



WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
Youth Program Report
PY 2025

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

Report produced and
provided by NCAWDB
Director's Council

 NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF
workforce
development boards



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Introduction

Workforce development provides opportunities to connect, train and educate residents for careers that help businesses and our economy thrive. Exposure for youth and young adults' to these opportunities are critical to the talent pipeline needed for a strong economy. North Carolina's 20 workforce development boards continue to incorporate new strategies to remove roadblocks for in-school and out-of-school youth, and engage young adults ages 16 to 24 who face barriers to employment.

Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) includes five components for WIOA programming to interconnect the 14 WIOA required youth elements and ensure participants are prepared for career success through:

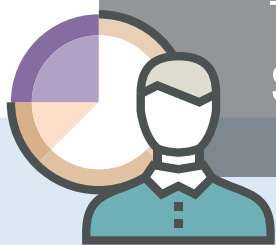
- » education
- » career pathways
- » career experience
- » leadership development
- » wraparound services

By partnering with local employers and community organizations, NCWorks NextGen ensures that youth not only gain the skills needed for in-demand jobs but also build lasting connections within their communities. Through WIOA funding, the NCWorks NextGen Youth program plays a critical role in shaping the future workforce of North Carolina by preparing young individuals for sustainable careers and fostering economic growth. By coordinating efforts and working collaboratively with other agencies to best serve these young adults, North Carolina workforce development boards achieved the following Federal performance success for participants in PY 25¹:

- » **76 percent** were employed within six months.
- » **74 percent** remained employed after 1 year.
- » **61 percent** who participated in training earned a credential.

Thousands of young adults have found the training and skills needed to enter the workforce and grow in careers they love. North Carolina workforce development boards are committed to ensuring the success of the WIOA youth and young adult program so that we continue to play a role in empowering young adults and bolstering our state's ever-growing workforce.

¹ Source: Future Works database

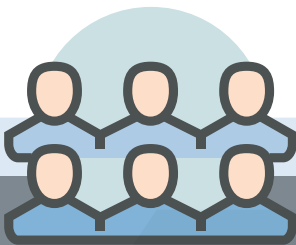


Total Youth
Served

3,397

COST PER PARTICIPANT

\$4,524



1,972

Total New Enrollments

Work-Based Learning
Opportunities



1,112

49



Pre-Apprenticeship/
Apprenticeship Training

Credentials Earned

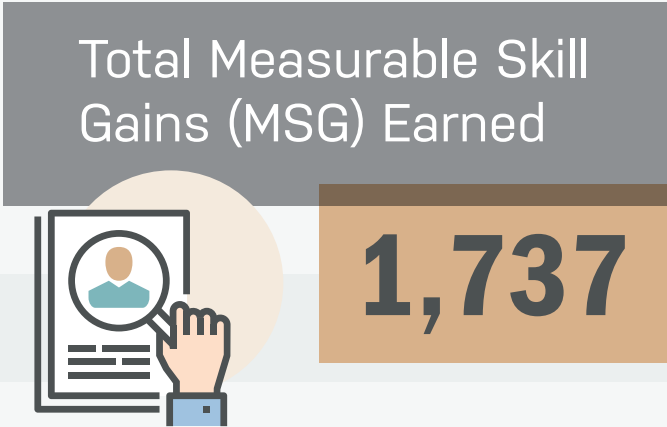
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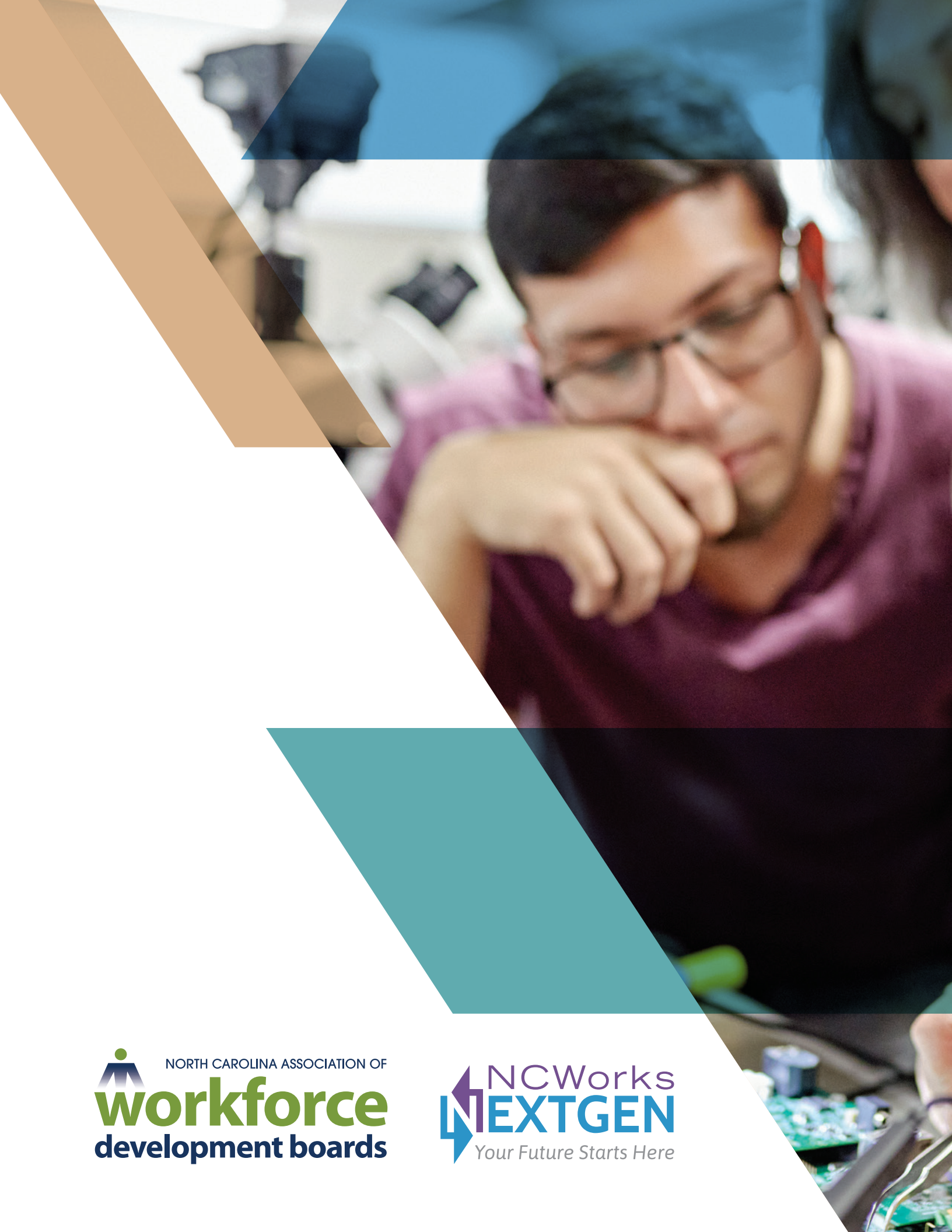
Received Supportive
Services

1,413





**Because of the timing of this report, the figures reported here may not correspond to the official State reporting numbers.*



**Reports From
NC Workforce
Development Boards**



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 221
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 121
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 63
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 21
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 38
 - Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 4
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 94
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 240
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 67
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 72
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 52
-
- The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) continues partnering with Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender County Schools to reach local high school students and educate them about career and employment options during high school and after graduation. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and board staff have participated in job fairs, hiring events, career and college days, and workshops to provide students with information on the WIOA program and the opportunities available to them. This partnership allows students to seek additional financial assistance through the WIOA Title I Youth Program for support with college expenses after graduation and to explore employment and Work Experience (WEX) Internship opportunities following career and college fair events.
 - The Youth Empowerment Services for the Community Justice Services Program for New Hanover County brought eight youth to the New Hanover County NCWorks Career Center on February 9, 2026, for a center tour and an overview of services available to young adults with justice-involved backgrounds. Youth learned about WIOA Title I Youth services for ages 16–24 and created NCWorks Jobseeker profiles, completed the Comprehensive WIOA Title I Application, developed resumes, and conducted job searches. This partnership

helps establish a pipeline of re-entry support for youth seeking a second chance.

- Cape Fear WDB staff presented at ApprenticeshipNC's New Hanover and Pender Counties Employer Information & Networking Event on April 29, 2026, at Cape Fear Community College, highlighting Work Experience and On-the-Job Training opportunities. Staff also shared information on apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship options available through WIOA Title I.
- Southeastern Community College hosted its Career Expo and Apprenticeship Day on April 29, 2026, introducing over 100 juniors and seniors to local career and pre-apprenticeship opportunities. WIOA Title I staff provided information to students, parents, and teachers on available program services.
- New Hanover County Schools hosted the Work Readiness Conference on April 30, 2026, at the Wilmington Convention Center, where students ages 16–18 learned about career pathways, apprenticeship options, work-based learning through paid internships, and training opportunities leading to post-secondary education.

Grant Recipients

Brunswick Community College	\$375,500
Southeastern Community College	\$428,000
Cape Fear WDB – New Hanover & Pender	\$543,492

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$626,946
Total Participant Costs	\$280,259
Total Costs	\$907,205

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$108,247
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	12%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$172,012
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	19%

Success Stories

Javonte

Javonte's journey through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program is a testament to what determination, opportunity, and a positive mindset can achieve. Referred by the Career and Technical Education Director at West Brunswick High School, he entered the program during his senior year with a clear goal—becoming an electrical lineworker—but without a defined path to reach it. After graduating in June 2025 and officially enrolling in July 2025, Javonte worked closely with his Career Navigator to build a structured plan for his future.



With guidance, he took his first major step by enrolling in the Electrical Lineman Program at Brunswick Community College on August 25, 2025. Javonte quickly stood out for his technical skill, strong leadership, and team focused attitude. Known for being one of the fastest climbers, he encouraged peers to "work smarter, not harder," consistently modeling professionalism and motivation. His perseverance showed as he overcame transportation barriers, often driving nearly two hours to complete required training while staying fully engaged in every part of his employment plan.

Javonte's leadership extended beyond his own success. He supported classmates—especially fellow WIOA participants—by keeping them focused, encouraging them through challenges, and motivating them to pursue additional training to strengthen their opportunities in the lineworker field. His selflessness and maturity set him apart.

To expand his skills, he enrolled in Truck Driver Training on September 2, 2025, completing it on November 24, 2025. His dedication led to employment as an Electrical Lineman with Lee Electrical Services, LLC, more than doubling his previous income and allowing him to apply the full range of technical, safety, and operational skills he worked hard to develop.

Mykael

Mykael began his educational journey at Southeastern Community College while attending Columbus Career and College Academy. During that time, he balanced high school and college courses while working full-time at KFC. Without knowledge of the WIOA program, managing school and work was challenging.



After graduating from Columbus Career and College Academy, he continued courses at Southeastern Community College and earned his Associate Degree in Arts. Determined to grow in healthcare, he completed the Nurse Aide program, which led to employment at a long-term care facility in Whiteville.

His perseverance and commitment remained constant through every hurdle. He gained valuable experience in long-term care and later as an ER Technician at Columbus Regional Healthcare System. Although many encouraged him to continue his education, doing so while working full-time was difficult. In 2024, he applied to and was accepted into the Associate Degree Nursing Program at SCC—a challenge he described as "one of the hardest things I've ever done."

During nursing school, Mykael learned about WIOA and met Amaris, who explained how the program could support his educational expenses. As a WIOA Youth participant from 2024 through 2026, he received assistance beginning in Spring 2025 for books, supplies, and required nursing equipment. This support eased the strain of balancing full-time work with unpaid clinical rotations.

While completing clinicals, he continued working as an ER Technician, a role he grew to love. He successfully completed the Associate Degree Nursing Program on May 8, 2026 and is preparing to transition into a Registered Nurse position in the Emergency Room once he passes his state boards.

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 388
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 230
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 196
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 18
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 148
 - Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 11
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 60
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 93
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 72
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 123
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 146
-
- *Developing Talent Pipelines in High-Demand Industries* – NextGen continues to connect youth to careers that support regional workforce needs. This year, NextGen provided 148 work-based learning opportunities across the Capital Area region, supported by several targeted initiatives that helped participants explore high-demand career pathways. Nine of eleven participants completed an HVAC pre-apprenticeship with Energywise, five gained hands-on experience as Patient Navigators with Wake County Public Health, and three participated in lineworker work experiences with the Town of Selma while preparing for technical training at Nash Community College. These industry-focused partnerships offered real-world experience and direct connections to careers in skilled trades, healthcare, and energy and utility services.
 - *Building Talent Pipelines in High-Demand Industries* – CAWD expanded its apprenticeship preparation efforts by launching two Biopharma training cohorts funded through Wake County's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) initiative. This year, CAWD supported biopharma candidates through additional coursework at Wake Tech Community College (WTCC) and preparation for job opportunities with Ajinomoto, Murphy's Naturals, and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. Nine candidates completed

courses in Bioprocess Movements, Environmental Health and Safety, Validation, and Industry Reporting Skills. Eight of the nine candidates secured either short-term work experiences or full-time manufacturing employment. Over the two-year program, 18 of 30 candidates achieved employment, with wages for work experiences ranging from \$16 to \$24 per hour.

- *Preparing Youth for AI and Digital Careers* – The NextGen Digital Bosses initiative launched this year and introduced participants to artificial intelligence, digital entrepreneurship, and online business development. Participants gained hands-on experience creating digital products, supporting local businesses, and developing workforce-ready technology skills. Nine participants successfully completed paid work-based learning experiences following the training, and seven advanced into additional work-based learning opportunities after completing the initiative.

Grant Recipients

Educational Data Systems, Inc (EDSI)	\$1,854,380
Johnston County Industries, Inc (JCI)	\$706,499
Orange DSS	\$184,354
Hope Center at Pullen	\$78,958

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$1,770,506
Total Participant Costs	\$1,400,518
Total Costs	\$3,171,025

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$254,699
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	8%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$1,145,819
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	36%

Success Stories

Kimberly

Kimberly enrolled in the NextGen Program in Lee County while preparing for the birth of her first child and pursuing her dream of becoming a Dental Assistant. Even when her baby arrived earlier than expected, she remained unwavering in her commitment to her goals and continued her training with determination.



Balancing newborn care with her studies, Kimberly successfully completed both a Dental Assistant training program and the NextGen Digital Bosses course, where she built skills in artificial intelligence, digital marketing, and professional development. She graduated at the top of her class with perfect attendance and earned multiple industry-recognized certifications.

Today, Kimberly is employed at Dental Care of Sanford, earning a self-sufficient wage and building a stable future for her family. Her journey is a powerful example of the resilience and perseverance NextGen strives to cultivate in every participant. With training, supportive services, and dedicated career guidance, Kimberly transformed personal challenges into long-term professional success.

Gavin

Gavin joined the NextGen Program in Johnston County at age 17 seeking career guidance and hands-on experience. After graduating high school early, he explored several career paths before discovering his passion for HVAC.

With support from NextGen, Gavin enrolled in HVAC training, participated in job shadowing, and completed a work-



based learning experience with a local employer. His strong work ethic and dedication quickly stood out, earning him an offer for full-time employment even before completing his training.

Today, Gavin is building a successful career in the HVAC industry and continues to pursue additional credentials to advance his skills. His growth shows how career exploration, employer partnerships, and work-based learning opportunities empower young adults to move confidently from education into meaningful employment.

Daijah

When Daijah enrolled in the NextGen Program in Orange County, she set three clear goals: earn her GED, obtain her driver's license, and secure permanent employment. With guidance and encouragement from her Career Advisor, she achieved each one.



After earning her GED and driver's permit, Daijah participated in a work-based learning experience with the Orange County Department of Social Services. Her professionalism, reliability, and strong customer service skills quickly stood out to staff and supervisors.

Because of her exceptional performance, Daijah was offered permanent employment with Orange County Government as a Child Support Services Technician. She has since earned her driver's license and is now pursuing a Business Administration degree while working full time.

Daijah's journey demonstrates the powerful impact of education, work-based learning, and career coaching in helping young adults build economic independence and long-term career success.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 90
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 68
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 11
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 4
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 23
 - Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 8
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 32
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 47
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 16
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 21
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 6
-
- Attended two Career Fairs for all Lincoln County high schools in the fall and spring, staffing a resource table and engaging with students, resulting in multiple In School Youth enrollments.
 - Delivered a NextGen presentation at Sunrise Resource Center in Lincolnton, educating youth on In School and Out of School Youth opportunities. This outreach led to one Out of School Youth enrollment and another participant successfully completing a Certified Nurse Assistant program and securing employment in her field in June 2026.
 - Hosted three NextGen Virtual Reality Days at the NCWorks Career Center–Cabarrus in partnership with Cabarrus County Schools. More than 40 students used Virtual Reality headsets to explore career pathways and hands-on occupational experiences.
 - Participated in the Signing Day for Wayne Brothers Pre-Apprenticeship, where six participants officially graduated and enrolled in the apprenticeship program
 - Hosted a resume workshop at Cox Mill High School (Cabarrus County) for 50 students and hired two interns for a semester to work at the NCWorks Career Center–Cabarrus.
 - Presented at Anson High School for the Career & Technical Education program, providing information on NC

Careers and NCWorks/NextGen services to approximately 15 students

Grant Recipients

Equus Workforce Solutions \$1,125,022

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$527,974
Total Participant Costs	\$143,461
Total Costs	\$671,435

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$147,674
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	22%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$128,328
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	19%

Success Stories

Titeyana

When Titeyana first connected with the NCWorks Career Center–Anson in Wadesboro, she arrived with a clear and ambitious goal: earning her Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and establishing a long-term career in the trucking industry. With guidance from her NCWorks NextGen Career Advisor, she confirmed her interest in the field and began outlining the steps needed to complete training and enter a livable wage career. In the beginning, the CDL permit exam presented challenges. After several attempts, she struggled with portions of the test but refused to give up. Through persistence, continued study, and encouragement from her Career Advisor, she overcame this barrier and successfully earned her Class



A CDL permit—an achievement that strengthened her confidence and reinforced her determination.

With her permit secured, her Career Advisor helped her enroll in a CDL training program aligned with her career goals. Shortly after beginning, however, her progress was interrupted by a medical emergency requiring surgery. Titeyana's training was put on hold, but her commitment never wavered. Her Career Advisor worked closely with the training provider to ensure she could return without penalty once she recovered. Additional setbacks, including health related challenges and weather delays, created more obstacles, but she pushed forward with steady determination.

As her training continued, she successfully passed her Pre-Trip Test and completed the entire CDL training program. She then worked with her NCWorks NextGen Career Advisor to strengthen her resume, practice interview techniques, and begin submitting applications to local employers in the trucking industry.

Today, Titeyana is actively pursuing employment and remains committed to building a stable and rewarding career. Her journey demonstrates resilience, courage, and the power of refusing to quit when faced with adversity. Titeyana's story proves that with determination and support, every goal becomes possible.

Justice

When Justice connected with the NCWorks Career Center-Iredell in Statesville, she arrived with a clear interest in pursuing a career in dental assisting. During her initial meeting, an NCWorks NextGen Career Advisor helped her confirm that this pathway aligned with her goals and explained the training and certifications required to enter the field.



Not long after beginning the process, Justice experienced an unexpected setback when her original training provider was

removed from the Eligible Training Provider List. This change forced her to adjust quickly, but with guidance from her Career Advisor, she pivoted smoothly. She was soon connected to a new dental assisting training program, allowing her to stay on track without losing momentum.

Transitioning into the new program brought its own challenges. Justice and several classmates needed time to adjust to a different teaching style, new materials, and unfamiliar expectations. Despite these obstacles, she remained dedicated, focused, and determined to complete her training.

Throughout her journey, Justice received ongoing support from her NCWorks NextGen Career Advisor. This included coordinating program requirements, helping her stay organized, and ensuring she had access to the resources needed to succeed. She also received supportive services such as mileage reimbursement, which helped her maintain consistent attendance and remain engaged in her training.

Justice's hard work paid off. She successfully completed the program, earning her Dental Assistant I certification along with her Nitrous Oxide credential. She has since secured employment in her chosen field and continues to build her professional experience.

Her achievements reflect resilience, adaptability, and the power of staying committed to a goal even when the path changes. Justice's journey shows that with determination and support, every challenge can lead to growth—and every setback can become a stepping stone toward success.

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 388
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 185
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 125
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 123
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 168
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 82
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 211
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 110
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 187
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 168

Grant Recipients

Central Piedmont Community College	\$1,309,211
Charlotte Works	\$750,000

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$1,215,431
Total Participant Costs	\$562,353
Total Costs	\$1,777,784

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$209,636
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	12%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$352,716
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	20%

Success Stories

Octavius

Since joining the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) In-School Youth (ISY) program, Octavius has shown an extraordinary trajectory of personal growth, professional focus, and unwavering resilience. He entered the NextGen ISY program as a high school sophomore with no work history and limited soft skills. Although he held an early passion for the culinary arts, he lacked the guidance and resources to shape that interest into a real career pathway.



By fully immersing himself in the opportunities provided by Charlotte Works—including Career Readiness Courses and the Working Smart curriculum—Octavius transformed from a student with promise into a young professional with purpose. His commitment and grit quickly became evident through his work with the Navigate Foundation. Across several rounds of paid work experiences, he thrived in an immersive culinary environment that offered industry certifications, hands-on training, and real-world exposure.

Despite the socio-economic challenges that qualified him for WIOA services, Octavius consistently exceeded expectations. His maturity, drive, and steady determination inspired both his peers and program mentors, proving that circumstances do not define one's future—character does.

As he prepares to graduate from West Charlotte High School in June 2026, Octavius stands on the threshold of a future he has earned through hard work and heart. This August, he will begin basic training for the United States Army, having secured a \$50,000 sign-on bonus and \$150,000 in college scholarships. His long-term vision is clear: use his military experience and educational benefits to attend Central Piedmont Community College and ultimately Johnson & Wales University, where he plans to complete his journey toward becoming a culinary professional.

Octavius' story is a powerful reminder of what young people can achieve when opportunity meets determination—and when potential is met with support, belief, and purpose

Jacob

Jacob's educational journey has always been rooted in family and fueled by purpose. With neither he nor his brother completing high school, Jacob felt a powerful drive to rewrite the story. He often shares that he did it for his brother and owed it to his mom—who never had the chance to graduate from a traditional high school. Earning his diploma became more than a personal goal; it was a tribute to her sacrifices, her strength, and her unwavering belief in him.



A turning point came when Jacob passed his first three HiSET tests. For the first time in years, he felt a genuine surge of confidence—proof that he was capable of achieving what once felt out of reach. The journey was tough, but each milestone reinforced his determination. To commemorate his graduation, Jacob got a tattoo, a permanent reminder of his resilience and the support system that helped him stand tall through the hardest moments.

Math became his greatest obstacle. Setback after setback left him discouraged, but his Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen Out-of-School Youth Advisor and instructors never let him lose sight of his strength. Their steady encouragement, paired with the program's certifications, career preparation, application assistance, and employment opportunities, kept him moving forward.

Today, Jacob is thriving in the manufacturing industry and has earned his forklift certification, opening new doors to advancement. Encouraged by his progress, he continues to pursue additional credentials and has applied to the ACT Program at Central Piedmont Community College to study HVAC. His personal achievements are equally inspiring—purchasing his own car, building excellent credit, and

establishing a foundation for long-term success.

Jacob is incredibly proud of passing his tests, launching his career, and continuing to grow. He often reflects that life gets better when you stay determined. His advice to others is simple but powerful: stay focused, persevere, and never give up on your goals.



Working Smart Class – Preparing our scholars for Work Based Learning Opportunities



Annual IamSTEAM Event – Exposing our scholars to the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 84
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 27
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 30
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 7
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 5
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 10
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 2
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 15
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 6
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- Participated in the Durham Public Schools Opportunity Fair, connecting high school students with the Durham NextGen Youth Program, NCWorks services, local employers, and training providers to support career exploration and workforce readiness.
 - Strengthened community partnerships through Empowerment Unleashed by connecting Durham residents with career readiness training, workforce resources, mock interviews, and local support services that promote employment and long-term self-sufficiency.
 - Engaged in Holistic Empathetic Assistance Response Team (H.E.A.R.T.S.) Community Advisory Council meetings to expand community partnerships and referral opportunities.
 - Connected Durham youth with career exploration, professional development, and paid Work Experience opportunities that support informed career planning and employment readiness.
 - Supported participants with referrals to supportive services—including transportation, education, and employment resources—to help reduce barriers to success.
 - Expanded employer engagement by developing new Work Experience placements and referral partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.
 - Hosted career readiness workshops focused on résumé development, interviewing skills, workplace etiquette, and financial literacy.

Grant Recipients

Eckerd Connects \$300,000

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$187,471
Total Participant Costs	\$61,185
Total Costs	\$248,926

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$59,309
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	24%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$89,075
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	36%

Success Stories

Malaysia

Within her first four months of enrollment, Malaysia made remarkable progress by completing a paid Work Experience (WEX) as an Office Assistant with the H.E.A.R.T.S. Organization in Durham, North Carolina. In this role, she supported daily administrative operations by organizing records, maintaining confidential information, assisting with office workflow, and applying effective problem solving skills in a professional environment. This experience strengthened her communication, organization, time management, and workplace professionalism, providing her with confidence and practical skills that will support her long term career goals.



Malaysia also demonstrated exceptional dedication to her education. By increasing her Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Educational Functioning Level (EFL), she earned a

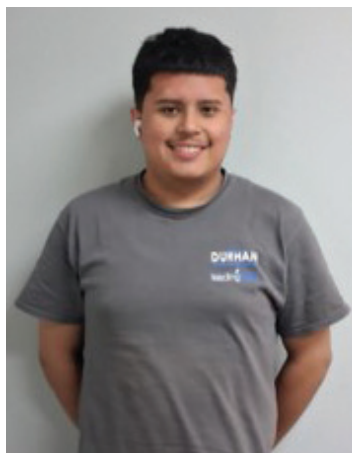
program incentive that recognized her academic growth and determination. Her commitment continued to shine as she reached two major milestones in November 2025: earning both her Dental Assistant Certificate and her Dental Radiography Certificate. These achievements significantly expanded her qualifications, advanced her career readiness, and brought her closer to her long term goal of becoming a Dental Assistant.

Malaysia's journey reflects the determination, resilience, and focus required to overcome barriers and pursue meaningful personal and professional success. Through the Durham NextGen Youth Program, she gained valuable work experience, strengthened her foundational academic and employability skills, and advanced her education—all while building a clear and achievable pathway toward a rewarding future in the dental field.

Her accomplishments highlight the powerful impact of supportive guidance, consistent effort, and belief in one's potential. Malaysia's story serves as a reminder that when young adults are equipped with the right tools, opportunities, and encouragement, they can transform their goals into reality and create lasting success for themselves and their communities.

Daniel

Just four years after immigrating to the United States from Colombia, Daniel is building a promising future through determination, hard work, and the support of the Durham NextGen Youth Program. With a strong interest in the automotive industry, he enrolled in NextGen to gain the skills and experience needed to pursue his goal of becoming an automotive mechanic.



To help him take the next step, Daniel began a paid Work Experience (WEX) with the City of Durham Fleet Management Division in April 2026. Throughout his placement, he worked alongside experienced Fleet Management Technicians, assisting with key vehicle maintenance and repair operations such as oil changes, brake services, inspections, and preventive

maintenance. He also supported service documentation and shop organization, gaining firsthand exposure to the daily operations of a professional automotive repair facility. This hands-on environment strengthened his communication, teamwork, time management, and problem solving skills.

Daniel quickly earned the respect of both supervisors and coworkers through his positive attitude, strong work ethic, and eagerness to learn. His willingness to take initiative and contribute to daily tasks made him a valued member of the Fleet Management team. The experience not only expanded his technical knowledge—it deepened his confidence and solidified his commitment to a long-term career in the automotive field.

Looking ahead, Daniel plans to enroll at Durham Technical Community College to earn a mechanic certification and continue developing his skills. Through the Durham NextGen Youth Program, he gained meaningful work experience, strengthened his foundational abilities, and took an important step toward achieving his goal of becoming an automotive technician.



Opening doors to future opportunities! At the April 2026 Opportunity Fair, NextGen partnered with the Emily K Center and Durham Public Schools to introduce high school students to local employers, training providers, and career resources—while showcasing how the Durham NextGen Youth Program can support their education and employment goals."



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 170
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 81
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 52
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 19
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 25
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 78
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 80
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 31
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 47
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 67
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- The Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board hosted the 2026 NCWorks NextGen Summit. The Summit brought energy, inspiration, and regional collaboration to New Bern on Tuesday, May 26, as the Eastern Carolina WDB welcomed young adults and workforce professionals for a day centered on the theme "Success Spark: Ignite, Inspire, Invest". Held at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center, the summit created a space for participants to build skills, exchange ideas, and strengthen connections across Eastern North Carolina. Facilitated by Cory Bennett and Susan Thomas of Leading To Change, the summit drew participants from five of the six Workforce Development Boards that make up the Vision East Workforce Boards: Cape Fear, Eastern Carolina, Northeastern, Rivers East, and Turning Point. Together, these boards represent 33 counties across Eastern North Carolina. 102 individuals attended the event. New Bern Mayor Jeffrey Odham opened the day by welcoming attendees to the city of New Bern. From there, the event launched into the opening session, Setting The Spark! Young adults participated in sessions designed to help them define their dream jobs, understand the impact of first impressions, and prepare for long-term success. Career Advisors explored strategies for stronger engagement, dynamic service delivery, and

transformational tools to better support customers. Attendees also enjoyed a taco bar lunch catered by The Flame before closing the day with Fanning The Flame, a reflective session focused on lessons learned and next steps. Overall, the summit delivered an engaging and interactive experience that encouraged collaboration, learning, and relationship-building.

- WCTI TV 12 "In Your Community" Interview with News Anchor Valentina Wilson: On November 14, 2025, WCTI TV 12 featured an interview with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen Career Advisors Sheila Darden and Crystal Lawrence, who shared details about open house sessions that were scheduled in the region at the NCWorks Career Centers. These sessions were tailored for out-of-school youth 16 to 24 years of age and designed to connect young adults with WIOA NextGen program information and valuable resources.

Grant Recipients

Carteret Community College	\$152,000
Eckerd Connects	\$447,800
Lenoir Community College	\$242,030
Wayne Community College	\$200,000

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$677,340
Total Participant Costs	\$256,324
Total Costs	\$933,664

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$84,147
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	9%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$172,178
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	18%

Success Stories

Alondra

Alondra's journey shows how determination and strong support can open the door to lasting opportunity. When she enrolled in the WIOA NextGen Youth Program in March 2025, she was a single mother helping raise her younger sister and determined to create a better future for her family.



From the start, Alondra was committed to a career in dentistry. She enrolled in the Dental Assistant Program at NC Dental U and used her long term goal of owning a dental practice as motivation. Through NextGen, she completed a work experience that strengthened her professionalism, an Administrative Assistant course to build office skills, and a job shadowing opportunity that confirmed her passion for dental work.

Her journey included significant hardship. During her training, her father was deported and her young child faced health issues, adding emotional and financial strain. Despite these challenges, Alondra stayed focused on her education and goals.

Her hard work led to success. After completing her Dental Assistant program, she earned a position with Aspen Dental in Goldsboro at \$18.00 per hour and soon received a raise to \$22.00 per hour due to her dedication and strong performance.

Alondra's story highlights the impact of workforce development programs and shows how perseverance, support, and opportunity can help young adults overcome obstacles and build meaningful careers. With determination and ambition, she continues progressing toward her ultimate goal of owning a dental practice and creating a brighter future for her family.

Tristin

Tristin enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen Program in May 2025 seeking support to complete his High School Equivalency (HSE) and establish

a path toward stable employment. At the time, he was a high school dropout who felt uncertain and hesitant about returning to school, but he pushed through his doubts because he understood that completing his education would open doors and lead to better opportunities.



With guidance from his NextGen Career Advisor, Tristin enrolled at Craven Community College and worked diligently toward earning his HSE, finishing in July 2025. Instead of stopping there, he continued strengthening his skills by enrolling in a forklift training course at Craven Community College. He earned certifications to operate five different types of forklifts, dramatically increasing his technical abilities and employability.

With new credentials in hand, Tristin began a Work Experience (WEX) at Chatsworth Products (CPI). During his WEX, he learned essential warehouse operations, proved his reliability, and quickly became a valued team member. His work ethic and rapid growth stood out so clearly that CPI offered him full-time employment before he even completed his WEX hours—a strong testament to his commitment and potential.

Tristin's progress demonstrates the impact and purpose of the WIOA NextGen Program. In just a few months, he transformed from a hesitant student unsure of his future into a fully credentialed, skilled, and employed young adult with a clear path forward. His story shows how access to education, hands-on training, and supportive guidance can help young people build confidence, develop valuable skills, and step into meaningful careers.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 73
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 36
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 39
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 11
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 40
- Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 1
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 22
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 39
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 18
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 46
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 29

- Made breakthroughs in establishing work-based learning partnerships with local businesses representing new industry sectors. These partnerships have expanded opportunities, offering students a wider range of options to explore their fields of interest in several industries: electrical, welding, logistics, HVAC, manufacturing, customer service.
- Strengthened collaboration with schools, collaborated with CTE, adult basic ed, and post-secondary educators to add valuable work-based learning, incentives, supportive services, and career coaching, community organizations, and partner agencies to support recruitment and service delivery.
- Increased youth enrollment and engagement across all counties through targeted outreach and referral partnerships.
- Collaborated with CTE, adult basic ed, and post-secondary educators to add valuable work-based learning, incentives, supportive services, and career coaching.
- Making It Work Engineering Expo
- Leadership Development provided to 55 Youth
- Educational Achievement Services provided to 21 Youth
- Alternative Secondary Education provided to 53 Youth
- Individual Career Services provided to 55 Youth

Grant Recipients

Ross Innovative Employment Solutions	\$374,800
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NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$185,878
Total Participant Costs	\$123,109
Total Costs	\$308,987

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$114,309
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	37%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$130,860
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	42%

Success Stories

Genesis

Genesis's journey is a powerful testament to resilience, determination, and the life changing impact of opportunity. In 2026, she was honored with the NCWorks Partnership Governor's Award—an achievement that reflects not only her hard work as a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth participant with Foothills Workforce Development Board, but also the strength of her character in the face of significant challenges.



Growing up in a single-parent household, Genesis balanced financial hardship, periods of homelessness, and the responsibility of helping care for her younger twin sisters, both of whom have special needs. Despite these obstacles, she remained unwavering in her commitment to her education and long term goals. Her motivation came from

a deep sense of responsibility, hope, and a belief that she could build a better future for herself and her family.

Her perseverance quickly became evident. In April 2025, Genesis earned the recognition of Student of the Month—proof that her drive and dedication were already shining through. Guided by her determination and supported by resources offered through the WIOA, she began a work experience at Robert Morgan Funeral Home, where she excelled. In a field that demands compassion, professionalism, and emotional maturity, Genesis thrived. She showed genuine care for grieving families, a steady calm in difficult moments, and a clear passion for funeral service.

With her eyes set on the future, Genesis will continue her training at Fayetteville Technical Community College in Fall 2026. She plans to build a long term career in funeral service, carrying forward the empathy and strength that define her.

Caleb

Caleb came to the NCWorks Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen Program with determination and enthusiasm as he began his journey into the workforce. From the start, he had a clear goal: securing employment with Lowe's Hardware. His focus, drive, and commitment made his vision feel within reach.



However, when unexpected medical challenges emerged, Caleb and his NextGen advisor worked together to find a placement that aligned with his strengths while still supporting his long term career goals. Through open communication, flexibility, and teamwork, they identified a work environment that accommodated his needs and allowed him to continue building valuable experience.

Today, Caleb is thriving in his current work placement. His strong work ethic, positive attitude, and resilience continue to shine through every step he takes. He remains committed to earning his Associate Badge at Lowe's—a milestone that reflects both his dedication and his future aspirations.

Caleb is also actively engaging with community resources to secure long term employment upon completing high school. His willingness to pursue support, build skills, and stay focused on his goals demonstrates the persistence that will carry him forward in his career.

Rosa

Heart of the Foothills Animal Rescue has partnered with the Foothills Workforce Development Board's NextGen Program to provide valuable hands-on experience for youth who share a passion for helping animals. Among these young adults is Rosa, whose journey reflects courage, growth, and a deep commitment to building a strong future for her family.



Rosa began her path with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program while enrolled at the early college in Rutherford County. After becoming a mother, she felt a renewed urgency to begin working, strengthen her skills, and take meaningful steps toward providing long-term stability for her family. Through the support of NCWorks WIOA NextGen, she found an opportunity that aligned with both her interests and her goals.

"NCWorks WIOA has helped me reach opportunities I may not have been able to get to without them. With the program I have been able to find my calling, a calling I never expected. Working at Heart of the Foothills Animal Rescue has not only allowed me to spend time with adorable animals but learn important life skills. This goes from helping take care of animals to assisting with the front desk. As I progress through the days, I think of my baby girl and my husband, whom I love very much. Some days are hard, but I love being able to provide an income to my growing family."



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 29
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 15
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 11
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 1
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 2
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 12
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 10
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 5
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 7
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 7

- Youth Career Fair at Gaston College
- Pathway to Success Bessemer City High School
- SaySo Summit youth leadership and advocacy event
- Southwest Middle School College Fair
- Cherryville High School event
- NextGen Con Greensboro

Grant Recipients

Two Hawk Workforce Services \$236,856

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$89,594
Total Participant Costs	\$69,925
Total Costs	\$159,519

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$32,612
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	20%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$37,312
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	23%

Success Stories

Kendall

Kendall entered the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen Youth Program in September 2023 with one clear goal: to build a stable, secure future for himself and his family. He knew the direction he wanted to go, but he needed guidance—and a solid plan—to get there. When Kendall met with his WIOA NextGen Career Advisor, everything began to take shape. Together, they mapped out the steps he needed to take to achieve his dream of earning his Commercial Driver's License (CDL A).



Once enrolled, Kendall registered for CDL training and began working toward his goal. The journey was not easy. He faced challenges throughout his program—new skills to master, obstacles to overcome, and moments of self doubt. But Kendall's determination never wavered. With steady encouragement and supportive resources from WIOA, he pushed forward, believing that each step brought him closer to the life he envisioned.

In June 2024, Kendall accomplished his first major milestone: he earned his CDL A. But he wasn't done yet. With newfound confidence and a commitment to keep growing, Kendall continued pursuing the next phase of his career. His perseverance paid off when he secured full time employment with the City of Gastonia—a role that offered stability, financial security, and the chance to build a career that would support his family for years to come.

The WIOA-funded training equipped Kendall with the skills and certifications needed to excel in a high demand field. Today, he takes pride in his work, knowing he turned determination into opportunity.

Reflecting on his journey, Kendall shares a powerful message:

"Delayed does not mean denied. If you want change, seize the opportunity and believe you can achieve your dreams."

Michaela

Michaela is a determined radiology student at Cleveland Community College. From a young age, Michaela was fascinated by the human body and technology, leading her to pursue a career in radiology.



Michaela joined the NextGen program in December 2023, with the goal of becoming a radiologic technologist. The path has not always been smooth. Balancing rigorous coursework with personal commitments tested Michaela's resilience. There were moments of self-doubt, especially during challenging exams and clinical rotations. However, Michaela found inspiration with the help of her case manager and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen program!

Michaela is determined to prove that one can overcome challenges and achieve success by maintaining resilience and discipline. We have no doubt that Michaela will successfully complete her training and secure a position within the dynamic field of radiology.

Michaela's journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and the support provided by WIOA NextGen Youth program. She described her experience in her training and the program as "Definitely worth it".

Lupe

Lupe's journey is a powerful reminder that a winding path can still lead to a bright future. As a single mother, she spent years juggling low wage jobs—retail, housekeeping, and seasonal warehouse work—doing everything she could to support her family. Deep down, she always dreamed of a career in healthcare, but the high cost of training and lack of support made that goal feel out of reach.



Everything changed when she discovered the WIOA NextGen Youth Program at her local NCWorks Career Center. For the first time, Lupe felt she had access to real guidance and a pathway forward.

Her turning point came when she received an email from the Program Lead at Gaston College informing her she had been accepted into the Phlebotomy Technician program. With excitement—mixed with nerves—Lupe took the leap.

Through WIOA funding, Lupe enrolled in the accredited Phlebotomy Technician course at Gaston College. The program covered tuition, books, and even transportation, removing financial barriers that had held her back for years. Balancing classes, studying, and parenting was challenging, and there were days when the workload felt overwhelming. But Lupe's determination never wavered. She showed up, stayed focused, and pushed through every challenge.

Her dedication paid off. Lupe completed her training and proved she could rise above obstacles to build the career she had always wanted. Today, she stands proud—equipped with certification, confidence, and a clear direction for her future.

Reflecting on her journey, Lupe expressed her gratitude: "Thank you, NextGen and WIOA, for your assistance in helping me with my future of becoming a qualified Phlebotomy Technician."

Lupe's story shines as proof that with support, resilience, and opportunity, dreams can become reality.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 91
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 56
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 93
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 1
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 38
- Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 8
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 20
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 26
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 18
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 86
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 4

- In preparation for the Summer Vocation Initiative, GuilfordWorks NextGen hosted 25 youth for a three-day career readiness symposium. Career Advisors facilitated résumé and interview workshops and partnered with employers and community organizations to host a career fair on the final day.
- NextGen staff partnered with 29 local employers to host youth for the Summer Vocation Initiative. These employers will serve as worksites for youth eligible for Work Experience and other Work-Based Learning opportunities throughout the summer.
- GuilfordWorks collaborated with Guilford County Schools, Alamance County Schools, and regional employers to host 334 youth at the Powering the Future Career Expo at the Greensboro Coliseum. This event introduced middle and high school students to careers in clean energy.
- NextGen partnered with the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, shift_ed, Reading Connections, Forge Greensboro, and She Built This City to host a half-day career fair focused on career pathways in skilled trades, IT, design and architecture, logistics and operations, and marketing and business support.
- In partnership with County Commissioner Foster and Guilford County Schools, NextGen served 444 youth

through Mobile Career Center events across Guilford County. These events introduced youth to NCWorks services, professional development workshops, and career guidance.

Grant Recipients

Ross Innovative Employment Solutions	\$753,650
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NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$753,275
Total Participant Costs	\$418,396
Total Costs	\$1,171,671

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$61,787
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	5%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$245,717
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	21%

Success Stories

Sewinet

Sewinet is a dedicated student at North Carolina State University, pursuing her degree in Sociology with a clear purpose: to build a career in immigration law and support the next generation of immigrants and their families. Her passion for advocacy, combined with her lived experiences and academic interests, led her to seek opportunities that would help her grow both professionally and personally.



Through the support of the NextGen Youth Program, Sewinet

secured an internship with a nonprofit organization that provides critical services to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. This placement offered her meaningful, hands-on experience and strengthened her understanding of the complex systems that shape the resettlement process.

During her internship, Sewinet job-shadowed the organization's legal department, gaining valuable insight into the procedures, documentation, and casework involved in legal resettlement. She learned how immigration cases are managed from start to finish and observed the dedication required to support families navigating major life transitions. Her experience extended beyond the legal office, giving her opportunities to greet clients at the airport, assist in finding housing and employment, and help families access food and other basic needs. Each interaction strengthened her empathy, cultural awareness, and commitment to service.

These experiences offered Sewinet more than workplace skills—they allowed her to see the human impact behind every resettlement case. She witnessed the courage of individuals starting new lives and felt inspired by the role she played in their journey. The skills, confidence, and knowledge she gained will equip her with the tools she needs to pursue her long-term goal of becoming an immigration advocate.

Seven

When Seven first connected with the NextGen team, he was navigating some of the most difficult challenges a young adult can face—homelessness, unemployment, and ongoing legal issues. Despite the weight of these circumstances, he showed a willingness to take meaningful steps toward change. With the support of his Career Advisor, Seven began building a path toward stability, growth, and long term success.



Through consistent one on one partnership, Seven received guidance tailored to his goals and needs. His Career Advisor connected him with employment resources and professional development opportunities that helped him rebuild confidence and develop essential workplace skills. He was also referred to legal assistance to help address and resolve the

barriers that had been holding him back. Each connection, each meeting, and each step forward became part of his progress—proof of his determination and the power of supportive services working together.

Seven is now thriving in his current work experience placement, where he is gaining hands on skills, learning professional expectations, and building the foundation needed for a long term career. His supervisors describe him as hardworking, engaged, and eager to grow. The workplace environment has been a positive space for Seven to regain stability while preparing for future employment opportunities.

In addition to his progress at work, Seven will be referred to the next expungement clinic—another important step toward clearing legal barriers and opening the door to even greater opportunities. With each milestone, Seven is demonstrating resilience, focus, and a continued commitment to rebuilding his life.

Seven's story is a reminder that transformation begins with one brave decision: choosing to move forward. With determination and the right support, he is creating a future defined not by past challenges, but by purpose, progress, and promise.



The NextGen team hosted a three-day career development symposium to prepare youth for the Summer Vocation Initiative. Working with business and community partners, the team facilitated workshops and mock interviews, provided resources for mental health and community services, and connected the youth to businesses for work-based learning and other opportunities.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 86
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 52
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 60
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 8
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 28
- Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 4
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 36
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 63
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 22
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 27
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 55

- Ongoing engagement in middle school and high school career fairs and career exploration events.
- Participation in multiple Back to School events to share information with families and community partners.
- Attendance at community college open houses and student orientation sessions.
- Participation in a multi school STEAM event providing an interactive session for students.
- Nearly 60 youth participants received services related to labor market information and career pathways.

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$271,853
Total Participant Costs	\$203,678
Total Costs	\$475,521

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$23,669
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	5%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$179,999
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	38%

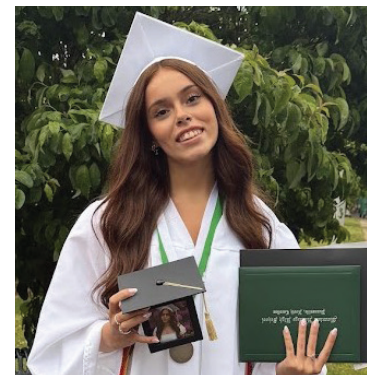
Grant Recipients

Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina	\$270,000
Mayland Community College	\$300,000

Success Stories

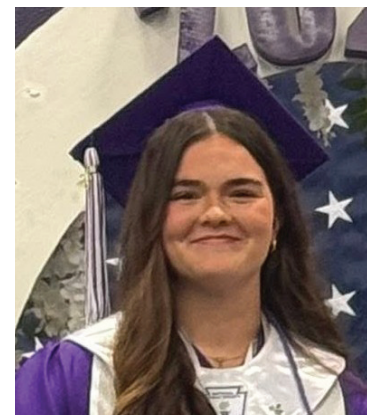
Sara

Sara enrolled in NextGen while in high school and demonstrated remarkable determination despite facing significant personal challenges, including helping care for family members and coping with the loss of a parent. Through a work-based learning internship with Hospice of the Blue Ridge, she gained valuable hands-on experience and confirmed her passion for nursing. Sara graduated from Mountain Heritage High School in May 2026 and is now co-enrolled at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and Western Carolina University, working toward both her Associate Degree in Nursing and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Her perseverance and achievements recently earned her the 2026 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Teen Youth category for workforce development.



Emma

Emma enrolled in NextGen while in high school and completed a paid work experience with the Toe River Health Department, where she explored healthcare careers and gained valuable hands-on experience. Working with her Career Advisor on career planning she confirmed her goal of pursuing a nursing career. Emma graduated as Salutatorian from Mitchell High School in May 2026 and will



attend Mayland Community College to begin the Registered Nursing program, with plans to become a nurse practitioner.

Brooke

Brooke enrolled in NextGen while pursuing her Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) degree at Mayland Community College, balancing her education with the responsibilities of being a single mother and guardian to her younger brother. Through determination, hard work and supportive workforce services, she continued her pathway and also earned her Registered Nursing (RN) licensure in May 2026. Today, Brooke is employed as an RN in the Emergency Department at HCA Mission Hospital, building a brighter future for her family while making a meaningful impact in the lives of others.



Brittany

Brittany enrolled in NextGen through the Wilkes Community Partnership for Children Pre-Apprenticeship Program to pursue her passion for working with children. With NCWorks support, she completed the Childcare Academy, earned industry credentials, and gained hands-on experience through a paid work experience at a local childcare facility. She plans to transition into an On-the-Job Training opportunity, creating a pathway to long-term employment in a field she is passionate about.



Owen

Owen enrolled in NextGen as a high school student seeking career exploration and guidance for his future with interest in environmental engineering. Through a paid work experience with Zaloo's Canoes, he gained hands-on experience studying the environmental impacts of



Hurricane Helene while assisting with riverbank restoration, tree planting, and outdoor recreation activities. After graduating in June 2026, Owen plans to attend Wilkes Community College and continue toward an engineering degree.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth enrolled in NextGen with a goal of building a stable healthcare career. As a motivated single parent, she began Pharmacy Technician classes and gained valuable hands-on experience through a paid work experience at Brame Huie Pharmacy. Her strong performance led to employment and participation in a registered apprenticeship program. Today, she continues working toward her Pharmacy Technician Certification competencies while receiving ongoing support services and career coaching through NCWorks.



NextGen Career Advisor participating in High School Career Fair

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 52
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 35
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 18
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 13
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 15
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 6
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 56
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 13

Grant Recipients

Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI)	\$400,000
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NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$202,929
Total Participant Costs	\$80,015
Total Costs	\$282,944

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$27,596
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	10%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$122,000
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	43%

Success Stories

Honesty

Honesty successfully completed her Dental Hygienist program at Dental U, marking a powerful milestone in her journey. As a single mother, her greatest motivation was always her son—her determination rooted in the desire to build a stable, supportive foundation for their future. Every late night, every long day, and every challenge she faced was fueled by her commitment to creating a life filled with opportunity and security for him.



Her hard work and perseverance paid off. Honesty proudly secured full-time employment as a Dental Assistant with Tarheel Periodontics, stepping confidently into a career she worked so tirelessly to achieve. Her NCWorks Youth Advocate described her as motivated, hardworking, and determined—qualities that were evident at every stage of her journey and shined brilliantly through her accomplishments.

Honesty's success is more than a career achievement; it is a testament to the strength and resilience she carries. She has proven to herself that dedication truly transforms dreams into reality. Even more powerful, she now serves as an example for her son—showing him that goals are reachable, challenges can be overcome, and hope can be built through perseverance.

Her story is one of courage, commitment, and unwavering love. By pursuing her education and forging a new path for her family, Honesty has created lasting change. She has not only rewritten her own future, but she has also given her son a gift that will guide him throughout his life: the belief that he can accomplish anything he sets his mind to.

Honesty's journey is inspirational, and her achievements stand as a reminder that with determination and heart, success is always within reach. Let her story encourage others to keep moving forward, stay focused, and never stop believing in the power of their dreams.

Jayden

Jayden came to NCWorks as an ambitious 18-year-old with a clear vision for his future: he wanted to earn his Commercial Driver's License and begin a career on the road. From the very beginning, his determination was unmistakable. He set his goal, committed to the process, and never doubted his ability to achieve it.



By the time Jayden turned 19, he had proudly earned his Commercial Driver's License (Class A)—just as he confidently predicted he would. His performance in the program was outstanding. Not only did he pass without any issues, but he also earned the Best Class A Basic Control Skills Test, achieving a perfect score in basic control skills. This accomplishment reflects both his natural ability and the hard work he poured into mastering every requirement.

Today, Jayden is employed full-time as a driver with Barnhill, stepping into the career he envisioned with pride and purpose. His journey is a powerful testament to the fact that when ambition meets perseverance, success follows.

We congratulate Jayden on his exceptional accomplishments. His story is a true example that determination pays off, and we celebrate the promising road ahead of him—mile after mile, achievement after achievement.

NCWorks and Sunrock Employability Workshop

NCWorks and Kittrell Job Corps joined forces to create an empowering opportunity for students participating in the



NextGen Tuesday Job Club. This ongoing partnership is centered on helping young adults build the essential skills needed to enter the workforce with confidence and purpose.

Each week, students strengthened their job-readiness skills, practicing everything from crafting strong elevator pitches and professional handshakes to developing polished resumes, mastering interview questions, and exploring Labor Market Information to better understand today's in-demand careers. The program also featured impactful guest speakers. Representatives from Coastal Credit Union shared valuable insights on money management, while Sunrock Industries provided guidance on what employers look for during interviews and emphasized the importance of soft skills in achieving long-term workplace success.

NCWorks Brings Careers to Life Through Virtual Reality

The Kerr-Tar NCWorks Career Center welcomed students from Vance Charter School for an exciting hands-on experience using Virtual Reality (VR) technology. During the visit, students immersed themselves in a variety of career simulations, including repairing a robotic picker, preparing a restaurant-quality dish, and changing an airplane wheel.

VR offers an innovative and engaging way for students to explore potential career paths in high-demand industries. By stepping into simulated work environments, they gain first-hand insight into the skills required for each role—all while learning, experimenting, and having fun in a safe and interactive setting.



Kerr-Tar
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 350
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 159
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 67
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 42
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 92
- Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 1
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 140
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 35
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 85
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 140
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 50

Grant Recipients

Bladen Community College - Bladen County	\$116,538
Two Hawk Workforce Services - Hoke County	\$56,288
Two Hawk Workforce Services - Richmond County	\$94,626
Two Hawk Workforce Services - Robeson County	\$248,030
Two Hawk Workforce Services - Scotland County	\$47,282
Scotland County Schools - In-School	\$15,761

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$483,672
Total Participant Costs	\$437,796
Total Costs	\$921,468

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$188,162
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	20%

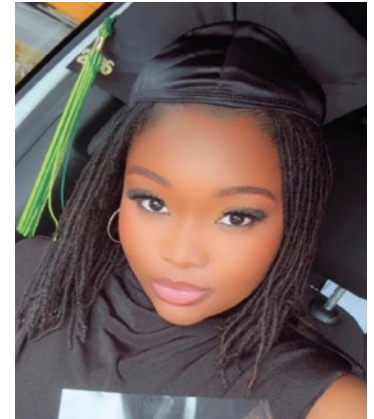
Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$249,634
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	27%

Success Stories

Deja

When Deja enrolled in the Bladen County NextGen Program in April 2026, she arrived with a clear and powerful goal—to create a brighter future for herself and her family. As a dedicated single parent and a hardworking employee at Bladen County Hospital, she carried significant responsibility. Still, Deja refused to let challenges stand in her way. Instead, she sought guidance and support to pursue her dream of becoming a Pharmacy Technician.



With determination, focus, and an unwavering commitment to her goals, Deja began her training through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) NextGen program. Balancing her job, parenting responsibilities, and coursework was not easy, but she approached each day with purpose. She understood that every step forward was not just for her benefit, but for the stability and opportunities she hoped to provide for her family.

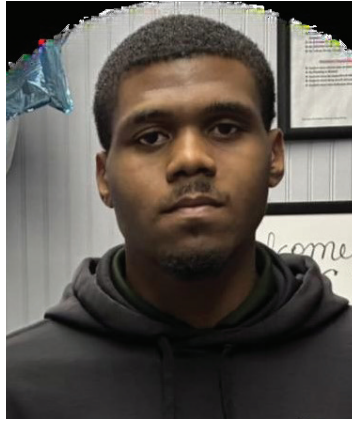
Her hard work quickly paid off. By June 2026—just two months after enrolling—Deja successfully completed her Pharmacy Technician training and earned her certification. This accomplishment represented far more than a credential; it validated her resilience, her strength, and her belief in the possibilities ahead.

Shortly after finishing her training, Deja secured a full-time position as a Pharmacy Technician, transforming her career goals into reality. With this new role, she gained increased financial stability and a renewed sense of confidence and pride in the path she built for herself.

Deja's journey is a powerful testament to perseverance, purpose, and opportunity. Her success shows that when individuals are supported, encouraged, and given access to workforce development resources, their goals can become the foundation for a thriving future.

Thyrien

Thyrien joined the Hoke County NextGen program in February 2025 with a clear and ambitious goal—to earn his Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) certification and build a career in this skilled trade. From the beginning, he demonstrated determination, discipline, and focus. He completed the first part of the HVAC program with ease, quickly proving his commitment to mastering the trade. Encouraged by his progress, he enrolled in the HVAC II course to advance his skills even further.



The HVAC II program brought unexpected challenges that caused many of his classmates to step away. Of the four students who began the course, Thyrien was the only one who remained steady, pushed through the difficult moments, and stayed committed until the very end. His perseverance became a defining part of his journey.

The NextGen team worked closely with local employers to secure a position that would allow him to immediately apply his HVAC training. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, he was unable to start the role originally arranged. Though this setback was disappointing, Thyrien refused to lose hope. Instead, he continued working with NextGen staff—attending career readiness workshops, participating in job searches, and following through on referrals.

With support and determination, Thyrien secured a position as a security officer at the local courthouse. This role not only provided stability but also placed him close to the county maintenance department—where future HVAC opportunities could emerge. Just one month later, he graduated with full credentials, earning both the AC Refrigeration Level Two Certificate and the HVACR Level Two Certificate.

Today, while continuing his work as a security officer, Thyrien has been placed next in line for the next opening on the county maintenance team—bringing him closer to the HVAC career he worked so hard to achieve.

Tamorra

Tamorra was working part time as a bank teller, struggling to make ends meet while carrying the weight of an unfinished Associate's Degree. Her education had been put on hold as she focused on parenting and creating stability for her daughter. Though she worked hard, she felt stuck—uncertain of how to move forward and unsure whether her dreams were still within reach.



Everything began to change when she heard success stories from participants in the Richmond County NextGen Program. For the first time in a long while, Tamorra felt a spark of hope. She reached out to the center and was connected with an Advisor who listened attentively as she shared her challenges—motherhood, financial strain, and her deep desire to build a better life for her family.

During their conversation, Tamorra revealed her long-standing interest in the pharmacy field. She viewed it as a stable, rewarding career with strong growth potential. Yet the financial burden of pursuing training while working part time felt overwhelming. Her Advisor explained how the program could support her through Pharmacy Technician training at Richmond Community College (RCC). Encouraged and inspired, Tamorra took a brave step forward and enrolled.

Throughout her training, she remained dedicated and focused. The program strengthened her skills and renewed her confidence. Midway through, fueled by newfound courage, she applied for a position with Walgreens—and was hired as a part-time Pharmacy Technician, with the possibility of transitioning to full time after completing her program.

Tamorra finished her Pharmacy Technician training at the top of her class, earning a \$150 incentive from RCC and officially stepping into her new role at Walgreens.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 280
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 209
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 180
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 39
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 109
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 76
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 61
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 61
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 101
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 118
- The Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board, in partnership with the NCWorks NextGen Program, the City of Fayetteville Office of Community Safety, and Fayetteville Technical Community College, successfully implemented the 2026 My Future So Bright Initiative. This collaborative effort integrated workforce development, education, public safety, and community engagement to prepare youth for long-term career success.
- Participants completed career readiness training in financial literacy, professionalism, communication, teamwork, leadership, conflict resolution, time management, customer service, and job-search strategies. Those who successfully completed the training also earned certifications in Hands-Only CPR, Stop the Bleed, and IC3 Digital Literacy.
- Through paid internships and work experiences with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private-sector employers, participants developed transferable skills, explored career pathways, and gained positive mentorship. The initiative also helped reduce risk factors associated with youth violence while strengthening the region's pipeline of skilled, motivated workers.

Grant Recipients

Cumberland County Schools	\$276,637
EQUUS Workforce Solutions	\$1,319,390
Harnett County Government	\$276,508
Montgomery Community College	\$91,597

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$373,416
Total Participant Costs	\$104,683
Total Costs	\$478,099

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$34,824
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	7%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$69,858
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	15%

Success Stories

Joel

Joel enrolled in the WIOA NextGen Youth Program on September 26, 2024, at age 18. At enrollment, he was unemployed, had limited work experience, and had not completed high school. With guidance from his Career Advisor, Joel established goals to earn his High School Equivalency Diploma, obtain his driver's license and automobile insurance, and gain work experience.



Joel enrolled at Central Carolina Community College and earned his High School Equivalency Diploma on April 23, 2025. He also completed career readiness activities, including interview preparation, mock interviews, soft-skills training, labor market research, and supportive services.

On September 29, 2025, Joel began a paid work experience as a Grounds Maintenance Worker with the Town of Lillington. He successfully completed the placement and met all required skill objectives. Because of his strong performance, Joel secured permanent, unsubsidized employment with the Town beginning January 15, 2026, earning \$18.00 per hour.

Joel plans to continue advancing his career and is considering military service to strengthen his leadership skills and expand his future opportunities.

Shondarious

Shondarious successfully completed the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Training Program at Sampson Community College on June 25, 2026. Throughout the program, he demonstrated professionalism, reliability, and a strong commitment to his career goals by maintaining perfect attendance and actively participating in classroom instruction and hands-on training. In recognition of his dedication, he received a Perfect Attendance Certificate.



Upon completing the program, Shondarious earned an industry-recognized CDL credential, gaining the technical knowledge and practical skills needed to pursue a career as a commercial driver. His achievement quickly led to employment with Southern Trucking, where he applies the skills acquired during training.

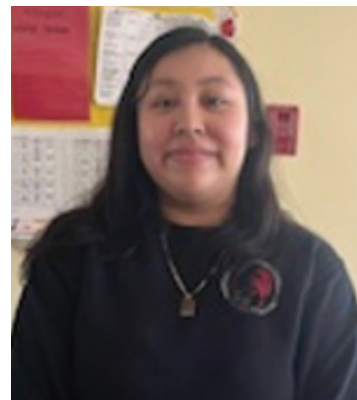
Shondarious' success demonstrates how dedication, industry-recognized training, and workforce development services can create meaningful employment opportunities, support economic mobility, and establish a foundation for long-term career advancement.

Prisila

Prisila enrolled in the WIOA NextGen Youth Program on December 3, 2024, at age 17. As a high school student with no previous work experience, she worked with her Career Advisor to establish goals focused on graduation, career

exploration, and work-based learning.

Prisila completed a summer internship as a Childcare Worker with Kidd's Place Too, Inc. from July 16 through September 12, 2025. She mastered all required skill objectives and demonstrated professionalism, a strong work ethic, and a willingness to learn. Based on her performance, the employer offered her a paid work experience as an Administrative Assistant, which she completed from November 6, 2025, through February 12, 2026.



On February 13, 2026, Prisila secured unsubsidized employment with Kidd's Place Too, Inc. as a Childcare Worker, earning \$11.50 per hour. She also completed career readiness activities in interviewing, workplace expectations, labor market information, financial literacy, and leadership development. Prisila's success demonstrates how determination, career preparation, and work-based learning can lead to meaningful employment and future career growth.



For the My Future So Bright Initiative, the NCWorks NextGen Program partnered with Fayetteville Technical Community College to prepare summer program participants for rewarding careers in healthcare through hands-on career exploration.



MID-CAROLINA
Workforce Development Board

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 255
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 220
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 85
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 186
 - Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 2
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 104
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 151
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 96
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 93
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 148
-
- Exceeded the policy requirement for the 20% Work Experience benchmark.
 - Currently planning a Career and College Night at William Randolph in partnership with the CDCs and CTE Directors. This collaboration has been highly successful, and we look forward to a strong event.
 - Construction Career Day was a success, serving 750 students.
 - Hosted multiple successful Youth Job Fairs at TC Roberson High School, Charles D. Owen High School, and Asheville High School, reaching more than 2,000 students and bringing in over 40 employers and educational partners at each event.
 - Utilized the Metrix Learning License to support many youth participants, resulting in:
 - Total Registrations: 1,226
 - Total Course Launches: 6,553
 - Total Hours: 1,882.57
 - Total Completions: 1,300
 - Total Licenses Issued: 4,732
 - The Summer Youth Employment Program was a success, with six participants placed across several host sites. Two participants worked with Anderson Automotive, one with Kimpton Hotel, one with Givens Estate, one with Deep Time Coffee Co., and one with the Asheville Chamber of Commerce. Most positions paid \$15 per hour.

Grant Recipients

Goodwill of Northwest NC	\$618,317
Henderson County Schools	\$187,858
Madison County Schools	\$134,481

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$674,281
Total Participant Costs	\$449,607
Total Costs	\$1,123,888

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$23,615
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	2%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$425,991
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	38%

Success Stories

Kreed

Kreed is a remarkable example of what determination, maturity, and a clear vision for the future can accomplish. A recent graduate of Rosman High School, he excelled both academically and athletically, proving early on that he was willing to put in the work to succeed. After graduation, he entered the workforce as a landscaper, but his ambition pushed him to seek something more—a long term career with purpose and stability.



Through the guidance of the NextGen program, Kreed discovered the Electrical Line Worker Academy at Cleveland County Community College. NextGen supported him fully, covering tuition, essential work boots and tools, assisting with enrollment and communication, and providing housing so he could focus entirely on his goals. With this support

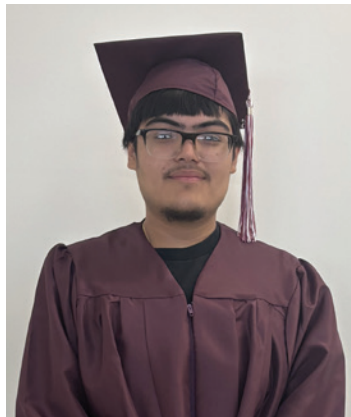
behind him, Creed secured a spot in the Academy and moved to Shelby on his own, demonstrating both independence and courage as he began the Academy's intensive 10 week training.

Throughout the program, Creed excelled. He completed a demanding series of certifications, including his CDL, truck driving training, flagger training, and ultimately his Electrical Line Worker Credential. His commitment stood out so clearly that a company reached out to his instructor requesting an interview before he even finished the program. Creed impressed them immediately, and within a week of graduation, he was attending orientation for his new full time position as an electrical line worker.

As our community witnessed through Helene and its aftermath, this field demands strength, resilience, and unwavering bravery. Creed has proven he possesses all of these qualities.

Emanuel

Emanuel arrived from Florida feeling behind on his credits and unsure how he would finish his high school diploma. On top of the academic pressure, he was navigating a major life transition—moving permanently to North Carolina to live with his father after having spent most of his life with his mother. Despite the challenges, Emanuel approached the change with optimism and a desire to move forward.



As he prepared to return to school, he understood that achieving his goals would require initiative and hard work. He scheduled a meeting with the county's alternative school, where he connected with a workforce career coach. Together, they set clear goals, and Emanuel enrolled back in school with a renewed sense of purpose. He also joined the program to gain work experience, committing more than a year to building professional skills while continuing his education.

During his senior year, Emanuel took meaningful steps toward adulthood. He created an employment profile on

Indeed, secured an interview, and was hired on the spot for his first part-time job. Balancing work and school wasn't easy, but Emanuel stayed organized, adjusted his schedule creatively, and arranged his own transportation to ensure he never missed a shift.

Anna

Anna enrolled in the WIOA NextGen program at the start of her sophomore year. Having experienced the challenges of foster care, she faced obstacles that could have easily discouraged her. Instead, these barriers strengthened her resolve. Rather than allowing her circumstances to define her, Anna used them as motivation to build a brighter future.



Since joining the WIOA NextGen program, Anna has gained hands on experience in a variety of work settings. Through these opportunities, she has developed essential career skills, explored new fields, and built confidence in her ability to achieve long term goals.

Anna's dedication to her education has been unwavering. She is now excelling academically, maintaining strong grades, and consistently holding herself to high standards. In addition to her high school coursework, she enrolled in online classes through AB Tech's Career and College Promise program, taking on college level academics with determination and focus.

This past May, Anna graduated high school with an impressive 4.2 GPA, an AB Tech GPA of 4.0, and 18 college credits already completed. She plans to pursue a career in criminal justice and criminal psychology—fields where her insight, resilience, and determination will serve her well. Anna has been accepted to Western Carolina University and will begin her next chapter this fall.

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 55
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 17
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 19
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 5
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 9
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 13
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 74
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 6
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 25
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 28
-
- Hosted the 8th Annual Real World Simulation Event at the NC Cooperative Extension in Currituck County on October 8, 2025. The event welcomed 109 students from 15 schools and community organizations, along with 24 chaperones and 50 volunteers. Students participated in two workshops on banking and insurance and rotated through 19 career and life-skills booths.
 - Hosted a "Let's Taco 'Bout Taxes" Adulting Day workshop. Kelvin Linton from Liberty Tax provided a presentation to 10 youth participants covering essential tax topics, including completing employment tax forms, when and how to file taxes, and how to identify reputable websites for tax filing assistance.
 - Attended a Youth Summit in New Bern hosted by the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, where youth enhanced their career and leadership development. Participants and staff from five different Workforce Boards were in attendance.
 - Staff participated in six Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Board meetings across four local public school systems.
 - Staff helped initiate a regional collaboration among Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington County Schools, myFutureNC, NENC Career Pathways, Eastern Area Health Education Center, and other workforce partners to expand

apprenticeship and work experience opportunities for youth. The partnership began with a joint workforce meeting on January 29 and developed into an ongoing project through the Carolina Across 100 initiative. The resulting Inner Banks Workforce Collaborative is now focused on creating sustainable career pathways and strengthening talent pipelines for education, public service, and healthcare careers across the three counties.

Grant Recipients

N/A Services Provided In-House

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$310,596
Total Participant Costs	\$129,213
Total Costs	\$439,809

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$60,140
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	14%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$69,073
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	16%

Success Stories

Tristian

Tristian enrolled in the NextGen program at just 16 years old while attending Perquimans County High School. At the time, he was facing significant challenges—food insecurity, unsafe living conditions, and an unstable home environment that made daily life incredibly difficult. Despite everything he was experiencing, Tristian remained determined to stay in school and fully participate in the NextGen program. His commitment became the foundation for the remarkable progress he would soon make.

A key part of Tristian's success was the strong, trusting relationship he built with his Career Advisor. During some of the toughest moments in his life, his Advisor provided steady encouragement, advocacy, and support. They worked together to connect Tristian with essential resources, navigate barriers as they emerged, and keep him focused on his education and long-term goals.



With support from NextGen, Tristian accessed critical resources such as food assistance, clothing, and other basic needs—allowing him to concentrate on school without constant worry. He participated in Adulting Days, workshops, and business and college tours, gaining important life skills and exposure to new career paths. Incentive checks earned through his engagement also provided extra support when he needed it most.

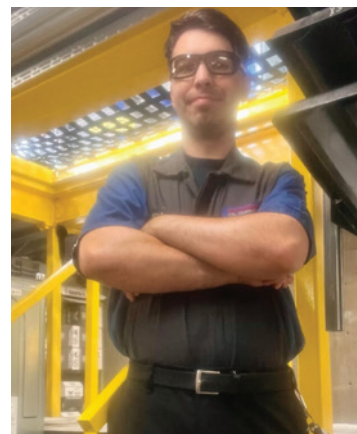
Tristian's resilience paid off in June 2025 when he graduated from Perquimans County High School, becoming the first in his family to earn a diploma. Shortly after, his Career Advisor helped him apply for a Welding Trainee position at Newport News Shipbuilding. Tristian was selected, completed three weeks of unpaid training, and is now employed there—continuing to strengthen his skills and build a promising future.

Tristian's journey is a powerful testament to determination and the impact of supportive guidance. Through perseverance and the help of NextGen, he has built a path toward stability, growth, and opportunity—proving that challenging beginnings do not define the future.

Niklas

Niklas joined the NextGen Program at 23 years old while enrolled in Job Corps and nearing completion of his Maintenance Light Repair training. His dedication led to earning his Automotive Vocational Program Certificate of Completion—marking the official beginning of his career in the automotive industry. Although he faced challenges, including a learning disability and limited work experience, Niklas remained focused and determined with the continuous support of his NextGen Career Advisor.

Through the NextGen Program, Niklas completed a job shadow at CB's Auto Tire and Service under the guidance of Calvin Boone. This experience provided valuable exposure to real world automotive work and helped shape his confidence. Building on that momentum, he participated in a 300 hour paid work experience funded by the program. During this placement, Niklas gained hands on technical skills, strengthened his workplace abilities, and earned wages while continuing to grow professionally.



When Niklas entered the program, he did not have a résumé. With individualized one on one support, he created a professional résumé that highlighted his training, certifications, and practical experience. He also completed job applications, practiced mock interviews, and earned a certificate through the "7 Steps to Get Hired" course offered in partnership with UNC–Chapel Hill.

Niklas's persistence paid off when he interviewed with Express Oil Change & Tire Engineers in Elizabeth City, NC. He was hired full time as a Pit Technician with a comprehensive benefits package that includes healthcare, life insurance, paid time off, a 401(k) match, disability insurance, and a flexible spending account.

Today, Niklas is proudly employed, gaining meaningful hands on experience, and working toward future advancement. His journey shows how dedication, support, and real world learning can turn career goals into reality.



Northeastern Workforce
Development Board
ALBEMARLE COMMISSION
REGION R COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 330
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 176
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 38
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 40
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 46
- Total Youth Entering Apprenticeship Opportunities: 10
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 177
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 325
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 119
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 192
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 134

Grant Recipients

Goodwill Industries of Northwest NC \$2,000,000

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$823,862
Total Participant Costs	\$1,083,792
Total Costs	\$1,907,654

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$705,645
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	37%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$378,147
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	20%

Success Stories

Keaton

Keaton joined the NCWorks NextGen Program in December 2025 with a clear vision: to build a stronger, more secure future by earning his Commercial Driver's License (CDL) through Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute. From the very beginning, he approached this goal with determination and purpose.



With the support of the NCWorks NextGen Program—and an unwavering belief in himself—Keaton made steady progress toward transforming his career and his life.

His journey through training was marked by dedication and persistence. On January 14, 2026, he earned his Class A Permit, a milestone that fueled his motivation to continue pushing forward. Just a few weeks later, on March 12, 2026, Keaton achieved a major victory by earning his Class A CDL. One week after that, on March 19, 2026, he proudly graduated from the program, proving to himself and others that hard work truly pays off.

Keaton's commitment didn't stop with graduation. On April 8, 2026, he stepped confidently into the workforce, beginning his career as a truck driver with Hardy Brothers. This transition marked not only the start of a new job, but the opening of a long-term, stable career pathway in the transportation industry—something he worked tirelessly to achieve.

His story is a powerful example of what can happen when motivation meets opportunity. Through targeted training and strong workforce development support, Keaton earned respected industry credentials and created meaningful change in his life. His perseverance, focus, and courage stand as a reminder to other young adults that they, too, can rise above challenges, pursue their goals, and build the future they envision.

Keaton's success is a testament to hope, hard work, and the incredible potential within every young person who chooses to keep moving forward.

Kaelynn

At just 22 years old, Kaelynn has shown what is possible when determination, courage, and belief in oneself come together. Her journey through the NCWorks NextGen Program is a powerful reminder that meaningful goals can be reached when young adults are provided with strong support and the right opportunities.



Kaelynn enrolled in Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training at Kino's Truck Driving School in High Point, North Carolina, with a clear vision of building a stable and rewarding career. On March 20, 2026, she proudly earned her CDL, marking a major step forward in her path toward the trucking industry. This achievement alone reflects her commitment, but what makes Kaelynn's story even more inspiring is how she accomplished it.

As the only woman in her CDL training class, Kaelynn faced a challenge that could have discouraged many. Instead, she embraced it with remarkable confidence, perseverance, and focus. Her instructors quickly recognized her talent and determination, and her classmates offered their support and encouragement. Together, they created an environment where Kaelynn could thrive—and she did. She excelled throughout the program, proving that skill and dedication speak louder than any barrier.

Her hard work led her quickly into the workforce. On June 1, 2026, Kaelynn began her new career with B&D Kiser Inc. in King, North Carolina, driving a dump truck and stepping into a role she truly enjoys. She is excited about her future and the doors her CDL has opened.

Kaelynn's journey demonstrates the power of persistence and the impact of training programs that invest in young adults. Her success is a reminder that barriers can be broken, opportunities can grow, and dreams can be achieved with courage and support. We celebrate Kaelynn's outstanding accomplishment and look forward to the many miles of success ahead.

Devan

When Devan joined the NCWorks NextGen Program, she carried a powerful dream—to become a Physical Therapist Assis-

tant (PTA). She also understood that the journey ahead would be demanding. With a documented medical diagnosis and one of the most competitive healthcare programs in front of her, Devan chose to focus on what she could control: her work ethic, her resilience, and her belief in her future.



As a senior at East Surry High School, she pushed herself academically by taking dual enrollment courses through Surry Community College while finishing her high school diploma. Knowing that the PTA program accepts only eight students each year, she enrolled in the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) I program to gain hands-on experience and build a strong foundation. Despite balancing high school classes, college coursework, clinicals, and a part-time job, Devan remained determined. By December 2024, she had earned her CNA I certification and proven her ability to rise to any challenge.

Her dedication continued through an internship at RidgeCrest, where she discovered her passion for caring for others. Her supervisors recognized her strong work ethic and positive attitude, awarding her an excellent evaluation and encouraging her to stay on as an employee. Devan gladly accepted, continuing to grow professionally while preparing for the PTA program.

When she first applied to the PTA program, she was not accepted—and she missed passing the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam by just a few points. Instead of seeing this as failure, Devan saw it as a turning point. She enrolled in the courses she needed, strengthened her application, worked diligently at RidgeCrest, and studied relentlessly. On May 26, 2026, Devan passed the TEAS exam and was accepted into the PTA program.

Her journey proves that setbacks are not endings—they are opportunities to rise.



PIEDMONT TRIAD REGIONAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 120
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 89
 - Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 24
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 43
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 35
 - Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 30
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 45
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 17
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 26
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 51
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- Hometown Talent was created to address two workforce needs simultaneously: providing young adults with meaningful paid work experiences and helping local governments build a pipeline of future employees. The initiative connected eligible Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) youth with Work Experience (WEX) placements in cities, towns, counties, and other public-sector agencies throughout the Rivers East region.

Through hands-on assignments, participants developed essential employability skills—including communication, teamwork, professionalism, problem-solving, and time management—while gaining valuable experience and exposure to careers in public service. Youth explored a variety of municipal career pathways such as administrative support, public works, parks and recreation, utilities, information technology, and other local government functions.

These paid WEX placements enabled participants to build relationships with employers, strengthen their résumés, and demonstrate their abilities in professional settings. At the same time, local governments benefited from a – try before you hire – model that supported succession planning and helped identify future employees from within their communities, strengthening the regional

workforce pipeline.

- Career Connected Summer Academy: Through the Northeast North Carolina Career Pathways (NENC) partnership, the Rivers East Workforce Development Board collaborated with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Coastal Plain, community colleges, employers, and other community partners to provide middle and high school students with hands-on career exploration experiences. During the program's second week, the Rivers East Workforce Development Board and other Mid-East Commission departments hosted students for an interactive Career Day.

Students explored careers in Finance, Planning, Aging, and Workforce Development while learning how professionals in these fields support communities across the region. The NextGen Career Advisor also led virtual reality career demonstrations, giving students an immersive opportunity to explore a wide range of occupations and career pathways. By combining technology, career exploration, and direct interaction with professionals, the academy helped students gain a deeper understanding of the diverse career opportunities available within their own communities.

Grant Recipients

Mid-East Commission	\$536,191
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NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$416,720
Total Participant Costs	\$271,521
Total Costs	\$688,241

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$71,178
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	10%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$200,343
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	29%

Success Stories

Luis

Luis' success shows the powerful impact that coordinated workforce development efforts can have in helping young adults move confidently from education into employment. After graduating from an early college high school, Luis knew he wanted to pursue a career in the dental field but wasn't sure how to begin. He explored training options that aligned with his goals, determined to take the next step toward a meaningful profession.



Despite his motivation, financial barriers made it difficult for him to start the training he needed. That changed when he connected with the WIOA NextGen Youth Program. Through this partnership, Luis gained access to vital resources that opened the door to opportunity. With tuition and related training expenses covered, he was able to focus fully on learning, building skills, and preparing for his future.

Luis completed his Dental Assistant I certification on December 3, 2025—a milestone that reflects both his drive and the effectiveness of supportive workforce programs. Even more inspiring, Luis quickly turned his new credentials into employment. Within just two months, he secured full-time work in his chosen field. On January 26, 2026, he began his role as a Dental Assistant I with Contentnea Health, where he continues to grow and thrive.

Luis' journey is a powerful reminder of what becomes possible when motivated young people have access to training, guidance, and support. Targeted investments like those provided through the WIOA NextGen Youth Program do more than fund education—they remove barriers, accelerate career pathways, and help young adults step confidently into in-demand jobs. His accomplishments reflect both personal determination and a workforce system committed to helping youth succeed. Luis' story encourages others to pursue their goals and shows that with the right support, a promising future is within reach.

Ty'Lasjah

After spending nearly a year and a half working in the prison system, Ty'Lasjah gained firsthand insight into the challenges of that environment. Over time, she realized it wasn't the long-term path she wanted. Driven by a desire for independence, stability, and control over her income, she made the courageous choice to pursue a new direction for her future.



With determination—but uncertainty about where to begin—Ty'Lasjah set her sights on earning her Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Her turning point came when she discovered the WIOA NextGen Youth Program through a flyer. She immediately scheduled an appointment with a Youth Career Advisor and began taking steps toward her goal.

Through the program, Ty'Lasjah enrolled in CDL training at TransTech. She approached every part of the training with focus, discipline, and resilience, fully committing herself to learning the skills needed to succeed in the trucking industry. Supported consistently by her Career Advisor, she stayed motivated and confident throughout her journey.

Ty'Lasjah successfully completed her program and earned her Class A CDL—an achievement that represents her hard work and unwavering commitment. Even more inspiring, she secured employment immediately after graduating. Today, she is thriving as an Over-the-Road (OTR) driver with U.S. Xpress, enjoying the freedom and independence she set out to achieve.

Ty'Lasjah proudly credits NCWorks and the WIOA NextGen Youth Program for helping her transform her goals into reality. She encourages other young adults to take bold steps toward their futures, offering a powerful message: don't be afraid—just go for it.

Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 76
 - Total New Youth Enrollments: 40
 - Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 55
 - Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 18
 - Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 66
 - Total Credentials Youth Earned: 56
 - Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 58
 - Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 60
-
- HIGHTS brings together WIOA participants from six far western counties by providing online Lunch and Learn sessions. We were honored to host a presentation led by Clint Kendall, CEO of Angel Medical Center in Franklin, NC. CEO Kendall and his team shared information about on-site healthcare training opportunities offered at Angel Medical and highlighted a wide range of career options such as facility maintenance, security, scrub technicians, Nurse Aide, information technology, and other in-demand industry jobs.
 - WIOA Youth participants enjoyed interacting with one another across all six counties, connecting over discussions, and gaining insight into jobs that provide a family living wage in our region. With pizza provided by our youth Case Managers, the event created a welcoming environment for learning, engagement, and career exploration.

Grant Recipients

HIGHTS	\$251,709
Haywood County Schools	\$110,000

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$284,450
Total Participant Costs	\$69,692
Total Costs	\$354,142

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$12,271
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	3%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$57,421
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	16%

Success Stories

Sophie

Sophie Wood, a participant in the Southwestern Workforce Development Board's WIOA Youth program delivered by HIGHTS, graduated in May 2026 with her High School Equivalency Diploma.

Sophie is now looking forward to taking psychology classes as she works toward a career supporting young children.

Having grown up in a home that provided services for foster children, she has a strong desire to work with children in need.

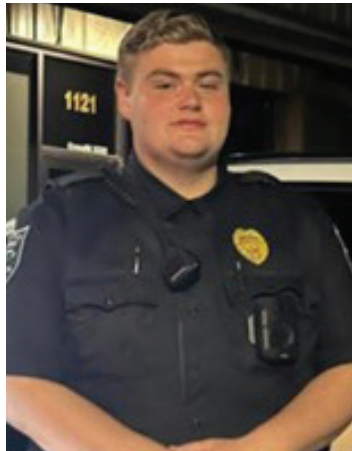
Through WIOA, Sophie is also gaining the opportunity to pair her education with paid work experience in the social services field, helping her build experience while exploring future career options.

Sophie will participate in a summer WIOA paid work experience with Cherokee Indian Hospital, supported through HIGHTS and the Southwestern Workforce Development Board.



Gabriel

Gabriel joined the HIGHTS WIOA Program with a clear goal: earn his GED and build a path toward a meaningful career. Through determination and consistent effort, he achieved that first milestone—earning his GED and opening the door to new opportunities.



With support from HIGHTS, Gabriel gained valuable work experience as a night security guard at Angel Medical Center. His strong performance, reliability, and professionalism quickly stood out, leading to full time employment. From there, he continued to push forward. Gabriel built connections with local law enforcement, attended job fairs, and ultimately earned sponsorship to enroll in Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET).

In December 2025, Gabriel proudly graduated from the BLET program through Southwestern Community College (SCC)—a major accomplishment marking his transition from student to trained law enforcement professional.

Today, we are thrilled to share that Gabriel has been hired by both the Jackson County Sheriff's Office and the Graham County Sheriff's Office.

Blake

Blake's journey at Lander Tubular is a powerful example of how hard work, dedication, and personal commitment can open doors to long-term success. From the moment he began his Work Experience placement, Blake showed a level of maturity and professionalism that immediately stood out. He arrived each day ready to work, eager to learn, and determined to make the most of the opportunity in front of him.



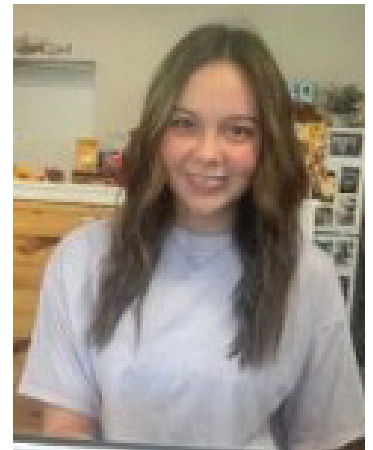
Supervisors at Lander Tubular consistently praised Blake for his punctuality, reliability, and strong work ethic. His commitment was clear—not only did he complete assigned tasks with excellence, but he also demonstrated initiative by offering thoughtful feedback to help improve operations. This willingness to contribute, learn, and grow showed that Blake wasn't just participating in a work experience—he was building a foundation for his future.

Beyond his day-to-day performance, Blake's positive attitude and dedication reflect his desire to create meaningful, lasting change in his life. His supervisors recognized his potential, describing him as dependable, motivated, and an asset to their team. Feedback like this speaks to Blake's character and reinforces the value of workforce development programs that connect youth with employers who believe in their future.

Jacelynn

Through the Southwestern Workforce Development Board's WIOA Youth program, delivered by HIGHTS, Jacelynn Beaver has turned education and work experience into continued employment and a pathway to college. Her accomplishments include:

- Earned a High School Equivalency Diploma at Southwestern Community College
- Completed a WIOA paid work experience at Chatuge Nutrition
- Hired permanently by Chatuge Nutrition
- Enrolled at Tri-County Community College in the Associate of Arts Transfer program



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 126
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 68
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 47
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 16
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 55
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 77
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 31
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 71

Grant Recipients

Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA)	\$104,815
Halifax Cooperative Extension Opportunities Industrialization Center of Rocky Mount, Inc.	\$78,268
Opportunities Industrialization Center of Wilson, Inc.	\$350,911
	\$228,854

NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$771,755
Total Participant Costs	\$86,242
Total Costs	\$857,998

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$51,714
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	6%

Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$466,115
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	54%

Success Stories

Jahniya

When Jahniya enrolled in the NextGen Program through OIC of Rocky Mount in February 2024, she brought with her a strong desire to grow, lead, and prepare for a meaningful future. As an in school youth, she was committed to strengthening her academic foundation, building confidence, and discovering how her passion for helping others could become part of her career journey.



Balancing school responsibilities and personal challenges, Jahniya faced moments that affected her focus and lowered her confidence. However, through the support of the NextGen Program, she began developing the tools she needed to overcome those barriers. With guidance from her Career Advisor, she improved academically, explored career pathways, and strengthened her communication and teamwork skills. She also developed a clear, achievable plan for her future. Along the way, she became actively involved in leadership development, community outreach, and youth focused activities—experiences that helped her recognize the power of her voice and the potential she carried.

Jahniya's growth became even more visible during her Work Experience placement at the Boys & Girls Club. There, she applied her newly developed skills and quickly proved herself dependable, professional, and driven. Working directly with youth allowed her to showcase her creativity, leadership, and commitment to service. Because of her strong performance, Jahniya was hired by the Boys & Girls Club—an exciting milestone that affirmed her passion for working with children.

Today, Jahniya continues moving forward with purpose. Inspired by her experiences and encouraged by the support she received, she enrolled at Pitt Community College to pursue a career in radiology while continuing her work with youth. Through opportunity, guidance, and her own commitment to success, Jahniya transformed challenges into stepping stones and built a clear pathway toward her future.

Tyquan

Tyquan's journey is a powerful reminder that a person's past does not have to define their future. After experiencing incarceration, he faced significant barriers to employment, education, and stability. With determination and a commitment to building a better life, Tyquan enrolled in the NextGen Program through OIC of Wilson as an out of school youth.



From the beginning, he showed focus, motivation, and a clear desire to achieve his goals. With support from his Career Advisor, Tyquan began taking meaningful steps toward a brighter future. He worked hard to complete his GED while also participating in workforce development activities that helped him grow personally and professionally. He completed Financial Literacy, Leadership Development, Entrepreneurship Workshops, and a Work Experience, and received Labor Market and Employment Information services to help him understand career opportunities and make informed decisions.

Each step helped Tyquan build confidence, strengthen his workplace skills, and develop a clearer vision for his life. He learned how to manage money, lead with purpose, explore business ideas, understand the job market, and succeed in a real work environment. Most importantly, he began to see himself not by the challenges he had faced, but by the goals he could achieve.

One of Tyquan's proudest accomplishments was earning his GED. For him, this milestone represented much more than an educational credential—it symbolized perseverance, personal growth, and a fresh start.

Recently, Tyquan began his career as a Machine Operator at Filter Easy in Wilson, NC, where he continues to demonstrate the dedication, responsibility, and strong work ethic that helped him reach his goals. His journey shows that through the NextGen Program, second chances can become turning points—and with the right support, they can lead to lasting success.

Sa'Jae

Sa'Jae is a recent high school graduate determined to build a meaningful and stable career. Before enrolling in the NextGen Program at OIC of Wilson, she worked part time as a package handler at FedEx. Although grateful for the job, she wanted a career that offered long term growth, stability, and purpose.



Through the NextGen Program, Sa'Jae received much more than job search assistance. Her Career Advisors provided guidance, encouragement, and the tools she needed to transition from uncertainty to opportunity. By participating in Leadership Development activities, she strengthened her confidence, communication skills, and leadership abilities. Financial Literacy workshops equipped her with practical knowledge about budgeting, managing money, and building credit—skills essential for both personal and professional success.

Through a Labor Market and Employment Information (LMI) exploration, she learned about the growing demand for pharmacy technicians and the expanding pharmaceutical industry in Wilson County. This information turned her initial interest into a clear and focused career goal.

To help her explore this pathway, Sa'Jae was placed in a Work Experience at Wilson Value Pharmacy. This opportunity became a turning point. She gained hands on training, developed professional workplace skills, and built the confidence needed to succeed in a pharmacy setting. Most importantly, she confirmed that pharmacy was the right career for her.

Sa'Jae's hard work and positive attitude did not go unnoticed. After completing her work experience, she was offered—and proudly accepted—a full time position as a Pharmacy Technician.



Accomplishments

- Total Youth Served: 126
- Total New Youth Enrollments: 88
- Total Youth Participated Pre-employment/Work Maturity Activities: 3
- Total Youth Who Obtained High School Diplomas/Equivalencies: 5
- Total Youth in Work-based Learning Opportunities: 27
- Total Youth Enrolled in Occupational Skills Training: 42
- Total Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Youth Earned: 69
- Total Credentials Youth Earned: 23
- Total Youth That Received Supportive Services: 91
- Total Youth Engaged in Employment: 42

- Developed an innovative partnership with Appalachian State University–Hickory that is redefining how education, employers, and workforce development collaborate to create meaningful opportunities for students. Through this partnership, we are connecting job seekers with the tools, resources, and guidance they need to build long-term, fulfilling careers while reaching untapped talent across our region.
- With bold and forward-thinking approaches, we are transforming the path from learning to earning. From work-based learning and career awareness to talent development, recruitment, and individualized career guidance, every initiative is intentionally designed to unlock potential and fuel regional growth.

Grant Recipients

Ross Innovative Employment Solutions	\$734,563
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NextGen Expenditures

Total Operating Costs	\$424,172
Total Participant Costs	\$167,889
Total Costs	\$592,061

Training Expenditures

Total of All Participant Training Expenditures	\$67,000
Training Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	11%

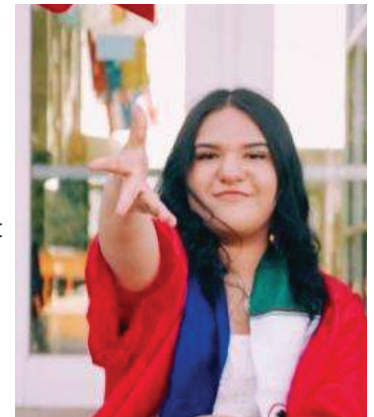
Work-Based Learning Expenditures

Total Work-Based Learning Expenditures	\$100,889
Work-Based Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures	17%

Success Stories

Vanessa

Vanessa's journey shows how courage, support, and persistence can turn uncertainty into purpose. Before receiving the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) scholarship, Vanessa often felt lost during her high school years. She had always dreamed of entering the medical field, but slipping grades and a lack of direction made that dream feel far away. Each day felt like an uphill climb, and her goals seemed almost unreachable.



During this time, she worked part time at a Boost Mobile store to help make ends meet. She struggled to see a path forward—until she made the decision to try harder. She stayed after school, asked teachers for extra help, and actively sought resources. That effort led her to a Career Advisor who introduced her to the WIOA NextGen Youth Program.

The application process initially felt intimidating, but with guidance from her teachers and encouragement from her Career Advisor, Vanessa gained confidence. She soon felt supported, capable, and hopeful for the first time in a long while.

Near the end of her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training—funded through the WIOA scholarship—everything changed. Vanessa was offered a full time position in the healthcare field even before completing the program. Today, she works at Catawba Valley Medical Center as a Utilization Review Generalist, gaining valuable experience while continuing to work toward earning her CNA license.

For Vanessa, the WIOA scholarship opened doors she didn't know existed. As the first member of her immigrant family to attend college, the opportunity became a true beacon of hope.

Madison

The NCWorks NextGen Youth Program provided Madison with the guidance and support she needed to explore her career goals and discover the path that felt right for her. The first two years after Madison graduated from high school were challenging. She struggled to understand who she was and what direction she wanted her life to take. Seeking stability, purpose, and a way to navigate her mental health challenges, she decided to look for employment that could help her move forward.



When Madison reached out to the NCWorks Career Center, she connected with her Career Advisor, still unsure of which path to pursue. With encouragement from her Career Advisor and Business Services Representative, she secured a placement in the early child development field at The Sandbox, an experience that soon became deeply meaningful.

During her 400-hour work-based learning experience, Madison discovered how much she enjoyed working with children and supporting their learning. She gained valuable skills in patience, communication, and understanding child growth and development.

This experience confirmed Madison's passion for child development. In August, she began attending CVCC to pursue a

degree in childhood education and development, with plans to graduate within the next two years. Reflecting on her journey, Madison shared:

"I decided to give it a try, and it turned out to be one of the best decisions I've ever made. Thanks to the NCWorks Career Center, I've found my path and a renewed sense of purpose for my future."

De'Andre

The NCWorks NextGen Youth Program provided financial assistance and supportive services to help De'Andre earn his Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL A) and move toward the career he had always dreamed of pursuing.

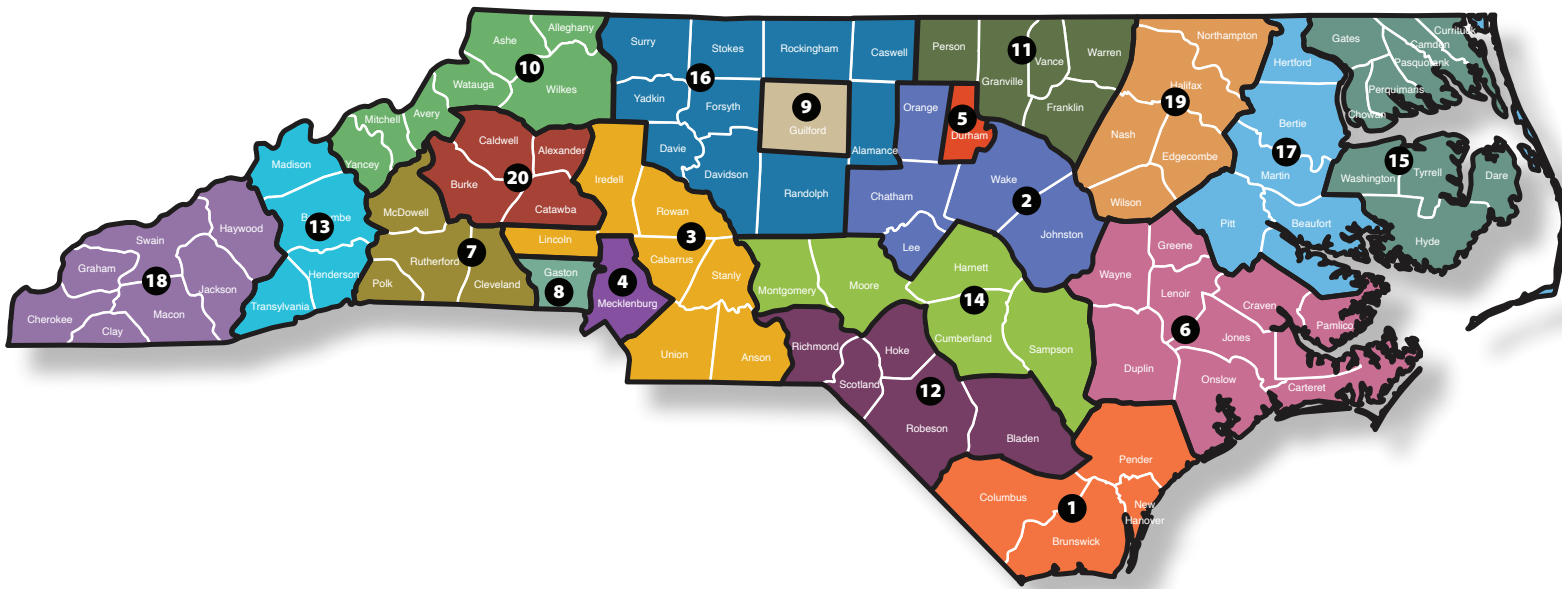


De'Andre's time in the NextGen program has been both impactful and inspiring. Through hard work, focus, and a strong commitment to learning, he successfully completed the evening CDL A truck driving training at Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute. His dedication paid off, opening the door to a career he had envisioned since childhood.

Today, De'Andre is working as an over the road (OTR) truck driver based in Arkansas, continually strengthening his skills as he advances in his profession. Reflecting on his experience, he shared:

"The program impacted me in a very positive way. It gave me an opportunity to pursue a career that I've always wanted since I was a little kid. It gave me an opportunity to change my career path. I felt the assistance throughout the whole program was very important—I never felt like I was 'alone' during the process. Help was always one call away."

North Carolina Workforce



1 Cape Fear WDB
Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, Pender

2 Capital Area WDB
Chatham, Johnston, Lee, Orange, Wake

3 Centralina WDB
Anson, Cabarrus, Iredell, Lincoln, Rowan, Stanly, Union

4 Charlotte Works WDB
Mecklenburg

5 Durham WDB
Durham

6 Eastern Carolina WDB
Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, Wayne

7 Foothills WDB
Cleveland, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford

8 Gaston County WDB
Gaston

Development Boards



9 GuilfordWorks WDB

Guilford

10 High Country WDB

Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, Yancey

11 Kerr-Tar WDB

Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, Warren

12 Lumber River WDB

Bladen, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson, Scotland

13 Mountain Area WDB

Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Transylvania

14 Mid-Carolina WDB

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15 Northeastern WDB

Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington

16 Piedmont Triad Regional WDB

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

17 Rivers East WDB

Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin, Pitt

18 Southwestern WDB

Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain

19 Turning Point WDB

Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton, Wilson

20 Western Piedmont WDB

Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba

North Carolina Workforce Board Chairs & Directors

All North Carolina Workforce Development Boards are comprised of at least 51 percent private sector members that represent a multitude of businesses – small local companies to large global corporations. Together with these local businesses, we create a workforce ready to meet the demanding needs of the local area, providing value for the growing economy.

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