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## **Workforce leader invests \$4.2 million to address economic segregation**

**Charlotte, N.C.** – Charlotte Works announces #Careers4All community campaign that lays out strategies targeting those left out of Charlotte’s major economic development and infrastructure projects. Focusing on unemployed and under-employed residents, Charlotte Works will invest \$4.2 million in workforce development during the 2017 program year and expand availability of training scholarships to moderate-income families in Mecklenburg County. The organization will hold a #Careers4All press conference on Wednesday, Nov. 15, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Charlotte Chamber.

Several factors have led to increased economic inequality, creating high unemployment clusters throughout Charlotte; yet, employment opportunities and infrastructure projects have not always followed them. The clusters are most notably found right outside of the center city, and the disparity in unemployment among zip codes has increased by 71 percent since 2000.

“Many Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents are being pushed further away from employment centers and infrastructure projects, including transportation and internet due to rising housing costs,” says Dr. Patrick Graham, President/CEO of Charlotte Works. “We’ve developed strategies to reach people in these unemployment clusters, which is an untapped talent pool for local employers. This will also take some private investment from the business community and foundations.”

Disparities highlighted, in part, by the Opportunity Task Force have created avenues for collaboration among organizations to help the community thrive. Careers4All seeks to move the needle when it comes to economic mobility by:

- **Increasing access to education and training scholarships.**
- **Increasing outreach career advisors for unemployment clusters.**
- **Increasing scholarship funding to provide advancement for existing entry-level employees.**
- **Increasing funding for pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships.**
- **Creating a centralized job coordination and placement initiative for people with barriers to employment.**

Employers like Carolinas HealthCare System are in favor of the Careers4All initiative.

“Our commitment includes identifying the skills and talents needed for the future workforce, as well as opening opportunities at CHS to qualified Charlotte Works participants,” says Laura Morrow-Fox, AVP of Human Resources at Carolinas HealthCare System and Charlotte Works Board member.

Last program year, Charlotte Works placed more than 7,000 people into full- and part-time employment with salaries totaling \$103 million.



This equates to nearly \$31 going back into the community for every \$1 that Charlotte Works invested. Through these outreach efforts, the organization plans to place an additional 1,000 people.

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Charlotte Works is a nonprofit organization that serves as the workforce development board for Mecklenburg County. It provides leadership and direction to the community that closes the gap between what employers want and the skills workers have.

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