

## For Immediate Release

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### **Mecklenburg receives \$531,000 for career pathways and statewide talent development** Charlotte Works to implement career pathways and retention skills for talent pipeline

**Charlotte, N.C.** – Charlotte Works was awarded \$531,000 through the state’s career pathway and innovation grant programs to implement regional and statewide pathway models. The grant will also be used to coordinate a soft-skills and retention-focused curriculum for workforce partners and the state’s community college system. The combination of new grants will enhance local and statewide talent development for employers and provide greater career and skills exposure for the K-12 education system.

The funds will be split among three initiatives:

- \$154,000 to implement an advanced manufacturing pathway for regional K-12 school districts, community colleges, universities, economic development and employers. Charlotte Works has already developed a pathway model with these partners to provide greater access to advanced manufacturing jobs.
- \$177,000 to coordinate *Working Smart*, a scenario-based curriculum focused on retention skills that many employers feel are missing from today’s workforce. The North Carolina Community College System adopted the curriculum that was created by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Workforce Providers Council, a consortium of 14 workforce-related agencies that partner on training and placement services for people with barriers to employment. Charlotte Works is partnering to expand *Working Smart* into the K-12 education system.
- \$200,000 for statewide staff positions to aid with advancing career pathway models like the advanced manufacturing model.

Charlotte Works’ President and CEO, Dr. Patrick Graham, is excited for employers and job-seekers.

“Career pathway development and retention skills are essential to meeting employer needs,” Graham said. “Our workforce system is trying to do a much better job of meeting employer needs and creating stronger talent by aligning educators and partners. It is very exciting for our community.”

Roger Collins, Siemens’ apprenticeship coordinator and Charlotte Works board member, has seen young adults find success at Siemens thanks to partnerships like Charlotte Works.

“These types of initiatives get at the heart of developing our future workforce while providing apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities for our youth,” he said. “Charlotte Works has been instrumental in our apprenticeship program and the successes of young people employed with our company.”

Both employer and community partner engagement are crucial to implementing training and career pathways successfully. With more than 34,000 people coming through Charlotte Works and its career centers each year, the primary goal is to prepare more individuals for the talent pipeline.

### **About Charlotte Works**

Charlotte Works is a leader and convener of the workforce system through aligned partnerships, innovative policies and career pathways development.

