



CHARLOTTE
WORKS

ENGAGED / EMPOWERED / EMPLOYED



PROGRAM YEAR
PY **2021** ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Our Mission

Leading the development of a skilled and in-demand workforce by engaging businesses, aligning community partners, empowering and connecting job seekers to meaningful employment, and fostering inclusive economic growth.

Who We Are

As the workforce development board serving Mecklenburg County, Charlotte Works leads the way in connecting job seekers and employers, providing skills training and work opportunities for youth and adults, analyzing and sharing data to educate the public on workforce needs, and aligning community partners around workforce initiatives to help make Charlotte-Mecklenburg a place of economic opportunity for all. Through programs and partnerships with service providers across the county, Charlotte Works ensures that job seekers have access to opportunities and also have the skills employers need. Charlotte Works oversees the NCWorks Career Center and NextGen youth programs, and administers the Working Smart essential skills curriculum for job seekers.

We empower job seekers by supporting their employment & training needs.

We engage with businesses to help meet their talent & growth goals.

We lead the development of partnerships to support local workforce initiatives.

We provide access to learning opportunities for youth & young adults.

We support the economic viability of Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Making an Impact Together

As we look back over Program Year 2021, we are proud to share our strategically cultivated partnerships as well as our innovative efforts to continually meet the evolving needs of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg workforce. The challenges associated with the effects of COVID-19 are still significantly impacting all industries across Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Through employer and job seeker surveys, Charlotte Works affirmed the continued need for increased accessibility to career resources and skills training opportunities. We continued expanding our NCWorks career services with partners like the YMCA and Mecklenburg County Libraries to create greater accessibility in neighborhoods that would not otherwise have access to our services.

Through our NCWorks Career Center as well as NextGen Youth programs in PY21, we were able to assist more than 56,000 adults and nearly 470 youth and young adults with their career development needs by providing career coaching, job readiness workshops, and access to skills training. Additionally, we were able to grant nearly \$173,000 in 27 on-the-job training grants, invested \$448,520 in internships, and granted \$106,672 to 15 companies to upskill 213 existing employees.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future of Mecklenburg County’s workforce and the businesses and organizations who sustain it. By cultivating a pipeline of untapped talent for an increasingly diverse business landscape, we will continue engaging, empowering, and employing the area’s workforce while attracting more organizations and talent to Mecklenburg County. Please enjoy learning about our dedicated teamwork, community engagement, and collaboration in our PY21 in review.



Matt Bradley, Board Chair

A stylized, handwritten signature of Matt Bradley in black ink.



Danielle Frazier, CEO

A stylized, handwritten signature of Danielle Frazier in black ink.

Helping Job Seekers Find Employment, Upskill Opportunities & New Career Pathways

In PY21, we collaborated with local partners to ensure job seekers had access to employment opportunities and career support services in a tough economic climate, in light of the pandemic’s lingering effects. Job seekers continued to access services virtually and in-person at the NCWorks Career Center in Charlotte.

PY21 Job Seeker Impact Snapshot



Through the Eyes of an NCWorks Career Advisor



“When you have to work to survive, being unemployed is a delicate space to be in,” said NCWorks Career Advisor Ebony Copeland. “One big barrier job seekers often face is realizing that what they feel is impossible is actually possible.” As a part of the NCWorks Talent Development team since 2018, Ebony has a passion for guiding job seekers while they discover their career path. She takes pride in letting the job seekers do some self-discovery and leans into her skills as a mentor and coach when needed.

“One young lady I worked with appeared to lack confidence in herself as she was settling for what she thought was her only career path. She thought she wanted to do medical coding, but it appeared to her that the universe kind of pushed her out of that path.” The young mother chose to enter the medical field through another path - the Dental Assistant program. Today, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), she has been able to visit dental offices and secure an internship as she follows a sustainable path of her choosing in a high-demand field.

“She is a young mom who is trying to fend for herself and her young children,” Ebony reflected. I can identify with her. Every time we have a hurdle, like when her car broke down, she calls and is anxious. I encourage her not to give up on herself.”

Ebony supports her clients through career assessments, resume creation, job searches and using NCWorks’ resources to gain career readiness skills. She enjoys the process of seeing clients gain employment, such as another young woman who recently went to work at American Airlines.

“My advice for job seekers is to be sure to brush up on your soft skills, like conflict resolution or communication,” Ebony remarked. “I think the Working Smart workshop (soft skills training) is always a good place to start because job seekers exchange experiences and gain skills to help them hit the ground running.” Ebony enjoys being there for her clients, supporting them, being the “voice of reason”, and steering them back on course when they drift off track.

Finding New Ways to Connect with Job Seekers Through Technology

On the back side of the COVID-19 pandemic, and dealing with its lingering effects, reconnecting with job seeker clients became paramount. On January 2, 2022, the NCWorks Career Center established its own digital footprint through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn, with all of the center’s social media links housed on Linktree at <https://linktr.ee/ncworkscharlotte>.

Additionally, the center claimed its online NCWorks property through Google Business Profile (GBP), building out its services and online presence. In the first month, the center’s online traffic through the GBP Insights Listing increased by 258% (vs. Jan 2021).

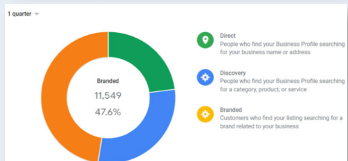
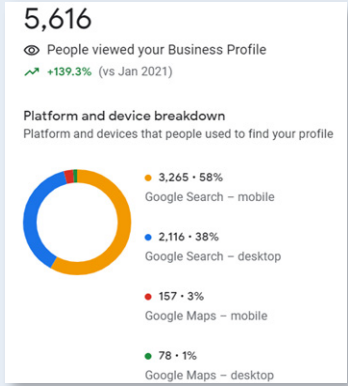
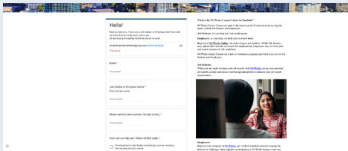
Within the first 30 days, 5,616 people found NCWorks Career Center’s new online presence, primarily by a Google search on their mobile device, desktop, mobile maps and desktop maps, respectively.

By the end of February 2022, the calls made via Google to our career center increased by 511%. The center was generating new interest and driving foot traffic as the COVID mask mandate was being lifted.

During the last quarter of Program Year 2021, 47.6% of our customers were finding the NCWorks Career Center by direct search of our branded name “NCWorks.” The center was finally appearing in searches via maps and website.

January 2022 Performance

- Business Profile Interactions **+257%**
- Calls made from Business Profile **+267%**
- Direction requests made from Business Profile **+227%**
- Google website clicks made from Business Profile **+315%**



Job Fair of the Carolinas Met Job Seekers “Where They Are”



A collaborative effort between NCWorks Charlotte, NCWorks Gaston and SC Works Catawba Region, the Job Fair of the Carolinas held on March 24, 2022, was a hybrid event which provided employers and job seekers the opportunity to participate in-person at the new NCWorks Career Center Charlotte as well as through an online platform. Nearly 140 jobseekers attended the event in-person and 355 participated virtually.

There were over 1,000 open positions offered by 54 participating companies located along the North Carolina/South Carolina Interstate 77 corridor and beyond. The organizers, acknowledging the multi-county, two-state nature of our regional workforce, attribute the collaborative efforts of all counties with the event’s success.

Reintroducing In-House Hiring Events

The March 2022 Job Fair of the Carolinas was the jumping off point, rolling out new in-house hiring event opportunities at NCWorks. Through the Google Business Profile, weekly hiring events are offered directly to job seekers via searches. A “sign up” process allows job seekers to register for the event and because their information is captured; they are then sent information about other hiring events as well as the Center’s Career Readiness Workshops.

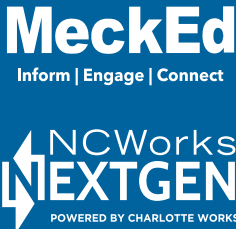


During the summer, the Business Services Team launched new outreach to get employers back to weekly hiring events in the Career Center. The first one in the new rollout was with local employer, Hood Container.

Hood Container’s HR Manager, JoAnn Steele, said they had hiring events in Atlanta, Chicago and Greensboro. But, the one at the NCWorks Career Center in Charlotte was the most successful. Steele explained, “Anyone who applied was a result of NCWorks; it was from all of your efforts. We had a total of 40 interviews and we made two additional offers. The total number of offers made was 16. It was a great success!”

The first hire of the day was Mario James, who has been job searching for eight months. He was excited to be hired by a company offering “reasonable pay and benefits.”

NextGen Youth and Young Adult Programs (Ages 16-24)



468
Total Youth Served

1,032
Total Work-Based Learning Opportunities

125
Training Scholarships

\$219,555
Training Scholarships

151
Total Paid internships

Charlotte Works’ Partner MeckEd Celebrates Graduating Seniors with Annual Block Party

Seniors from the MeckEd program celebrated receiving their high school diplomas in the annual graduation ceremony block party. The 25 graduates had the chance to get a jump start on their futures as Bank of America volunteers conducted mini workshops on budgeting, setting up a LinkedIn account, and setting up their very own checking accounts. Out of the graduates, 15 have committed to colleges including Central Piedmont, NC A&T, Winston Salem State, and Shaw University. One student has already started taking dental assistant classes, and others are already in the workforce.

Central Piedmont and the Mayor’s Office on Entrepreneurship were also in attendance. The celebration included an appearance from Hugo the Hornet, learning stations, food trucks, a mobile game truck, photo booth, giant games, cornhole, and a live DJ.



NCWorks Hosted Virtual and In-Person Workshops to Train Job Seekers

“Hybrid” is the new word around NCWorks when it pertains to communication with job seekers and employers. The Career Center’s Talent Engagement Facilitator, Sheila McKinnon, provided virtual workshops such as the WIOA Orientation, Resume Tips, and Interviewing Skills. However, for more challenging workshops such as Spreadsheets and Pivot Tables, she provided training in-person. The Working Smart: Soft Skills for Workplace Success program is a multi-day workshop that is conducted in-person and closes with a graduation. As ‘Pomp and Circumstance’ played in the background, McKinnon introduced each student and presented them with the Center’s Certificate of Completion. Often, staff and others attend the graduation to encourage those who complete the entire training.



In addition to training job seekers in-house at the NCWorks Career Center, 16 community partners who were trained by NCWorks also led their organizations in the delivery of the Working Smart: Soft Skills for Workplace Success program to their constituents and clients in PY21.

Using MeckEd’s Comprehensive Career Services to Take Flight



Meet Melissa: Melissa joined MeckEd’s Career Pathways program in July 2021 after being referred by a friend who had previously participated in the program. She was not certain about her career goals. Her focus was on working at a beauty supply store, saving money to move out of her parent’s home, and living independently. After participating in soft skills development workshops, increasing her Grade Point Average (GPA), and identifying a career path passion, she became an active participant in the NextGen program. One her most impactful experiences has been her involvement in MeckEd’s Inner Peace Mentoring sessions. These meetings provided safe spaces for Melissa to have meaningful conversations with peers around sensitive subjects which helped her in the pursuit of her career and academic goals. Melissa also participated in job shadows, workshops, and roundtable discussions that exposed her to careers that were both exciting, lucrative and in-demand. Her Career Pathways Advisor nominated her for the Willie Lee Boykins, Jr. Scholarship, which is sponsored by Rich Black Brand, Inc. and designed to support young women of color to pursue post-secondary goals. Melissa was one of 14 nominees. Following her participation in a financial literacy workshop, Melissa was chosen as one of the three winners! Despite her progress, Melissa wasn’t sure if she was going to graduate. Her career pathways advisor and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Rich Black Brand worked with Melissa to make sure she completed her training. Melissa once had no intentions of attending college or pursuing an established career. Currently, she is scheduled to begin classes at Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) in the fall, and is hoping to transfer to a four-year university to pursue a career in aviation!

Deepening Our Engagement With The Businesses Community

In PY21, we strengthened our work with business leaders to ensure employers had the necessary support systems to maintain and grow their businesses, and to find top talent, even in the aftermath of the pandemic.

PY21 Employer Impact Snapshot



On-the-Job Training
27 On-the-Job Training (OJT) grants totaling \$172,917



Adult Work Experience
21 Adult Work Experience (internships) serving employers in Healthcare, Construction, IT, Education, Business & Finance



Apprenticeship
Continued partnership with Cognizant apprenticeship program supporting 2nd cohort of apprentices



Talent Source Network
Hiring projects with Atrium Health, Atrium Guest Services, Intercontinental Capital Group, Element Designs



NCWorks Training
NCWorks Eligible Training Provider List new training provider approvals: Craft & Trade Basic Construction, Global Vocational Training Center, Charlotte Area Fund



Employer Hiring Events
33 total, serving over 150 employers

UpSkill Charlotte

Our local Incumbent Worker Training grant, UpSkill Charlotte, allocated \$106,672 to 15 companies in the manufacturing, construction, hospitality and information technology sectors. These grants provided a variety of professional development for 213 employees, such as Manufacturing & Engineering, English as a Second Language, Disability & Inclusion, and Information Technology. Successful completion of these trainings resulted in a wage increase and/or potential advancement for each employee.



Sector Partnership: Coalition for Construction Careers (C3)



Charlotte Works' revised C3 (Coalition for Construction Careers) sector partnership is solutions-driven, and focuses on three crucial initiatives: Construction Education, Construction Career Pathways, and Construction Trades Training.

To kick off this relaunch, an in-person Construction Resource Pipeline Event was held at The Craft and Trade Academy on December 2, 2021. The event connected employers who have hiring and training needs to local workforce partners with those resources. The goal was to educate businesses about available assets and develop relationships to address the industry's talent needs and grow a skilled construction workforce in our region.

CW Business Engagement Team in the Community



- Greater Charlotte Hospitality & Tourism Alliance Gala
- Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte—Hora Feliz
- Women's Business Center Charlotte Virtual Panel & Ribbon Cutting
- Vocational Rehabilitation National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- DisabilityIN NC Employment Collaborative
- 8th Annual Breakfast Conversations—Small Business Connector
- Charlotte LGBT Chamber of Commerce—Small Business Fair

CMS Charlotte MED Week Workforce Partner of the Year Award

Charlotte Works received an award for Workforce Development Community Partner of the Year during Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week on October 14. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools coordinated MED Week in observance to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of minority and women-owned business enterprises and to honor those corporations and financial institutions supporting minority business development.

MED week brings to light the public, private partnership that support and advocate for minority businesses. The 2021 theme was "Engage, Elevate and Empower."

The Partner of the Year award honors Charlotte Works for the support of minority and women-owned business enterprises. Senior Business Engagement Manager, Andrew Davila, accepted the award on Charlotte Works' behalf during a recognition luncheon to commemorate the achievement of minority entrepreneurs and affirm our community's commitment to the principle of equal opportunity.



Supporting The Workforce Through Community Outreach, Partnerships & Expanding Our Reach



In PY21, we deepened our reach into the workforce ecosystem supporting job seekers and employers through key partnerships and engagements.

Danielle Frazier Attends “Exploring Economies: Austin” with a Charlotte Delegation

In March 2022, Charlotte Works’ CEO Danielle Frazier attended the “Exploring Economies: Austin” inner city trip organized by the **Charlotte Regional Business Alliance**. Danielle was joined by Charlotte Works’ board members, Raki McGregor, Chris Jackson, and Victoria Watlington, along with Charlotte-Mecklenburg elected officials and business and community leaders. The purpose of the trip was to learn: (1) What is attracting entrepreneurs, technology companies, and top talent to Austin; (2) How the city is developing its infrastructure amidst its rapid growth; (3) The keys to success for their higher education and workforce development ecosystems.

During her visit, Danielle moderated a panel on talent and workforce development. The discussion centered on how the Austin area is developing their local talent, working with key community partners, and measuring impact.

As the 11th most populous city in the United States, a magnet for Fortune 500 and technology companies, and a thriving arts community, Austin has many similarities to Charlotte. The delegation knew it could learn from their successes and challenges. Thus, it was a worthwhile trip to the Texas capital to learn, get inspired, and collaborate with existing and new partners.



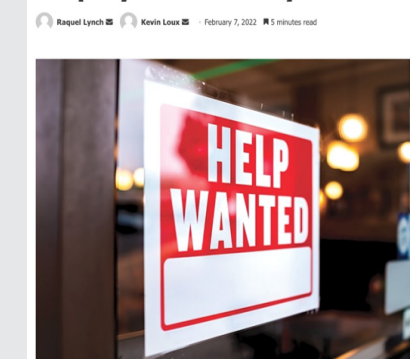
Grassroots Organization Outreach

Guided by our overall strategic plan, in PY21, we conducted one-on-one outreach to area grassroots organizations, selecting those aiding justice-involved, homeless, disabled and immigrant populations.

The discussions centered around the specific challenges faced by those they serve. In turn, we examined how our supportive services and resource network could address those challenges and identified areas where we need to improve our assistance. These productive discussions led to new and revitalized relationships with often overlooked organizations across Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Op-Ed Secured for Charlotte Works & Goodwill Talent Survey

OPINION: It's Not a Labor Shortage, It's a Shortage of Employer Creativity



In August 2021, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont and Charlotte Works released our findings from a survey of job seekers in the greater Charlotte region to better understand how to support employees in their return to the workforce after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey inquired about what matters most to them in terms of returning to the workforce and workplace satisfaction, as well as what employers can do to attract, retain, and talent.

As the year persisted with talk of a great resignation/reshuffle, we continued to hear from employers that they were facing a talent shortage. However, many of the employers who provided this feedback were not responding to the priorities of job seekers that were identified in the survey.

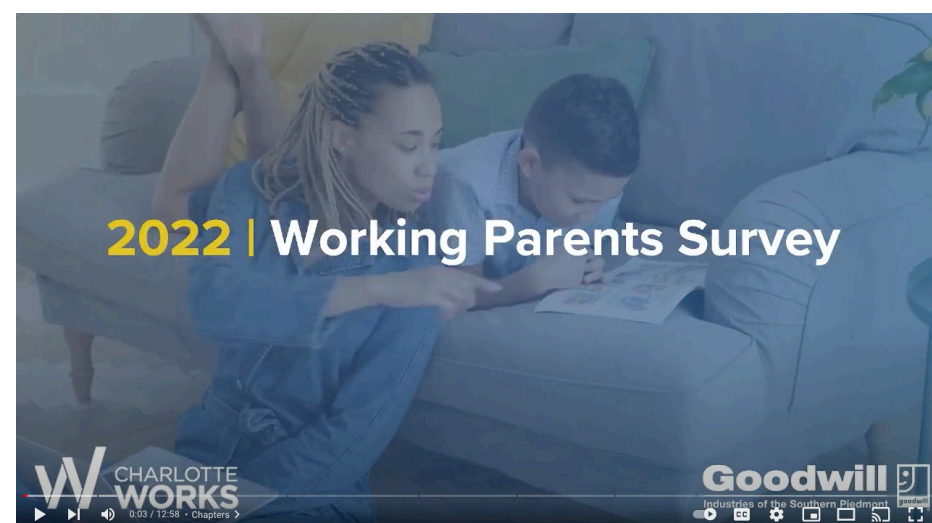
This is why in February 2022, Charlotte Works Chief Impact Officer Kevin Loux co-authored an op-ed alongside Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont’s Chief Programs Officer Raquel Lynch, challenging employers to be more creative to close the talent shortage.

Expanding Our Reach Through the Consolidation of the NCWorks Career Centers

On July 1, 2022, the NCWorks Career Center located on Forest Point Boulevard was merged with the new NCWorks Career Center located on McAlpine Park Drive in Charlotte. The new location emerged as the largest career center footprint of the over 75 career centers statewide. Exciting initiatives grew from the consolidation, such as hosting a massive two-state hiring event known as the Job Fair of the Carolinas as well as creating weekly in-house hiring events where job seekers could come in, interview, and potentially get hired on-the-spot.



2021 became a transformative year as the staff at the NCWorks Career Center was able to provide an umbrella of services, reaching job seekers “where they are,” and still offering meaningful services to employers who face their own hiring challenges. The consolidation spawned both virtual and in-person workshops for building resumes, enhancing interview skills, and even honing a Microsoft Office skill set. All of the career readiness workshops, soft skills training, and employer-driven hiring events were offered at no cost to job seekers and employers.



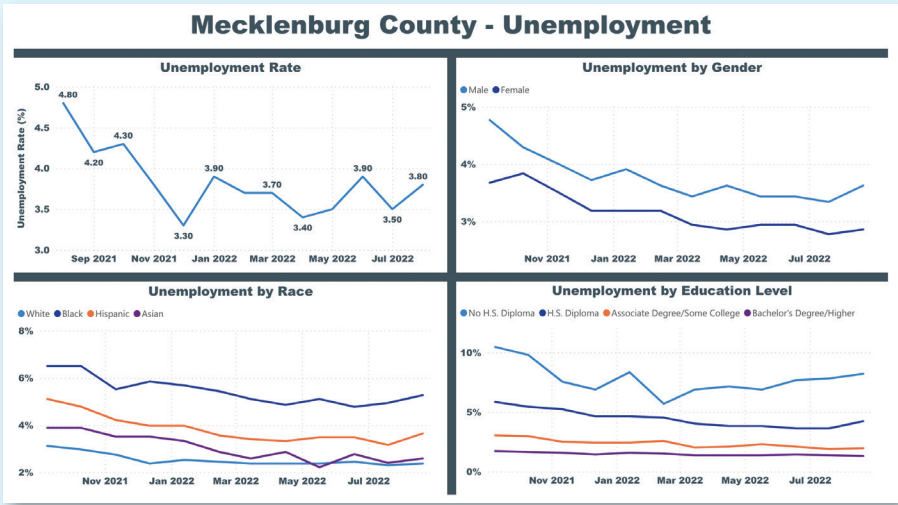
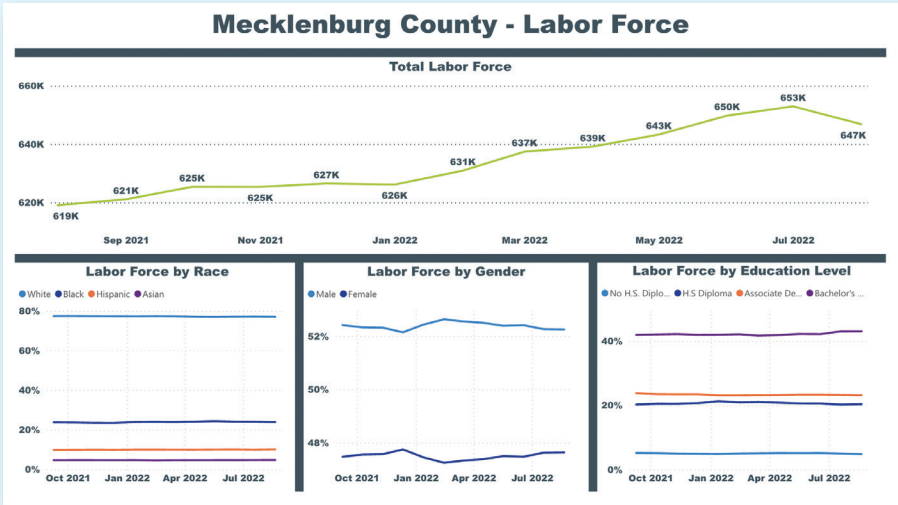
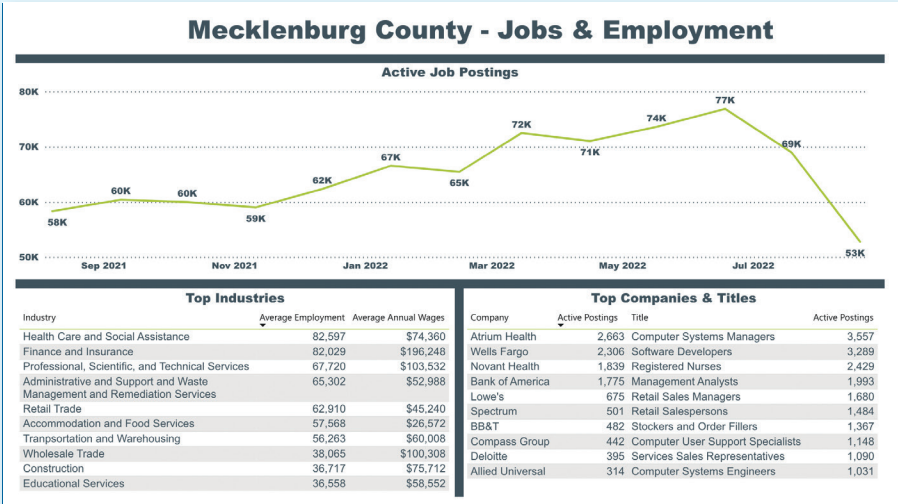


2022 | Working Parents Survey

Charlotte Works partnered with Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont to release a working parent survey to better understand how to support working parents in their return to the workforce. This video highlights key survey findings and best practices for employers to respond to the survey findings.



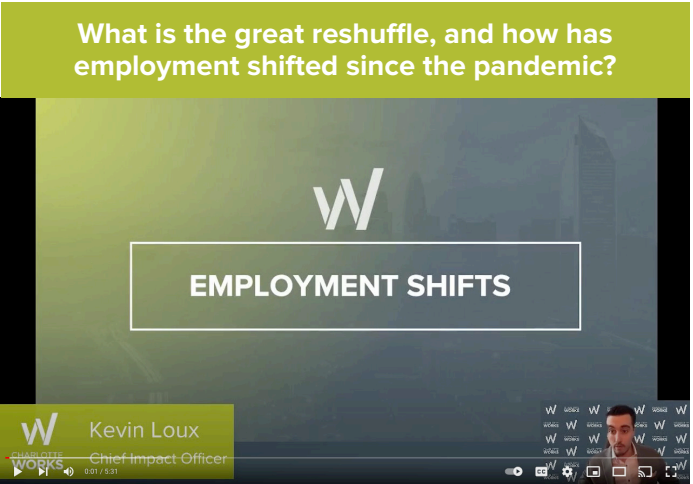
Workforce Data: Keeping The Community Informed



Charlotte Works Resource Blogs

In PY21, we released a number of blogs designed to help employers and job seekers understand important issues and prepare them for success. The blogs began with resources to help job seekers file taxes and understand how their unemployment benefits from the pandemic would be taxed. We also highlighted the unfortunate history of tipped workers in America to help employers make more informed decisions about compensation structure for employees. [To read our blogs, visit \[charlotteworks.com/news-and-blog\]\(https://charlotteworks.com/news-and-blog\).](#)

Labor Market Videos



In this video, we explore how employment in Mecklenburg County has shifted since the pandemic and also look at what changes are here to stay, and what changes are likely temporary.



How can employers close the talent shortage? Latent Talent may be hidden today, but with the right support structures in place, it represents a large untapped talent pool that can even outperform traditional talent. In this video, we explain what latent talent is, where they are, the barriers to full employment, and opportunities to reach those who may not be fully in the workforce.



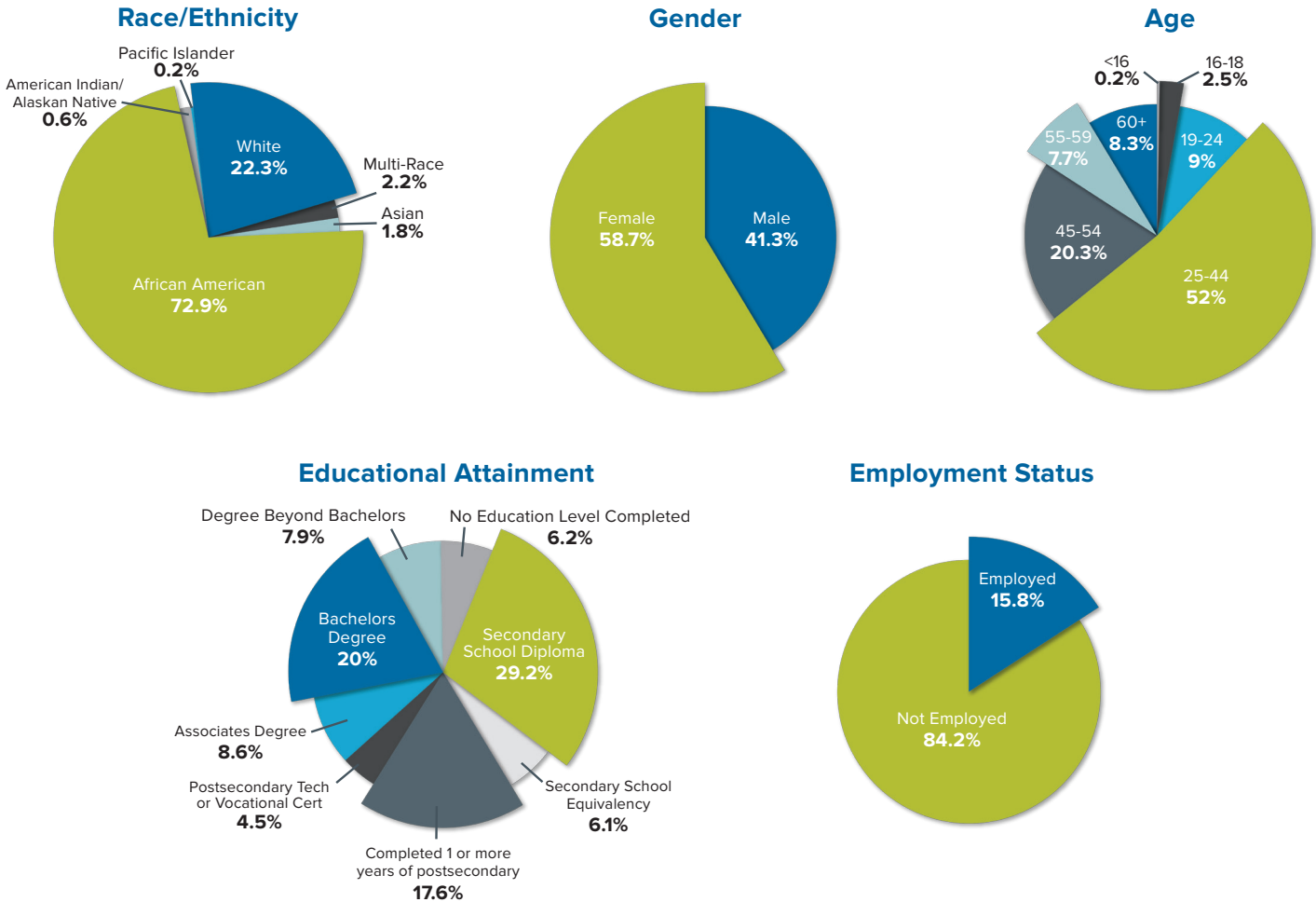
What is the great resignation and why are workers leaving their jobs now more than ever? In this video, we break down the 4.3M to a regional level, an industry level, discuss what the key motivators are, and how Charlotte Works can help your business attract and retain talent.



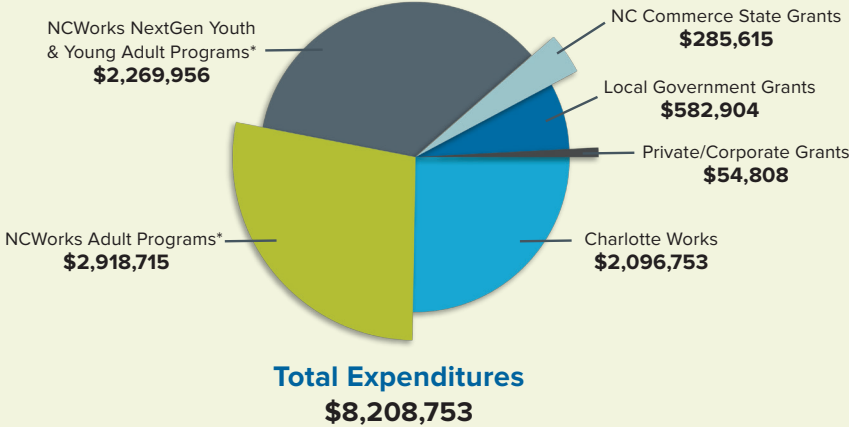
What is going on with inflation and how is it impacting the workforce? In this video, we break down what inflation looks like and how this is likely to impact employers.

[To watch any of our videos, visit \[youtube.com/@charlotteworks\]\(https://youtube.com/@charlotteworks\).](#)

Who We Served in Program Year 2021



Program Year 2021 Expenditures



*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funded

- Matt Bradley (Chairman)**
Deloitte Consulting, LLP

Akeshia Craven-Howell*
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Raki McGregor (Vice Chairman)
Novant Health

Cassandra Triggs-Tucker (Treasurer/Secretary)
Hearst Communications

James Bolling
Microsoft Corporation

Merribeth Butler-Fadel
Disability: IN North Carolina

Edie Fletcher*
Bank of America

Russ Fortson
American Airlines

Susan Gann-Carroll*
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Veronica Grantham
NC Department of Commerce

Zaira Goodman*
Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Chris Hage
Duke Energy

Heather Hill
Central Piedmont Community College

Chris Jackson
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont
- David Leonardi**
UA Local 421

A. Fulton Meachem
INLIVIAN

Isael Mejia*
Ironworkers District Council

Brandi Newman
Atrium Health

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Newton & Arroyo, PLLC

Chris Payton*
Bank of America

Thomas Ray
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Department of Health & Human Services

Valerie Sachariat
Charter Communications

Chad Schuchmann
Daramic, LLC

Scott Thrower
Southern Piedmont Central Labor Council

Anthony Trotman
Mecklenburg County Health & Human Services

Victoria Watlington*
The Coca Cola Corporation

Peter Zeiler*
Mecklenburg County Office of Economic Development

* Board member during PY21, not on current board
* New board member for PY22



Charlotte Works Board of Directors and Staff

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