



# 2019-2020 Annual Report



Eastern Carolina  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.



## Our Vision

Our vision for Eastern North Carolina is a qualified workforce with an educational attainment level that meets the needs of local firms so they can compete in today's marketplace.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to develop the workforce through a collaborative, customer-focused approach that facilitates partnerships between job seekers, workers, employers, and educators, aligning workforce requirements to economic needs.



## Our Value

We add economic value to our community by ensuring that our public workforce system is responsive in meeting the education and training needs of our job seekers and employers alike, thereby leading to a better quality of life and ensuring employers have access to the skilled workforce they need, resulting in a thriving economy.



# Message from the Board Chair & Executive Director

To our stakeholders:

We have put together this annual report to acknowledge the efforts of everyone involved and to present the impact that we have made in our community over the past year. The dedication, commitment, and hard work of our staff, NCWorks partners, and service providers enabled us to deliver quality services to businesses and individuals in need.

This has been a year like no other, and everyone involved has put forth extraordinary effort to continue pouring into our local community. It is more important than ever to develop our workforce and we have adapted through the pandemic to do just that.

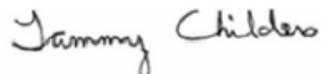
We could not have accomplished everything that we have without the active and generous support of our Board of Directors and the ECWDB Consortium. Their countless hours of effort dedicated to our mission has been critical to our success.

Through our combined efforts, the economies of our local communities will continue to thrive.

Sincerely,



Carla Byrnes, Chair



Tammy Childers, Executive Director



# Consortium & Board of Directors

## Officers

Mark Price, Chief Elected Official  
Carla Byrnes, Chair  
Bill Green, Vice-Chair  
Al Searles, Secretary/Treasurer

## Carteret County

Bob Cavanaugh, Carteret County Commissioner  
Mike Kraszeski, Atlantic Veneer, President  
Cindy Holman, Carteret County Government,  
Consolidated Human Services Director  
Trapas Pratt, MechWorks Mechanical Contractors, Inc.,  
Senior Vice President

## Craven County

Johnnie Sampson Jr., Craven County Commissioner  
John Wilson, BSH Home Appliances Corporation,  
Human Resources Manager  
Anthony Cruz, International Machinist & Aerospace  
Workers Union, Labor Representative  
Bill Green, Vice President of Business Services

## Duplin County

Kennedy Thompson, Duplin County Commissioner  
James Wolfe, Economic Development Partnership of  
NC, Southeast Existing Industry Expansions Manager  
Al Searles, Smithfield, Sr. Director, Transportation &  
Logistics

## Greene County

Jerry Jones, Greene County Commissioner  
Angela Bates, Greene Lamp, Inc., Executive Director  
Judy Darden, Darden Bookkeeping, Owner  
Ray Holloman, JAK Moulding and Supply, Sales  
Manager

## Jones County

Mike Haddock, Jones County Commissioner  
Frank Emory, Emory Construction, Owner  
David Hill, DP Hill Manufacturing, President  
Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd, Jones County Partnership for  
Children, Executive Director

## Lenoir County

Roland Best, Lenoir County Commissioner  
Jason Trull, Spirit AeroSystems, Human Resources  
Manager  
Dr. Rusty Hunt, Lenoir Community College, President  
Bruce Parson, Blind Shop, Owner

## Onslow County

Mark Price, Chief Elected Official  
Shannon Vitak, NC Dept. of Health and Human  
Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Manager  
Veronica Perez, Concentrix, Site Director  
Karl Zurl, NC Department of Commerce, Southeast  
Division of Workforce Solutions, Regional Operations  
Director

## Pamlico County

Candy Bohmert, Pamlico County Commissioner  
Carla Byrnes, B & B Yacht Designs, Co-Owner  
Dr. Jim Ross, Pamlico Community College, President

## Wayne County

Ray Mayo, Wayne County Commissioner  
Fletcher Bizzell, Wayne Opportunities, Inc., Board  
Director  
Charles Brogden, Franklin Baking Company, LLC,  
Director of Human Resources  
Melanie Sanders, Caswell Development Center, Human  
Resources Manager



## ECWDB Staff



Tammy Childers,  
Executive Director



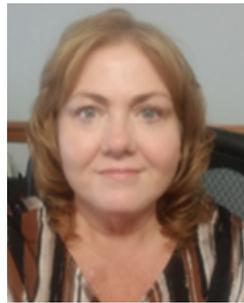
Bob Kehres,  
Assistant Director



Lisa Harvey,  
Program Coordinator



Trina Hale,  
Accounting Technician



Debbie Simpkins,  
Fiscal Monitor



George Kramer,  
Business Services  
Representative



Erin Ananian-Gentile,  
Strategic Initiatives  
Coordinator



Joanne Payne,  
Administrative  
Assistant



Anita Bradley,  
Administrative  
Assistant



Joan Kornegay,  
Hurricane Florence  
Program Specialist



Phillip Prescott,  
Business Services  
Representative



David Jones,  
Public Information  
Specialist

## Youth Council

Anthony Cruz, Labor  
Representative, International  
Machinist & Aerospace Workers  
Union

Frank Emory, Chair, Emory  
Construction, Owner

Angela Bates, Greene Lamp, Inc.,  
Executive Director

Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd, Jones  
County Partnership for  
Children, Executive Director

Melanie Sanders,  
Caswell Development Center,  
Human Resources Manager

John Wilson, BSH Home  
Appliances, Human Resources  
Manager

Shannon Vitak, Vocational  
Rehabilitation, Manager

Dustin Walston, Lenoir  
Community College, Dean of  
Continuing Education

Jerome Shepard, Carteret  
County, HR Generalist/Safety  
Officer

Dr. Jim Ross, Pamlico  
Community College, President

## About the ECWDB

The Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc. (ECWDB) is a non-profit organization located in New Bern, North Carolina. It is the designated administrative/fiscal agent for the Federal and State workforce development funds appropriated by the North Carolina Department of Commerce to operate employment and training services in a nine-county local area.

The ECWDB contracts its programs with reputable organizations throughout the nine counties that provide services in local NCWorks Career Centers serving both the job/training seeker and the employer populations.

A twenty-eight member board of directors governs the ECWDB in partnership with the local elected officials. ECWDB membership includes representatives from business and industry, education agencies, economic development agencies, vocational rehabilitation, community based-organizations, and labor organizations. Membership is drawn from individuals who have optimum policy-making authority from their organization. Members of the ECWDB are appointed by the elected officials of their respective counties per criteria established by the Governor.

The board's role in workforce development is evident through the established partnerships with our regional and local economic developers, community colleges, school systems, businesses, chambers of commerce, and community organizations to ensure that our region is known as a pro-active, forward-thinking region that has a workforce to support local industry. Through our collective efforts, our Region now is recognized at the State and National levels as a Certified Work Ready Communities Region. The workforce development services in our network of NCWorks Career Centers is also reflective of how the board is ensuring alignment with the NCWorks Commission's strategic plan and vision for North Carolina.

The board, partners, and staff take great pride in the work that has and continues to occur throughout this region. The shared vision for our region and state continues to move the board forward in new areas, such as the regional career pathways efforts, which better aligns career development strategies into targeted career pathways, and focuses on sector strategies that align to the region's high growth, high wage, and high skill demands.



The ECWDB's role is to ensure that the local workforce development system is business-driven and responsive to meeting the employment and training needs of both job seekers and employers.

The ECWDB:

- coordinates rapid response meetings with employers who are downsizing or facing a plant closure
- serves as a point of contact for business, industry and the public sector to identify solutions that address their workforce needs
- promotes strategies to encourage life-long learning and improve workplace skills
- assists in the development of new training programs to benefit the region's workforce
- conducts planning, oversight, and evaluation of local workforce development programs to include the NCWorks Career Center system
- offers advice regarding workforce policy and programs to local elected officials, employers, education and employment agencies, and citizens
- coordinates with economic development efforts to promote the region's availability of qualified workers
- reviews local agency plans and grant applications for workforce development to ensure coordination of services

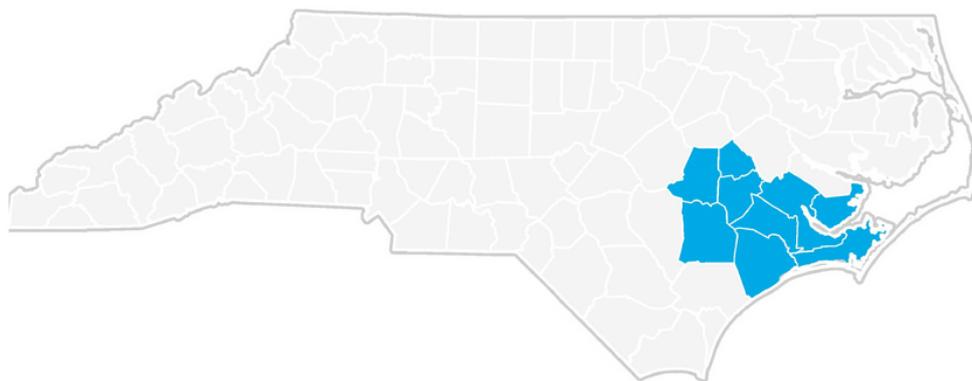
# Our Region

The Eastern Carolina Workforce Area is comprised of nine of the twelve counties located within the Southeast Prosperity Zone. There are four military bases in the three highest populated counties of Craven, Onslow, and Wayne.

In addition, the three coastal counties (Carteret, Pamlico, and Onslow) are growing seasonal resort and retirement areas. These nine counties are primarily rural and reliant upon agriculture and encompass a total area of 5,710.64 square miles, with 4,834.41 square miles of land area. The counties' populations range from Jones and Pamlico with less than 13,000 each to Craven, Onslow and Wayne with more than 100,000 each.

According to the US Census data as of July 2019, the total population of the Eastern Carolina Workforce Area was 638,157. The counties are a diverse mix of races, ethnic groups, and ages with pockets of urban prosperity among rural poverty.

Government, retail trade, services, and manufacturing are the significant sources of employment, with the government employing the largest number of workers. Most of the jobs are located in the more populated counties with military installations and the seat of government for each county. The region recognizes that opportunities and challenges are not confined to one county or another. It is through regional collaboration that the counties of the Eastern Carolina Local Area leverage their assets to create a competitive advantage in a global economy.



County	Population
Carteret	69,473
Craven	102,139
Duplin	58,856
Greene	21,012
Jones	9,419
Lenoir	55,949
Onslow	197,938
Pamlico	12,726
Wayne	123,131
<b>Total</b>	<b>638,157</b>

NCWorks Certified Career Pathways are essential to engaging industry and ensuring the education and training pipeline at the local level is aligned with the needs of local businesses. Career pathways are purposeful plans for education and training, leading to knowledge and skill acquisition and successful careers.

The ECWDB has identified five high growth/high wage sectors with high demand career opportunities within the local area.

- Aerospace, Aviation, and Defense
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction and Skilled Trades
- Health Sciences
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

Through WIOA training funds, eligible job seekers can receive training in approved programs for careers in these high demand industries.

# NCWorks Career Centers

## NCWorks Career Center Locations

### Carteret NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Division of Workforce Solutions  
309 Commerce Avenue, Morehead City, NC

### Craven NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Division of Workforce Solutions  
2836 Neuse Boulevard, New Bern, NC

### Duplin NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Division of Workforce Solutions  
192 Magnolia Extension, Kenansville, NC

### Greene NCWorks Career Services

One-Stop Operator: Lenoir Community College  
Greene County Education Center of LCC  
818 Highway 91 North, Snow Hill, NC

### Jones NCWorks Career Services

One-Stop Operator: Lenoir Community College  
Jones County Education Center of LCC  
509 Highway 58 North, Trenton, NC

### Lenoir NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Lenoir Community College  
231 Highway 58 South, Kinston, NC

### Onslow NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Division of Workforce Solutions  
461 Western Boulevard, Jacksonville, NC

### Pamlico NCWorks Career Services

Pamlico Community College  
5049 Hwy 306 South, Grantsboro, NC 28529

### Wayne NCWorks Career Center

One-Stop Operator: Division of Workforce Solutions  
2006 Wayne Memorial Drive, Goldsboro, NC

NCWorks Career Centers are facilities that provide job seekers, training seekers, and employers access to a variety of services. These facilities are critical in the workforce development process, and provide necessary services to many people in need.

COVID-19 has changed the landscape of our business in so many ways. NCWorks Career Centers implemented a call center model approach for serving customers virtually. Career advisors were all working remotely and logged into NCWorks from their homes. They used headsets with microphones and would sign in to take customer calls.



We have also changed all of our processes so that it would be easier and more accessible for customers. The processes were redesigned to allow customers to take assessments from their phones and then upload the results. Additionally, all of our forms have been changed to fillable PDFs so that customers can sign them and send them back to us on their phones.

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Before the pandemic, we would meet with individuals in person to address their needs. Now, we have implemented virtual meetings to reduce the potential risk of spreading COVID-19. We held virtual Rapid Response sessions for companies who were impacted by the pandemic and were forced to lay off workers.

These changes were critical to continue providing services to those in need. This has been a challenging year in so many ways, but the incredible efforts of everyone at ECWDB and NCWorks have allowed us to continue serving those who need our help. It is more important than ever to continue bringing services to job seekers and employers in our area.



## Job Seeker Services

- Eligibility determination for training programs
- Job search and placement assistance
- Career counseling and planning
- Referrals to and coordination of activities with partner programs and services
- Workforce and labor market data
- Information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Information and support regarding financial aid assistance for training and education programs
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers

## Business Services

- On-the-job training
- Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace
- Employee recruitment and screening
- Tax credit and hiring incentives
- Research materials on labor trends and industry trends
- Workshops, seminars, and job fairs
- Skills testing of job candidates using Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN)
- Rapid Response Services offers confidential consultations regarding layoffs or plant closings.
- Employer training services can be provided for current employees with incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and customized training.

# A Regional Success Story

In February of 2019, Derrick Session had been a happily employed Machinist for over six years at Advanced Machine Group (AMG) of Holly Ridge, NC. This unique community sits on the county line of Pender County, and is also closely located to Brunswick and New Hanover Counties. Derrick was quite surprised when, with great sadness, this established family-owned employer announced they would be permanently closing.

AMG reached out to the New Hanover NCWorks Career Center seeking assistance locating new employment opportunities for their employees. Because AMG was located in Onslow County and so close to Pender County, the New Hanover Center coordinated communication with both locations. Onslow and Pender County NCWorks Career Centers, as well as Brunswick County staff, then joined forces with multiple sessions of employer and employee guidance at the worksite. Staff worked collaboratively to provide resources from all areas. Employees received assistance updating or creating their resume and an introduction to the features of NCWorks. They were also connected to Veterans Assistance, provided Health Insurance information, and established Unemployment (DES) accounts. Many employees worked with Career Center staff at all three career centers, received referrals to hiring employers, and found jobs quickly.

Derrick's goal had always been to continue working as a Machinist. When after several months he was still unable to find a position at his level of expertise, he remembered one of the NCWorks staff he met had told him, **"You can reach out to me for anything you need."** He made a call to the Job Developer in Brunswick County that had helped him with his resume many months before. After some discussion, he decided to enroll in the NCWorks WIOA Dislocated Worker Program to receive additional training and better his chances of finding a permanent suitable position.

In August 2019, Derrick began a complex On-the-Job Training plan at HSM Machine Group in Leland, NC (Brunswick County). In February 2020, his months of hard work resulted in the successful completion of specific OKK, Nigataa, Maatsura and Yam Seiki Milling training as well as multiple production, processing and communication techniques. Derrick loves his new job and remains a fulltime employee at HSM today. His supervisors find him a welcome addition to the HSM team, and consider him a talented, thoughtful, and reliable employee.

Advanced Machine Group received assistance with the closing of their company in multiple ways. A Rapid Response organized by Onslow County NCWorks Career Center included resources from Coastal Carolina Community College, Legal Aid, and area NCWorks Programs. NCWorks staff provided industry contacts for the sale of equipment and materials. AMG was thankful for the support they received during this difficult time.

Due to the collaborative efforts of the staff of four NCWorks Career Centers – Onslow, Pender, New Hanover and Brunswick – two employers and a dozen employees received guidance and support during this event. Derrick Session is just one shining example.

*Connie Wayne, Job Developer, Brunswick County, NC*

# PY 2019-2020 NCWorks Performance Dashboard

## \*Employment Data PY 2018 & PY 2019 Comparison

Employed	254,889	Employed	247,680
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	Unemployment Rate	5.2%
NC Unemployment Rate	3.9%	NC Unemployment Rate	5.9%
US Unemployment Rate	3.7%	US Unemployment Rate	6.0%

## NCWorks Businesses Served PY 2018 and PY 2019 Comparison

Employers Served	2,210	Employers Served	2,035
New Registered Employers	137	New Registered Employers	113
Internal Job Postings	7,569	Internal Job Postings	6,719

## Job Seeker Information

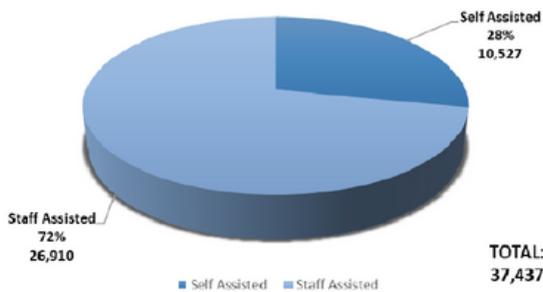
Total Job Seekers Served	25,369
New Registered Job Seekers	6,798
New Resumes Added	5,508
Available Candidates	~49,927
Skills of Available Candidates	
	Office & Administrative Support Management
	Production
	Transportation & Distribution
	Sales

## Jobs Information

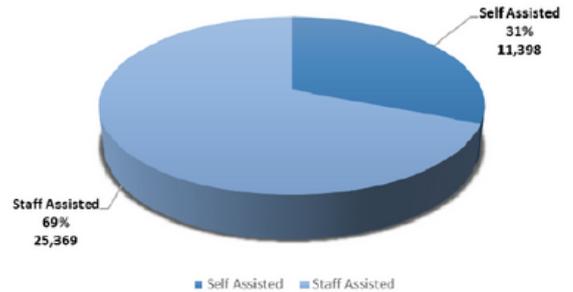
Number of Available Jobs	±7,619
Top 5 Types of Employment Available	
	Healthcare Practitioners & Technicians
	Food Preparation & Serving
	Sales
	Education, Training, & Library Management

## NCWorks Job Seekers Served PY 2018 and PY 2019 Comparison

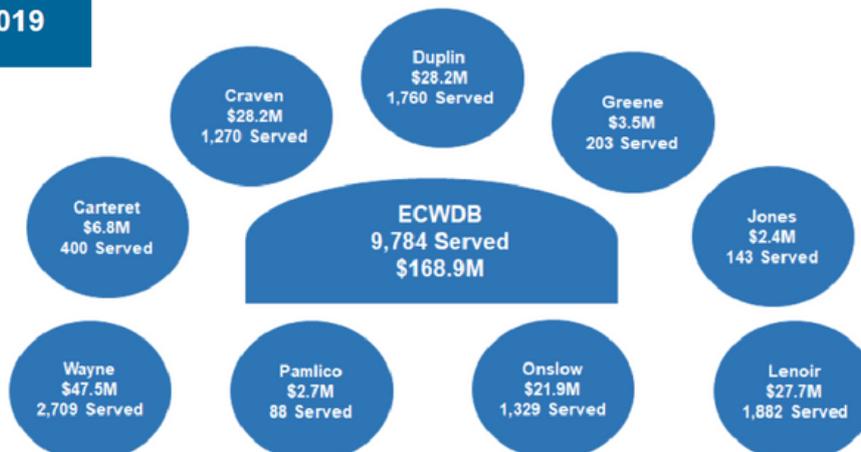
ECWDB - Job Seekers Served PY 2018

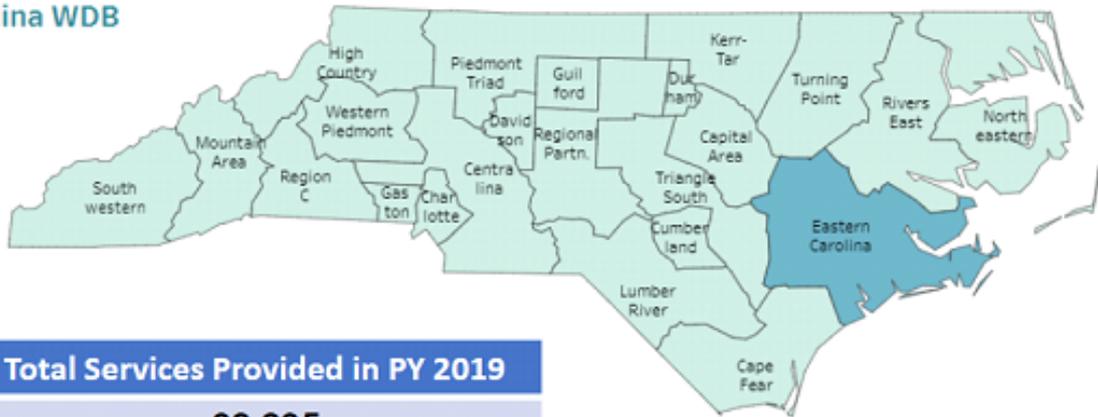


ECWDB - Job Seekers Served PY 2019

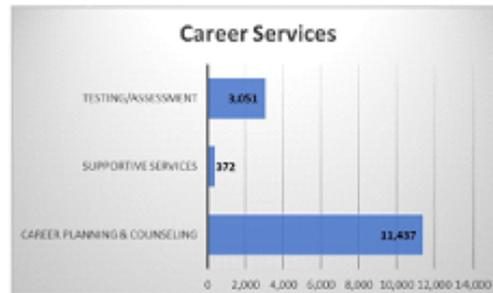
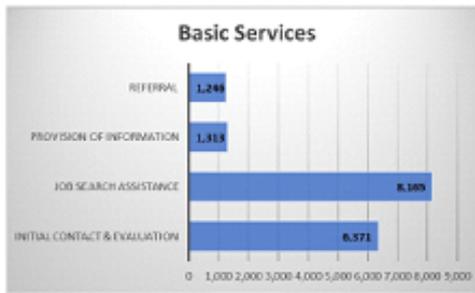
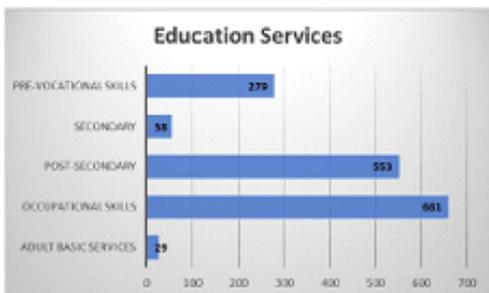


## Estimated Annual Earnings – PY 2019





**Total Services Provided in PY 2019**  
**38,295**



## Nomination of Distinction for Outstanding Employer

House of Raeford was a nominee for the 2020 Governor’s NCWorks Awards of Distinction for Outstanding Employer. House of Raeford is a fourth-generation family-owned, family-operated, family-oriented enterprise that has been in existence since 1964. It is an integral part of the food manufacturing sector in NC. They handle or manage every step within chicken production from hatcheries to processing with five ready-to-cook plants and three further processing plants. Employing more than 5,300 employees with a current revenue of \$1.3 billion annually, House of Raeford is one of the top ten chicken producers in the U.S. During the past year, the company has proven their commitment to improve the community and create an inclusive workforce by expanding benefits, increasing wages, providing employment and training opportunities, and recruiting and hiring individuals with barriers to employment.

In the past year, House of Raeford has expanded their recruiting and retainment strategies through partnerships with NCWorks Career Centers and James Sprunt Community College. Their workforce development contributions have increased with the implementation of additional employment and training opportunities and an online onboarding system that streamlines the hiring process at production plants in Rose Hill and Wallace. New employees along with incumbent staff from both plants participate in a training program designed in conjunction with the Customized Training Program Director at James Sprunt Community College. Employees receive training that combines hands-on production processes with customized in-class curriculum that better prepares them for success on the job as well as promotional opportunities.

In addition to implementing the workforce initiatives that make them an exceptional employer, the company also stands out through their actions taken in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. "Stay-at-Home" orders were causing consumers to stock their freezers with a greater amount of meat products than usual. This combined with an increase in demand, saw shortages of chicken beginning to occur in the marketplace. House of Raeford initiated the creative response of bringing their premier chicken products to areas easily serviced by their locations. Refrigerated trailers stationed in designated areas provided easy pickup for customers where the chicken was sold in bulk at discounted prices. House of Raeford had a unique opportunity to increase their involvement with the community and positively impact its' citizens.

## Job Fairs

# Construction & Skilled Trades

Employers across our region have always been dedicated to developing the workforce and willingly help to sponsor local job fairs in collaboration with their local NCWorks partners. During the first half of the year, these events were held in indoor locations in Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, and Wayne Counties. The last on-site job fair for 2020 was held on the campus of Lenoir Community College on March 11, 2020.

In addition to the job fairs for multiple employers, several specialized career fairs were held specifically for employers. On November 21, 2019, the Lenoir NCWorks Team held a Saturday session for Spirit AeroSystems which drew over 100 job-seekers to the event.



Jason Trull, HR Manager, Spirit AeroSystems is ready to interview candidates.



Employers across the region. During September and October of 2019, the ECWDB, NCWorks Career Center staff, and partners collaborated to hold a series of industry round tables focused on Construction and Skilled Trades. Community partners, such as representatives from the Workforce Development programs at our local Community Colleges, Career & Technical Education from our Public Schools, NCWorks Center Managers, and others were present to listen and learn from the discussion.

On September 11, 2019, the ECWDB and Craven County NCWorks hosted a round table discussion with local Construction, Skilled Trades and Sub-Contractor employers from Craven, Pamlico, Jones and Carteret counties. In October, the ECWDB, Onslow and Duplin NCWorks hosted the second round table in Jacksonville which was led by Mr. Frank Emory. The focus was on addressing what matters most to employers — ensuring the industry has what it needs to grow and thrive.

Employers had the opportunity to discuss their major concerns, challenges and issues facing the industry, offer possible solutions, and define the skills and training needed in employees.

We heard many positive responses from employers. One employer said, **“It is a start. Thank you guys for the initiative.”**

Ultimately, this discussion led to a newly designated and defined Construction and Skilled Trades Career Pathway where students can gain the skills and technical education necessary to be solid, dependable, and well skilled employees in the construction and related fields industry. Our region has always been dedicated to developing the workforce and willingly help to sponsor local job fairs in collaboration with their local NCWorks partners. During the first half of the year, these events were held in indoor locations in Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, and Wayne Counties. The last on-site job fair for 2020 was held on the campus of Lenoir Community College on March 11, 2020.



# Aviation & Aerospace Certified Career Pathway

Program Year 2019 saw the end of the NCWorks Commission's Certified Career Pathways Initiative. The initiative was retired after reaching its goal of having 2 certified pathways in each workforce development board region. Prior to the end of this enterprise, the ECWDB had 3 pathways certified by the Commission: Health Sciences (2017), Advanced Manufacturing (2018), and Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics (2018).

In late 2019, the NCWorks Commission handed over the pathways certification duties to local workforce development boards and it was decided that a working group would be created to develop a strategy and framework for pathways certification moving forward. The ECWDB participated in this working group and, in March 2020, the criterion for certification was completed and adopted. Taking the lead, the ECWDB had 2 additional pathways certified by the board and endorsed by the NCWorks Commission: Aerospace & Aviation and Construction & Skilled Trades.

While the certification criterion has been condensed to highlight the important factors of a career pathway such as employer engagement, collaboration, education and training, and evaluation, the process is still the same. Employers remain at the center of the conversation, give input on needs and challenges, and assist with curriculum development. Adhering to this structure, the ECWDB had a series of round tables with employers from each of the targeted industries. These round tables were conducted using the NextGen Sector Partnership model which places industry at the center of the conversation. Partners from workforce, economic development, K-12, higher education, Vocational Rehabilitation, military, and others participate in "listen only" mode to give employers the space they need to speak openly and honestly.

Aerospace & Aviation pathway certification work began in November of 2019, following a call to action from Dr. Brian Black of SpiritAerosystems. Seeing a need for skilled technical workers in the aviation manufacturing industry, Dr. Black gave a presentation to key stakeholders at East Carolina University, sparking the initiative in our region.

Several meetings were held with strategic partners throughout November and December, culminating in the first employer roundtable in February.



The first round table was held on February 20, 2020 at the Global Transpark in Kinston bringing together employers from airport management to aerospace manufacturing. When COVID-19 hit, a virtual round table was held on July 28, 2020. Challenges discussed included the need for technically skilled workers with the ability to pass a drug screen, career awareness of the industry, and collaborating to build an Aerospace Center of Excellence.

Though the pathways have been certified, the work is far from over. Round tables will continue for all industry sectors for which we have a certified career pathway to discuss new and continuing challenges and the ways our partnerships may solve them. Despite COVID-19, engagement is ongoing and participation is high in the virtual realm.



# Strategic Planning Retreat



Dr. Stephanie Deese, Executive Director, North Carolina Association of Workforce Boards kicks off the retreat focusing on the importance of local boards addressing local workforce challenges.



Bob Knight, Workforce Policy Advisor, ResCare Workforce Services, and former President of the National Association of Workforce Boards facilitated the retreat and challenged the boards to engage and innovate.



Al Searles, ECWDB Incoming Chair, provides insights on workforce challenges faced by employers in the tight labor market

On September 13-14, 2019, the “Vision East” strategic planning retreat brought together representatives of six Workforce Development Boards in Beaufort, NC: Cape Fear WDB, Eastern Carolina WDB, Region Q WDB, Northeastern WDB, Lumber River WDB and Turning Point WDB. Since 2004, a collaborative relationship among the “Vision East” boards has helped them develop and implement strategies to improve eastern North Carolina’s workforce system, addressing the growing challenges of an ever-tightening labor market.

Working together, these boards formed the Vision East WDB alliance to ensure alignment in addressing the broad workforce challenges that are reflective of the NCWorks Commission’s vision for workforce development. The boards share a vision for Eastern North Carolina of a qualified workforce with an educational attainment level that meets the needs of local firms so they can compete in today’s marketplace.

Dr. Stephanie Deese, Executive Director, North Carolina Association of Workforce Boards, began the retreat by giving an overview of the role of WDB members and an overview of serving on a local workforce development board based upon the USDOL’s 2019 Call to Action for Workforce Development Boards. She was followed by: Jeff DeBellis, Director of Economic & Policy Analysis, Labor and Economic Analysis, NC Department of Commerce; Robert Knight, Workforce Policy & Government Relations, ResCare Workforce Services, Baltimore, Maryland; and Ron Painter, President, National Association of Workforce Boards, Washington, DC.

The retreat focused on 1) insights into Eastern NC’s economic status; 2) a perspective on national workforce development; 3) current political landscape of workforce and education legislation; and 4) regional strengths, challenges and opportunities. Workforce board break-out groups convened to establish meaningful strategies, timelines and success indicators that align local workforce board plans with the Governor’s priorities of educational attainment, business engagement and local innovation.

The six boards broke out into two groups to focus on employer engagement and educational attainment. Each board was asked to develop action plans around both topics that the boards could collectively address. Based upon the discussions from the two-day retreat, each board will establish local strategies in the development of their 2020 strategic plan. The Vision East directors will work together to ensure goals are achieved.



# Workforce Partnership Conference

The Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board and NCWorks Career Centers were well represented during the 2019 NCWorks Partnership Conference in October. Staff from the board, Department of Workforce Solutions and other partners facilitated 3 different sessions over the three day conference.

Erin Ananian-Gentile, Career Pathways Specialist - ECWDB, Lindsay Gress, Manager - NCWorks Career Center Carteret and Onslow Counties, Gerry Cruz, Career Advisor, Veterans - DWS, and Diane LeBlanc, Career Advisor, Veterans - Coastal Carolina Community College facilitated a session entitled “Enhancing Services to Veterans and Spouses.” This session concentrated on best practices in serving military affiliated customers who may not qualify for career services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Their unique needs can be met by workforce board initiatives and specialized staff who understand these needs. The panel shared best practices from the ECWDB and partners on serving this demographic, featuring the Military Employment Enhancement Initiative, business engagement, employer outreach, and career advising.



Tammy Childers, Erin Ananian-Gentile, George Kramer from the ECWDB, Al Searles, Board Member and Senior Director of Transportation and Logistics – Smithfield’s Foods, Diane LeBlanc – Coastal Carolina Community College, and Carol McCormick, Assistant Manager – NCWorks Career Center Craven County presented a discussion titled “Taking Care of Business: Business Engagement and Transformational Relationships” which explored how the ECWDB is building transformational relationships with businesses. The panel shared strategies, the benefits of NCWorks business services, how to cultivate strong employer relationships, the importance of communicating economic impact, the importance of engaging employers through NextGen business roundtables, and ways to promote the NCWorks brand. On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training as engagement strategies and how to present these programs to employers were also highlighted.

Tammy Childers, Executive Director – ECWDB, Adria Graham-Scott, Director – Durham WFB, Ginger Brick, Director – Cape Fear WDB, and Virginia Hamilton – American Institutes for Research presented a workshop titled “Using Human Centered Design to Improve Programs and Services.” This workshop centered around using Human Centered Design (HCD) to enhance customer engagement and refocus delivery of services on customer needs. The workforce board representatives shared how HCD improves the customer experience. They provided a lively description of HCD and how it is being used by workforce agencies around the country along with ways to include the customer voice in policy development.





Over the next several years, the Eastern Carolina Region is expected to experience an increased demand for highly skilled workers. As an emerging workforce, today’s youth are critical aspects of the pipeline of skilled workers to meet the expected demand. This subject was the topic of every Eastern Carolina Youth Council (ECYC) meeting held this past year. How can we be effective in ensuring a skilled workforce? How do we engage youth to pursue careers in the region’s high growth career pathways? How do we keep our at-risk youth involved in school? How do we engage parents? How do we engage businesses in providing work-based learning opportunities? To begin addressing these questions, the ECYC held a strategic planning session. Led by ECYC Chairman Frank Emory and facilitated by Erin Ananian-Gentile, the ECYC adopted a new mission statement on March 28, 2019, as follows: **“To support and enable high-quality youth programs that empower and prepare today’s young adults to become tomorrow’s productive citizens.”**

To meet the needs of local and regional businesses, the ECWDB and ECYC are partnering with local companies, community colleges, public schools, and community-based organizations to offer innovative programs that will prepare WIOA eligible youth for success in the workplace by providing a variety of effective and comprehensive education and employment services. Our outstanding programs link academic and occupational learning to meet local industry needs.

Youth Career Advisors are critical to the success of our Youth Programs. Advisors ensure that services are designed to prepare youth to achieve their short and long-term goals that include occupational skills training, attainment of nationally recognized certifications, attainment of high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, apprenticeship opportunities, paid and unpaid internships, post-secondary education, military services or unsubsidized employment.

Working together, our youth providers served 257 youth participants. 54 of those youth received an industry recognized degree or credential, and 46 entered employment. COVID-19 really made us think about working in a virtual environment. As traditional means of outreach closed to providers, we created a Next Gen Youth Program Orientation video and uploaded it to our new Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc. YouTube Channel. The link was provided to Career Advisors to include in any virtual outreach they were conducting. This virtual orientation helped spread the word about the program and drive interest and enrollments during a time of limited in-person contact.

The NCWorks NextGen Youth Program provides young adults with the best possible opportunity to find a job and career path. We help young adults to set and accomplish goals, understand how to be a responsible employee, and start down a solid career path with a promising future. A dedicated career advisor supports each young adult through these steps.

Young adults will receive the following services in this program:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention
- High school services, drop out recovery services, and GED
- Paid and unpaid work experiences
- Occupation skill training
- Education and workforce preparation activities
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Labor market and employment information, career awareness, and career exploration
- Activities that help prepare for and transition to higher education and training

## Youth Council

The mission of the Eastern Carolina Youth Council (ECYC) is to support and enable high-quality youth programs that empower today's young adults to become tomorrow's productive citizens. The ECYC seeks to engage with our youth and young adults to understand and eliminate barriers to employment while they build their skills and earn industry recognized credentials. Our goal is to serve and inspire young people to achieve their educational goals and pursue a career pathway of their choice.

The ECYC is chaired by Jones County Commissioner Frank Emory, who also serves as a member of the ECWDB. The ECYC meets quarterly to bring together local workforce training providers, schools, community organizations, and others in an effort to better coordinate youth funds and services in the community and create a youth service network.

In PY 2019 we had great presentations, which led to discussion on how to better serve our youth, what support systems and programs are available for additional collaboration, and much more!

- Youth Council Strategic Planning session discussed increasing educational attainment for youth and promoting short-term certificate, diploma, and degree programs that result in higher wages than a traditional 4-year degree.
- Youth program participants provided insight into their challenges and shared their thoughts about the youth program and how we can better serve the youth population.
- Regional CTE directors served on a panel to discuss the activities in their counties, opportunities and challenges, successes, and how we can better collaborate to serve the youth in our region.



CTE Director Panel, 1/23/20

Pictured L-R: Chris Bailey, Onslow County; Holly Tolston, Craven County; Allison Dees, Carteret County; Jessica Shimer, Lenoir County; Barbara Lee, Jones County

## NextGen Youth Program-James

James was in an automobile accident when he was 9 years old and lost his leg. He wanted to work and find a career in which he could make a difference but, due to his disability, it was painful to stand for long periods of time. James was working two manufacturing jobs when he enrolled in the NextGen Youth Program at Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC in February 2018.

After career counseling, including a review of labor market information and career assessments, James decided he wanted to enroll in Nursing. He suffered from memory issues from the accident, so he was worried about how successful he would be in the program. He decided that he would go through the continuing education healthcare career pathway and enrolled in Nursing Assistant I (NAI). James had trouble passing the skills exam and he paid out of pocket with the money he was earning at a paid work experience (WEX) site through the program, and retook the NAI class. He passed the written and skills exam and became certified. James' WEX worksite at that time was Eastpoint Prosthetics & Orthotics, the place where he had gone for his prosthesis. He also completed a WEX at Spring Arbor. James has taken and passed the NAII class and is currently in a WEX at UNC Lenoir Health Care.

James has participated in all the NextGen activities and meetings, including attending NC Youth Summit, assisting with job fairs, and serving the homeless at Mary's Soup Kitchen in Kinston, NC. James is currently mentoring another NextGen Youth participant and serves as a youth mentor through The Gate in Kinston, NC. He has also attended Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board (ECWDB) Youth Council meetings and shared his experiences with the members. He connected with the Unit Manager of Vocational-Rehabilitation who said the program could assist with school if James wanted to go into a career making prostheses.



# NextGen-Shaelah

In Webster’s dictionary, success is defined as “obtaining one’s goal” or “attaining a favorable or desired outcome,” and fortitude is described as the “strength of mind that enables one to meet adversity with courage.” This incredible success story is about Shaelah, a young woman who not only reached her goal of earning her high school diploma and an associate degree in science from Lenoir Community College concurrently, but she did it with the extra passion to earn high academic honors while working part time in a health clinic, and giving birth to a baby boy during her senior year at Jones Senior High School. She was named a North Carolina Academic Scholar by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and finished her high school career ranked fourth in her graduating class with a weighted cumulative grade point average above a 4.0 value. Shaelah was inducted into the National Honor Society, the Career and Technical Education Honor Society, and lettered in three sports.

Shaelah’s dream is to work in a medical and health science career. While striving hard to reach her educational and career goals, she also became a mother. Her positive attitude enabled her to meet each day’s challenges with a smile and an extra purpose to accomplish her goals. Everyone who worked with her was inspired by her steady focus and ability to look at her life’s journey as a blessing, and one that would give her even more success and fortitude to carry with her into her future endeavors. She is currently enrolled in a phlebotomy course at Lenoir Community College as she prepares to build on her educational and career skills. She sees her future as a dedicated healthcare professional and a proud and loving mother.



## Career Development

Job seekers and students have been more pressured than ever to find ways to set themselves apart from other potential candidates. There are several services that ECWDB provides for people to stay competitive in the job market.

**3,916** job seekers took advantage of the ECWDB’s Traitify Assessment to help identify potential careers based upon their interests.

## Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN)

Understanding how competitive the job market has become, over **1,000** customers took advantage of the ECWDB’s online WIN program that allows customers to practice for their Career Readiness Certificate.

## Work Ready Communities



In October 2019, Wayne County was recognized by ACT for achieving recertification for the Work Ready Communities, which has resulted in over 20,000 CRC’s issued to Wayne County citizens. The ECWDB was recognized for spearheading the Work Ready Communities initiative in the Region resulting in over 600 participating employers and 60,000 CRCs.

## 470 Individuals Participated in WIOA-funded Training Programs During PY 2019-2020

The ECWDB's WIOA Title I training offers low-income youth, adults, and dislocated workers invaluable opportunities to participate in career pathways training that will result in upward mobility and self-sustaining wages. Participants enrolled in the ECWDB's WIOA training programs have the opportunity to select from over 75 approved training programs in a variety of career pathways. Training programs are geared toward adults who need to learn new skills or update their current skills to become employed or re-enter the workforce.

Historically, individuals with higher levels of education consistently fare better in the labor market. With good jobs becoming harder to find for people with a high school diploma or less, the ECWDB has approved training offerings that focus on developing skills in demand by local employers that result in attaining a certificate, diploma or degree and leads to better employment.

Approved training programs are updated as the needs of employers change. Funding assistance for items such as registration, tuition, textbooks, fees, and required supplies is made available through Individual Training Accounts (ITA) to assist students with the opportunity to reach career goals they might not have been able to obtain otherwise.

Upon completion of the training program, a student is empowered with the skills to become a self-sufficient wage earner. A total of 470 ITAs were issued to students enrolled in WIOA funded training programs during the 2019-2020 year. Data shows training that resulted in the highest wage earnings occurred in health sciences, transportation and logistics, and skilled trade occupations.

## WIOA Youth Program-Lillian

Lillian came to the WIOA Youth program in 2017 seeking to earn her Adult High School Credential. She succeeded in completing this credential that same year and entered the early childhood associate degree program at Carteret Community college in the spring 2018 semester. Along the way, Lillian was accepted in the Partnership East Program and Pirate Promise program and set her sights toward the associate transfer program with the intention of attending East Carolina University to earn her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education.

While attending class, Lillian participated in paid work experience through the WIOA Youth Program. She started the work experience component as a means of career exploration and to develop her employability skills. She initially started as a Front Desk Attendant at the Boys and Girls Club. After successfully completing this program, she went on to work as a Kids Program Specialist at the NC Maritime Museum. At this work experience Lillian gained experience planning child friendly, educational activities for visitors and school groups. Lillian then went on to work as a Teacher Assistant where she worked with children ranging from birth to Kindergarten. She completed SIDS training and after-school program training and excelled in her role. Her last work-based learning opportunity was as a Human Resource Assistant for Carteret Community College. In each of these work experiences, Lillian gained new knowledge of working with the public, children and administrative tasks, all of which will give her a good foundation for her continued course of training.



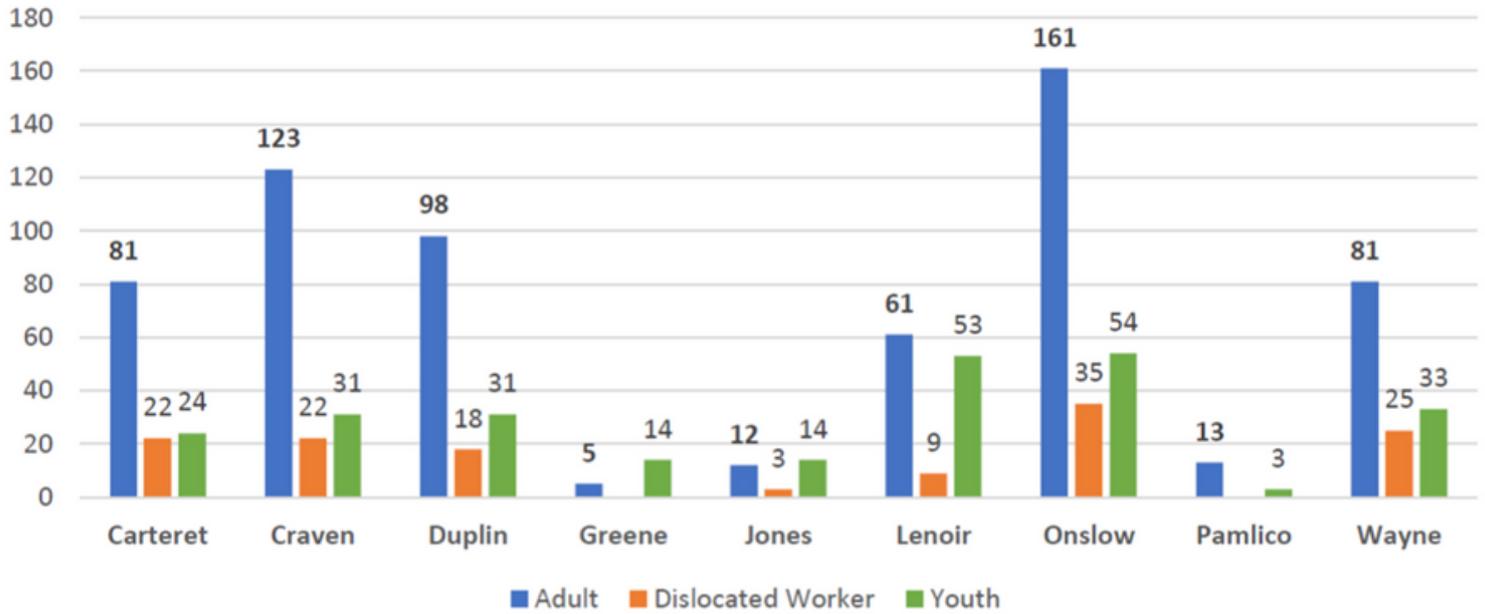
Lillian has stated of her experiences, **“The WIOA program has given me the opportunity through work experience to explore career options. It has allowed me to work with some amazing mentors who were always there when I needed advice or just needed someone to talk to if I am having a problem and to help push me in the right directions.”**

Lillian has also taken advantage of other services offered by the WIOA Youth Program including supportive services, financial literacy, leadership opportunities, and completion of the Career Readiness Certificate. Most notably, Lillian was selected and attended the North Carolina Youth Summit in 2019.

Lillian completed her associate degree program in the summer of 2020 and transferred to ECU during the Fall 2020 semester to complete her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education.

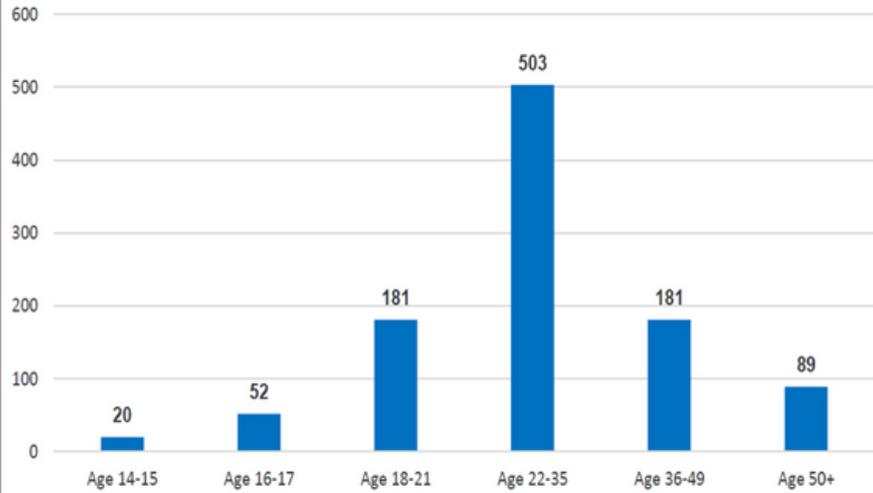
# Title I WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Training Enrollments

## PY 19-20 WIOA Title I Enrollments by County and Program

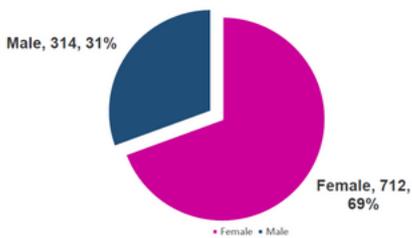


- Adult - 635
- Dislocated Worker - 134
- Youth - 257
- Total - 1,026**

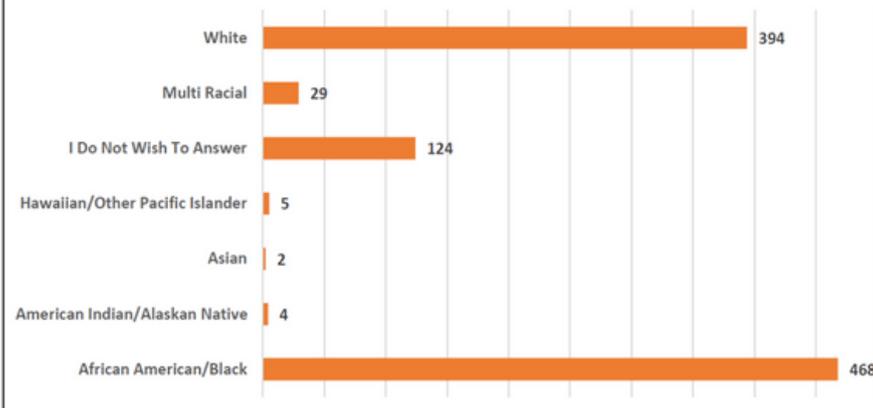
## WIOA Title I Enrollments by Age



## WIOA Title I Enrollments by Gender

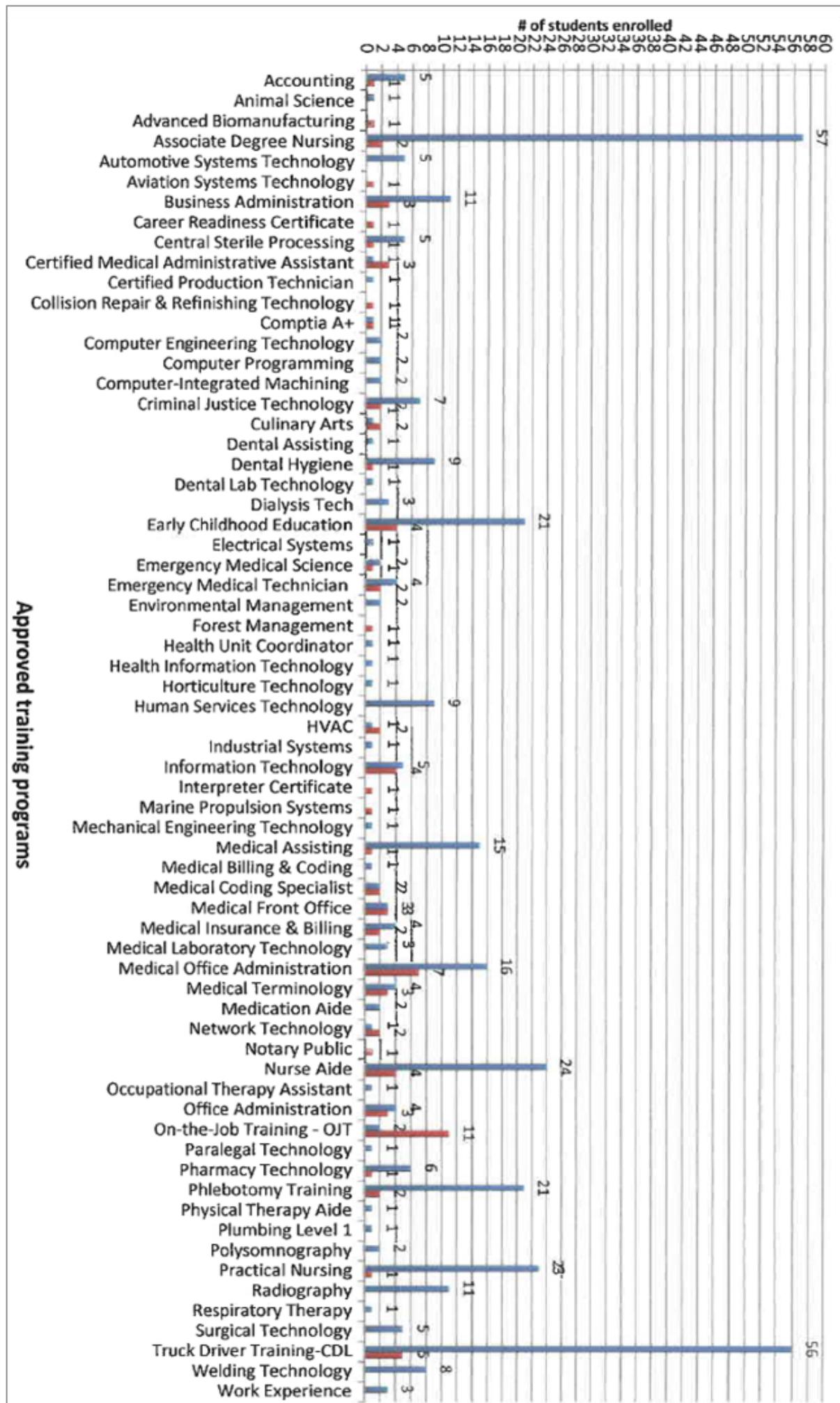


## WIOA Title I Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity



The graphics on this page represent the different ages, races/ethnicities, and genders of the people that we have served through our WIOA Title I programs. Our hope is to extend our outreach and connect even more people with the resources that they need to be successful.

# Participants of WIOA Funded Training



Adult - 386

Dislocated Worker - 84

**Total - 470**

A special thank you is extended to the following Training Providers who accepted our Individual Training Account Vouchers and provided quality training opportunities.

Community Colleges

- Bladen
- Carteret
- Coastal Carolina
- Craven
- James Sprunt
- Johnston
- Lenoir
- Miller-Motte
- Pamlico
- Pitt
- Sampson
- Wayne
- Wake Tech
- Wilson Tech

## ECWDB Partners with Area's Seven Community Colleges to Receive Finish Line Grants in the amount of \$187,440.00

The Finish Line Grants provide emergency support services to community college students who were more than 50% completed in their program degree completion by removing unforeseen financial obstacles from their path, which if not resolved quickly could cause students not to complete their training.

## Human-Centered Design Continuous Improvement Efforts

Human Centered Design sessions were held in Carteret and Lenoir Centers where the NCWorks staff worked together to identify challenges and develop solutions for improving the customer experience.



Carteret NCWorks team using HCD in planning for the new Center location.



Lenoir NCWorks Team focusing on enhancing the customer experience.

## ECWDB Receives MEEI

June 30, 2020 marked the end of the second year of the Military Employment Enhancement (MEEI) Grant that was awarded to the ECWB in the amount of \$400,000.00. This grant allowed the ECWDB to pilot a program to demonstrate improving and increasing veteran, recently separated service member, and military spouse access to education and employment through the NCWorks Career Center Network. The ECWDB partnered with Coastal Carolina Community College with the goal to serve 99 individuals over the two-year grant period with approximately 25 of them enrolling in On-the-Job training within a three-county (Craven, Onslow, and Wayne) region.

During PY 2018, MEEI served 49 veterans, transitioning service members, and spouses in achieving their education and training goals of obtaining a certificate, diploma, or degree resulting in employment, job retention, and increased earnings. During PY 2019, the MEEI program assisted 63 individuals in achieving their education and training goals.

While the second half of PY 2019 posed great challenges for the program due to COVID-19 and statewide closures, the staff were able to meet these challenges head on. There was a significant drop in the number of individuals that were seeking training services, but the team began working side by side with the Jobs for Veterans Grant (JSVG) staff to identify potential participants. This partnership also allowed participants to feel more at ease that there was a team that would ensure their needs would be met to successfully enter, or re-enter, employment. The team was also able to conduct cross-training with WIOA Title I, Title III, and JSVG staff in protocols that were to be transitioned from in person to a virtual platform due to the pandemic. These protocols have created a more seamless approach to being able to serve clients with a warm handoff even when staff were not co-located.

According to Nicole Hall, Human Services Coordinator at Coastal Community College, "This program has been an asset to many individuals that are transitioning out of the military as well as military veterans. Many people have requested additional information about this from other places and asked if this was available nationwide!"

The following is a breakdown of the outcomes for PY 2019:

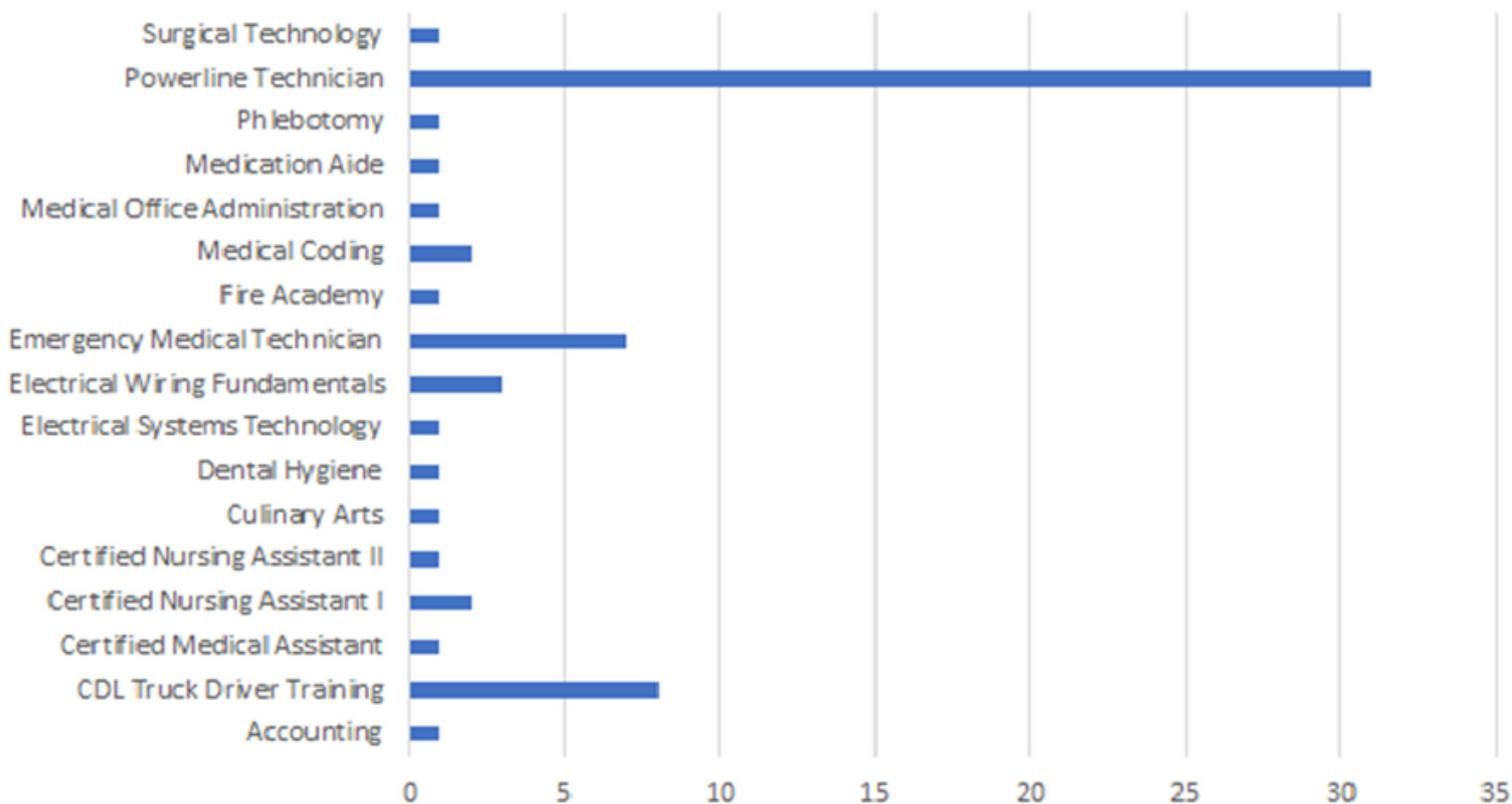
Participants Enrolled	64
Completed Training & Earned a Credential	57
Participants Who Obtained a Job	48
Participants Who Obtained Job-Related Employment	44
Number of OJTs	3
Number of OJTs Who Were Retained	3

# WIOA MEEI Program—Scott

Scott is a veteran of the Marine Corps who retired after 20 years of faithful service to his country. He was painting houses for a living just to earn some extra money when he decided he wanted to begin a second career that would provide services to his community.

Scott heard about the WIOA Program at Coastal Carolina Community College in February of 2019 and began to inquire about how the program might assist him in meeting the goal he had set for himself. He was introduced to the WIOA Military Employment Enhancement Initiative and learned about the OJT Program. Scott met the Business Services Advisor, Diane LeBlanc, and they had a conversation about possibly doing an OJT. Mrs. LeBlanc provided him with information about a job posting that might possibly lead to an OJT with the City Of Jacksonville as a Police Services Officer. The duties of that position included crime scene investigation, management of files and records, testifying in court presenting evidence in criminal and civil cases, and keeping confidential information. Scott applied for the position and the City was very interested in hiring him. His OJT started in March of 2019 and ended in August of that same year. Scott remains in that position and is thankful for the services provided by the WIOA MEEI Program.

## MEEI TRAINING PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS - PY 2019



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# COVID-19 and the Pandemic

COVID-19 and the pandemic changed the way ECWDB, and many others, conducted business in 2020. It is impossible to talk about our impact on the community without also discussing the impact that COVID-19 has had on us. When COVID began to spread wildly, we had no choice but to make adjustments. Starting around March, we began to change the landscape of our business.

Here at ECWDB, we immediately began to implement the guidelines proposed by the CDC. Masks, social distancing, and limiting public interaction were all necessary. Previously, many of our meetings were held in office, but that all ended and our meetings were transferred online. ECWDB and those we work with have done an incredible job adjusting to this foreign landscape. It has not been easy, but we have managed to continue providing necessary services to the workforce of Eastern North Carolina through these challenging times.

Before the pandemic, people in need would stop by our office or their local NCWorks Career Center in person. Our services were easily accessible to those who needed them, but that was no longer possible after the pandemic began. We were committed to bringing our services to those in need regardless of the circumstances. We overhauled our website and social media, implemented a new texting service, and conducted socially distanced drive-thru career fairs. These are some of the ways that we adapted to this new environment to continue bringing our services to those in need.

## Texting Services

One of the many challenges that we faced in the pandemic was the inability to reach people in need. Before the pandemic, people would simply come into the office or their local NCWorks to receive assistance and ask questions. Now, these actions are simply not possible and it has been difficult to reach people in the same way.

Our solution to this issue was to implement a new texting service, which allows people to contact us at their own convenience. We believe this service is critical in continuing to reach those in need during these challenging times.



Masks and social distancing were critical in keeping our businesses up and running. We all had to make changes and sacrifices, but we have continued to provide service to those in need.



Even in the midst of the pandemic, progress is being made on the soon-to-be home of the Carteret County NCWorks Career Center located on the campus of Carteret Community College in Morehead City, NC



# Drive-Thru Career Fairs

On December 16, 2020, a Drive Thru Job Fair was held on the campus of Lenoir Community College for MasterBrand Cabinets and hosted by NCWorks Career Center-Lenoir County. Over 110 applicants participated in the event. Dedicated staff braved the cold rain for this successful event.

## Craven County



## Duplin County



## Lenoir County



These are only a few of the many examples of extraordinary efforts that many have undertaken for the benefit of the community. It would be impossible to feature every event that we have participated in, but these examples give a good idea as to the extent to which we have had to adapt our services. The people of ECWDB and NCWorks have remained committed to bringing important workforce development services to those in need.

# 2019-2020 Financial Report

## Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc.

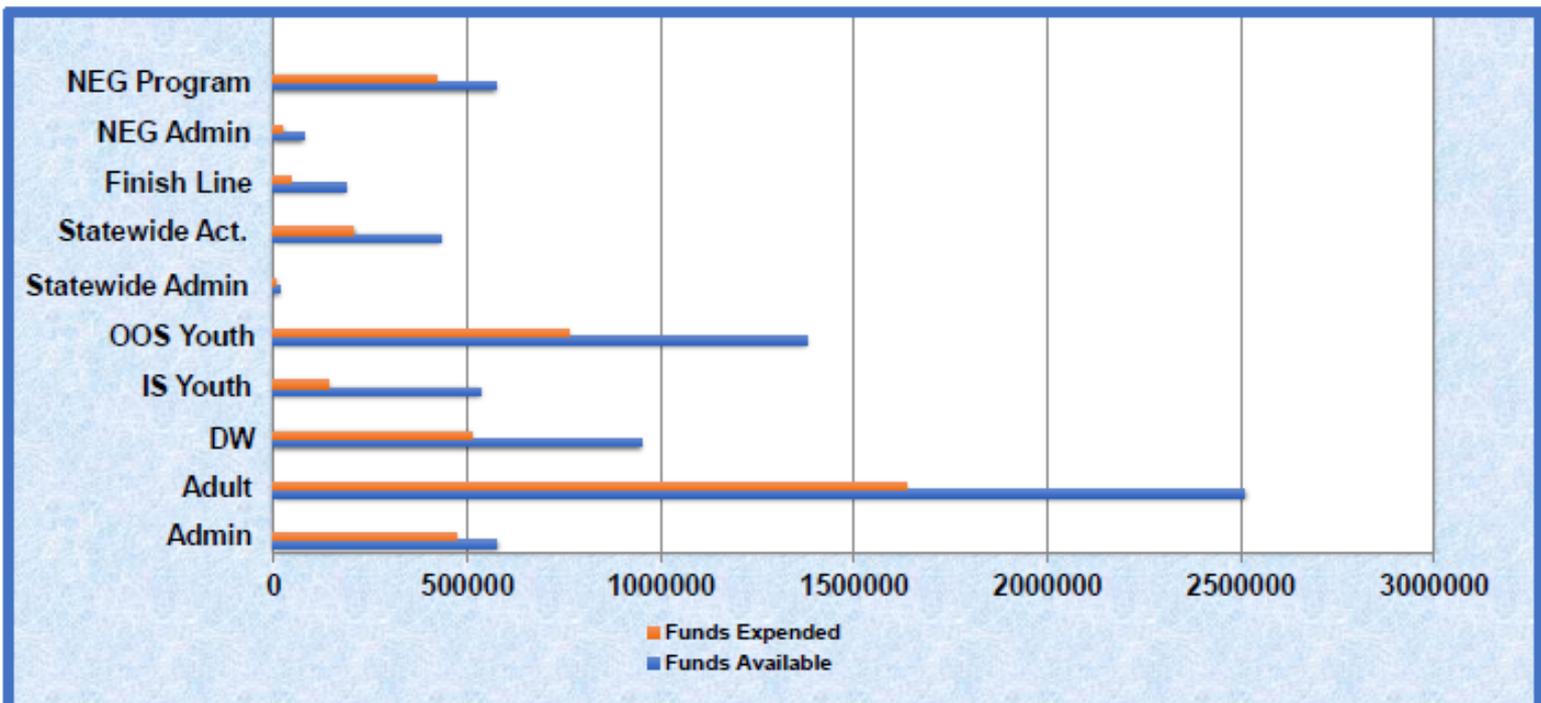
### Financial Report

6/30/2020

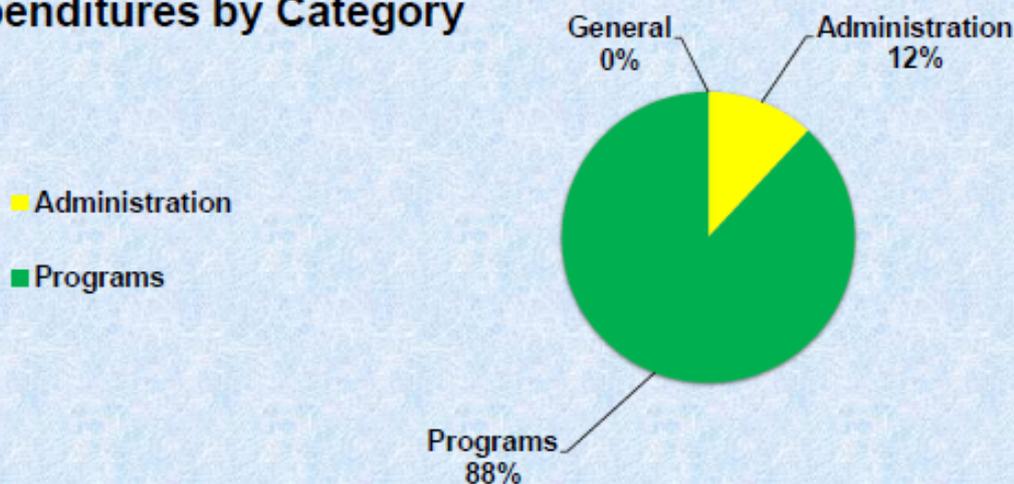
Funds Summary		Funds Available	Funds Expended	Funds Remaining
4010	Administration	575,300	471,566	103,734
4020	Adult	2,509,885	1,631,731	878,154
4030	Dislocated Worker	949,450	510,533	438,918
4040	In-school Youth	534,999	137,767	397,233
4040	Out-of-school Youth	1,377,548	760,738	616,810
4050	Statewide Administration	14,308	5,678	8,629
4050	Statewide Activities	428,480	205,107	223,373
4050	Finish Line Grant Program	187,477	41,743	145,734
3110	National Emergency Grant Administration	76,236	22,660	53,577
3130	National Emergency Grant Program	574,838	418,028	156,810
Subtotal		7,228,522	4,205,551	3,022,972
General		29,373		29,373
Total		7,257,896	4,205,551	3,052,345

Note: Funds expended are reduced by interest and/or program income attributed to individual funds in the amount of:

\$1,327



### Expenditures by Category



Audited

# Acknowledgements

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To our ECWDB staff and NCWorks Career Center staff,

We want to express our sincere appreciation for your professionalism, dedication and contributions to building a strong network of NCWorks Career Centers and partnerships to serve the citizens of eastern North Carolina. It is because of your steadfast desire to help others succeed that we succeed together. Your compassion and willingness to help others comes through in all that you do. Keep shining your light on others.

To our One-Stop Operators, NCWorks staff and partners,

We are incredibly grateful to our One-Stop Operators, Division of Workforce Solutions and Lenoir Community College for providing leadership through the local NCWorks Career Centers. As a result, the Center Managers, their outstanding staff, and the many partners served over 25,000 customers through their NCWorks Career Centers.

Carteret NCWorks Career Center	Carteret NCWorks Career Center	Carteret NCWorks Career Center
Craven NCWorks Career Center	Craven NCWorks Career Center	Craven NCWorks Career Center
Duplin NCWorks Career Center	Duplin NCWorks Career Center	Duplin NCWorks Career Center

To our Adult and Dislocated Workers Service Providers,

Thank you for providing the highest quality of career planning, counseling services, training, and employment opportunities for Eastern Carolina's 812 Adult and Dislocated Worker WIOA participants. You are making a difference one life at a time.

Carteret Community College	Lenoir Community College
Coastal Carolina Community College	Pamlico Community College
Greene Lamp, Inc.	Wayne Community College
James Sprunt Community College	

To our Youth Service Providers,

Thank you for making a positive difference in the lives of 466 future leaders who were served through the local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. Our youth look to role models like you and dream bigger dreams as a result.

Carteret Community College	Jones County Schools Lenoir
Coastal Carolina Community College	Community College
Craven County Schools	Onslow County Schools Wayne
Greene Lamp, Inc.	Community College

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## In Loving Memory



Mr. Joseph Wiggins, Jones County Commissioner and former Chief Elected Official, Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Consortium



Mrs. Jennifer Polk, Wayne County NCWorks Career Center Manager



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