John Chaffee:

John Chaffee is the President/CEO of NC East Alliance, a regional, not-for-profit, economic development organization representing a cluster of small metropolitan and micropolitan areas from the fringe of the Research Triangle to the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Chaffee earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Economic Geography with a specialization in industrial location and regional economics. He began his career of economic development in eastern North Carolina (1977) and was selected as executive director of the Pitt County Economic Development Commission in 1983. During his nearly 30 years in local economic development, Chaffee assisted companies that created roughly 10,000 new jobs. In January 2006, he ‘retired’ from local economic development to become director of the North Carolina Biotechnology Center’s Eastern Regional Office in Greenville with the mission to facilitate capacity building for life sciences in eastern North Carolina. He was named CEO of North Carolina’s Eastern Region in April 2009 and became CEO of the NC East Alliance in January 2014. He counts among his successes the establishment of the first corporate park in eastern NC, development of robust partnerships, strategies to recruit Japanese companies, collaborative efforts to encourage the emergence of a life science R&D-based cluster in the Greenville Metro area, and a nationally recognized regional approach to employer-focused workforce development and STEM education.

Mr. Chaffee’s accolades include being named to the list of “Outstanding Young Men in America” by the Jaycees and “Outstanding Young Leader in Geo-Economics” by Site Selection Handbook. He has served as a member of the North Carolina Economic Development Board and as a board member for the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. He currently serves on the State Advisory Board of the North Carolina Small Business and Technology Development Center and the NCSU Industrial Extension Service Advisory Board. Mr. Chaffee also participates in the Advisory Committees for the ECU Departments of Biology and Engineering. His articles on economic development have been published in professional journals and the German newspaper, Handlesblatt.