



June 1, 2006

Dear Friends,

The Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc., has concluded a regional workforce research project which was created to better understand the workforce challenges of the area comprised of Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, and Wayne Counties.

The primary product from this research, the State of the Workforce Report 2006, includes workforce supply, demand, and emerging education trends, and an analysis of the implications for achieving workforce excellence in the region.

Our goal is to share data with economic development, education, business, government, labor, and other community leaders who agree that a serious commitment to workforce development is essential to the region's economic vitality.

The underlying theme of the report suggests that regional economic development cannot succeed without a stronger emphasis on, and strategic investment in, workforce development. The challenge for this region is to fully embrace the concept that in order to become a high-skills region we need to focus on improving the educational levels of our current and future workforce and to develop their skill sets needed to assist our local employers in competing in the ever-changing global economy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, for their excellent research in authoring this report. Additionally, I want to thank the members of our Steering Committee, as well as those who participated in our community forums, for their valuable insights and contributions.

We look forward to convening community stakeholders and generating a dialogue that will lead to solutions to the various gaps identified in the report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D.T. Harris".

D.T. Harris
Board Chairman