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2020 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



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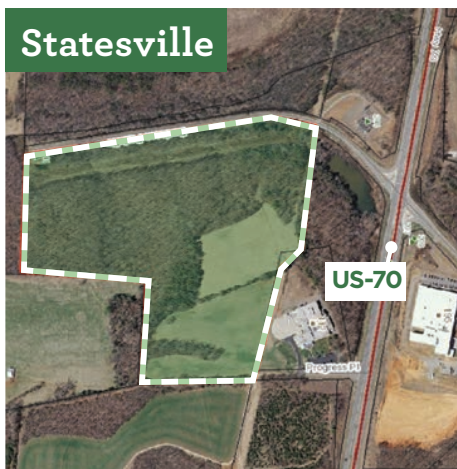
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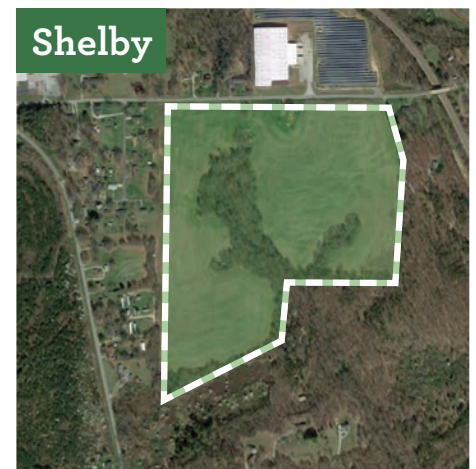
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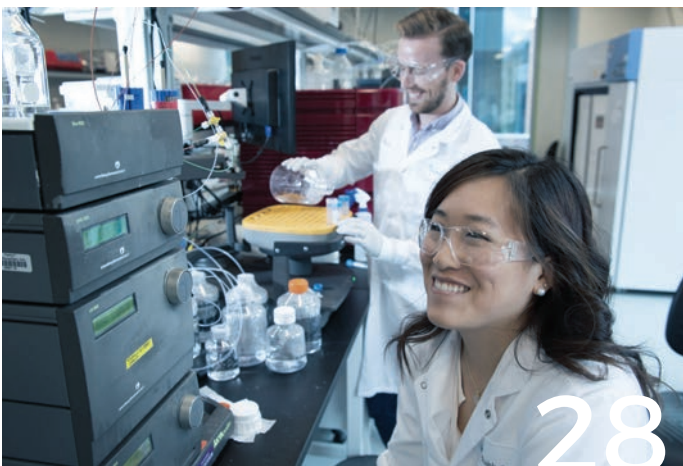
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NORTH CAROLINA[®]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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Cover photo by Mike Belleme

Pictured: New Belgium Brewing Co. General Manager Jay Richardson, Brewing Manager Alex Dwoinen, HR Business Partner Sara Phillips, and Lead Brewer John Swanson

10 REASONS TO BE IN N.C.

1. A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY TAX CLIMATE

North Carolina's 2.5% corporate income tax rate is the lowest among the 44 states with the levy. Overall, North Carolina has the third-lowest business tax burden in the U.S., according to a 2018 Anderson Economic Group study. Producing its most comprehensive business-tax burden ranking ever, the economic research and consulting company considered 11 taxes paid by businesses.

2. FAST-GROWING POPULATION AND TALENT POOL

North Carolina's population is expected to grow to 10.5 million in 2020 and surpass 11 million by 2030. The state's population is increasing at twice the U.S. average, which fuels the local pipeline of workforce talent. The state's growing population has access to top-tier training. Students are earning degrees at 53 colleges and universities across the state. North Carolina's 58-campus community college system is the nation's third-largest and a national model for customized workforce training.

3. AFFORDABLE BUSINESS-OPERATING COSTS

North Carolina's cost-effective business environment is clear across several measures, including construction costs (16% below the national average in metropolitan areas) and industrial electricity costs (about 10% below the U.S. average). In fact, North Carolina's labor, energy and tax costs are all well below the national average, according to *Forbes*, and rank as the nation's second-lowest overall.

4. LOCATION AND LOGISTICS TO REACH MILLIONS

North Carolina's central East Coast location and superb road transportation network provide access to more than 178 million customers within a day's drive. Two deep-water seaports and two Class 1 rail carriers enable companies to reach millions more domestic and international customers. International airports include the nation's sixth-busiest in Charlotte as well as Raleigh-Durham International Airport, described by an MIT study as the best-connected medium-sized airport in the U.S.

5. LEADERSHIP IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

North Carolina's universities excel in research and development. UNC Chapel Hill and Duke University ranked among the top 35 universities worldwide for the most U.S. utility patents issued in 2018. North Carolina State University

ranks among the nation's top 10 universities for key technology transfer metrics. The state is also home to several research parks, including the nation's largest at Research Triangle Park.

6. NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BUSINESS CLIMATE

North Carolina consistently finishes among the leaders in well-regarded national business rankings. For the second year in a row, *Forbes* listed North Carolina as the nation's No. 1 best state for business in 2018. CNBC placed North Carolina No. 3 on its 2019 ranking of America's Top States for Business, saying, "No state's economy is on more solid ground than the Tar Heel State."

7. QUALITY OF LIFE

North Carolina's low cost of living and family-friendly reputation make it an ideal place to call home. North Carolinians enjoy a moderate climate year-round and unique access to a variety of stunning natural landscapes, flanked by the Great Smoky Mountains and Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and 300 miles of beaches to the east.

8. STRONG MANUFACTURING AND PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE

At more than 472,000 employees, North Carolina has the largest manufacturing workforce in the Southeast U.S. and the ninth-largest in the U.S. Meanwhile, the state's professional, scientific and technical services workforce has grown 16% over the last five years to more than 231,000 employees, one of the highest growth rates in the U.S.

9. PERFORMANCE-BASED, TARGETED INCENTIVES

North Carolina offers eligible companies state and local programs that lower their costs and increase their global competitiveness, including performance-based grants tied to job creation. In recent years, legislators have significantly expanded possible grants for projects that create large-scale employment and investment in North Carolina.

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina helps companies of all sizes identify sites, navigate economic-development incentives, find workforce solutions and more. If you are interested in locating or growing your business in North Carolina, call 919-447-7744, email clientservices@edpnc.com or visit edpnc.com.

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THE RIGHT MIX

It's difficult to encapsulate North Carolina in a word. From its vast expanse of sandy beaches in the east to its towering mountain ranges in the west, the state boasts a wide variety of both landscapes and business ventures.

The Charlotte region is home to 425 corporate headquarters, including several Fortune 500 companies (*Page 44*). Western North Carolina, home to a billion-dollar craft-beer industry, attracts national brands looking for a thriving business environment and excellent quality of life. In the east, a new workforce-training program is prepping the labor pipeline through manufacturing-education programs (*Page 36*). The Triangle area is a red-hot center for software development and life-sciences companies, including serving as one of the biggest gene-therapy research capitals in the world (*Page 28*). The state's middle section, now branded by the Carolina Core initiative, is taking a broader look at economic development through its megasite offerings (*Page 36*).

Perhaps the right word to capture the spirit of the Tar Heel State is diversity, which is driving major economic growth and attracting new residents from around the world. North Carolina ranks as the 12th fastest-growing state for population, with an 8.9% gain from 2010-18, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Among the 10 most populous states, it was No. 3 in growth. Newcomers are drawn by three of the nation's highest-rated research universities, dozens of other public and private universities, and 58 community colleges that offer a vast array of education and workforce-training opportunities (*Page 10*). Tourism spending topped \$25.3 billion in 2018, an increase of 4.8% from 2017, according to the N.C. Department of Commerce. 2018 also saw a \$3.54 billion projected investment in new projects, with 157 new projects or expansions that engaged state economic developers.

So come join the excitement. North Carolina is ready and open for business. For more information, check out ncedg.com.

— Taylor Wanbaugh, *project editor*



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BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Community colleges are vital in producing the next generation of skilled workers in North Carolina and beyond.



The North Carolina Community College System plays a huge part in the state's thriving economy. About 40% of N.C. workers have received education or training at one of the state's 58 community colleges during that last decade. The accumulated contribution of former students totaled \$19.6 billion in added state income, creating more than 322,000 jobs, according to a 2015 NCCCS study.

Peter Hans has been leading the charge as system president since May 2018, incorporating his 20 years of leadership experience in higher education policy and governance. Hans grew up in

Peter Hans, top, has led the N.C. Community College System since 2018. Wake Technical Community College, right, is the largest community college in the state with more than 21,000 students.



PROVIDED BY STEPHEN J. COPPEDGE, NCCCS

A photograph of a modern building with a large glass facade, identified as Community College Hall. The building features a brick base and a multi-story glass upper section. The entrance area is paved with red bricks and includes a planter with flowers.

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN NORTH CAROLINA

TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN 2017-18

N.C.'S RANKING AMONG STATES WITH THE MOST COMMUNITY COLLEGES

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES
STARTED WITH HELP
FROM THE SYSTEM'S
SMALL BUSINESS CENTER
NETWORK, A STATE-FUNDED
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Locations of N.C. community college campuses

Southport and Hendersonville, then earned a bachelor's degree at UNC Chapel Hill and a Master of Liberal Arts in extension studies from Harvard University. He spent a combined 18 years on North Carolina's governing boards for community colleges and the UNC System. From 2016-18, he was a senior adviser to former UNC System President Margaret Spellings on issues such as technology, health care, strategic planning and K-12 education. Hans' career also includes serving as a policy adviser to N.C. political leaders Lauch Faircloth, Richard Burr and Elizabeth Dole.

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR TOP PRIORITIES SINCE TAKING THE HELM AS PRESIDENT OF THE N.C. COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM? HOW HAS THE SYSTEM CHANGED OVER THE LAST YEAR?

My focus has been to unify the community colleges toward a common set of goals. We agreed on critical areas and won full support from the legislature and the governor toward seven of our eight budget priorities this year, including workforce training, information technology, Hurricane Florence relief, expansion of a Career Coach program and capital funding to upgrade facilities. While final budget passage remains in limbo, we are grateful for the bipartisan support and, especially, for a \$12 million proposal to achieve parity in the funding of short-term workforce training programs as compared to degree programs. This will help us prepare more people for jobs that are available right now.

Another priority was to promote our community colleges to students through the first-ever statewide marketing campaign, which fully launched in August, thanks to the generosity of the John M. Belk Endowment and the North Carolina Community Colleges Foundation. Through radio, TV, billboards, [and] print and digital ads, our story is being shared with millions of North Carolinians. Our message is simple: choose a higher education focused on getting you hired — “Your hire education.” We have to do a better job [of] telling prospective students about what they can gain at their community colleges. The marketing effort is one way to do that.

We are also changing our internal processes to better serve students. I like to think of success in terms of four pillars: simplify, align, support and accelerate. We want to smooth out the educational journey for students, with less confusion, more defined career paths and effective advising along the way. We have to be able to work in concert with the public schools,

universities and local businesses to provide relevant skills training and education. We also need to support our students in order to help them get to a degree or certificate faster. This has never been more important, as technology and automation are creating dramatic change in the workplace and society.

WHAT MAKES THE N.C. COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM UNIQUE FROM OTHER STATES' PROGRAMS?

We enjoy strong support from the public, as well as political, civic and education leaders in North Carolina. We are one of the largest systems in the country, with 58 colleges spanning the state, available to any resident within a half-hour drive. Our community colleges provide so much for so many — from literacy and basic skills, to dual enrollment for high school students, to short-term workforce training, to two-year associate degrees. We provide a more affordable option for the first two years of college for students who go on to succeed at four-year colleges and universities. We provide customized training for local business and act as an engine of economic development. The vitality, versatility and adaptability of our colleges make them essential leaders for the state's future.

ARE THERE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OR COURSES THAT HAVE BEEN ADDED TO ADDRESS THE WORKFORCE SHORTAGES IN CERTAIN INDUSTRIES?

In an effort to be responsive to workforce needs, we are always looking at our portfolio of programs and adding to them if necessary. Recently, we've launched a new program in public safety administration, for example. We've also made it easier for all colleges to use an expedited application process for mechatronics engineering technology. Other new programs include those to train new electric line workers, truck drivers, highway construction trades and corrections officers. These are careers that are in high demand right now.

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM DOING TO HELP BRIDGE THE STATE'S RURAL/ URBAN DIVIDE?

We are engaged in creative efforts to meet the needs of people in rural counties and areas that are economically distressed. One example is RAMP East (*Page 22*), or the Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline for Eastern North Carolina, which spans 10 counties. This is a coalition of eight community colleges, economic

50

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IN WORKFORCE TRAINING:
THE PIEDMONT TRIAD LEADS THE
STATE IN AEROSPACE EDUCATION

5

INTERSTATES
ARE WITHIN EASY REACH OF THE AIRPORT

1,000

ACRES OF LAND READY FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND LINKED TO THE AIRPORT BY A
NEW TAXIWAY BRIDGE



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development entities, workforce development boards and nonprofits to give residents a pathway toward a wide array of new, advanced-manufacturing jobs. We offer Advanced Manufacturing Institutes that provide short courses to introduce students to the basic skills they need in order to pursue these technical jobs. The initiative has already gained dozens of industry champi-

ons who are searching for skilled employees.


We are also creating and maintaining close alliances with business in many areas of the state, both to build the workforce of the future and to give [businesses] a voice in the development of new programs. One example is the ApprenticeshipNC program, which has grown by 44% since it moved

to the community college system two years ago. Last year, more than 11,000 people in North Carolina were served in the apprenticeship program. This model is becoming more popular, and it serves both the needs of students and employers.

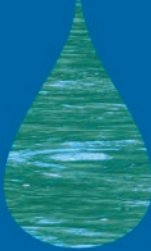
WHAT STEPS ARE UNDERWAY TO CUT TUITION COSTS AND MAKE EDUCATION MORE AFFORDABLE?

There were legislative tuition increases in the years after the recession, but tuition and fees have been fairly stable for the last few years. There are a number of efforts underway to keep prices down for students. On the local level, colleges are covering tuition for students who meet certain criteria. For example, the Durham Tech Promise program provides up to \$1,000 a year for two years to eligible students who enroll within one year of high school graduation. The program is funded by Durham and Orange counties. Private scholarships are also making a difference for many.

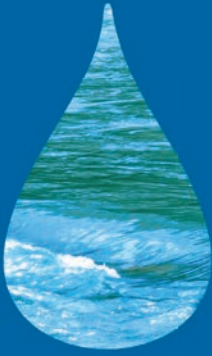
Students are saving money in other ways. Career and College Promise offers high school students free community college courses, helping them to progress more affordably to a two-year degree. Better transfer agreements help community college students transfer more credits when they go on to a four-year university, saving tuition dollars in the long run. And the Finish Line Grants program announced last year by Gov. Roy Cooper provides grants to students who encounter unforeseen financial challenges such as medical bills or car repairs. More than 1,900 grants have been awarded so far, helping students stay on track to graduate. 🗺️




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A HOPPING INDUSTRY

Western North Carolina's billion-dollar craft-beer industry attracts national brands looking for a strong business environment and excellent quality of life.

BY MARLA HARDEE MILLING

Note: After time of publication, New Belgium Brewing announced plans to sell to Australian-based Lion Little World Beverages for an undisclosed amount.

Here's a secret about the exploding billion-dollar-a-year craft-beer industry in western North Carolina: Competitors genuinely want each other to succeed. They compete fiercely, but when a new brewery moves into town, they'll roll out the welcome mat and offer tips born from years of experience as well as trial and error. Even as they focus on individual business-success strategies, you're just as likely to see brewery owners and beer-makers seated around a table together, enjoying a cold one at the end of the day as they discuss collaborations and admire the quality of each other's brewing finesse.

This congeniality certainly fits into the Asheville vibe, but the willingness to work together and push each other to higher levels benefits the entire industry. Brewers in Asheville and surrounding towns will tell you there's no room for mediocre beer here.

"If you come here, you'd better make fantastic beer," says Mike Rangel, owner of Asheville Brewing Co. and interim executive director of the Asheville Brewers Alliance. "If we decided to go to Philadelphia and open a cheesesteak business, people would be like, 'Why are you moving to Philadelphia? You're going into the big guns.' If you're coming to Asheville, you better be able to market, you better have a great connection with nonprofits, you better treat your employees well, you better be green — all those sorts of things. And that's before you even get to the point of how your beer tastes."

"We compete like hell here," Rangel continues, but says he learned early in the game to follow the lead of Oscar Wong, who showed everyone that being kind and helpful was the best path.

It's impossible to recognize Asheville's rise as "Beer City USA" without talking about Wong. He laid the groundwork for the craft-beer industry

While New Belgium Brewing Co. is headquartered in Fort Collins, Colo., western North Carolina's strong craft-beer community and stellar quality of life persuaded the employee-owned brewery to open a \$140 million location in Asheville in 2016.

PROVIDED BY NEW BELGIUM BREWING CO.





QUICK LOOK

Western North Carolina boasts a booming beer community, strong business environment and desirable quality of life.



New Belgium's Asheville facility helped increase the brewer's production by 50%. Its products are now sold in all 50 states, and the brewery ranks as the 11th-largest in the country. The company is 100% employee-owned with more than 700 workers.

in Asheville when he founded Highland Brewing Co. in a 2,000-square-foot space in the basement of Barley's Taproom & Pizzeria on Biltmore Avenue in 1994. The business is now housed in an expansive 180,000-square-foot location in east Asheville situated on 40 acres. Highland, now the state's largest craft brewery, produces about 50,000 barrels of beer a year and has 60 full-time and 20 part-time employees.

"We basically saw that with Oscar, you could be a good guy, you could be a family person, you could be a credit to Asheville and still be a competitive businessperson," Rangel says. "Oscar was the first here, and he basically said, 'Hey, I'd like this to be a gentlemanly pursuit.'"

Wong's daughter, Leah Wong Ashburn, has taken the reins from her dad, serving as Highland's president and CEO. Female leadership is also strong at breweries like New Belgium Brewing Co., with founder Kim Jordan and women in many key management roles. While New Belgium is headquartered in Fort Collins, Colo., the national brewer boasts a second location in Asheville. The trend for female brewers is also on the rise. Jeff "Puff" Irvin, director of the Craft Beverage Institute of the Southeast at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, says, "We've been averaging 20% to 25% women in the program since it started." The Institute prepares students for careers in brewery and distillery operations and management, distribution, sales and marketing, and self-employment opportunities including opening their own craft beverage facility.

Another trend in the beer industry includes the increasing need for more highly trained workers to oversee increasingly complex machinery, which is expensive. Ashburn notes the demand for technicians who can run machines that break down and identify contaminants.

"There are bugs all over us and yeast and things in the air," she says. "The brewing process is very closed, but it is possible, once in a while, to get things in the beer just from air and people. Some of those things are beer spoilers, and we want to keep those things out. So, we are constantly testing our beer. We taste every batch three times before it goes out the door. If we know something is off, we can look at the DNA and identify exactly what it is."

"Our quality approach is way beyond any brewery our size. Way beyond," Wong says. "We feel strongly that over time, the public will opt for quality and consistency. That has to be a basic trait. You can make all the fancy newfangled tastes, and they'll be good for a fad for a few months, but it's better to be known as consistent. [With our] brand name, people feel if they buy Highland beer, they might not care for the style, but it will be a good, clean, well-crafted beer. We think that will be our survival over time."

Michael Craft moved to Asheville four years ago to help launch New Belgium Brewing's facility in the city's River Arts District. He's been with the company for 17 years and says lifestyle was a big factor in the decision to build an

CRAFTING EDUCATION



Jeff "Puff" Irvin, director of the Craft Beverage Institute at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

Along with the plethora of breweries in western North Carolina, there is a growing need for a highly skilled workforce. Employment in the primary breweries manufacturing industry in Buncombe, Henderson, Haywood and Madison counties grew by a whopping 754% from 2011 to 2016, according to the Asheville Brewers Economic Contribution Impact Study by the Economic Development Coalition of Asheville-Buncombe County. More than 600 direct jobs were added with an average salary of more than \$55,000. That demand has prompted beer-making programs at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Appalachian State University and Blue Ridge Community College.

A-B Tech began its program in 2013 and awarded its first associate of applied science in brewing, distillation, and fermentation in 2015. "We're actually the first one to award a two-year degree in the country," says Jeff "Puff" Irvin, director of the Craft Beverage Institute at A-B Tech.

"We do it by a cohort model where we limit our program to 24 students," Irvin says. "They take their first two semesters, and then have a summer internship where they have a 250-mile radius to find an internship in the craft-beverage industry. We've had people work at breweries,

wineries, cideries, distilleries and craft-soda pop producers. Then, they come back for their second year, which is technically their fourth and fifth semesters, and graduate in May."

Most of the students coming through the program already have undergraduate degrees, and sometimes higher-level degrees. They come to A-B Tech for hands-on training. The program evolves to meet the changing needs of the industry.

"We were pretty beer-focused at first," Irvin says. "We've added sanitary welding, which is something all of the brewers around here want. Anything that comes in contact with food has to be a very clean, sanitary weld. To do that is an art form. It's not something that people can just pick up. It's a lot of practice. We want our students to be able to recognize a good weld from a bad weld. There will be a few that excel and maybe decide to look at that as a career."

Irvin walks through the expansive space at A-B Tech, which features the traditional classrooms, but more importantly, an impressive learning space with full-size brewery equipment. "We're really lucky to have the scope and scale of the equipment," Irvin says. "When I first got here, I said, 'If I'm going to teach people how to do this commercially, it needs to be on commercial-size equipment.'"

The training facility features a commercial-size brewhouse, six pilot brewing systems, hybrid distillation system, commercial winery-production equipment, sensory analysis lab, packaging lines, and a quality-assurance and quality-control lab.

Right now, the program cannot sell beer produced by the students, but Irvin says he is wading through legalities to see what is possible. He's also working to educate the public about craft beverages and serves as executive director of the board of the North Carolina Craft Beverage Museum. It's working on finding a location for a permanent brick-and-mortar location, which will tell N.C. history through the lens of craft beverages.

Irvin says exceptional water, four seasons, and active lifestyle are all key reasons why breweries are choosing to locate in Asheville and surrounding towns.

"We've got great water," he says. "We have good, clean water and very consistent water. It's not completely devoid of mineral content, but [they're] very delicate minerals. There's only about four parts per million calcium. So, when you have that blank slate to build up from, you don't have to have a lot of infrastructure to clean the water before you're using it for products."



Independent and family-owned Highland Brewing Co. was founded by Oscar Wong in Asheville in 1994. Led by his daughter, President and CEO Leah Wong Ashburn, Highland is now the largest brewer based in the state.

East Coast distribution facility here. The New Belgium campus includes a production facility, offices, a taproom, and lots of free space for families to play and enjoy the scenery on the banks of the French Broad River. New Belgium is among a number of other national brewers such as Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. and Oskar Blues Brewery that have chosen the Tar Heel State for additional locations.

“Of course, Sierra has been around even longer than us, so we’ve known those folks in those industries for a really long time,” Craft says. “It just seems like everyone was thinking about the same thing at the same time and found out we all picked the same [area], which was really cool.” Sierra Nevada opened its taproom and brewery in Mills River, and Oskar Blues chose Brevard.

“The quality of life piece was a big part of the puzzle — including the water. There’re so many great breweries in this town because of the water,” Craft says. “I think this town is really unique because you can’t find a bad beer in this town or a bad plate of food, and that comes with a lot of people who care about those things. I’ve never lived in

a place that has such great access to hiking. ... Colorado has got great hiking, but it’s just a different kind.”

New Belgium is 100% employee-owned and offers perks such as a free bicycle to ride to work, a 12-pack of beer a week, a trip to Belgium at an employee’s five-year anniversary, and other benefits including more travel and sabbaticals at various milestones. New Belgium also closes at 8 p.m. as a favor to employees to give its workers a chance to have a life outside work. “We don’t get a lot of people who leave here,” Craft says.

Being an integral part of the community is also part of their vision. All tips left at New Belgium’s Liquid Center tasting room are donated to local nonprofits. The brewery also puts a dollar per barrel brewed into a fund for philanthropic causes. In addition, it hosts the Tour de Fat bike festival, which has raised nearly \$6 million for local bike nonprofits.

“New Belgium wants to be a business that is truly a force for good and impacts a community in a positive way,” Craft says.

That idea is not original to New Belgium. Other brew-

eries in western North Carolina also focus on supporting local nonprofits and the community through a variety of initiatives and implement measures to serve as good stewards of the land and environment.

From her seat on the mezzanine area at Highland Brewing, Ashburn points out the window to five brightly colored beehives. “Those are owned by a local company — Asheville Bee Charmer — but they are on our roof because our roof is a great place for them,” she says. “They are prolific, and so we are pollinating our land and fostering healthy growth. We made a beer with the honey. It’s a small batch only on tap here.”

Ashburn is also excited about a plan taking shape on the property to add hiking trails. “It’s something I’ve dreamed about for years,” she says. “We’ll have some trails through the woods. I’d like people to spend time here. We’re a very active family, and so I love that the brewery can be a reflection of our family. Beer is celebratory and encourages people to gather, but it’s also great to get outside and enjoy the view.”

Another point of pride is collaborations with other brewers. “This is our 25th anniversary, and we did our 25th anniversary beer with Sierra Nevada,” Ashburn says. “It was really wonderful because we extended that collaboration not only to another brewery for whom we have so much respect, but also to six other family-owned independent hops growers, farmers and maltsters. Their logos are on the back of the can, which is just great.”

The big question: How many breweries can western North Carolina sustain? There are more than 30 breweries in Asheville alone. The

numbers continue to increase, but according to many brewery owners, it’s not at a tipping point yet.

“I think there is room for more breweries in and around Asheville,” Rangel says. “I didn’t used to think that, but I definitely realized that

“The quality of life was a big part of the puzzle. ... I think this town is really unique because you can’t find a bad beer in this town or a bad plate of food, and that comes with a lot of people who care about those things.”

MICHAEL CRAFT
NEW BELGIUM BREWING CO.

beer-drinkers’ palates have become such that they look for beer the same way they look for food. The demand seems to be constant. Even if you’re from Atlanta, and you love

to come to Asheville, and you’ve been to Asheville Brewing three times, and you’ve been to Highland twice and Green Man [Brewery] four times, that’s not sustainable to keep coming back. But if you come back, and you’re like ‘Oh my gosh. I didn’t

get to go try Dssolvr,’ or ‘I didn’t get to go try Zebulon Artisan Ales,’ then it keeps that need going. It’s like going to San Francisco as a food-ie. You can live in San Francisco and never eat all the food. Same with Asheville. You can walk out right now and there’s 200 [India pale ales] within a 45-minute drive or wherever you are,

and we’re talking about phenomenal beers. As long as they keep building parking garages and more hotels, Asheville will be able to support more breweries.” 🐾



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QUICK LOOK

A new eastern N.C. workforce development program pairs manufacturers, local community colleges and other organizations to train workers.

RAMPING UP FOR A BOOM

RAMP East matches workers and manufacturers to revitalize a big chunk of North Carolina.

BY EDWARD MARTIN

Here, close enough is never enough. The 1.2 million-square-foot Cummins Inc. Rocky Mount Engine Plant is larger than a big-city shopping center. The manufacturing precision is incredible — the biggest of these engines will power 40-ton trailer-trucks the equivalent of four dozen trips around the globe before requiring overhaul.

The secret, says Paul Powell, the plant's engineering manager, is no big thing.

Powell says Cummins holds "tolerances to the micron level," which, for reference, is about 1/75th the size of a human hair. "It gives tremendous pride to our individuals to know that their process, their checks and their tool setups resulted in an engine that was perfect to the end-customer."

On another day, John Judd, the plant manager who began in 1988 working on an assembly line, walks the plant floor and stops to fist-bump a technician in a blue smock.

Around him, racks of 35,000 different bar-coded, finely polished pistons, connecting rods and other parts, await some of the 170,000 engines — ranging from 65 to 600 horsepower — that the plant will build this year. The steady "braaaaap" of pneumatic wrenches wielded by goggled workers fills the air as giant, robotic arms tirelessly position heavy parts. At one workstation, an inspector wearing surgical gloves runs his fingers over the satiny surface of an engine cylinder head, feeling for imperfections. At another, technician Dominique Battle flashes her employee identification under a card reader.

"Every employee [who] comes to their station to build an engine uses their badge to swipe in," she says. "This says, 'I built this engine, and I did it right the first time.'"

In advanced manufacturing, employees like Battle master not only technical skills but what workplace analysts call "soft skills" such as conflict resolution and problem-solving. "What makes us different is [that] we're

Cummins Inc. Rocky Mount Engine Plant is a partner in a budding project called Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline East, which pairs industry input with local community colleges and other organizations to train workers.

PROVIDED BY CUMMINS INC.



Edgecombe Community College's Advanced Manufacturing Academy prepares students for careers in manufacturing, offering training in manufacturing concepts, math for manufacturing, OSHA 10 and forklift operation.

a team-based work system, and with that comes accountability and looking out for each other,” Judd says.

The Cummins Rocky Mount plant, one of the region’s largest companies with 1,800 employees, provides not only a close-up of Tar Heel advanced manufacturing, but it also shares a growing concern with its industrial neighbors in eastern North Carolina. Rocky Mount is 60 miles east of Raleigh.

Despite technology, these engines remain fundamentally human creations, and finding, training and hiring the workers who build them is a challenge in an area now experiencing a strong manufacturing boom.

Cummins is a partner in a budding project called Regional Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline East that’s shaping up to meet the demand. It’s a novel approach that pairs industry input with local community colleges, the Carolinas Gateway Partnership economic development organization, the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina and other agencies to fill that pipeline. It’s funded partly by a \$641,000 award from the Golden LEAF Foundation, a nonprofit established in a lawsuit settlement intended to help replace lost tobacco-industry jobs.

The first step is regional thinking, says Peter Hans, president of the North Carolina Community College System and a former leader of Golden LEAF. “Workplace issues don’t recognize artificial boundaries,” he says. “RAMP East is a blended approach from every sector. We’re taking ourselves out of the old, traditional silos and figuring out how we can all work together.”

Innovatively, RAMP East takes advantage of what’s already in place rather than creating a new organization. That could

take years when the impending boom doesn’t leave that luxury of time. Its principle is simple.

Community colleges, where customized training can be tailored to meet the needs of specific new or expanding industries, already have technical training such as machining, blueprinting or welding. Not to mention that industries such as drugmaker Pfizer Inc., another RAMP East partner and the region’s largest private employer with 3,000 employees, have vaunted, in-house training programs.

One of these programs can be found in a large, low-slung building full of classrooms adjacent to the Cummins plant, serving as the company’s training center. New employees cluster around desks as instructors discuss engine technology.

“We have 300 or 400 different roles here, but every one is a critical spoke in the wheel,” says Ralph Emerson, the center’s manufacturing director. “Every technician goes through a three-week employee orientation, and we have core skills, Cummins values, operations excellence, problem-solving, and value-stream mapping. We’re evolving into a manufacturing university that includes an engine tear-down section. It gives hands-on experience.”

Before employees are hired and reach that stage, however, RAMP East introduces them to advanced manufacturing. Deborah Lamm, a retired Edgecombe Community College president who promoted workforce development, is a RAMP East consultant.

“Edgecombe County and the region have a high unemployment rate historically, and I see this as an opportunity to turn that around and get people into the workplace who’ve not had the opportunity to get training, as well as to provide opportunities for growth and promotion for our

PULLING RANK

Military skills and training generate new jobs.

In a small mall in Wilmington, mothers with fretting children and retirees with unexplained aches jockey in Masonboro Family Medicine's parking lot. It's a long-established practice, founded by two of its four physician assistants in 2003.

Andrew Illobre sees a range of patients from pediatric cases to adults with diabetes and high blood pressure. In a region known for sunny beaches and outdoor activities, he has a special interest in skin cancer and sports injuries. Fellow physician assistant Kim Martin shares more than his medical interests — Illobre is a Coast Guard retiree and Martin is a former Army reservist.

Up the coast in Hampstead, the ink is barely dry on Lee Colter's discharge, but the Marine veteran is enthusing about business prospects for him and wife Renea in the Port City. Grumpy Grandpa's Coffee is a mobile coffee shop, making the rounds at farmers markets and local events. Renea's grandfather, a Navy veteran, inspired the name, and Lee's robust facial hair inspired their other fledgling enterprise: Beligerent Beard, which makes and sells a line of beard oils and washes they make online and at about a dozen retail outlets.

"More than anything, being military has opened doors for us," Colter says. "You learn leadership, and it's a great asset when you're forming a business."

The clinic and Colter's startup represent an often unnoticed success story for North Carolina: Their owners are among 84,000 military veterans who've established businesses here, becoming part of the larger military and defense economic sector that pumps \$66 billion a year into the state's economy.

"We combine both active-duty military and veterans in how we look at the military's impact," says Marine veteran Larry Hall, secretary of the N.C. Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. He heads the state's N.C. Military Affairs Commission, established in 2013 by the General Assembly to protect and build the state's military resources. "We recently had about 730,000 veterans and 100,000 retirees living in North Carolina, and our state is No. 2 in veterans living in rural areas."

About one in 10 businesses in the state

is veteran-owned.

Massive military bases such as Fort Bragg, with a population of more than 60,000 military members and civilians, and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, with close to 40,000 Marines and civilians, capture most of the attention. But Hall says veteran-owned businesses show that North Carolina is succeeding in attracting and keeping former military members such as Illobre, Martin and Colter.

Hall and N.C. Secretary of Commerce Tony Copeland portray the armed forces as a massive repository of skills and talent waiting to be tapped through military-friendly programs, whether by veterans setting up their own businesses or becoming executives or employees of civilian industries and enterprises. Copeland cites two of the state's high-profile advanced manufacturers: Honda Aircraft



Co. in Greensboro and Spirit AeroSystems in Kinston. Now employing about 1,600, Honda has invested about \$250 million. Similarly, Spirit employs about 800.

Many of their potential workers are former military members trained while on active duty. "We need to figure out how to access that and bring them back into the private sector," Copeland says.

Hall and others say the military is concentrated in eastern North Carolina. Fort Bragg, Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Marine Corps Air Station New River, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point and the U.S. Coast Guard Base at Elizabeth City are all on or east of the Interstate 95 corridor.

"We've got, combined, 100,000 active-duty and 21,000 reserve and National Guard personnel, plus 22,000 or so civilian employees," Hall says. "That means we're talking about a total of about 140,000 or more working, active-duty

personnel. We're responsible for about \$66 billion a year coming into the state through the military and veteran communities combined. One way to look at it is, we're the second-largest industry sector in the state, and we're a value-added segment of the economy because most of the money is federal. We call ourselves a hidden economic engine."

One of the state's smaller major bases, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base nevertheless has an annual economic clout of more than \$700 million, with its 12,000 active-duty personnel, civilian employees and dependents.

At Fort Bragg, the North Carolina Military Business Center estimates the Army pumps \$31 million a day into the region. In one way or another, more than 250,000 people in the region have ties to the base. Hall says the value of the military training is inestimable.

For one thing, he says, former service members like Lee Colter "are tested, trained and evaluated in leadership." When they make the transition to civilian life, they retain those characteristics and skills. "We call them culture carriers. When you hire military, they bring those elements to the workplace." The military typically spends tens of thousands of dollars training people in fields such as aviation maintenance and computer technology that are in demand at Honda and elsewhere.

The N.C. Department of Commerce and the state are pumping millions into programs such as North Carolina for Military Employment, which conducts dozens of hiring fairs annually, and the N.C. Military Business Center, based at Fayetteville Technical Community College. The latter group puts Tar Heel businesses on the trail of Defense Department contract opportunities.

Cary-based North Carolina Veteran's Business Association helps former service members start businesses and lobbies politicians to support veteran-friendly legislation and regulations.

"We've got about 22,000 people a year transitioning from active-duty on bases in North Carolina, and we're trying to keep them in North Carolina," Hall says. "In eastern North Carolina, the primary economic drivers are the defense industry and our universities," he says. "The folks there know how important the military is to their economy."



RAMP East pairs industry input with local community colleges, the Carolinas Gateway Partnership economic development organization, the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina and other agencies to help fill the workforce pipeline through hands-on industry training.

existing workers,” she says. “RAMP East is a game-changer, but we’ve got to step up to the plate and provide the workforce.”

For years, agencies such as the Gateway Partnership have courted industries. Suddenly, their successes create a new problem — how to meet local recruiters’ promises to provide thousands of workers to run the plants. It’s a welcome dilemma here.

“We’ve taken our lumps, but we see a lot better days ahead,” says David Farris, a longtime car dealer and now president of the Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce. For the 10-county region that RAMP East covers, he says those lumps began more than three decades ago when bedrock industries such as tobacco and textiles started withering as the result of global economic forces.

It didn’t seem so bad for a while. Rocky Mount maintained a core of homegrown financial institutions such as Centura Bank and others, including several local savings and loans. Other major businesses were headquartered in the city.

Then, in the 1990s, mergers began swallowing banks, the savings and loan industry collapsed nationwide, and iconic local companies such as Hardee’s Food Systems Inc., the fast-food chain once headquartered in Rocky Mount, were bought. In many instances, operations moved out of town. Devastating Tar River flooding during Hurricane Floyd in 1999 destroyed more local businesses.

Gradually, thousands of jobs evaporated. Today, Rocky Mount, the unofficial flagship of the region, has a popula-

tion of about 54,000, down about 4,000 since 2000. But a hard-earned turnaround began in 2016.

CSX Transportation Inc., a Jacksonville, Fla.-based rail giant, unveiled plans for what is becoming a \$160 million, 150-employee intermodal logistics hub called the Carolina Connector. The same year, Wilson’s Bridgestone Americas Inc. tire plant began a five-year, \$200 million expansion, promising hundreds of new jobs and pushing its total payroll past 2,000.

In 2017, other manufacturers followed suit. Triangle Tire USA, a subsidiary of Chinese Triangle Tyre Co. Ltd., laid out plans for a \$580 million, 800-job plant in the region’s Kingsboro megasite west of Tarboro, with production expected to begin in 2020. Next door, Corning Inc., the New York-based glass and fiber-optic giant, announced an \$87 million, 150-employee distribution center.

The next year, Pfizer revealed a \$200 million expansion at its local plant, boosting employment to 3,000 with the addition of about 800 jobs. The Aurora potash manufacturer of Saskatoon, Canada-based plant-nutrient giant Nutrien Ltd. and other partners now associated with RAMP East followed suit.

“We’ve got an enormous amount of work going on here, close to \$1 billion in construction,” says Norris Tolson, president and CEO of the Gateway Partnership, one of the driving forces behind RAMP East. Recently, he adds, the partnership and other recruiters were pursuing nearly 50 other projects in Nash and Edgecombe, two of the 10 RAMP East counties.

Josh Tatum, the partnership's director of research and special projects, including RAMP East, assesses the impact. "We see the need in the next 18 to 24 months to fill 3,500 to 4,000 advanced-manufacturing jobs in just the two counties, not even talking about the other eight," he says. Community colleges in Beaufort, Edgecombe, Halifax, Hertford, Martin, Nash, Pitt and Wilson counties are taking part.

RAMP East tackles the challenges at the most basic level. The first is overcoming old ideas about manufacturing, which labor analysts say frequently are based on legacy industries such as textiles, often dangerous and known for poor working conditions.

"Today's manufacturing world is much different from the manufacturing world of yesteryear," Judd says. "People have been steered toward four-year college degrees, but now, jobs in manufacturing and trades are in high demand. We have to educate our community, parents and teachers, and I think we're turning that tide."

Only 27% of parents say they encourage their children to find jobs in manufacturing, according to a recent poll by the National Association of Manufacturers. It set a goal of raising that to 50% by 2025.

RAMP East's corporate partners underscore another reason advanced-manufacturing jobs are increasingly attractive. At Wilson's Bridgestone plant, average annual pay and benefits top \$64,000, about \$20,000 more than the county's overall average. Triangle Tire has said it will offer \$56,000 a year in pay and benefits. Corning's distribution complex is expected to pay in the \$45,000 to \$48,000 range.

Landing those jobs, however, requires preparation and, in some cases, different attitudes. At a recent meeting at Edgecombe Community College, early RAMP East enrollees listened to instructors at one of the project's Advanced Manufacturing Institutes programs initiated at the eight participating community colleges.

In the institutes here and elsewhere, students will get a 96-hour, semester-long introduction to the basic skills needed in workplaces such as Pfizer, Bridgestone and Triangle Tire. Through RAMP East, they may qualify for scholarship help, which could amount to \$800 or more.

"We started the pilot class by targeting seniors from local high schools who graduated in June but didn't have a plan for careers," says Michael Starling, Edgecombe Community College's business dean. The Advanced Manufacturing Academies assume students will learn specific technical skills either by taking those courses as part of their overall two-year associate degree programs or once they are hired through training by their new employers.

"We teach things like manufacturing concepts, an introduction to advanced manufacturing, working smart, critical thinking, working as a team and problem-solving," Starling says, skills that will be needed regardless of which manufacturer hires them.

It was manufacturers that set the pace for the academy programs, adds Maureen Little, the N.C. Community College System's vice president for economic development.

BRINGING IT HOME

Eight North Carolina community colleges are localizing training through RAMP East:

- *Beaufort County Community College*
- *Edgecombe Community College*
- *Halifax Community College*
- *Martin Community College*
- *Nash Community College*
- *Pitt Community College*
- *Roanoke-Chowan Community College*
- *Wilson Community College*

"The industries reviewed the curriculum and agreed what content would be pertinent," she says.

Now, here at Edgecombe and at Beaufort County Community College, the other pilot, academy students find themselves learning basic manufacturing math, Occupational Safety and Health Administration health and safety practices, and Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt, the introductory level of a widely used industry program that relies on team efforts to reduce waste and improve manufacturing consistency.

Little says the industries "will participate in job and career fairs and allow employees to tour plants," possibly ending in job interviews.


Much is riding on RAMP East. Tolson estimates as many as 25,000 workers in its 10-county area indicate they're looking for new or better jobs. RAMP East, he adds, could have as many as a thousand participants in its pipeline by 2020.

RAMP East recognizes that not all of those are newly created jobs. Lamm says RAMP East intends to accommodate "incumbent" or already employed workers. Regardless of what the RAMP East partners make — from tires to plant nutrients to injection-molded plastics — they face a shared challenge.

At Cummins, Emerson says the company will have to replace as many as 400 workers eligible for retirement over the next six years, not including normal turnover or those needed for possible expansions. Plus, adds Cummins spokeswoman Katie Zarich, the company constantly upgrades its technology but relies heavily on retraining to fill those roles.

"This is not just a Cummins challenge," Emerson says. "This is a challenge facing the United States, with the baby boomers retiring."

The principles of RAMP East could also spread across the state, Little says, tailored to the kinds of industries growing there. "RAMP East is certainly a model that can be replicated. Not just for manufacturing, but say health care, information technology or whatever is driving the local economy."

The Northeast "needs a shot in the arm as much as anybody in our state," Hans says. "And without the talent pipeline we're creating, we can't do that." 

A NEW PAIR OF GENES

Advances in gene therapy are saving lives in North Carolina's Research Triangle.

BY JIM SHAMP

In partnership with the North Carolina Biotechnology Center

If you spin a globe and push a pin into the “capital” of gene therapy, your pin will end up in North Carolina’s Research Triangle.

Impressive, considering the fact that gene therapy is poised to change the lives of scientists, businesses and patients all around that globe.

The Research Triangle, located in the Piedmont region of the state, got its name from its 20-mile proximity to three world-renowned research universities: North Carolina State University, Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. And it’s contributing mightily to North Carolina’s 35-year transformation into a life-science magnet.

A cute little Connecticut kid named Conner Curran personifies the amazing potential for gene therapy — and for the Triangle’s contribution to its life-saving potential.

Conner was only 4 years old when his parents, Christopher and Jessica, learned the reason why he wasn’t able to keep up with his twin brother, Kyle, or even his 2-year-old brother, William, in typical playground romping.

In 2015 Chris and Jessica took Conner for medical testing. That’s when they got some of the worst news that parents could imagine: Despite the genetic makeup shared by twins, Conner had inherited a faulty gene that Kyle didn’t have. That saddled Conner with a degenerative disorder shared by about one of every 3,500 boys at birth: Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

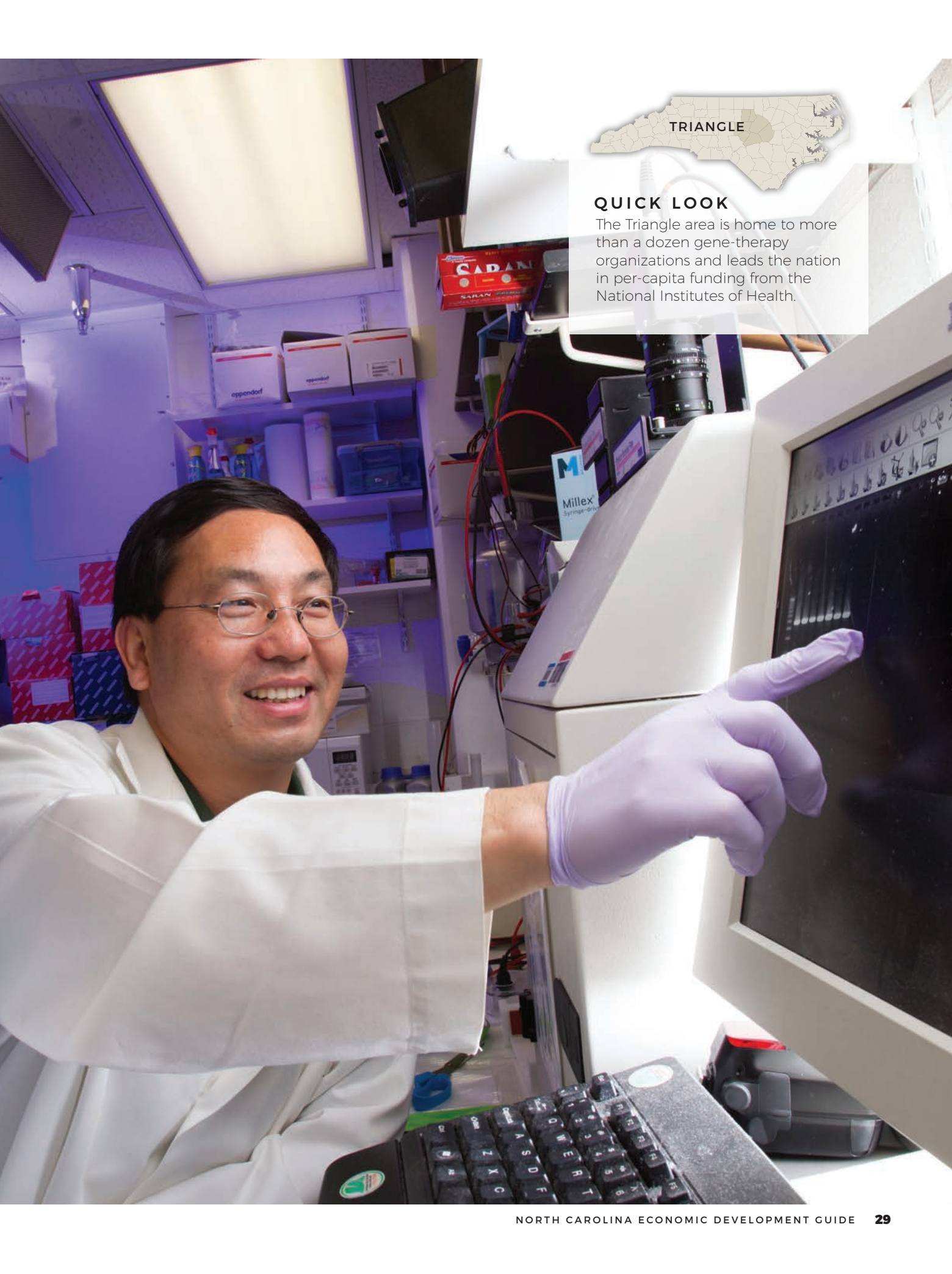
The Currans learned that boys with DMD usually lose the ability to walk by age 12 and die of cardiac or respiratory failure by their mid-20s. The abbreviated lives of kids with DMD are defined by painful, unstoppable muscle-wasting, ultimately leaving them unable to move, communicate, swallow or breathe.

When Conner was diagnosed, he was a bright and curious preschooler,

The UNC School of Medicine opened its Gene Therapy Center in Chapel Hill in 1993. The center’s ultimate goal is to transition gene-therapy research from the laboratory into Phase I clinical trials to treat various diseases.

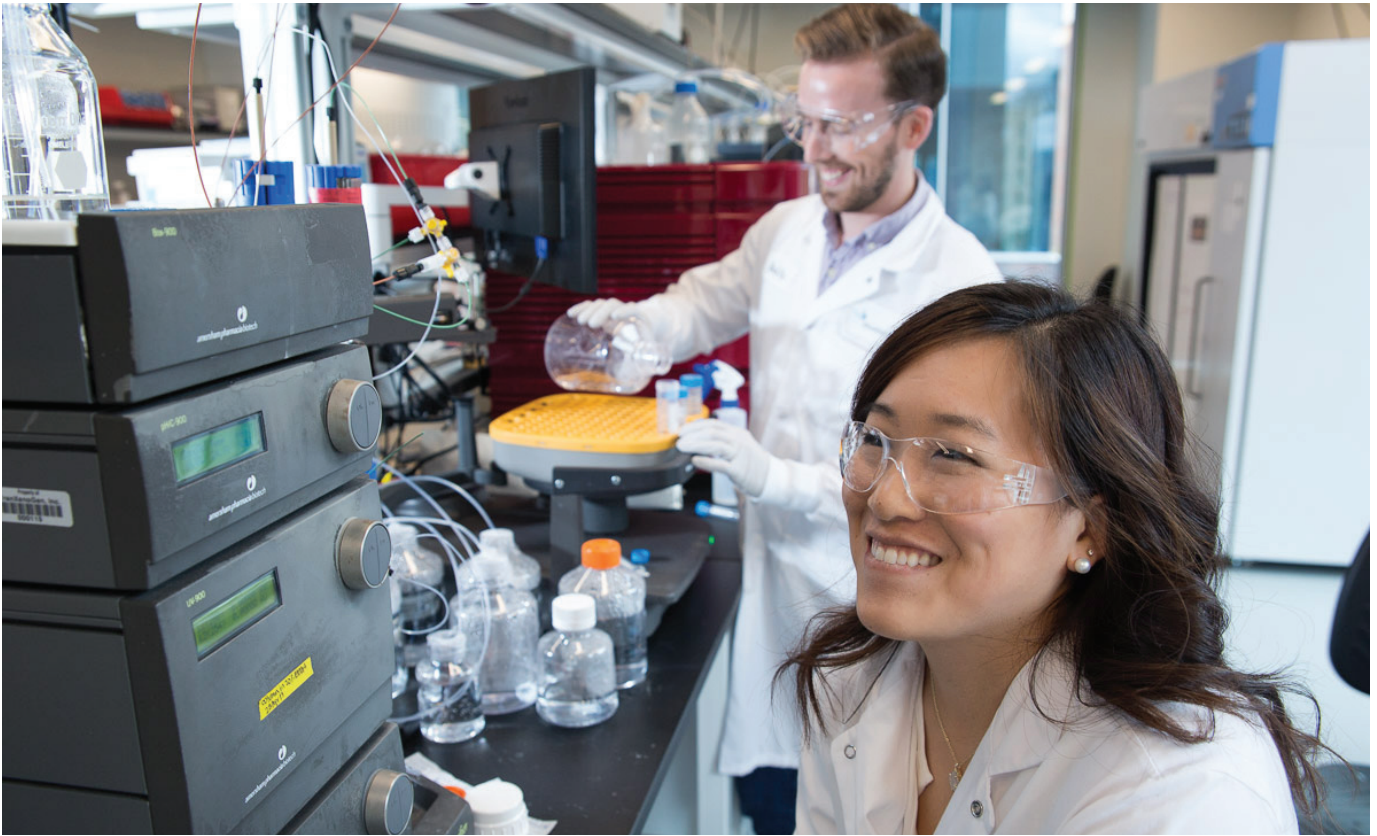
PROVIDED BY UNC HEALTH CARE AND UNC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE. BRIAN STRICKLAND





QUICK LOOK

The Triangle area is home to more than a dozen gene-therapy organizations and leads the nation in per-capita funding from the National Institutes of Health.



Cambridge, Mass.-based bluebird bio develops pioneering gene therapies for severe genetic diseases and cancers. At bluebird's 125,000-square-foot Durham manufacturing plant, which opened in early 2019, the company produces lentiviral vectors for its gene and cell therapies.

able to do some of the things his siblings and peers could do with the help of numerous medications and frequent physical therapy. But his muscles were not developing like those of healthy children. Instead, they were turning into unruly fibrous tissue destined for failure. So Conner had to stand at the sidelines of the playground, watching as other kids played.

"When this diagnosis of DMD entered our family, it truly impacted our entire family," says Jessica, a first-grade teacher in Ridgefield, Conn. "We all had hopes and dreams for Conner the day he was born."

The Currans, like many families confronting deadly diseases such as DMD, organized and joined support groups. They researched treatment possibilities, including clinical trials for new approaches that might offer hope where none had ever existed.

So in March 2018, the family headed to North Carolina. Edward Smith, a Duke associate professor of pediatrics and neurology, invited Conner to participate in a new clinical trial of a DMD gene therapy.

The therapy is a direct result of seminal discoveries made by gene-therapy scientist Jude Samulski while he was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Florida. He later became the director of the Gene Therapy Center at UNC Chapel Hill, about 12 miles from the Duke hospital.

Samulski is also co-founder of the prolific Research Triangle Park gene-therapy company Asklepios BioPharmaceutical, commonly known as AskBio.

Samulski came to the UNC School of Medicine from the University of Pittsburgh in 1993. His recruitment was bolstered by about \$250,000 in grant funding and other support to UNC Chapel Hill from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. Eight grants and loans from the taxpayer-funded Biotech Center totaling about \$1.5 million have supported Samulski's academic research and commercial technologies at the School of Medicine's Gene Therapy Center and at AskBio.

Those foundational outlays have brought huge returns to North Carolina, totaling nearly \$600 million in follow-on investments in Samulski's research and resulting companies. It amounts to more than \$400 for every dollar of support from the Biotech Center.

The DMD therapy was under development by an AskBio spinout, Bamboo Therapeutics of Chapel Hill, when Bamboo was purchased by global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer in 2016.

During Conner's visit to Duke, he became the first person to receive the two-hour intravenous infusion of Pfizer's experimental gene therapy. By the end of summer 2019, Pfizer had given the one-time infusion of the "genetic liquid," the

fluid volume equivalent of about half a can of soda, to six boys with DMD. Results will continue to unfold for years.

“Conner experienced some nausea and no appetite the third day after the infusion, for a brief 24 hours,” Jessica says. “We happened to be at Jude [Samulski]’s house that day, thank God, because he eased our worry. He invited us to his home for a party he was having for his family. As you can see, we quickly became close with Jude.”

Conner’s nausea is a common early side effect from the boys’ bodies’ confrontation with their adeno-associated virus gene therapy treatments. But those discomforts are treated by professionals overseeing the clinical trial volunteers, and the boys are able to go home after about a week of observation and care.

This is groundbreaking medical research. And if the DMD gene therapy proves to be generally safe and tolerable, the next big question is effectiveness: Ultimately, can it bring the sustained genetic changes that would classify it as a lasting cure?

“Conner had a substantial overall improvement in his function after the gene therapy,” Jessica says. “He continued to improve greatly for months. He was doing things he could never do before — climbing stairs, jumping on two feet. But I think the increased stamina was the biggest thing for us. He used to come home from school and crash on the couch. Before the therapy, his teacher said that Conner would fall asleep on the carpet after lunch; he just couldn’t keep up. Now he can go for long walks and does not ask to be picked up.”

“Jessica sent me some pictures of Conner running and swimming,” Samulski says. “It’s amazing. Every time I see it, I can’t believe it’s true. It’s a ‘streak-across-the-sky’ type of feeling.”

AskBio, established in 2001, is the 21st-century life-science equivalent of Thomas Edison’s lab. But this version has racked up more than 500 patents and processes on a uniquely end-to-end technology platform with globally lifesaving potential. This unicorn is growing steadily — not in Boston or Silicon Valley — but in central North Carolina’s woods, iconic Research Triangle Park.

The small company has an uncanny knack for building a “supply chain” of scientific innovation through its own labs and collaboration with others. It’s effectively converting

AN EXPANDING ROSTER



bluebird bio is one of many gene-therapy companies established in the Triangle area.

Besides AskBio, AveXis, Bamboo and Pfizer, other gene-therapy companies established in the Triangle include:

Adrenas Therapeutics Inc.

Palo Alto, Calif., with Raleigh site

Axovant Sciences

Basel, Switzerland, with Durham site

bluebird bio

Cambridge, Mass., with facility in Durham

Couragen Biopharmaceutics

Chapel Hill

Enzerna Biosciences Inc.

Raleigh

Genencine Therapeutics

Durham

OncoTrap Inc.

Research Triangle Park

Precision BioSciences Inc.

Research Triangle Park

StrideBio Inc.

Durham

Triangle gene-therapy suppliers/support companies include:

Advanced Cell and Gene Therapy

Chapel Hill

Columbus Children’s Foundation

Research Triangle Park

Cmed Clinical Services

Morrisville

ZenBio

Research Triangle Park

General BioSystems

Durham

GENEWIZ

Research Triangle Park

Neochromosome

Chapel Hill



In August 2019, Pfizer Inc. announced a \$500 million effort to add 130,000 square feet and 300 employees to its 230-acre Sanford campus that manufactures clinical trial and commercial drug materials for vaccines. The company invested \$100 million in 2017 to expand the campus and add 40 people to its more than 600-person workforce.

basic research findings into valuable gene therapies poised to correct a wide range of human maladies.

Samulski, now a vigorous 65-year-old grandfather, is revered in scientific circles as a pioneer in the use of the live, but harmless, recombinant adeno-associated virus as the premier delivery mechanism, or vector, for gene therapy. It uses the natural tendency of viruses to attack cells. He has tweaked the process to make sure AskBio technology gets healing power from the warfighting tendencies of invasive viruses and the body's natural defensive maneuvers.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first Samulski-based gene therapy for human use in December 2017. Brand-named Luxturna by Spark Therapeutics, a Philadelphia pharmaceutical startup, it relies on the technology to replace a defective gene in patients with a rare inherited vision-loss disease. In the U.S., the disorder is currently found in only 1,000 to 2,000 children.

The second FDA approval of an AskBio-derived gene-replacement therapy came in May 2019 with AveXis' Zolgensma. It treats spinal muscular atrophy, an inherited and deadly neuromuscular disease that, like DMD, limited its victims' treatment options. Zolgensma was also created from Samulski's technology.

AskBio received an undisclosed upfront payment, milestone payments and royalties based on AveXis' successful development and commercialization of Zolgensma. After AveXis bought rights to Zolgensma, Novartis bought the company for \$8.7 billion to get control of the AskBio-invented spinal muscular atrophy therapy. Now AveXis, headquar-

tered in Bannockburn, Ill., is investing \$115 million and hiring 400 people at its new Durham gene-therapy manufacturing facility.

These new approaches to wellness are expensive. Zolgensma's one-time dose is priced at \$2.1 million, the most expensive treatment in history. LentiGlobin, from bluebird bio, which has a manufacturing facility in Durham, was approved in June 2019 for the European market at \$1.8 million a dose. Sparks priced Luxturna at \$425,000 for each one-time injection, or \$850,000 for both eyes.

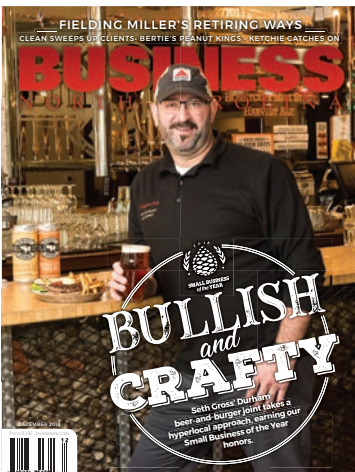
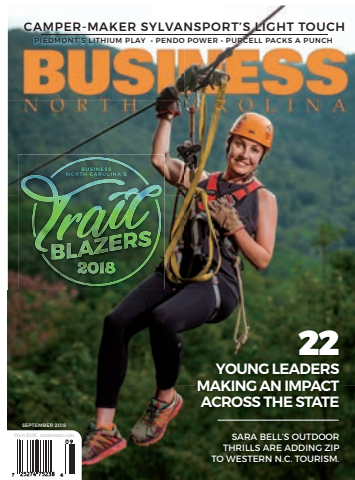
These kinds of numbers have led to new commercial and societal challenges and discussions about the companies' need to recoup their development costs and to balance the costs and benefits of one-time, potentially curative, and often lifesaving treatments. The companies are establishing installment plans and spreading charges over five years. If the therapy stops working, the payments also stop coming to the company providing the therapy.

BUILDING AN END-TO-END PLATFORM

To say AskBio is on a roll would be an understatement. It's not only creating new and improved therapies, but it has also developed a proprietary cell line manufacturing process called Pro10 designed to streamline output and bring down the cost per dose.

The company is a beehive of activity, with scientists and other employees leaning into research, development and manufacturing, and company leaders fielding collaboration calls from around the world. After a recent \$225 million ven-

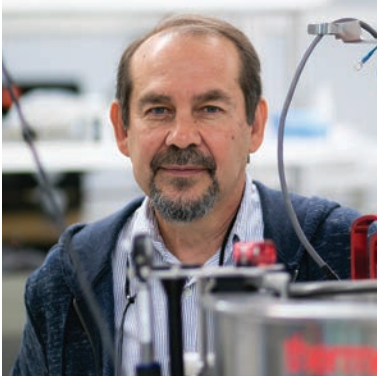
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BUSINESS
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“We are creatures of our genetics, and this is the final arena. ... It’s pretty impressive that North Carolina is set to become the Silicon Valley of gene therapy.”

JUDE SAMULSKI
ASKBIO



Photo courtesy HuthPhoto

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ture capital investment, the largest-ever single round by a life-science company in the state, AskBio announced a collaboration and an acquisition in the span of just two weeks in August.

The company will partner with Boston-based Selecta Biosciences Inc. to develop an important way for gene-therapy recipients to receive subsequent doses, if needed. Researchers in the relatively nascent field have been concerned that some gene therapies put recipients’ immune systems on alert, so a second dose might become dangerous. That could be a problem if a very young child gets an especially small infusion that turns out later to have been inadequate for an adult body.

AskBio acquired Scottish company Synpromics Ltd. to incorporate the Edinburgh firm’s gene-control technology and expertise in bioinformatics and data-driven design to allow more precise cell targeting and gene expression.

AskBio has spun out numerous gene-therapy companies besides Bamboo, including Chapel Hill’s Chatham Therapeutics, purchased by Baxter International in 2014 for \$70 million, and RTP’s NanoCor Therapeutics, which is developing treatments for cardiovascular disease. AskBio also has about a dozen additional partnerships with companies around the world.

Samulski took a sabbatical from UNC and joined Pfizer in Sanford for slightly more than a year, as vice president of gene therapy, after its purchase of Bamboo. After overseeing the roll-out of the DMD clinical trials, he transitioned back to UNC and then to AskBio as the company’s scientific founder and chief scientific officer.

Pfizer’s 230-acre Sanford campus manufactures clinical trial and commercial drug materials for vaccines. But Pfizer, already the world’s largest pharmaceutical company, recognized North Carolina’s workforce excellence and gene therapy leadership. So the company invested \$100 million in

2017 to expand its Sanford site and add 40 people to the site that already employed more than 600 workers. In August 2019, the company announced an additional \$500 million effort to add 130,000 square feet and 300 employees to the highly specialized manufacturing project.

Pfizer's acquisition of Bamboo also led Samulski to link the global pharmaceutical company with NC Biotech. That resulted in a transformative \$4 million postdoctoral fellowship program in gene therapy.

"If our universities can continue to pump out the next generation of leaders, with the right formula, it will continue what the Biotech Center had the wisdom to start in 1993 by putting the funding in," says Samulski. "We pioneered it, we lead it.

"We are creatures of our genetics, and this is the final arena. It's thrilling to be part of it. Like a moon shot, every time it can put a flag in the sand. And it's pretty impressive that North Carolina is set to become the Silicon Valley of gene therapy."

AskBio and a variety of other companies are developing AAV to treat a wide range of genetic afflictions. These include big puzzles such as hemophilia, congenital heart failure, cystic fibrosis, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, epilepsy, Lou Gehrig's disease and macular degeneration. The technology developed by Samulski is the foundation for more than two-thirds of the gene-therapy industry worldwide.

It's significant that more than a dozen of those companies have established some or all of their business operations in the Triangle area. That may not be surprising, perhaps, since the Triangle is also leading the nation in per-capita funding from the National Institutes of Health.

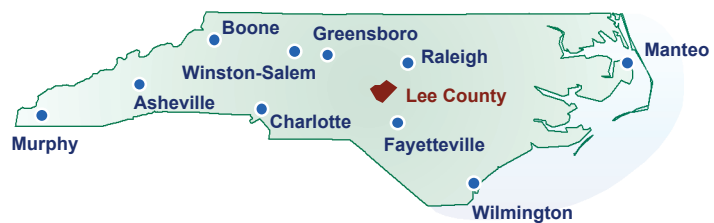
Still, it's a leading indicator of what's to come for the sector and for the Triangle. The global gene-therapy market is expected to be five times greater by 2026. There are already reportedly more than 1,800 clinical trials underway for gene therapies. 🐼



Central Carolina Enterprise Park

Sanford, North Carolina

- Central Carolina Enterprise Park (CCEP) is an ideally positioned 750-acre NC certified site for industrial development. It is in close proximity to Raleigh Executive Jetport, RDU International Airport and the Moncure Megasite.
- CCEP lies within 35 miles of three NC Megasites: Moncure Megasite, Chatham-Siler City Megasite and Greensboro-Randolph Megasite.
- CCEP boasts exceptional infrastructure, including water and sewer service and extensions; 10GB per second fiber service; power and natural gas service; and new roads, walking path, signage, lighting and landscaping.
- CCEP is adjacent to U.S. 1, a four-lane, quality, high-speed interstate. The park is only 15 minutes from I-540, putting both RDU International Airport and Raleigh's urban core just 35 minutes away.
- Recently completed 117,000 SF shell building, expandable, on 15 acres. Other lots available, 5-420 acres.





QUICK LOOK

The Carolina Core Initiative takes a broader view of economic development.



CORE STRENGTH

Leaders from Fayetteville to Winston-Salem shape a regional strategy for job growth.

BY D. LAWRENCE BIVINS

Mapping imagery has long been critical to those involved in promoting business locations. Less common is the savvy to view a geographical patchwork and spot clear opportunities others have missed. Architects of the Carolina Core initiative have successfully accomplished this, piecing together a hodgepodge of human and physical assets to create a compelling rationale for a 21st-century business destination.

“We’re probably only in the second inning here,” says Stan Kelly, president and CEO of the Piedmont Triad Partnership in Greensboro. The organization has a decades-long track record of forging collaboration across county and municipal lines. But rarely has it presented a strategy as sweeping as this attempt to bring 50,000 new jobs to the heart of the Tar Heel State by 2038. Along with the PTP board made up of regional leaders, Kelly came up with the idea, which seeks to reinvigorate the traditional cradle of North Carolina manufacturing.

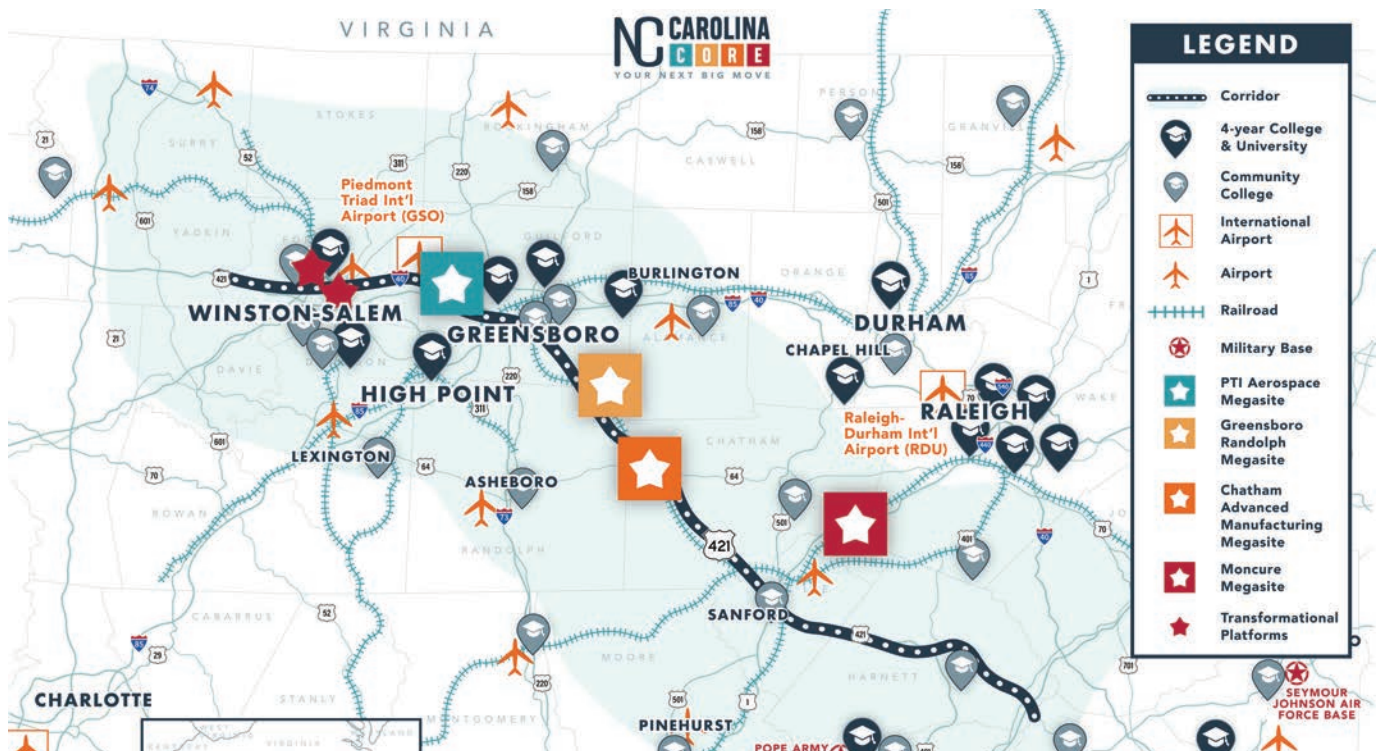
Though champions of the Core have a long-term vision, the initiative has already yielded results, with 10,000 announced new jobs in the initial year. “These are coming in singles, doubles and triples,” says Kelly, who is quick with baseball metaphors. “In time, we’ll find more triples and ultimately, that home run.”

The initiative weaves together four North Carolina megasites: large, accessible swaths of undeveloped land with certification checklists met and modern infrastructure already, or soon-to-be, in place. The sites are in various stages of readiness as local officials work to install industry-grade water, sewer, natural gas, telecommunications and power. Common to all of them is proximity to labor, which is the real competitive differentiator for today’s companies and communities.

“We’re a large region from a workforce and talent perspective,” says Kelly, who spent decades as a banking-industry executive in the Triad prior to assuming leadership at PTP in 2015. About 800,000 people

Piedmont Triad International Airport’s state-of-the-art facilities and available workforce make PTI a catalyst for commercial and industrial development.

PROVIDED BY PIEDMONT TRIAD AIRPORT AUTHORITY



Carolina Core, located between Winston-Salem and Fayetteville, boasts four megasites with 7,200 acres of certified land that offer advanced manufacturers room to grow. The region includes many other industrial sites, higher education institutions, international transportation, research parks and mixed-use developments.

live within 30 miles of Greensboro, he says. Broaden the aperture across a 60-mile radius, and companies have a potential labor pool of more than 2 million. “We have a lot of workers,” Kelly says of the region.

The blend of physical and human resources comes with a generous dose of leadership and collaboration. With the Carolina Core stretching from Winston-Salem to Fayetteville, there are a host of economic development professionals, elected officials, educational partners, state entities and private allies in the mix. The goal is to unite them around themes of readiness, connectivity, branding and shared reward.

“It’s not traditional regionalism — it’s more strategic,” says Bob Leak Jr., president and CEO of Winston-Salem Business Inc. and a longtime North Carolina economic development leader. “We think of regional programs as place-based,” he says. “The Core is more asset-based.” The group sought something with global resonance. It examined data and studied maps. “We did a very deep dive,” Leak says.

It also sought feedback from location advisers, an influential voice in corporate site decisions. Kelly, Leak and other Core leaders hosted 10 site-selection consultants for lunch in Chicago to gauge their reaction to the strategy. Feedback was encouraging, and the group has requested expertise from Development Counselors International, a New York City-based location-marketing agency, and is moving ahead with advertising, digital promotion, social media platforms and additional consultant outreach. “All

of us are looking forward to taking this message out to the rest of the world and letting them know where we are,” Leak says.

While not home to a megasite, Winston-Salem brings formidable assets to Carolina Core efforts, including the 220-acre Whitaker Park, a redeveloped manufacturing complex adjacent to Wake Forest University. One of the South’s most prestigious private universities, Wake Forest has extended its reach beyond the campus into downtown Winston-Salem and the broader region.

Julie Freischlag, dean of the Wake Forest School of Medicine and CEO of Wake Forest Baptist Health, says additional global attention on the Carolina Core will yield new opportunities for Wake Forest in recruiting talented workers, patients and students and developing new partnerships with businesses. The Wake Forest Innovation Quarter supports commercialization of pioneering treatments, merging medical technologies and other health-related startups. “We have a lot of entrepreneurial thinkers,” Freischlag says. “There are a lot of opportunities for companies to work with us.”

When Freischlag, a vascular surgeon by training, arrived at Wake Forest nearly three years ago from the University of California at Davis, she was quickly invited to take a regional leadership role. “Stan [Kelly] invited me to serve on the PTP board the minute I came to town,” she says. Kelly brought her up to speed on a new idea taking shape that would encompass the region’s business assets, including health care expertise and higher education institutions. “I

can't remember him not talking to me about Carolina Core — even when it didn't have a name," Freischlag says. With 20,000 employees and a patient service area extending across about half of Carolina Core's footprint, Wake Forest Baptist's collaboration was a natural fit. "We're a health system, and it's important that we be a part of something like this." (At press time, Wake Forest Baptist was negotiating a combination with Charlotte-based Atrium Health, the state's biggest hospital operator.)

In Chatham County, home to megasites in Moncure and Siler City, Alyssa Byrd, president of Chatham Economic Development Corp., works to synthesize the Carolina Core vision with local business-development objectives. The county sits between the manufacturing-rich Triad and technology-oriented assets of the Research Triangle region. "In terms of our demographics, we pick up both Greensboro and Raleigh within 45 minutes," Byrd says. With automotive equipment-makers and advanced manufacturers at the top of its short list of target industries, Chatham County responded quickly to the invitation to join Carolina Core.

"Automotive is the holy grail," Byrd says. "But we also make sure we're responding to the realities of the market." Assuming a "home run" such as a large manufacturing plant doesn't materialize, she doesn't rule out the option of developing the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site into a more conventional industrial park that would be home to a range of tenants. The 1,818-acre property, which sits partially along a Norfolk Southern Railway line in the county's northwest, has had technical leadership from Greensboro-based Samet Corp. and Stimmel Associates, an engineering and land-planning firm with offices in Charlotte and Winston-Salem. Funding assistance has come in part from the Rocky Mount-based Golden LEAF Foundation, a state-created nonprofit. Logistics and distribution operations would

"We have a lot of entrepreneurial thinkers. There are a lot of opportunities for companies to work with us."

JULIE FREISCHLAG
WAKE FOREST BAPTIST HEALTH



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The 2,500-acre Moncure Megasite is the state's largest. It's about 45 minutes from Raleigh, providing convenient access to major universities, community colleges and Research Triangle Park. The Chatham County site is adjacent to Wake, Lee and Harnett counties.

also work well at the Chatham site, Byrd says.

Accessibility is the central selling point of the Moncure Megasite, a 2,500-acre property at the southeastern tip of Chatham County being developed and promoted by Raleigh-based NAI Carolantic Realty Inc. Within easy reach of Raleigh, Fayetteville and Research Triangle Park, companies settling at the property can tap a large, well-educated workforce that includes exiting military personnel at Fort Bragg near Fayetteville. With both north-south and east-west mainline rail links, Moncure tenants will have good access to North Carolina's deepwater ports.

"We're the geographical center of North Carolina," says Michael Smith, CEO of the Sanford Area Growth Alliance, also a Carolina Core partner. The city of Sanford, just south of Moncure, extended sewer service to the megasite under a revenue-sharing agreement. "It's a big deal for us," says Smith, who came to Lee County in 2018 after spending much of his career in the western Piedmont region. "It's a pretty dramatic story," he says of the Carolina Core vision. "When I heard about it, my initial reaction was that it was a great idea that makes a lot of sense."

Smith says the accessibility advantage of the Carolina Core lies both with its locational edge and its aviation assets. His community is home to the Raleigh Executive Jetport, a corporate aviation facility opened in 2001. Other general aviation airports dot the region, connecting businesses with customers, markets and opportunities. Commercial air transportation also figures into the strate-

gy. Fayetteville Regional Airport offers passenger service via Delta Air Lines and American Airlines, in addition to extensive fixed-based operations supporting business aircraft. Critical to the Carolina Core strategy is Piedmont Triad International Airport in Greensboro, which can connect passengers with either nonstop or one-stop service to 250 business destinations around the world.

"Air travel is going to be very important for the companies locating at any of the megasites," says Kevin Baker, executive director of the Piedmont Triad Airport Authority. While serving as North Carolina's third-largest airport, Piedmont Triad also offers its own megasite to complement the Carolina Core's assets. A 1,000-acre property is under development that will build on the airport's impressive lineup of aviation-related tenants. Greensboro is home to aerospace manufacturers, suppliers, and maintenance and service providers, with names such as Cessna Aircraft Co., HondaJet and HAECO Americas leading the list. FedEx Corp. maintains a busy mid-Atlantic hub that employs more than 1,000 workers at PTI.

Carolina Core dovetails neatly with PTI's strategic plan to bring Greensboro aerospace- and aviation-service jobs. The airport's expanded acreage is being equipped with top-grade utilities, including abundant water for the purpose of modern fire-suppression systems and advanced fiber optics. "One of the big needs [of aerospace companies] these days is broadband," Baker says. Companies deploy virtual engineering teams pulled together from sites

THINK IT.

MAKE IT.

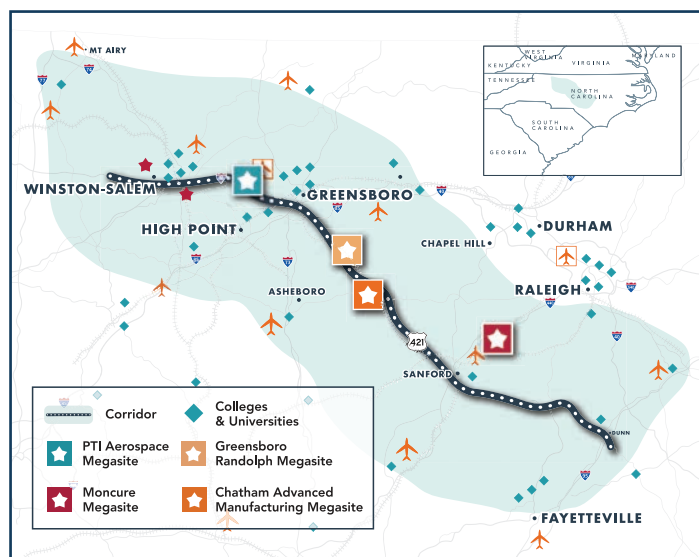
MOVE IT.

YOUR NEXT BIG MOVE



The Carolina Core stretches between Winston-Salem and Fayetteville at the heart of North Carolina, which is consistently ranked as one of the best states to do business with low costs and competitive incentives. Anchored by four new megasites of 7,200 acres of certified land, research parks and mixed-use developments, the corridor draws from a deep pool of manufacturing and engineering talent fueled by top-notch colleges and universities.

Little wonder Hanesbrands, Mack Truck, Honda Aircraft, Volvo Trucks, Old Dominion Freight Line, HAECO Americas and more than 50 corporate and regional headquarters call the region home.



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CORE CAMPUSES



Breaking down once-thick lines of separation among educational providers and training curricula sets North Carolina apart from competing states, a distinction that leaders of Carolina Core are seeking to maximize as they move ahead with corporate recruitment plans.

N.C. public schools, based on systematic state funding across communities, give secondary educators flexibility in balancing conventional academic curricula with innovative vocational opportunities such as youth apprenticeships, career and technical training, and early-college high school. “It’s a broad program that makes North Carolina easy to work with,” says James Blair, an Atlanta-based global location adviser with Navigator Consulting. “That’s not something available in every state.”

With campuses in Chatham, Lee and Harnett counties, Central Carolina Community College collaborates with public school systems in each county to create a workforce pipeline capable of filling both current and anticipated employer needs. “We work very closely with our K-12 partners,” Central Carolina President Lisa Chapman says. That includes a unique Career Coaches program that places college advisers in each of the nine high schools in the area. They counsel students in as early as the ninth grade on local career opportunities and the coursework needed to build the qualifications for them.

Central Carolina — like each of

North Carolina’s 58 community colleges — offers short-term training programs to meet the skill demands of expanding and arriving companies. In Lee County, the college has met the growing needs of Pfizer Inc., Pentair and Magneti Marelli. Of a 14-student cadre of high school grads who simultaneously completed youth apprenticeships at Caterpillar Inc. in 2019, 12 were hired by the company permanently. “It’s been a great partnership,” Chapman says of the college’s support for the Illinois-based construction-equipment company, which has had a manufacturing site in Sanford since 1999.

Earlier in 2019, Central Carolina entered into a partnership arrangement with Western Governors University North Carolina, which provides competency-based bachelor-degree programs online. The deal provides “articulation” — an agreement to honor inter-college transfer credits — as well as tuition discounts, scholarships, and guidance for the college’s advisers and faculty.

“A partnership with WGU means that a community college can offer a clear pathway to a four-year degree,” says Catherine Truitt, chancellor of WGU North Carolina. Central Carolina is one of eight North Carolina community colleges the university partnered with as of mid-2019. WGU students transferring from community colleges enjoy enhanced prospects for success. “Statistically, students are more likely to finish their bachelor’s degrees if they come to us through a community college,” Truitt says.

around the world, each sending and receiving large data packets. “They rely on big digital pipelines,” he says. Conventional connectivity, however, also remains critical. “We’re blessed with roads, roads and roads,” Baker says. “Our interstates are second to none.”

Upgrading U.S. 421 to “interstate” status is central to the Core’s strategy. The key thoroughfare links each of the four megasites. Much of it already operates as an interstate in all but name — four lanes divided by a broad median, controlled access and quality interchanges. Only a few stretches will require re-engineering. “We’re requesting it be granted interstate status,” says Michael Fox, a Greensboro attorney who chairs the N.C. Board of Transportation. The request is now in the hands of federal officials in Washington, D.C. “It doesn’t happen overnight,” Fox says.

Once complete, U.S. 421 will plug into North Carolina’s busy nexus of industry-grade freeways including I-95, I-40, I-85 and I-77. “We have an incredible confluence of highways,” Fox says. When combined with extensive rail and aviation assets, the region is “a sweet spot as far as transportation goes.”

Highway connections also are key to shuttling large numbers of employees to and from their new jobs. The region’s workforce nearly earned the 1,900-acre Greensboro-Randolph Megasite a big win in the hunt for a \$1.6 billion Mazda Toyota manufacturing facility. In early 2018, officials of the Japan-based joint venture announced their selection of Huntsville, Ala., after a national search. More recently, the Greensboro-Randolph Megasite, which sits on U.S. 421 just 10 miles from I-85, was under consideration by the U.S. unit of India’s Mahindra Automotive for a 2,000-job production site, according to news reports.

The headline-generating Mazda Toyota search, dubbed “Project New World,” may turn out to have been

a dress rehearsal for future success in North Carolina's long quest for an automotive-manufacturing plant, according to James Blair, managing director at Navigator Consulting, a location-advisory firm with offices in Atlanta; Jackson, Miss.; and Dusseldorf, Germany. "Greensboro would have been the better choice for automotive because of the labor supply," Blair says. Though his firm was not involved in the Mazda Toyota effort, he cites the region's large number of workers skilled across professions automakers typically need, from welding and mechatronics to engineering and logistics. "That area from Raleigh to Greensboro typically runs the gamut." Blair says he's being generally impressed with North Carolina's megasites.

"Our No. 1 asset is workforce," says N.C. Secretary of Commerce Tony Copeland. Officials from Mazda Toyota's search team, in fact, conceded as much to Copeland and others. "It came from their data," he says. But the choice of Huntsville, Ala., boiled down to the company's desire to be near existing supply chains. "We could find them 3,000 employees to manufacture automobiles," Copeland says. "What we couldn't do was move the site 250 miles west."

Still, optimism is high for the allure of North Carolina's megasites in landing major names in automotive, aerospace and other prominent industries. "We need to be diligent about working on all these sites to make sure they are as prepared as possible," says Copeland, who was a site-selection consultant prior to his appointment as commerce secretary in early 2017. Again, it's a long game. Recent big wins at megasites in Edgecombe and Davidson counties were the result of planning that began in the 1990s. Copeland commends Carolina Core leaders for stepping forward to pull the initiative together. "Leadership is the ability to see the future," he says. "That's what they're doing." 🇺🇸

"We're blessed with roads, roads and roads. Our interstates are second to none."

KEVIN BAKER
PIEDMONT TRIAD AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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AHEAD OF THE GAME

More major corporate boards are picking Charlotte as their main base as the city's reputation as a business powerhouse accelerates.

BY HARRISON MILLER

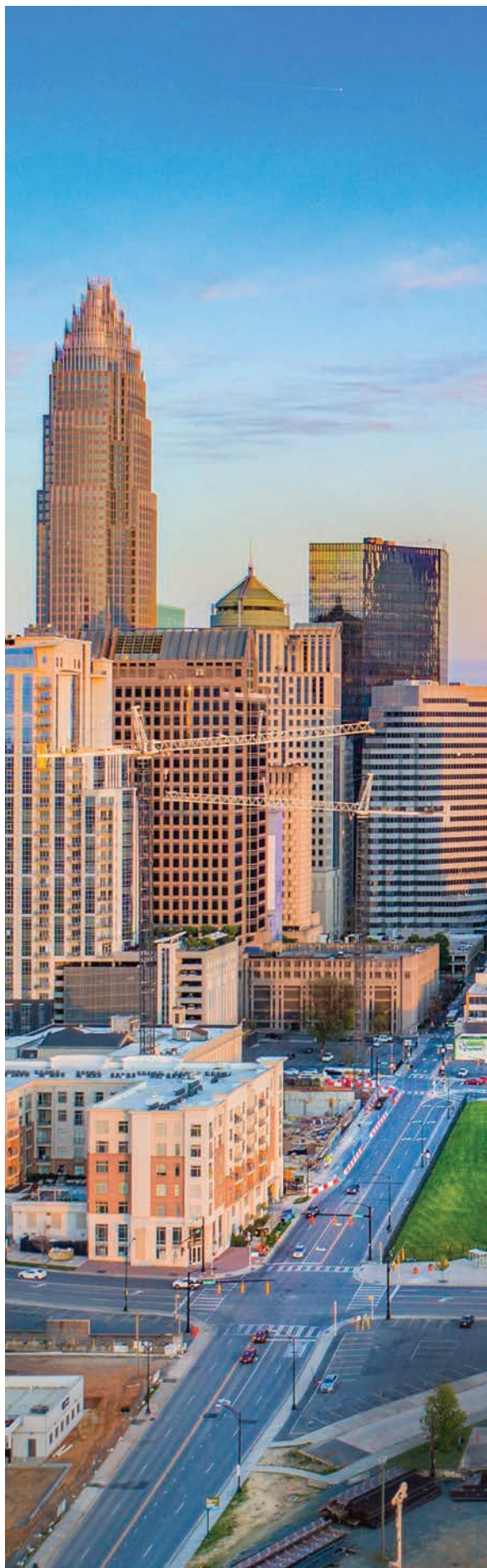
In downtown Charlotte, between St. Peter Catholic Church and the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, a sign posted on a 1.5-acre pocket park reads “Charlotte — The Center of the Known World.” Created by artist Gary Sweeney in 2002, the signpost marks the mileage and direction to other cities named “Charlotte” in Vermont, Texas, Australia and other locations across the world. As the second-largest financial hub in the nation, home to more than a dozen Fortune 1000 companies, and one of America’s fastest-growing tech markets, the Charlotte region has made a name for itself as a bustling business hub.

Mecklenburg County alone is home to 425 corporate headquarters. Pending some final relocations, the area will become home to 17 of the nation’s 1,000 largest publicly traded companies ranked by *Fortune* magazine. According to the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, more than half of the companies on the Fortune 500 have one or more facilities in the region’s area. Meanwhile, about 1,040 foreign firms are represented in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metro area. The multitude of businesses and a solid economy contributed to Charlotte’s \$174 billion gross domestic product in 2017, which accounted for almost 1% of America’s total GDP.

Charlotte’s skilled labor force, cost of living at 3.8% below the national average, business-friendly environment and access to major transportation networks are a few of the key factors for recruiting and retaining its big corporate players, according to the business alliance.

The Queen City is home to six companies on the Fortune 500 list, including Bank of America Corp., Brighthouse Financial Inc., Duke Energy Corp., Honeywell International Inc., Nucor Corp. and Sonic Automotive. Retail giant Lowe’s Cos. Inc. is stationed 30 minutes north in Mooresville. In 2018, the seven companies generated more than \$300 billion in revenue; if the companies were their own country, they would rank among the top 45 in the world in terms of gross domestic product, ac-

Mecklenburg County is the site of 425 corporate headquarters while Charlotte, right, is home to six companies on the Fortune 500 list, including Bank of America Corp., Brighthouse Financial Inc. and Duke Energy Corp.





QUICK LOOK

The Charlotte region shines as home to 425 corporate headquarters, including 17 listed in the Fortune 1000.





Home-improvement retailer Lowe's Cos. plans to open global technology headquarters in Charlotte's South End neighborhood. It will add more than 1,600 high-paying tech jobs to the area over the next several years.

cording to international financial institution World Bank.

Electronics manufacturer and technology giant Honeywell, which ranks No. 77 on the Fortune 500 list, has relocated its global headquarters from Morris Plains, N.J., to Charlotte. About 250 senior-management jobs transferred from the Garden State to the Queen City last fall, and the company plans to add 500 more positions over the next five years.

"Charlotte is a top-10 destination city in the U.S. that will readily enable us to recruit and retain the world-class talent

we will need over the long term to support Honeywell's strategic focus on leading technology and software solutions within our end markets," CEO Darius Adamczyk said in a press release.

Honeywell is leasing space at a 23-story office building under construction at the Legacy Union development in downtown Charlotte. It plans to occupy 280,000 square feet across nine floors of the building near Bank of America Stadium, which hosts the Carolina Panthers football team. Construction is set to be completed in 2021.

"We selected Charlotte because it offers a great business environment along with access to a workforce that has the skill set Honeywell will need to be competitive over the coming decades," Adamczyk noted. Other cities considered included Atlanta; Houston; Orlando, Fla.; and Tampa, Fla.

The November 2018 announcement came a day after N.C. lawmakers approved doubling the state's job-development tax breaks to \$16,000 per job — about \$12 million total for Honeywell. The maker of smart, automated consumer and commercial appliances will also receive as much as \$88 million in combined state and local incentives based on job and investment targets. The county expects to generate \$51 million in net revenue over the 15-year grant.

Another powerhouse is on its way with soon-to-be-merged BB&T Corp. and SunTrust Banks Inc. moving from existing headquarters in Winston-Salem and Atlanta, respectively. Pending regulatory approval, the result will be Truist Financial, the sixth-largest U.S. bank with more than \$440 billion in assets.

The combined institution will take up more than half of the 46-story Hearst Tower in downtown Charlotte. Truist expects to eventually employ 2,000 people, including corporate communications, finance, human resources, insurance, legal, technology and risk-management teams. The location puts the bank in the heart of a vibrant financial district that will help create a transformational financial institution, Kelly King, BB&T chairman and CEO, said in a press release. State and local governments didn't provide incentives for the combination. Instead, the companies targeted Charlotte because of its affordability and attractive labor market, Mayor Vi Lyles says.

Cutting costs and additional spending for innovation and technology are key forces in the BB&T-SunTrust deal. The combination is expected to result in \$1.6 billion in savings by cutting redundant operations and overlapping branch locations. "One of the most powerful benefits of this merger is that we are able to take significant costs out from redundant areas and reinvest it into innovation, technology and our talent," BB&T Chief Financial Officer Daryl Bible said in a release.

At its new Charlotte office, Truist plans an Innovation and Technology Center, where workers will focus on automation, developing and improving digital services, and enhancing cybersecurity. "[It will] be the hub of our efforts to drive digital transformation through innovation," says

MORE INVESTORS IN THE QUEEN CITY

Nearly 45,000 people are directly employed in headquarters offices in the Charlotte region, more than double the national average concentration of such talent, according to the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance.

"The Charlotte region offers access to national and international markets through the seventh-busiest airport in the world, a business-friendly climate with the lowest corporate tax rate in the country at 2.5%, and a professional service and headquarters talent pool twice the size of the national average," says Janet LaBar, CEO and president of the business alliance. "Charlotte stands to benefit from increasing real estate prices and cost of living in more high-profile markets, particularly in the Northeast. Two of the three Fortune 1000 headquarters that have [been] announced in the last year alone have come from the Northeast."

In addition to Charlotte's strong Fortune 500 roster, the Queen City is now home to 17 Fortune 1000 headquarters. The biggest company that entered the market over the last year, behind Honeywell and the proposed BB&T and SunTrust merger, is Dentsply Sirona Inc., which announced it was relocating its headquarters from York, Pa., last May.

Dentsply Sirona, which ranks 628 on the 2019 Fortune 1000 list, makes equipment for dentists, orthodontists and oral surgeons. It was founded in 2016, when Dentsply acquired Sirona Dental Systems for \$5.5 billion, creating a business with a combined market value of about \$13 billion.

The company's headquarters will be housed in Ballantyne Corporate Park, where it also trains dental professionals and provides demonstrations for its different product groups, which include a variety of instruments, im-

aging and hygiene systems, implant equipment and orthodontic tools. Last year, the company also announced it would invest \$3.3 million to establish a commercial sales hub, which will create 320 jobs in Mecklenburg County over the next three years. The relocation and expansion was aided



Janet LaBar, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance

by about \$4 million in state and local incentives and will build on Dentsply Sirona's 145-employee local workforce at its current Charlotte site.

Other corporate expansions in the region included big national and international companies. Last February, accounting firm Ernst & Young LLP announced an \$8.2 million investment to develop a new EY Wavespace Innovation Center in South End that will create 375 jobs over the next five years.

LendingTree LLC, which has called Charlotte home for more than 20 years, is planning to relocate from Ballantyne to South End. The company expects to invest \$26 million to expand its headquarter operations, and will anchor 175,000 square feet of a new mixed-use development being constructed by The Spectrum Cos. and slated to open by January 2021. The expansion, which is being aided by about \$10 million in state and local

incentives, will bring 436 new jobs over the next five years. The company now has 488 workers in the area.

E-commerce giant Amazon opened a 1.1 million-square-foot fulfillment center in May, roughly the size of 28 football fields, in Kannapolis, about 30 miles northeast of Charlotte. The Amazon CLT3, which represents between a \$50 million to \$60 million investment for the company, now has 1,000 employees after initially projecting about 600 workers. Incentives included \$624,700 from the city paid out over three years and \$2.7 million of road improvements from the N.C. Department of Transportation.

Amazon also completed a 855,000-square-foot robotics distribution center next to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, named Amazon CLT4, which opened in September. The company plans to hire 1,500 people at the \$200 million center, adding to its current 3,500-employee workforce spread across warehouses in Kannapolis, Concord and Wilkinson Boulevard in Charlotte. The Charlotte City Council approved \$13.4 million in road and infrastructure improvements for the airport-area facility last summer.

Mecklenburg County also got a boost from foreign firms last April. Tokyo-based Yokohama Tire Corp. constructed a \$5.8 million research and development facility that will add 56 jobs, and Chinese forklift manufacturer Hangcha opened a U.S. headquarters in Charlotte.

The additions and expansions in the Queen City join the likes of Domtar Corp., Sealed Air Corp., Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Commscope Holding Co., JELD-WEN Holdings, Albemarle Corp., Curtiss-Wright Corp. and SPX Flow Inc. among the Charlotte region's Fortune 1000 representatives.



Electronics manufacturer and technology giant Honeywell is relocating its global headquarters to a 23-story office building under construction in downtown Charlotte.

William Rogers, SunTrust chairman and CEO. He is slated to succeed King as the combined company's CEO in September 2021.

Other big Fortune 500 firms are investing heavily in tech in Charlotte. In June, Lowe's said it plans to open a global technology headquarters in the South End neighborhood just south of downtown. The announcement is part of Lowe's initiative to improve its technology to propel growth.

The home-improvement chain plans to bring more than 1,600 high-paying tech jobs to the area over the next several years, seeking software and infrastructure engineers, data scientists and analysts, architects, and technologists with artificial intelligence and machine learning experience. The goal will be to improve customer service and offer new capabilities, both online and through an app, Seemantini Godbole, Lowe's chief information officer, said at the June announcement.

As part of the \$153 million investment, Lowe's will occupy 15 floors of a 23-story office building expected to be completed in 2021. The state is providing \$54 million in incentives paid over the 12-year project duration, based on meeting job and investment targets.

As the headquarters of Bank of America Corp. and as the largest employment center for Wells Fargo & Co., the Queen City has been an established financial powerhouse

for decades. Charlotte banks had \$2.3 trillion in assets as of 2018, according to the business alliance, making it the second-largest financial center in the nation behind New York.

It's also one of the nation's largest-growing tech hubs. The city's tech talent pool increased 48% between 2013 and 2018. Tech workers now comprise 4.6% of the total labor force, compared with the national average of 3.5% for metro areas, according to CBRE Group Inc., a real estate investment-services company.

The Queen City is receiving a lot of recognition for its tech talent. Charlotte was rated the best place to work in tech for 2019 by the Computing Technology Industry Association and the least-expensive place to base your tech startup by Bloomberg Technology. It also had the nation's fastest-growing tech talent pool in the country for the second consecutive year, according to CBRE. Only Toronto grew faster in North America.

While the Raleigh-Durham area has for decades received more acclaim for its status as a major tech center, Charlotte is catching up. Raleigh's 61,040 tech workers still exceed Charlotte's workforce of 55,430. But Charlotte's average tech salary has grown 9.2% over the last five years to \$95,952, surpassing the Triangle average of \$95,707, which increased 8.9% during the same period, according to CBRE.

The Computing Technology association projects Charlotte and Raleigh's tech-sector jobs to grow by 11% over the next five years.

In addition to Charlotte's lower-than-average cost of living, a number of factors have lured people and businesses to the area to drive growth, including its large skilled workforce and business-friendly environment.

The Charlotte metropolitan area has a population of 2.5 million, and 45% of Mecklenburg County adults hold bachelor's degrees or higher. Charlotte alone added 13,515 residents over the last year, bringing the total population to 872,498 and making it the 16th-largest city in the nation.

The Queen City has been a major driver of Mecklenburg County's 16.6% population increase in the last decade, providing companies with plenty of potential talent. Over the last year, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area added nearly 12,000 jobs, and companies invested \$1.03 billion in the region, contributing to the county's 5.6% GDP growth over the year.

Economic developers also praise North Carolina's pro-business policies and regulations. The state's 2.5% corporate tax rate is among the lowest in the nation, according to the business alliance. The cost of doing business in the Tar Heel State is 10% lower than in the rest of the country, according to FiveThirtyEight, a New York-based research analytics firm. Last year, *Forbes* rated North Carolina

as the best state for business, and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis found it had the fastest-growing large economy in the nation. In addition to the state perks, Charlotte is home to the seventh-busiest airport in the world because of a big American Airlines hub.

Charlotte is also experiencing record-low unemployment. The city's jobless rate was 3.7% in August after bottoming at 3.2% in September last year. That compares with a state average of 4.2% and a national average of 3.7%. Meanwhile, average wages in Mecklenburg County grew 5.7% to \$66,225 between 2017 and 2018, outpacing an average 4.3% national increase.

Even in the wake of major investments over the last year, the Queen City is already preparing for its next phase of growth. Charlotte Center City Partners, a nonprofit that promotes development in downtown and South End, says the area has 5.1 million square feet of office space, 840,000 square feet of retail space, 2,276 hotel rooms and 8,363 residential units planned or under construction.

Trade battles and declining business confidence are raising concerns that economic development may slow in the next few years. About 74% of business economists expect a recession by the end of 2021, according to a July study by the National Association for Business Economists.

UNC Charlotte economist John Connaughton doesn't share that pessimism. "With the national unemployment rate consistently below 4%, more job openings than job seekers, modest interest rates and continued consumer optimism, it will take a considerable negative event to slow the economy during 2019 or into 2020," he said at an economic forecast event.

In any case, the city is quickly solidifying its place as the most important Charlotte in the world. 🇺🇸

DAVIDSON COUNTY EDC

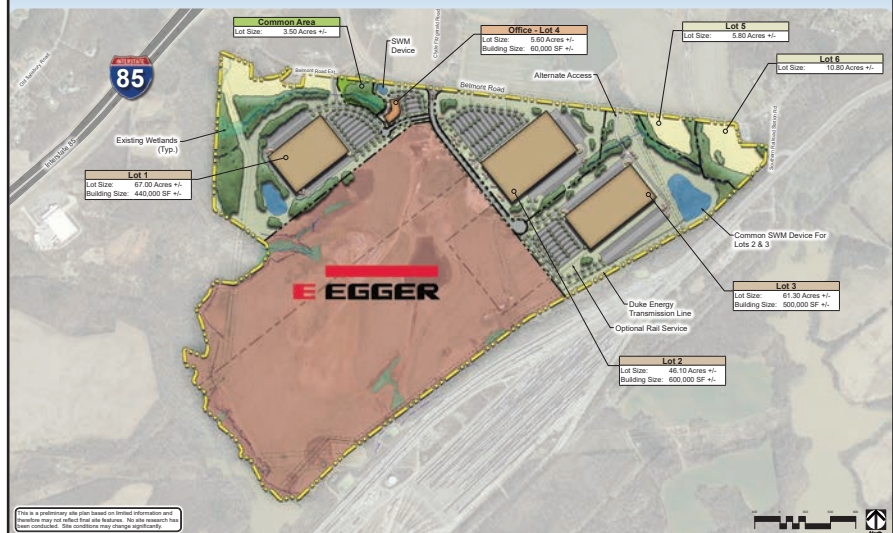
Economic Development Commission

www.DavidsonCountyEDC.com



Davidson County, NC, is situated at the center of NC's manufacturing Region. Our low business cost, proactive regulatory environment, education and training resources plus a dependable workforce make Davidson County the most reliable location for your success.

Contact: Craig Goodson, President/CEO
Cmgoodson@davidsoncountyedc.com
 336-243-1900 or 336-934-3097



This is a preliminary site plan based on limited information and is not a final site plan. No site-specific information has been included. Site conditions may change significantly.

Prepared for:
 I-85 Corporate Center
 Davidson County, NC
 Prepared by:
 Stimmel
 July 1, 2019 (Page 8 of 12)

Overall Masterplan
I-85 Corporate Center
 Davidson County, NC



I-85 CORPORATE CENTER

EGGER Wood Products Inc's 238 acre US Headquarters and Manufacturing Campus anchors the I-85 Corporate Center. Currently there are 207 acres available for additional development. Centered between the Charlotte Financial Services Region and the Raleigh Pharma Region, we have direct access to I-85, I-285, I-40, I-73/74 and within a 30 minute drive of a skilled and/or trainable workforce of 750,000 people. Combined with leading-edge, customized advanced technologies education and training solutions from Davidson County Community College, this is always a prime location consideration for US and International manufacturers each year.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

North Carolina is a great place to establish or grow your business. Below are some recent economic-development announcements.

AMAZON SEATTLE

NEW JOBS: **3,000**

COUNTIES: **MECKLENBURG, WAKE**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$400M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **NA**

The growth in online retail has dust flying in Garner, where Amazon is developing a \$200 million fulfillment center on an 88-acre site once occupied by Conagra Brands Inc. The center is expected to employ 1,500 workers and generate \$45 million in annual payroll in the southern Wake County town. A similar project is underway at an Amazon center near Charlotte Douglas International Airport. The company neither sought nor received financial incentives from the N.C. Department of Commerce, though local officials promised transportation improvements in return for Amazon's jobs and investment.

AVIDXCHANGE CHARLOTTE

NEW JOBS: **1,229**

COUNTY: **MECKLENBURG**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$41M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **\$19.6M**

AvidXchange, a fintech company founded in a Charlotte coffee shop in 2000, is doubling its employee headcount at its Queen City headquarters. New positions will pay average annual salaries of about \$68,500. AvidXchange provides cloud-based software that simplifies the way companies pay their bills. The firm automates the end-to-end payment process for customers in construction, energy, real estate and other industries. Accounting giant Deloitte ranked AvidXchange on its Fast 500 in 2018.

PUBLIX LAKELAND, FLA.

NEW JOBS: **1,000**

COUNTY: **GUILFORD**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$400M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **\$13.1M**

Grocery giant Publix opened the Triad's biggest distribution center, a 1.8 million-square-foot warehouse complex in east Greensboro, on Nov. 13. The center sits on a 350-acre property. Its \$400 million development cost made multiphase "Project Sky" North Carolina's largest capital investment in the last year. Founded in 1930, Publix has 1,218 supermarkets from Florida to Virginia, including 42 in North Carolina. The employee-owned company ranked first this year on *Fortune's* inaugural list of Best Big Companies to Work For.

CHEWY BOSTON AND DANIA, FLA.

NEW JOBS: **1,200**

COUNTY: **ROWAN**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$55M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **\$166,650**

Modern infrastructure and a ready-to-go workforce were among the factors drawing Chewy, an online pet-supply retailer, to Salisbury. Its new facility will join eight other fulfillment centers the company maintains nationally. Chewy's owner PetSmart Inc. spun off the unit with an initial public offering in June. Founded in 2011, the company's annual revenue tops \$3.5 billion.

HONEYWELL CHARLOTTE

NEW JOBS: **750**

COUNTY: **MECKLENBURG**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$248M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **\$42.4M**

The relocation of Honeywell's senior management team from New Jersey to Charlotte, along with the conglomerate's Safety and Productivity Solutions division headquarters, is expected to add \$7.9 billion to North Carolina's gross domestic product over the next 12 years. Lawmakers changed the state's cornerstone financial incentive program to permit one of the state's largest grants ever. Honeywell ranks 77th on the Fortune 500 and develops a wide variety of energy, security and supply-chain technologies. It will anchor a new 23-story building in downtown Charlotte that is expected to open in late 2020.

NATIONAL GENERAL INSURANCE WINSTON-SALEM

NEW JOBS: **626**

COUNTY: **FORSYTH**

PROJECTED INVESTMENT: **\$12.2M**

N.C. INCENTIVES: **\$5.6M**

Property and casualty insurer National General announced in September 2018 that it would expand its Winston-Salem office, adding sales, accounting, information technology, human resources and other positions. A unit of a New York-based public company, NatGen's N.C. roots date from its 1920 founding in Winston-Salem. The 626-job expansion will bring its workforce in the state to more than 2,000. "Project Backstop" also considered Cleveland, Ohio; Baton Rouge, La.; and Tijuana, Mexico, as possible locations.

NORTH CAROLINA'S 2018

economic development scoreboard

157

new projects or expansions
that engaged state economic developers



19,729

new jobs
announced by Gov. Roy Cooper



\$3.54 billion
projected investment
of new projects



69%
projects choosing
rural or distressed counties



source: N.C. Department of Commerce

► DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

Job Development Investment Grants provide performance-based incentives directly to new and expanding businesses to help offset the cost of establishing or expanding in the state.

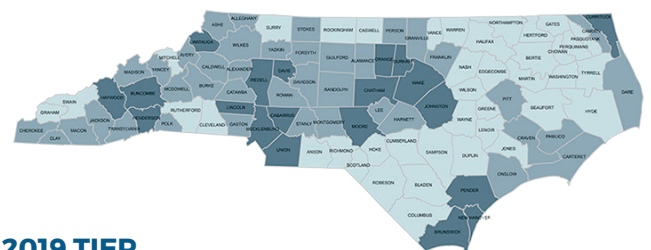
The **One North Carolina Fund** is another incentive program that awards cash grants based on the number of jobs created, amount of investment, location and expected economic impact.

In 2018, legislators approved a **Transformative Project** provision of the JDIG grant program. To qualify, companies must create at least 3,000 jobs and invest at least \$1 billion within 10 years.

Other programs include **Building Demolition** and **Building Reuse** grants that provide funds for site rehabilitation and renovation of vacant industrial and commercial buildings.

► TIERED TAX CREDITS

North Carolina annually assesses the economic health of its 100 counties, assigning each to one of three tiers. The 40 most distressed counties — the lightest-shaded below — are eligible for greater tax credits. Lesser incentives are available for other counties.



2019 TIER DESIGNATIONS 1 2 3

source: Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina Inc.

EAST

Eastern North Carolina is known for its 300-mile stretch of beautiful sandy beaches that kiss the Atlantic Ocean. The region is also rich in history: It is home to Battleship North Carolina, Cape

Hatteras and a half-dozen other lighthouses, and the birthplace of aviation, the Wright Brothers Memorial. The region also features vibrant agricultural, education and health care sectors.

BIGGEST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- East Carolina University, Greenville
- UNC Wilmington
- UNC Pembroke
- Fayetteville State University
- Fayetteville Technical Community College
- Cape Fear Community College
- Pitt Community College

ATTRACTIONS

- Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and Wright Brothers Memorial, the Outer Banks
- Historic Tryon Palace, New Bern
- Battleship North Carolina, Wilmington
- Airlie Gardens, Wilmington
- 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse, Edenton
- North Carolina Aquariums: Kure Beach, Roanoke Island, Nags Head and Pine Knoll Shores
- Fort Fisher State Historic Site, Kure Beach
- N.C. Maritime Museums: Beaufort, Hatteras, Southport

EVENTS

- North Carolina Azalea Festival, Wilmington, April
- Fayetteville Dogwood Festival, Fayetteville, April
- North Carolina Pickle Festival, Mount Olive, April
- Hang Gliding Spectacular, Nags Head, May
- Big Rock Blue Marlin Tournament, Atlantic Beach, June
- Blackbeard's Pirate Jamboree, Ocracoke, October
- North Carolina Seafood Festival, Morehead City, October
- Wilmington Riverfest, Wilmington, October
- Wilson Whirligig Festival, November

INDUSTRIES

- Aerospace and defense
- Agriculture
- Biotechnology
- Marine trades
- Metalworking
- Textiles
- Tourism



COUNTIES

Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Currituck, Dare, Duplin, Edgecombe, Gates, Greene, Halifax, Hertford, Hoke, Hyde, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Montgomery, New Hanover, Northampton, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pender, Pitt, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Tyrrell, Washington, Wayne and Wilson

CHARLOTTE

Long known as a base for banking and Fortune 500 companies, the state's most populous metro area is also experiencing growth in financial technology, logistics and advanced manufacturing. The region draws thrill-seekers with screamworthy

attractions at Carowinds amusement park and some of the sports world's fastest and loudest action at Charlotte Motor Speedway in nearby Concord. Others flock to the U.S. National Whitewater Center to ride zip lines through the trees or splash through the rapids.

BIGGEST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- UNC Charlotte
- Central Piedmont Community College, multiple locations
- Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, multiple locations
- Gaston College, multiple locations

ATTRACTIONS

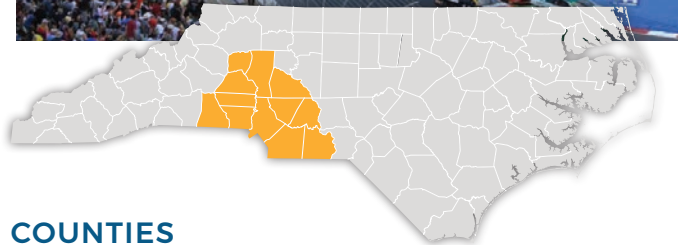
- U.S. National Whitewater Center, Charlotte
- Charlotte Motor Speedway, Concord
- Carolina Panthers NFL team, Charlotte
- NASCAR Hall of Fame, Charlotte
- Charlotte Hornets NBA team, Charlotte
- Carowinds amusement park, Charlotte
- Discovery Place, Charlotte
- Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens, Belmont
- Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium, Gastonia
- N.C. Transportation Museum, Spencer
- Lake Norman and Lake Wylie

EVENTS

- Loch Norman Highland Games, Huntersville, April
- Beer, Bourbon and BBQ Festival, Charlotte, March
- Circle K Speed Street, Charlotte, May
- Yiasou Greek Festival, Charlotte, September
- Carolina BalloonFest, Statesville, October
- Carolina Renaissance Festival, Huntersville, October-November
- Christmas Town USA, McAdenville, December

INDUSTRIES

- Business and financial services
- Corporate headquarters
- Aerospace and defense
- Textiles
- Energy
- Automotive parts manufacturing



COUNTIES

Alexander, Anson, Cabarrus, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union

TRIAD

smack dab in the middle of the state, the Triad is renowned as a hub for education, distribution and manufacturing. Three UNC System campuses and thriving private universities boast combined enrollments topping 50,000. Meanwhile, visitors enjoy wineries across

the Yadkin Valley, the Old Salem settlement in Winston-Salem and the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro, home to more than 1,600 animals. Then there's Mount Airy, the small town that inspired *The Andy Griffith Show*.

BIGGEST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- UNC Greensboro
- Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem
- Elon University
- High Point University
- N.C. A&T State University, Greensboro
- Guilford Technical Community College, multiple locations
- Forsyth Technical Community College, multiple locations
- Winston-Salem State University

ATTRACTIONS

- North Carolina Zoo, Asheboro
- International Civil Rights Center & Museum, Greensboro
- Old Salem Museum & Gardens, Winston-Salem
- Greensboro Science Center, Greensboro
- Andy Griffith Museum, Mount Airy
- Yadkin Valley Wine Country, Elkin
- Kaleideum science and children's museums, Winston-Salem

EVENTS

- National Black Theatre Festival, Winston-Salem, July-August
- Wyndham Championship golf tournament, Greensboro, August
- Winston-Salem Open tennis tournament, August
- Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival, Elkin, September
- Mayberry Days, Mount Airy, September
- Carolina Classic Fair, Winston-Salem, October
- Annual Barbecue Festival, Lexington, October
- Autumn Leaves Festival, Mount Airy, October
- Seagrove Pottery Festival Weekend, Seagrove, November

INDUSTRIES

- Aerospace and defense
- Furniture
- Finance
- Insurance
- Textiles
- Winemaking



COUNTIES

Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin

TRIANGLE

The Triangle is an internationally known center of higher education, with three major research universities plus several smaller institutions. Raleigh is home to state museums of art, history and natural

sciences, which together attract more than 1 million visitors annually. Arts, music and cultural opportunities fill the region's calendar in the state capital and nearby Durham and Chapel Hill.

BIGGEST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- N.C. State University, Raleigh
- N.C. Central University, Durham
- UNC Chapel Hill
- Duke University, Durham
- Wake Technical Community College, multiple locations
- Central Carolina Community College, multiple locations

ATTRACTIONS

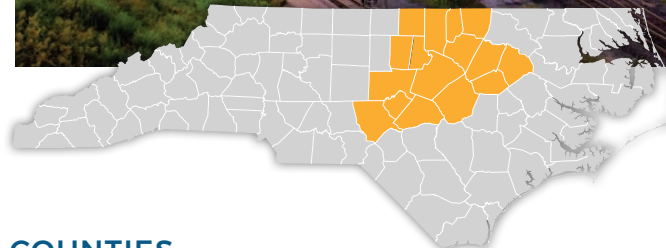
- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Raleigh
- PNC Arena, home of the Carolina Hurricanes hockey team, Raleigh
- State Farmers Market, Raleigh
- North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh
- Durham Performing Arts Center
- Morehead Planetarium and Science Center, Chapel Hill
- Marbles Kids Museum, Raleigh
- North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh
- Museum of Life and Science, Durham
- Koka Booth Amphitheater, Cary

EVENTS

- Moogfest, Durham, April
- Apex Peakfest, May
- American Dance Festival, Durham, June-July
- Festival for the Eno River, Durham, July
- Lazy Daze Arts and Crafts Festival, Cary, August
- World of Bluegrass, Raleigh, September
- Hopscotch Music Festival, Raleigh, September
- North Carolina State Fair, Raleigh, October

INDUSTRIES

- Biotechnology and pharmaceuticals
- Information technology
- Clean technology
- Higher education
- State government



COUNTIES

Chatham, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Nash, Orange, Person, Vance, Wake, Warren and Wilson

WEST

There is one undeniable fact when it comes to western North Carolina: The views are breathtaking. Visitors from around the world flock to the Blue Ridge Parkway to glimpse changing leaves in the fall and the bloom of nature in the spring.

Outdoor activities include hiking, whitewater rafting, wildlife viewing or sipping on local wine, craft beer and cider. Asheville, with its art galleries, restaurants and breweries, regularly ranks among the world's most intriguing cities, according to travel publications.

BIGGEST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- Western Carolina University, Cullowhee
- UNC Asheville
- Appalachian State University, Boone
- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

ATTRACTIONS

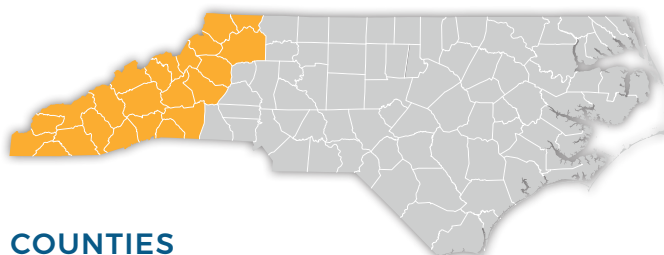
- Biltmore Estate, Asheville
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Nantahala Outdoor Center, Bryson City
- Tryon International Equestrian Center, Mill Spring
- Sliding Rock, Transylvania County
- North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville
- Grandfather Mountain, Linville
- Chimney Rock State Park, Chimney Rock
- Linville Caverns, Marion
- Cherokee Cultural Attractions, Cherokee
- Tweetsie Railroad, Blowing Rock

EVENTS

- Blowing Rock WinterFest, January
- MerleFest, Wilkesboro, April
- Lake Eden Arts Festival, Asheville-Black Mountain, May and October
- LEAF Festival, Black Mountain, October
- An Appalachian Summer Festival, Boone, June-August
- Folkmoot USA, Waynesville, July
- Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, Linville, July
- Chow Chow culinary festival, Asheville, September
- Autumn at Oz, Beech Mountain, September
- N.C. Apple Festival, Hendersonville, September
- Brushy Mountain Apple Festival, North Wilkesboro, October
- Woolly Worm Festival, Banner Elk, October

INDUSTRIES

- Aerospace and defense
- Furniture
- Beer
- Data centers
- Tourism
- Advanced manufacturing
- Christmas trees



COUNTIES

Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey

THE PLACE TO BE

A low cost of living, competitive tax rates and top-notch educational institutions are just some of the reasons North Carolina consistently ranks as a top state to do business in.

#1 MOST COMPETITIVE STATE

Site Selection, 2018

#1 BEST STATE FOR BUSINESS

Forbes, 2018

#2 BEST BUSINESS CLIMATE

Site Selection, 2018

SILVER SHOVEL AWARD

Area Development, 2019

#15 MOST COMPETITIVE BUSINESS TAX CLIMATE

Tax Foundation, 2020

▶ 15 LARGEST PUBLIC COMPANIES BASED IN NORTH CAROLINA*

	COMPANY	HEADQUARTERS	INDUSTRY
1	Bank of America	Charlotte	Financial services
2	Honeywell	Charlotte	Advanced technology
3	Lowe's	Mooresville	Home-improvement stores
4	Duke Energy	Charlotte	Utilities
5	BB&T	Winston-Salem	Financial services
6	Red Hat	Raleigh	Software
7	IQVIA Holdings	Durham	Pharmaceutical services
8	Laboratory Corp. of America	Burlington	Medical testing
9	Nucor	Charlotte	Steel
10	Martin Marietta Materials	Raleigh	Building materials
11	Dentsply Sirona	Charlotte	Dental equipment
12	Old Dominion Freight Line	Thomasville	Trucking
13	Advance Auto Parts	Raleigh	Specialty retail
14	Qorvo	Greensboro	Semiconductors
15	Albemarle	Charlotte	Chemicals

*ranked by market value as of 6/30/2019

source: Capital Investment Cos. and The Nottingham Co.

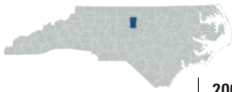
▶ LARGEST CITIES

RANK	CITY	POPULATION
1	CHARLOTTE	852,992
2	RALEIGH	464,451
3	GREENSBORO	292,286
4	DURHAM	265,055
5	WINSTON-SALEM	243,445
6	FAYETTEVILLE	209,028
7	CARY	162,321
8	WILMINGTON	121,910
9	HIGH POINT	112,997
10	ASHEVILLE	93,621
11	CONCORD	92,568
12	GREENVILLE	89,660
13	GASTONIA	76,298
14	JACKSONVILLE	75,310
15	CHAPEL HILL	63,178
16	HUNTERSVILLE	61,220
17	ROCKY MOUNT	54,644
18	BURLINGTON	53,623
19	APEX	52,842
20	WILSON	49,054
21	KANNAPOLIS	47,901
22	MOORESVILLE	41,255
23	HICKORY	40,932
24	INDIAN TRAIL	39,390
25	WAKE FOREST	37,279
26	MONROE	35,330
27	SALISBURY	34,536
28	HOLLY SPRINGS	34,068
29	GOLDSBORO	33,636
30	CORNELIUS	31,737
31	MATTHEWS	31,132
32	GARNER	30,783
33	NEW BERN	30,139
34	SANFORD	29,962
35	MINT HILL	27,522
36	THOMASVILLE	27,096
37	FUQUAY-VARINA	26,924
38	MORRISVILLE	26,041
39	ASHEBORO	25,848
40	STATESVILLE	25,824
41	KERNERSVILLE	25,705
42	CLAYTON	21,158
43	LUMBERTON	20,960
44	CARRBORO	20,715
45	LELAND	20,297
46	KINSTON	20,184
47	CLEMMONS	20,059
48	SHELBY	20,020
49	BOONE	19,797
50	HAVELOCK	19,766

source: Office of State Budget and Management, 2018

ALAMANCE

Alamance Chamber
of Commerce
336-228-1338
alamancechamber.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	146.8	165.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	59.6	61.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.8	\$38.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 16.7%
Retail: 15.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Laboratory Corporation of America

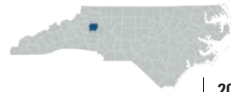
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Burlington (part): population 52,866

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
67.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Elon University;
Alamance Community College

ALEXANDER

Alexander County Economic
Development Corp.
828-632-1161
alexanderedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	36.7	38.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	9.9	9.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.3%	3.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.5	\$35.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 40.2%
Government: 11.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Craftmaster Furniture

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Taylorsville: population 2,131

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
79.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Catawba County Community College

ALLEGHANY

Alleghany County Chamber
of Commerce
336-372-5473
alleghanycountychamber.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	11.0	11.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	3.5	3.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.7%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.9	\$37.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 17.0%
Health care: 14.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Parkdale Mills

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Sparta: population 1,799

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
59.7 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Wilkes Community College

ANSON

Anson Economic
Development Partnership
704-690-4936
ansonedp.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	26.8	25.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.2	7.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.9%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.5	\$33.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 20.8%
Government: 14.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Hornwood

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Wadesboro: population 5,426

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.7 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
South Piedmont Community College

ASHE

Ashe County
Economic Development
336-846-5501
ashencedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	26.8	27.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.1	7.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.9%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.3	\$35.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 15.6%
Health care: 14.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
American Emergency Vehicles

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Jefferson: population 1,559

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
44.3 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Wilkes Community College

AVERY

Avery County Economic
Development Committee
828-733-8201
averycountync.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	18.0	17.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.3	6.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.0	\$34.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 14.4%
Health care: 13.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Sugar Mountain Resort Inc.

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Banner Elk: population 1,158

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
55.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Lees-McRae College;
Mayland Community College

BEAUFORT

Beaufort County
Economic Development
252-946-3970
beaufortedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	46.7	47.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	17.4	15.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.4%	4.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.7	\$40.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 14.6%
Retail: 13.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
PCS Phosphate

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Washington: population 9,355

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
63.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Beaufort County Community College

BERTIE

Bertie County
Economic Development
252-794-5301
co.bertie.nc.us



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	21.1	19.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	7.0	5.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.6%	5.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.1	\$34.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 14.3%
Health care: 12.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Perdue

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Windsor: 3,527

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
86.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Rowan County Community College;
Martin Community College

BLADEN

Bladen County Economic Development Commission
910-645-2292
bladennc.govoffice3.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	35.0	34.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	13.2	13.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.1%	5.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.6	\$34.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 46.0%
Health care: 7.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Smithfield Foods

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Elizabethtown: population 3,425

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
82.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Bladen Community College

BRUNSWICK

Brunswick Business and Industry Development
910-408-1603
brunswickbid.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	102.3	136.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	28.9	32.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	5.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.0	\$41.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.5%
Health care: 13.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Duke Energy Progress

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Leland: population 20,297

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
48.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Brunswick Community College

BUNCOMBE

Economic Development Coalition Asheville-Buncombe County
828-258-6101
economicdevelopmentasheville.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	232.8	262.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	115.7	132.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.8%	3.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$35.7	\$46.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 20.5%
Hospitality: 13.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Mission Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Asheville: population 93,621

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
52.9 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
UNC Asheville; Montreat College; Warren Wilson College; Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

BURKE

Burke Development Inc.
828-764-9370
burkedevinc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	90.0	91.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	31.6	29.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.4%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.1	\$34.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 25.6%
Manufacturing: 25.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Carolinas HealthCare System
Blue Ridge

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Morganton: population 16,921

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
69.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Western Piedmont Community College

CABARRUS

Cabarrus Economic Development
704-782-4000
cabarrusedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	170.9	209.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	66.7	77.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.9%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$35.2	\$43.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 15.6%
Hospitality: 13.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Amazon.com

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Concord: population 92,568

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
74.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Barber-Scotia College; Rowan-Cabarrus Community College; Cabarrus College of Health Sciences

CALDWELL

Economic Development Commission of Caldwell County
828-728-0768
caldwelledc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	81.9	83.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	26.7	25.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.1%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.3	\$33.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 25.5%
Health care: 13.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Merchants Distributors

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Lenoir: population 17,749

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
63.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

CAMDEN

Camden County Economic Development Commission
252-338-6363, ext. 103
camdencountync.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	9.8	10.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	2.1	1.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.5%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$37.1	\$44.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 11.2%
Retail: 10.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Swain & Temple

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Elizabeth City (part): population 44

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
74.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

CARTERET

Carteret County Economic Development Department
252-222-6121
carterettedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	64.7	70.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	23.4	23.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.5%	4.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$38.5	\$47.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 19.2%
Hospitality: 15.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Carteret Health Care

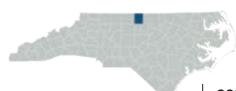
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Morehead City: population 9,481

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
31.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Carteret Community College

CASWELL

Caswell County Office of
Economic Development
336-514-0427
caswellcountync.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	23.6	23.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	3.2	3.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.3%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$24.9	\$34.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 20.9%
Education: 18.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
WS Construction

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Yanceyville: population 2,022

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Piedmont Community College

CATAWBA

Catawba County Economic
Development Corp.
828-267-1564
catawbaedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	152.4	158.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	85.5	88.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.4%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$35.1	\$43.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 27.6%
Retail: 12.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Catawba Valley Medical Center

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Hickory (part): population 40,835

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
57.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Lenoir-Rhyne University;
Catawba Valley Community College

CHATHAM

Chatham County Economic
Development Corp.
919-542-8274
chathamcdc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	61.2	74.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	16.5	14.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.0%	3.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$45.6	\$60.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 16.3%
Retail: 11.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Carolina Meadows

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Siler City: population 8,534

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
67.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Central Carolina Community College

CHEROKEE

Cherokee County
Economic Development
828-837-5527
cherokeecounty-nc.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	27.2	29.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.2	8.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	9.4%	4.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$25.5	\$31.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.5%
Health care: 15.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Murphy Medical Center

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Andrews: population 1,851

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
52.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Tri-County Community College

CHOWAN

Edenton Chowan
Partnership Inc.
252-482-2007
edenton.net



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	15.0	14.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	5.3	4.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.9%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.9	\$39.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 19.8%
Manufacturing: 11.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Vidant Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Edenton: population 4,640

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
75.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

CLAY

Clay County Economic
Development Commission
828-835-9564
claycountyedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	10.3	11.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	2.1	2.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.7	\$32.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 19.1%
Health care: 13.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Ingles Markets

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Haynesville: population 372

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
43.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Tri-County Community College

CLEVELAND

Cleveland County Economic
Development Partnership
704-669-4701
ccedp.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	97.0	98.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	33.5	35.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.5%	4.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.4	\$36.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 19.0%
Health care: 14.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Atrium Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Shelby: population 20,020

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
72.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Gardner-Webb University;
Cleveland Community College

COLUMBUS

Columbus County Economic
Development Commission
910-640-6608
columbusedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	56.6	56.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	17.0	15.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.0%	5.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.3	\$32.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 16.9%
Retail: 13.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
International Paper

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Whiteville: population 5,190

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
80.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Southeastern Community College

CRAVEN

Craven County
Economic Development
252-633-5300
cravenbusiness.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	99.6	103.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	41.3	39.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.1%	4.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$36.9	\$42.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 17.5%
Health care: 17.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
CarolinaEast Health System

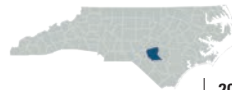
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
New Bern: population 30,139

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
54.9 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Craven Community College

CUMBERLAND

Fayetteville Cumberland County
Economic Development Corp.
910-500-6464
fayedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	311.1	329.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	119.8	119.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.3%	5.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.2	\$37.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 19.1%
Retail: 14.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Cape Fear Valley Health Systems

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Fayetteville: population 209,028

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
79.9 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Methodist University; Fayetteville
State University; Fayetteville
Technical Community College

CURRITUCK

Currituck County Economic
Development Department
252-232-6015
thinkcurrituck.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	23.5	27.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	5.7	7.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.5%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.9	\$44.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 18.7%
Hospitality: 10.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Academi Training Center

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Myock, unincorporated

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
48.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

DARE

The Outer Banks
Chamber of Commerce
252-441-8144
outerbankschamber.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	34.1	37.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	19.5	19.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.5%	5.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$40.0	\$53.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Hospitality: 22.9%
Retail: 19.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Vidant Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Kill Devil Hills: population 7,266

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
47.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

DAVIDSON

Davidson County Economic
Development Commission
336-243-1900
davidsoncountyledc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	159.6	167.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	42.6	43.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.3%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.3	\$37.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 22.1%
Retail: 11.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Atrium Corp.

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Thomasville (part): population 26,773

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
54.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Davidson County Community College

DAVIE

Davie County Economic
Development Commission
336-751-2714
daviecountyledc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	40.3	43.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	10.6	12.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.3%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$38.5	\$45.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 26.3%
Retail: 11.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Ashley Furniture Industries

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Mocksville: population 5,425

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.8 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Davidson County Community College

DUPLIN

Duplin County Economic
Development Commission
910-296-2180
duplinedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	56.9	59.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	20.4	19.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.9%	4.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.1	\$33.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 31.5%
Agriculture: 12.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Butterball

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Wallace (part): population 4,025

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
James Sprunt Community College

DURHAM

Greater Durham
Chamber of Commerce
919-328-8700
durhamchamber.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	258.3	311.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	183.9	204.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.9%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$39.5	\$47.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 17.9%
Education: 14.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Duke University

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Durham (part): population 264,686

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
71.2 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Duke University; NC Central
University; Durham Technical
Community College

EDGECOMBE

Carolinas Gateway
Partnership
252-442-0114
econdev.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	55.8	53.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	20.1	16.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	10.6%	6.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.0	\$33.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 17.3%
Manufacturing: 16.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
QVC

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Rocky Mount (part): population 15,687

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
95.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Edgecombe Community College

FORSYTH

Winston-Salem
Business Inc.
336-723-8955
wsbusinessinc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	343.0	377.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	185.4	186.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$40.3	\$46.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 21.0%
Retail: 11.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Winston-Salem: population 243,445

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
75.4 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Wake Forest University; Salem College;
Winston-Salem State University; UNC
School of the Arts; Forsyth Technical
Community College

FRANKLIN

Franklin County Economic
Development Commission
919-554-1863
franklincountync.us/services/edc



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	58.5	67.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	11.6	12.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.3%	4.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.7	\$34.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 22.4%
Retail: 11.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Novozymes North America

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Louisburg: population 3,485

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
80.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Louisburg College;
Vance-Granville Community College

GASTON

Gaston County Economic
Development Commission
704-825-4046
gaston.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	203.1	221.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	69.3	74.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.8%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.8	\$39.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 21.3%
Health care: 15.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
CaroMont Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Gastonia: population 76,298

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
84.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Belmont Abbey College;
Gaston College

GATES

Gates County
Chamber of Commerce
252-506-1592
gatescounty.govoffice2.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	12.2	12.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	1.5	1.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.5%	4.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.3	\$35.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 10.4%
Retail: 10.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Ashton Lewis Lumber

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Gatesville: population 318

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
79.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

GRAHAM

Graham County
Economic Development
828-479-7984
grahamcountyedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	8.6	8.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	2.7	2.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	10.8%	6.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.0	\$31.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Construction: 20.6%
Hospitality: 14.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Graham County Land Company

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Robbinsville: population 639

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
65.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Tri-County Community College

GRANVILLE

Granville County Economic
Development Commission
919-693-5911
granvillecounty.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	58.5	61.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	20.2	21.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.7%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.6	\$36.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 25.2%
Manufacturing: 20.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Revlon Consumer Products

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Oxford: population 8,504

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
84.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Vance-Granville Community College

GREENE

Greene County Economic
Development Commission
252-747-3446
cogreenenc.us/economic-development



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	20.9	21.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	4.3	4.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.7%	3.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$23.2	\$32.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 27.4%
Health care: 13.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Greene County Health Care

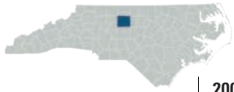
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Snow Hill: population 1,592

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
78.6 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Lenoir Community College

GUILFORD

Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
336-387-8312, greensboroeda.com
High Point Economic Development Corp.
336-883-3116, highpointnc.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	474.3	533.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	278.8	281.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.2%	4.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$37.9	\$45.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 13.0%
Manufacturing: 11.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Cone Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Greensboro: population 292,286

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Bennett, Guilford and Greensboro colleges; High Point and NC A&T State universities; UNC Greensboro; Guilford Technical Community College

HALIFAX

Halifax County Economic Development Commission
252-519-2630
halifaxdevelopment.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	55.1	51.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	17.8	15.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	9.3%	6.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.0	\$35.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 17.7%
Retail: 14.6%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Halifax Regional Medical Center

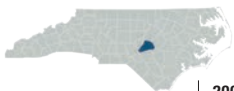
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Roanoke Rapids: population 14,738

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Halifax Community College

HARNETT

Harnett County Economic Development Commission
910-893-7524
harnettedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	108.5	133.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	23.9	25.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.7%	4.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.9	\$32.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.8%
Health care: 13.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Food Lion

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Dunn: population 9,541

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
75.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Campbell University;
Central Carolina Community College

HAYWOOD

Haywood Economic Development Council
828-456-3021
haywoodedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	58.0	63.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	17.3	17.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.7%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.0	\$38.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 17.8%
Manufacturing: 15.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Blue Ridge Paper Products

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Waynesville: population 10,110

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
58.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Haywood Community College

HENDERSON

Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development
828-692-6373
gohendersoncountync.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	104.1	117.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	36.3	38.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.9%	3.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$34.7	\$41.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 17.3%
Manufacturing: 15.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Pardee Hospital

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Hendersonville: population 14,251

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
56.1 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Blue Ridge Community College

HERTFORD

Hertford County Economic Development
252-358-7801
hertfordcounty.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	24.2	24.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	9.6	9.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.8%	5.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$25.6	\$32.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 24.5%
Retail: 16.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Vidant Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Ahoskie: population 4,784

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
84.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Chowan University;
Roanoke-Chowan Community College

HOKE

Raeford Hoke Economic Development Commission
910-875-6113
hokecounty.net



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	44.6	54.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.4	8.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	5.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.4	\$30.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 21.3%
Health care: 18.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Butterball

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Raeford: population 4,948

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
75.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Sandhills Community College

HYDE

Hyde County Office of Planning and Economic Development
252-926-4178
hydecountync.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	5.9	5.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	2.1	1.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.1%	8.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$22.6	\$41.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 22.0%
Manufacturing: 13.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Illinois Tool Works

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Swan Quarter, unincorporated

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Beaufort County Community College

IREDELL

Statesville Regional Development,
704-871-0062, statesvilleregion.com
Mooresville South Iredell Economic
Development Corp.
704-664-6922, edcmooresville.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	154.8	179.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	65.9	73.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$37.3	\$48.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 15.4%
Retail: 13.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Lowe's

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Mooresville: population 41,255

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
52.8 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Mitchell Community College

JACKSON

Jackson County Office of Economic
Development, 828-631-2240,
jacksonthrive.jacksonnc.org
Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
800-962-1911, mountainlovers.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	38.7	44.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	13.9	13.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.2%	4.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.8	\$31.8

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Education: 21.2%
Hospitality: 18.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
DLP Partner Medwest

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Sylva: population 2,720

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
38.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Western Carolina University;
Southwestern Community College

JOHNSTON

Johnston County Economic
Development Office
919-205-1232
growwithjoco.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	160.1	199.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	44.2	48.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.6	\$38.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 14.7%
Manufacturing: 14.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Johnston Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Clayton (part): population 21,158

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
76.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Johnston Community College

JONES

Jones County
Economic Development
252-448-1315
jonescountync.gov



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	10.1	10.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	1.6	1.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	4.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.2	\$38.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 20.0%
Government: 13.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Harris Teeter

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Maysville: population 1,036

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
79.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Lenoir Community College

LEE

Sanford Area
Growth Alliance
919-774-8439
growsanfordnc.com/edc



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	56.5	60.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	26.5	26.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.8%	4.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.9	\$38.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 29.6%
Retail: 12.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Caterpillar

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Sanford: population 29,962

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Central Carolina Community College

LENOIR

Lenoir County
Economic Development
252-527-1963
lenoirredc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	59.4	57.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	27.4	28.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.4%	4.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.6	\$39.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 28.8%
Health care: 17.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Sanderson Farms

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Kinston: population 20,184

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
84.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Lenoir Community College

LINCOLN

Lincoln Economic
Development Association
704-732-1511
lincolnedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	75.8	84.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	21.8	23.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.5%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.4	\$43.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 20.5%
Retail: 13.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Atrium Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Lincolnton: population 10,565

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
59.9 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Gaston College

MACON

Macon County Economic
Development Commission
828-369-2306
maconedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	33.7	36.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	11.8	11.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.1%	4.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.4	\$38.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 18.6%
Hospitality: 14.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Drake Enterprises

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Franklin: population 4,113

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
37.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Southwestern Community College

MADISON

Madison County
Economic Development Board
828-649-1377
investinmadison.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	20.5	22.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	4.2	3.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$25.9	\$32.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 13.8%
Retail: 11.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Mars Hill University

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Mars Hill: population 2,096

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
55.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Mars Hill College; Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

MARTIN

Martin County
Economic Development Corp.
252-789-4904
martincountyledc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	24.5	23.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	8.9	6.7
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.7%	5.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.8	\$34.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.2%
Health care: 15.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Snacks Holdings

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Williamston: population 5,400

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
81.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Martin Community College

MCDOWELL

McDowell Economic
Development Association Inc.
828-652-9391
mcdowellnceda.govoffice3.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	44.7	46.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	16.0	16.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.4%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$25.6	\$32.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 39.4%
Retail: 12.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Baxter International

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Marion: population 8,436

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
58.8 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
McDowell Technical Community College

MECKLENBURG

Charlotte Regional Business
Alliance
704-378-1300
charlotteregion.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	888.7	1093.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	568.8	695.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.1%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$63.4	\$57.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 11.5%
Retail: 9.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Atrium Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Charlotte: population 852,992

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
61.7 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Davidson College; Johnson C Smith, Johnson & Wales, Pfeiffer and Queens universities; UNC Charlotte; Central Piedmont Community College

MITCHELL

Mitchell County Economic
Development Commission
828-537-1404
mitchellcountyledc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	15.6	15.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	5.4	4.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.3%	4.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.0	\$34.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 18.1%
Education: 15.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Sibeco North America

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Spruce Pine: population 2,170

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
58.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Mayland Community College

MONTGOMERY

Montgomery County Economic
Development
910-576-4221, ext. 1307
montgomerycountync.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	27.7	27.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	9.4	9.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.5%	3.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.7	\$33.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 35.2%
Health care: 12.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Grede II

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Troy: population 3,211

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
62.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Montgomery Community College

MOORE

Moore County
Partners in Progress
910-246-0311
moorebusiness.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	86.0	99.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	31.7	36.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.3%	3.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$40.3	\$49.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 25.8%
Hospitality: 15.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
FirstHealth of the Carolinas

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Pinehurst: population 17,100

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
51.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Sandhills Community College

NASH

Carolinas Gateway
Partnership
252-442-0114
econdev.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	93.4	95.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	43.8	40.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.7%	5.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$34.0	\$40.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 18.5%
Health care: 13.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Hospira

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Rocky Mount (part): population 38,957

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
67.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
N.C. Wesleyan College;
Nash Community College

NEW HANOVER

Wilmington Business
Development
910-763-8414
wilmingtonbusinessdevelopment.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	197.4	233.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	103.5	114.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.3%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$37.6	\$44.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 16.5%
Hospitality: 13.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
New Hanover Regional Medical Center

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Wilmington: population 121,910

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
55.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
UNC Wilmington;
Cape Fear Community College

NORTHAMPTON

Northampton County Economic
Development Commission
252-534-1092
northamptonnc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	22.0	20.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	5.8	5.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.0%	5.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.6	\$33.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 12.5%
Wholesale: 11.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Lowe's

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Gaston: population 1,102

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
91.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Halifax Community College;
Roanoke-Chowan Community College

ONslow

Jacksonville Onslow
Economic Development
910-939-7023
joednc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	174.8	198.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	45.9	48.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$39.5	\$45.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 22.2%
Hospitality: 16.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Walmart

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Jacksonville: population 75,310

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
70.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Coastal Carolina Community College

ORANGE

Orange County Economic
Development
919-245-2325
growinorangenc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	129.6	144.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	62.4	72.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.0%	3.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$51.1	\$62.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Education: 28.3%
Health care: 25.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Industrial Connections & Solutions

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Chapel Hill (part): population 59,874

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
86.8 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
UNC Chapel Hill;
Durham Technical Community College

PAMLICO

Pamlico County Office of
Economic Development
252-745-3081
pamlicocounty.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	13.0	13.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	3.1	3.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.1%	4.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.0	\$40.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 19.4%
Health care: 16.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Food Lion

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Bayboro: population 1,211

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
62.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Pamlico Community College

PASQUOTANK

Elizabeth City Pasquotank County
Economic Development Commission
252-338-0169
elizabethcitypasquotankcdc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	40.5	39.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	17.8	15.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.0%	4.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.8	\$38.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 17.4%
Retail: 17.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Sentara Healthcare

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Elizabeth City (part): population 17,687

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Elizabeth City State University;
College of The Albemarle

PENDER

Wilmington
Business Development
910-763-8414
wilmingtonbusinessdevelopment.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	50.1	62.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	10.6	12.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.2%	4.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.1	\$35.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 14.3%
Health care: 12.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Pender Memorial Hospital

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Burgaw: population 4,091

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
64.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Cape Fear Community College

PERQUIMANS

Perquimans County Economic
Development Commission
252-312-5314
econdevperquimansnc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	13.2	13.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	2.0	2.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.0%	4.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$32.1	\$39.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Hospitality: 16.0%
Government: 14.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Guest Services

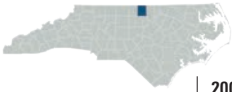
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Hertford: population 2,099

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
59.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
College of The Albemarle

PERSON

Person County Economic
Development Commission
336-597-1752
personcountyedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	38.2	40.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	10.5	9.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.4%	4.1%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.0	\$36.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.1%
Manufacturing: 15.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
GKN Automotive Components

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Roxboro: population 8,181

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Piedmont Community College

PITT

Pitt County
Development Commission
252-902-2075
locateincarolina.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	160.7	179.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	72.6	77.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	4.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.0	\$39.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 22.7%
Education: 14.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Vidant Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Greenville: population 89,660

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
72.1 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
East Carolina University;
Pitt Community College

POLK

Polk County Office
of Business Development
828-894-2895
polknc.org/economic_development



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	20.0	21.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	5.1	5.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.0%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$36.2	\$43.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 30.4%
Hospitality: 9.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
St. Luke's Hospital

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Tryon: population 1,792

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
54.9 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Isothermal Community College

RANDOLPH

Randolph County Economic
Development Corp.
336-626-2233
rcedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	139.1	143.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	47.9	44.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.6%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.6	\$36.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 33.7%
Health care: 9.5%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Technimark

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Asheboro: population 25,848

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
63.3 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Randolph Community College

RICHMOND

Richmond County
Economic Development
910-997-8190
richmondnced.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	46.7	45.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	15.0	13.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	9.6%	5.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.4	\$34.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 23.1%
Retail: 13.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Perdue

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Rockingham: population 9,099

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
83.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Richmond Community College

ROBESON

Robeson County Office of
Economic Development
910-739-7584
robesoncountyoed.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	131.7	131.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	42.2	38.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.2%	5.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$24.9	\$28.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 18.7%
Manufacturing: 17.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Mountaire Farms

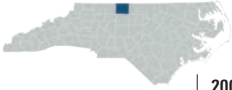
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Lumberton: population 20,960

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
77.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
UNC Pembroke;
Robeson Community College

ROCKINGHAM

Rockingham County Center for
Economic Development, Small
Business & Tourism
336-342-8138
gorockinghamcountync.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	92.8	91.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	29.1	25.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.7%	4.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.3	\$36.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 21.2%
Retail: 15.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Walmart

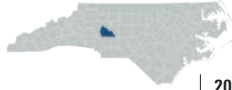
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Eden: population 15,023

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
69.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Rockingham Community College

ROWAN

Rowan EDC
704-637-5526
rowanedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	136.6	142.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	48.1	48.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.0%	3.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.7	\$37.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 17.2%
Manufacturing: 15.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Food Lion

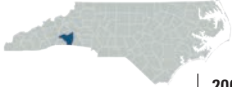
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Salisbury: population 34,536

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
65.8 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Catawba College; Livingstone College;
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College

RUTHERFORD

Rutherford County
Economic Development
828-287-6200
rutherfordncedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	66.6	68.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	22.8	18.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.3%	5.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$25.8	\$31.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 15.9%
Health care: 14.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Rutherford Regional Health System

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Forest City: population 7,429

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
59.7 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Isothermal Community College

SAMPSON

Sampson County Economic
Development Commission
910-592-8921
sampsonedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	63.2	64.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	20.1	18.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.6%	4.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.9	\$36.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 16.7%
Agriculture: 12.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Smithfield Foods

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Clinton: population 8,340

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
82.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Sampson Community College

SCOTLAND

Scotland County Economic
Development Corp.
910-266-4326
scotlandcountyedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	36.5	35.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	14.1	11.8
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	11.3%	7.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.3	\$31.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 17.9%
Health care: 17.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Scotland Health Care System

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Laurinburg: population 15,560

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
100.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
St. Andrews University;
Richmond Community College

STANLY

Stanly County Economic
Development Commission
704-986-3682
stanlyedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	59.9	63.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	19.5	19.2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.7%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.3	\$38.0

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 17.9%
Retail: 15.1%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Atrium Health

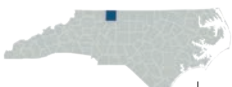
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Albemarle: population 16,140

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
67.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Pfeiffer University;
Stanly Community College

STOKES

Stokes County Economic
Development Commission
336-593-2496
stokesedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	46.9	46.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	7.3	7.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.0%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$28.9	\$35.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 15.6%
Education: 14.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Wieland Copper Products

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
King (part): population 6,245

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
66.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Forsyth Technical
Community College

SURRY

Surry County Economic
Development Partnership Inc.
336-401-9900
surryedp.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	72.9	73.1
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	30.2	29.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.1%	3.6%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.3	\$37.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 16.0%
Health care: 13.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Pike

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Mount Airy: population 10,252

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
58.2 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Surry Community College

SWAIN

Swain County Economic
Development Commission
828-448-7838; swaincountync.gov/
economic-development.html



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	13.9	14.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	7.9	10.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.1%	4.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$26.4	\$37.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Entertainment: 37.4%
Government: 22.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Bryson City: population 1,488

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
36.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Southwestern Community College

TRANSYLVANIA

Transylvania Economic Alliance
828-393-4130
transylvaniaalliance.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	32.4	35.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	9.5	9.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.2%	3.8%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.1	\$40.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 16.7%
Retail: 14.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Mission Health

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Brevard: population 8,159

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
63.6 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Brevard College;
Blue Ridge Community College

TYRRELL

Tyrrell County
Economic Development
252-796-1371
tyrellcounty.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	4.4	4.3
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	1.1	1.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.3%	6.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$24.4	\$30.9

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 24.2%
Retail: 12.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Capt. Charlie's Seafood

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Columbia: population 833

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
88.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Beaufort County Community College

UNION

Monroe-Union County
Economic Development
704-282-5780
developunion.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	192.3	232.8
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	57.6	64.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.7%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$36.7	\$49.6

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 19.1%
Retail: 12.3%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Tyson Farms

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Indian Trail: population 39,390

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.1 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Wingate University;
South Piedmont Community College

VANCE

Henderson-Vance County Economic
Development Commission
252-492-2094
vancecountyedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	45.1	45.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	16.3	14.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	9.2%	5.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.1	\$34.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 14.8%
Retail: 14.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Walmart

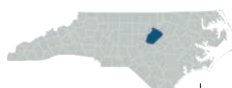
LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Henderson: population 14,982

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
89.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Vance-Granville Community College

WAKE

Wake County Economic
Development
919-664-7000
raleigh-wake.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	856.9	1074.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	452.1	560.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.7%	3.3%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$47.7	\$56.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Retail: 11.3%
Health care: 10.8%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Wake Med Health & Hospitals

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Raleigh (part): population 463,115

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
72.1 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Meredith College; William Peace
University; St. Augustine's University;
Shaw University; N.C. State University;
Wake Technical Community College

WARREN

Warren County Economic
Development Commission
252-257-3114
warrencountync.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	20.8	20.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	3.6	3.1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.7%	6.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$24.4	\$29.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Government: 23.1%
Retail: 12.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Glen Raven

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Norlina: population 1,072

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
79.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Vance-Granville Community College

WASHINGTON

Washington County
Economic Development
252-793-5823
washconc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	13.3	12.2
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	3.4	3.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.9%	6.0%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.2	\$35.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 21.3%
Health care: 17.0%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Domtar Paper

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Plymouth: population 3,544

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
85.5 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Beaufort County Community College;
Martin Community College

WATAUGA

Watauga County Office of
Economic Development
828-264-3082
wataugaedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	49.5	57.6
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	21.5	23.6
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.6%	3.5%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$30.1	\$35.5

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Hospitality: 19.4%
Education: 18.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Appalachian Regional Healthcare
System

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Boone: population 19,797

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
40.3 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Appalachian State University;
Caldwell Community College and
Technical Institute

WAYNE

Wayne County
Development Alliance Inc.
919-731-7700
waynealliance.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	120.0	124.7
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	45.6	42.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.0%	4.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$31.3	\$37.1

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Health care: 19.3%
Retail: 14.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Wayne Memorial Hospital

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Goldsboro: population 33,636

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
66.4 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
University of Mount Olive
Wayne Community College

WILKES

Wilkes Economic Development Corp.
336-838-1501
wilkesedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	68.8	69.9
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	22.5	22.0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.8%	3.7%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.8	\$35.7

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 20.5%
Retail: 12.7%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Tyson Farms

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
North Wilkesboro: population 4,372

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
66.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Wilkes Community College

WILSON

Wilson Economic Development Council
252-237-1115
wilsonedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	79.6	82.0
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	39.5	36.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.0%	6.2%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$33.5	\$39.3

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 19.5%
Health care: 13.4%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
BB&T

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Wilson: population 49,054

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
73.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Barton College;
Wilson Technical Community College

YADKIN

Yadkin County Economic Development Council
336-679-2200
yadkinedc.com



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	38.1	38.5
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	9.5	9.9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	5.8%	3.4%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$29.9	\$36.2

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 27.7%
Transportation: 9.9%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Unifi

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Yadkinville: population 2,973

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
66.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Surry Community College

YANCEY

Yancey County Economic Development Commission
828-682-7722
yanceyedc.org



	2008	2018*
POPULATION (000S)	17.9	18.4
EMPLOYMENT (000S)	4.0	4.4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.8%	3.9%
PER CAPITA INCOME (000S)	\$27.1	\$34.4

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing: 28.8%
Retail: 13.2%

LARGEST PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYER
Altec Industries

LARGEST CITY/TOWN
Burnsville: population 1,709

COUNTY PROPERTY TAX
60.0 cents per \$100 value

HIGHER EDUCATION
Mayland Community College

SOURCES

Population, counties, largest city/town, employment and unemployment rate: N.C. Office of State Budget and Management. Hyde and Currituck counties have no incorporated towns. Employment number comes from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (All Industries category). Employment share by industry sector and largest private-sector employer: N.C. Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Division, as of fourth quarter of 2018. 2019-20 property-tax rate: North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and N.C. Department of Revenue. Per capita income: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Community colleges are listed for every county in their designated service area.

*Per capita income is for 2017, the most recent year available.



THE NEW RIVER, N.C. DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

NORTH CAROLINA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

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