



**For Immediate Release
June 3, 2009**

Moore County, NC

Southern Pines – Pinehurst Area Ranked Highly in Economic Strength

In the 2009 Economic Strength Rankings just released by POLICOM, Inc., the Southern Pines – Pinehurst area is 24th out of the 574 micropolitan statistical areas in the United States. This ranking puts the Southern Pines – Pinehurst area high on the national list of communities with a stable, but consistently growing economy, which enables residents to enjoy a higher quality of living.

POLICOM is a Palm City, Florida-based independent economic research firm that analyzes local and state economies to determine if a particular economy is growing or declining and why. On an annual basis, the company looks at the country's 'micropolitan statistical areas', defined as having a population of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000. Each area is evaluated based on the long-term tendency of its economy to consistently grow in both size and quality. The higher the ranking, the more constant the growth has been over an extended period of time.

To measure the economic strength of all 574 micropolitan statistical areas nationwide, POLICOM used data from 1988 to 2007 and looked at various economic criteria, such as how much employees earn in small businesses and in the construction and retail sectors since these industries tend to grow or decline in direct proportion to the condition of the economy.

"POLICOM's ranking simply affirms what residents already know and what we've been emphasizing to prospective clients all along", said Ray Ogden, Executive Director of Moore County Partners in Progress, the economic development organization serving all of Moore County. "Thanks to the local economy's track record of steady growth, we have an exceptional standard of living in Moore County, and it's a great place to start, relocate or expand a business."

For the past 6 years, the Southern Pines – Pinehurst area has consistently maintained a position in the top 30 in the Economic Strength Rankings. For 2009, it is one of only two micropolitan statistical areas in North Carolina that are in the top 25.

**P.O. Box 5885
Pinehurst, North Carolina 28374-5885**

Phone (910) 246-0311 Toll Free 800-461-3755 Fax (910) 246-0312

Email: econdev@moorebusiness.org Website: www.moorebusiness.org

Page 2

“I think the current ranking reveals one of the reasons Moore County has fared relatively well during these economic conditions compared to some of our neighboring counties. Our local economy was in good shape going into the recession, and I think it will help us to recover more quickly”, Ogden said.

To view the entire 2009 Economic Strength Rankings, visit www.policom.com.

Partners in Progress is the economic development organization that serves all of Moore County to improve the quality of life for our citizens through new business recruitment and existing business expansion. For more information, visit www.moorebusiness.org.

Contacts:

Ray Ogden, Executive Director, Partners in Progress: 910-246-0311