together, they partnered, they collaborated, showing the power of networking. The enthusiasm that these persons showed, and which communities now have when they have seen the finished project, was an encouragement. We also saw that enthusiasm didn't come when success was attained but it was what actually propelled them through the difficult time. We were reminded that change is a difficult process but if you keep at it there will be the reward on the other side.

Having participated in the Exchange I am more motivated to encourage stakeholders to collaborate more to drive entrepreneurship and innovation through public private partnerships. This is important as the emphasis needs to be on team-work, as one presenter said so eloquently "We don't need to be that one person to take the credit. We all can take the credit."

I must add that the value of team work was well demonstrated by the organizers of this Competitiveness Exchange. Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate.

# Testimonials



**Name:** Dr. Rikhiraj Permanand

**Title:** Executive Director of the Economic Development Board and Council for Competitiveness and Innovation from Trinidad and Tobago

This Exchange has been very useful as we got an opportunity to understand how large cities and rural areas have been able

to transform their economies and how we can use and develop innovation to create sustainable economic development. The importance of STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math - as part of the education curriculum from kindergarten to tertiary education, the transfer of technology from universities to the private sector and the importance of developing entrepreneurs through incubators and business accelerators have clearly been demonstrated as pathways for successful economic growth.

I leave the Exchange with a commitment to collaborate with my counterparts who participated in this programme as well as those who were kind enough to give of their time to showcase their initiatives in Atlanta and North and South Carolina. Specifically, I want to understand the ATDC 'Start Up Gauntlet' boot camp for start-up entrepreneurs for application in Trinidad & Tobago; to obtain the survey instrument developed for the Manufacturing Extension Programme and apply to manufacturers in Trinidad & Tobago and to review the Cabarrus PPP Economic Development model in the context of the EDB in Trinidad & Tobago.

This exchange comes at a timely moment as Trinidad & Tobago prepares to host the VIII Americas Competitiveness Forum, which will take place from October 8 to 10, 2014 in Port-of-Spain under the theme "Human Imagination at Work – Driving Innovation and Competitiveness". What we have been shown demonstrates that the world is changing rapidly and to stay ahead we need to innovate through collaboration between academia, private sector and public sector.



**Name:** Tamara Vasquez

**Title:** Coordinator of the areas of Innovation and Sustainable Tourism, National Competitiveness Council of Dominican Republic

This Exchange, organized by the RIAC, has been an impactful activity. Experiencing the dynamics and the relationships between the public sector, private sector and academia is

certainly a great practice for us to take back to our country. The relationships and contacts made with different actors are also fundamental, as they may become key strategic partners in the short term to develop activities in the country through the Council.

For the Dominican Republic, an important part of these visits is to experience and learn about the efforts undertaken through incubators and business acceleration initiatives, so that we may assess the types of efforts that we can adapt.

The Exchange and the opportunity to share with colleagues from other countries in the region is undoubtedly a unique networking experience. 19 countries are here, most of which share common interests and realities. Therefore, the value of the exchange is unquestionable. With Mexico, for example, we had great exchanges and there are also good practices in other countries that could certainly be developed.

# Testimonials



**Name:** Andrés Córdoba

**Title:** President of Ecuador's College of Textile Engineers

The exchange is very timely for Ecuador, as it develops a new economic model based on productive relations, in which entrepreneurs' involvement is substantial as the basis for this change.

We consider this Exchange very useful and hope that with the help of the OAS and the Department of Commerce of the United States we will have the opportunity to develop some actions. Specifically, we would like to replicate the model followed by the Manufacturing Solutions Center in the Textile and Apparel Production Development Centre of Ecuador as they both share similar elements.



**Name:** Jalima Gómez

**Title:** Manager of the National Exportable Supply of ProNicaragua, Official Government Agency for Investment and Export Promotion

This exchange has been very enriching. The visits to different companies, institutions, universities and research centers

provided us with a lot of knowledge and interesting ideas that can be developed in our own countries. Participating was worthwhile for Nicaragua and I see potential for future collaboration.

There is much to follow-up on, such as the network of contacts and support developed, both from the United States and other participating countries. Also, we had the opportunity to meet and learn from different companies and agencies with extensive expertise in their fields.

The experience has been very rewarding as it has given us knowledge that will definitely allow us to undertake better actions. Education is necessarily the beginning of the process to develop a country, and through this exchange we have been able to absorb knowledge and innovation elements to bring to our institutions.

# Testimonials



**Name:** Matt Erskine

**Title:** Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development

This exchange has been tremendous in terms of sharing best practices in innovation in economic development with our western hemisphere partners. We were proud to showcase the amazing work that's being done in the United States to spur innovation and create the jobs of the future. I thank our partners in Atlanta, Greenville, Conover, Charlotte, and Kannapolis for inviting us to see their projects firsthand and for demonstrating how important wide, regional collaboration was to ensuring success.

We hope this is the beginning of continued viable conversations and partnerships moving forward.



**Name:** Thomas Guevara

**Title:** Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

I think this has been a fabulous exchange. The exchange far exceeded our expectations as a vehicle for increasing the dialogue between the United States and Latin

American and Caribbean countries and members of the OAS and to further hands-on opportunities for mutual investment and trade. Critically, based on the feedback that I received from the participants, the exchange went way beyond our expectations in terms of generating excitement, opportunities and dialogue. I consider this is just the beginning as opposed to the end of our engagement.

When we exchange best practices, when we exchange ideas, when we exchange contexts and develop relationships between various countries, parties, and organizations, it promotes greater opportunity for future investment that will benefit the entire hemisphere. That was our goal.

We will continue to share best practices and continue to develop relationships where individuals and the countries and the organizations they represent will have further opportunities to engage and, perhaps, develop mutually beneficial projects going forward. We look forward to staying in touch and continuing this critical dialogue.

# Testimonials



**Name:** Lee E. Moritz Jr.  
**Title:** Mayor City of Conover, NC

The City of Conover and Manufacturing Solutions Center are proud to have been selected as one of the host cities in the first American Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACE). The ACE provided all participants with

the opportunity for mutually beneficial economic development between OAS member states and the City of Conover.

The alliances created during the ACE have generated significant opportunity for international sourcing, subassembly, and production of manufactured goods. This is a step toward a new manufacturing economy based upon collaboration in both the public and private sector.

For too long, governments have lured manufacturers away from each other. This is not a sustainable policy. Conover and MSC have taken a different approach. It is not important where the job is created, but the fact it is created. Whether jobs are created in Conover, a neighboring city, or out of state, in the end, a rising tide floats all ships.

I want to thank the OAS, State Department, and the Department of Commerce for the opportunity and recognize DAS Tom Guevera for his comments regarding Conover and MSC "This is truly an example of the next generation of job creation."



**Name:** Brad Richardson, CECD  
**Title:** Economic Development Manager, Neighborhood & Business Services, City of Charlotte

The Exchange offered Charlotte a wonderful opportunity to showcase the public-private partnerships that transformed Charlotte's economic landscape through innovation and

entrepreneurship. Bringing thought leaders from such a wide variety of nations created an atmosphere that is conducive to the sharing of ideas, which was beneficial not only for the men and women visiting, but the host organizations as well. By taking time to find a space to discuss how educational institutions, companies, incubators and the government work together all participants were given the chance to find a relatable story to help accelerate their own vision.

Sharing models from a cross-section of sectors enable the delegates to find a system that will work in their own communities, helping them to create their own blend of entrepreneurial spirit through collaboration. Cultivating resources for information and creating connections to support innovation will insure continued economic growth in the Americas.



# Testimonials

**Walter Bastian**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere**  
**International Trade Administration**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**

“While economic powerhouses like New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago are valuable to study, studying smaller cities has allowed exchange participants a local view of successful economic development. For example, I put Greenville on the tour in part because of its success with public-private collaborations such as the one that developed ICAR. I thought it was a wonderful example for our colleagues in Latin America to be able to bring them together to hear how the government works with the universities and the private sector.”

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**Sherry Tross**  
**Executive Secretary for Integral Development**  
**Organization of American States**

“The Exchange for Competitiveness is part of the task of facilitating dialogue and defining public policies, because all countries have something to offer and this kind of innovation and entrepreneurship diplomacy creates win-win solutions. All these experiences in the United States and the Americas, have changed paradigms and ways of doing business in our countries, transformed public-private partnerships and encouraged the creation of new businesses and entrepreneurs. Many of the leaders shaping regional economic development and directing innovation centers in 20 countries of the Americas are part of this Exchange. This is an excellent opportunity to promote high-value regional development, building on mutually beneficial cooperation opportunities.”

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**Julian J. Robinson.**  
**Minister of State of Jamaica**  
**Ministry of Science, Technology and Mining**

“What has been beneficial is to understand how important the automotive industry is to Greenville. While not everything is directly applicable, we ought to take back the salient points, use it in our own situation back in Jamaica. Jamaica has plans for an incubator for early stage entrepreneurs, which is slated to launch in September, and plans to build a venture capital ecosystem to help fund entrepreneurship and innovation in the country, said Robinson. One of the challenges for entrepreneurs is that they don't have access to traditional sources of financing from banks,” he said. Now that we're here in Greenville, which is heavily automotive geared, we're understanding the kinds of programs that have been put in place to ensure that there is innovation and entrepreneurship.”

# Testimonials

**Liliana Reyes Castrejón**  
**Venture Capital Director**  
**National Entrepreneurship Institute in Mexico**

“I was impressed by the Core Lab and the campus as a whole in Kannapolis. I think it’s a great example that you can do great things if you have these partnerships in private and public areas. It’s a wonderful experience to realize that it could be possible to develop this kind of university research centers.”

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**Cesar Parga**  
**Chief of the Section of Competitiveness, Innovation and Technology**  
**Department of Economic and Social Development**  
**Organization of American States**

“I think one of the spirits of this exchange is that the United States is a big and important partner for many of the countries, but in this day and age, cooperation is about everyone. Economic development and innovation can come from any corner of every state in every country, and I think nurturing and building networks is a critical component to having a prosperous Americas.”

# Survey Results

The following information contains an overall evaluation and suggestions provided by the participants of the First Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship resulted from a survey that was distributed at the end of the activity.

## **Summary of results:**

- Around 95% of the participants expressed that the Exchange fulfilled their expectations and around 80% thought that the activity exceeded their expectations.
- Around 90% of participants considered that the multinational character of the program was favorable to promote collaborations, showed their satisfaction for the useful mix of the participants and expressed that the quality of the presentations and the balance-diversity of cities and programs presented were excellent.
- Around 95% of the participants would consider participating in a similar program in the future in the United States or in another country such as Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay. It was also expressed the interest of visiting Asia (Korea).
- The most commonly selected topics for the next tour in the US were Agro-Industry, Manufacturing, IT, electronics, Innovation Services, etc.
- The programs and experiences that were listed as the most helpful to learn about were Georgia Tech, Venture Lab, Clemson University (CU-ICAR), Conover's Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC), NC Research Campus.

## **Collaboration opportunities that participants were able to develop through the Exchange:**

- First hand collaboration between the three sectors, academia-public-private sectors with many meetings in which they could get to know the players in other countries.
- Promotion of alliance with research institutions including alliances with some of the institution participants with obtaining the information to be included at the public proposals.
- Interchange of contacts with other countries, US agencies, universities and institutions

## **Recommendations for the organizers:**

- Give more time to participants to get to know better each other, introduce themselves and exchange ideas.
- Schedule more break times between visits and presentations. An option is to make the program longer or shorter.
- Organize workshops related to the development models.
- Give priority to the follow-up process and accompany the processes. Participants were willing to explore the possibility of deepening the exchange of knowledge with most of the experts, promote technical visits and exchanges, training programs, adapting the models, etc.
- Build a website with all the documents, power point presentations and photos.
- Facilitate more opportunities for the exchange of experiences in various topics such as industrial policy, SME projects, programs in Science and Technology.

# Website with Documentation & Power Point Presentations

The screenshot shows the website interface for the Americas Competitiveness Exchange. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'RIAC', 'MEMBERS', 'SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES', 'REPORT', 'SUBNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS', 'EVENTS', and 'OBSERVATORY'. The main header features the RIAC logo and the slogan 'MORE COLLABORATION MORE COMPETITIVENESS'. A search bar and social media links are also present.

The main content area is titled '[2014-03-31] AMERICAS COMPETITIVENESS EXCHANGE ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP'. It includes logos for the Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, and the Organization of American States. A central graphic shows a map of the United States with the text 'The Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship' and 'First Edition: March 31st - April 4th, 2014 in the United States'. To the right, there is a '#ACXchange' section and a 'FORO DE COMPETITIVIDAD DE LAS AMERICAS 2014' countdown timer showing 118 days, 23 hours, 42 minutes, and 6 seconds.

Below the main content, there is a paragraph of text: 'In this page you will find information on the First Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, an activity organized by the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC) through the US Government and the Organization of American States. The activity took place from March 31st to April 4th, 2014 in the United States.'

Another paragraph follows: 'The First Exchange consisted of visits to centers of advanced technology and innovation in urban and rural areas of the states of Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, as successful examples of investments and public-private partnerships, including research and development centers in the medical, agro industrial, manufacturing and automotive industries. Among the cities visited were Atlanta, Greenville, Conover, Kannapolis and Charlotte. Several of the projects visited were presented as part of the experiences in the Signs of Competitiveness of the Americas Report of 2012 and 2013 of the RIAC, for which the OAS serves as technical secretariat. The itinerary of the visit, biography of the participants, cities, and experts of the exchange are available here.'

A sidebar on the right contains a 'Tweets' section with a 'Follow' button and several tweets from @riacnetorg, @UN, and @WorldBank.

At the bottom of the main content area, there is a list of links: 'Agenda', 'List of Participants', 'Site Visit Contact List', 'Participants Testimonials', 'Final Report', 'Press Releases', and 'Photos'.

## CLICK TO ACCESS THE WEBSITE

[http://riacnet.org/intercambio-para-la-competitividad-de-las-americas-en-innovacion-y-emprendimiento/ct\\_43/en/](http://riacnet.org/intercambio-para-la-competitividad-de-las-americas-en-innovacion-y-emprendimiento/ct_43/en/)

# Photos



**flickr**

[www.flickr.com/photos/89835551@N02/sets/72157644625497016/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/89835551@N02/sets/72157644625497016/)

# The Exchange @ Twitter



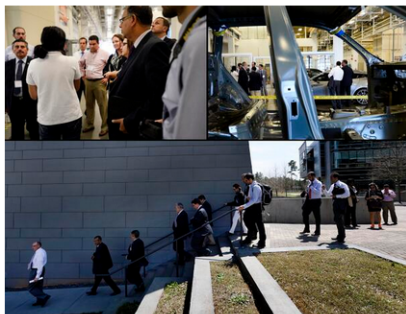
**OAS** @OAS\_official · 30 de mar.  
More than 45 delegates from the Americas will be visiting #innovation hubs in Atlanta, Greenville, Conover, Kannapolis, Charlotte #ACXchange

**Mykal McEldowney** @mykalmphoto

More than 20 chief executives from 19 countries toured the @CU\_ICAR campus today @US\_EDA #ACXchange @GreenvilleNews pic.twitter.com/NyXOCHRtov

Ver traducción

Responder Retweetar Favorito Más



Group photo! #ACXchange @StateDept @riacnetorg @TradeGov @SelectUSA pic.twitter.com/00FKpdXAYi

Responder Retweetar Favorito Más



Keith McGregor of @GeorgiaTech Venture Labs: "We tell our students, don't get a job. Make one." #ACXchange



Retileado por RedDeCompetitividad  
**EDA** @US\_EDA · 4 de abr.  
#ACXchange gets schooled on #EPIC @UNICCharlotte. Great example of Univ-Industry partnership on global scale! pic.twitter.com/PJDdyXc5Xy



**OAS** @OAS\_official

First stop: Global Center for Medical Innovation during the Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship #ACXchange

**Adam Hill** @adamatpackard

Thanks to @Charlotte\_Intl for bringing this great group by @PackardPlaceCLT! #ACXchange @danielroselli pic.twitter.com/bsmRFvNcTF

Ver traducción

Responder Retweetar Favorito Más



# Press Releases

## Los cuatro ingredientes para la innovación

**EL FINANCIERO** – April 24, 2014

[www.elfinanciero.com.mx/opinion/los-cuatro-ingredientes-para-la-innovacion.html](http://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/opinion/los-cuatro-ingredientes-para-la-innovacion.html)

## First Americas Competitiveness Exchange Encourages Collaboration, Drives Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the Western Hemisphere

**Commerce.gov** – April 11, 2014

[www.commerce.gov/blog/2014/04/11/first-americas-competitiveness-exchange-encourages-collaboration-drives-innovation-a](http://www.commerce.gov/blog/2014/04/11/first-americas-competitiveness-exchange-encourages-collaboration-drives-innovation-a)

## Intercambio de experiencias exitosas e innovadoras impulsan la cooperación regional Secretaría Ejecutiva para el Desarrollo Integral - OEA

**OEA** - Boletín, Abril 2014

<http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/nl/0414/1-es.asp>

## Exchange of Successful and Innovative Experiences Fuels Regional Cooperation Executive Secretariat for Integral Development - OAS

**OEA** - April Bulletin, 2014

<http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/nl/0414/1-en.asp>

## State Minister Robinson Attends Innovation and Entrepreneurship ... (Int'l)

**Jamaica Information Service** - April 4, 2014

<http://jis.gov.jm/state-minister-robinson-attends-innovation-entrepreneurship-retreat-u-s/>

## Research Campus attracts international business, political leaders (NC)

**The Independent Tribune** - April 4, 2014

[http://www.independenttribune.com/news/article\\_0c9e9e5c-bbf0-11e3-b08e-001a4bcf6878.html](http://www.independenttribune.com/news/article_0c9e9e5c-bbf0-11e3-b08e-001a4bcf6878.html)

## Concluyó Primer Intercambio para la Competitividad en las Américas, coorganizado por la OEA

**OEA** - April 4, 2014

[http://www.oas.org/es/centro\\_noticias/fotonoticia.asp?sCodigo=FNC-14335](http://www.oas.org/es/centro_noticias/fotonoticia.asp?sCodigo=FNC-14335)

## First Americas Competitiveness Exchange Concludes, Co-Organized by the OAS

**OAS** - April 4, 2014

[http://www.oas.org/en/media\\_center/photonews.asp?sCodigo=FNE-14337](http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/photonews.asp?sCodigo=FNE-14337)

## International tour visits Conover's Manufacturing Solutions Center

**Hickory Daily Record** - April 3, 2014

[http://www.hickoryrecord.com/news/article\\_860dee14-bb7d-11e3-8af0-0017a43b2370.html](http://www.hickoryrecord.com/news/article_860dee14-bb7d-11e3-8af0-0017a43b2370.html)

## Latin American business leaders tour ICAR

**Greenville Online** - April 3, 2014

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/2014/04/03/latin-american-business-leaders-tour-icar/7240269/>



# Press Releases

## **Upstate hosts international group**

**GSA Business** - April 3, 2014

<http://www.gsabusiness.com/news/50987-upstate-hosts-international-group>

## **Arrancó en la OEA el Primer Intercambio para la Competitividad en las Américas**

**Antilavadodedinero.com** - April 2, 2014

[http://www.antilavadodedinero.com/news\\_det.php?id=9745](http://www.antilavadodedinero.com/news_det.php?id=9745)

## **Delegados de 20 países participan en el Primer Intercambio para la Competitividad en las Américas, coorganizado por la OEA**

**ArgentinaON.com** - April 2, 2014

<http://www.argentinaon.com/noticias/politica/11728-delegados-de-20-paises-participan-en-el-primer-intercambio-para-la-competitividad-en-las-americas-coorganizado-por-la-oea.html>

## **Trade, entrepreneurship exchange launched in Georgia**

**Online Athens** - April 1, 2014

<http://onlineathens.com/local-news/2014-04-01/trade-entrepreneurship-exchange-launched-georgia>

## **Georgia News Roundup**

**Marietta Daily Journal** - April 1, 2014

[http://mdjonline.com/view/full\\_story/24853819/article-Georgia-News-Roundup?instance=home\\_state\\_bullets](http://mdjonline.com/view/full_story/24853819/article-Georgia-News-Roundup?instance=home_state_bullets)

## **Delegates from 20 Countries Participate in the First Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, co-organized by the OAS**

**OAS** - April 1, 2014

[http://www.oas.org/en/media\\_center/press\\_release.asp?sCodigo=E-124/14](http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=E-124/14)

## **Delegados de 20 países participan en el Primer Intercambio para la Competitividad en las Américas, coorganizado por la OEA**

**OEA** - April 1, 2014

[http://www.oas.org/es/centro\\_noticias/comunicado\\_prensa.asp?sCodigo=C-124/14](http://www.oas.org/es/centro_noticias/comunicado_prensa.asp?sCodigo=C-124/14)

## **OAS and the Inter-American Competitiveness Network Organize Visit to Innovation Centers in Cities in Southern United States**

**OAS** - March 28, 2014

[www.oas.org/en/media\\_center/press\\_release.asp?sCodigo=AVI-049/14](http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=AVI-049/14)

## **La OEA y la Red Interamericana de competitividad organizan una visita a centros de innovación en ciudades del sur de Estados Unidos**

**OEA** - March 28, 2014

[www.oas.org/es/centro\\_noticias/comunicado\\_prensa.asp?sCodigo=AVI-046/14](http://www.oas.org/es/centro_noticias/comunicado_prensa.asp?sCodigo=AVI-046/14)



# More Information and Support

For more information and to pursue cooperation opportunities please contact

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**Adriana Bonilla** at [abonilla@oas.org](mailto:abonilla@oas.org)

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**Canada**