



Serving the North Carolina Counties of Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico and Wayne

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North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research Releases Report on Eastern N.C. Economy

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Studies show that the eastern North Carolina economy still struggles.

Eastern North Carolina continues to lag the state in terms of assets needed for growth, says the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research in a follow-up report on the state's poorest region. The East, the Center found, has improved on some indicators such as internet access, natural gas availability, and employment. But, an over-reliance on agriculture, low-wage retail, and low-skill manufacturing, combined with a less educated work force, hurts the region in competing for new jobs.

"The state seems to keep looking for one big project that can drive the East the way Research Triangle Park drives the Triangle, such as the Global TransPark or the new international port near Southport," says Mike McLaughlin of *North Carolina Insight*, the Center's journal. "But our bottom line finding is that different approaches to economic development are necessary for different parts of the East. "What works for Wilmington will not work for Warsaw," adds McLaughlin.

The Center finds the East still has fewer college

graduates, more high school dropouts, lower per capita income, and higher poverty than the rest of the state. Sparse population and a lack of cultural amenities also can be obstacles for some areas, says McLaughlin.

Indeed, state Senate Majority Leader Tony Rand (D-Cumberland) says that if North Carolina's eastern third were a state it would be among the poorest in the nation. The Center's research builds on its 2001 study that found fewer college graduates, more high school dropouts, and higher poverty and unemployment in the East. Additionally, the previous study found the region trailing on such measures as internet access, housing affordability, and natural gas availability.

In explaining why the state needs to focus attention on the East, Tom Lambeth, former director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation says, "If you are sitting in a boat and it springs a leak, it really doesn't matter whether it is in your end of the boat. If it goes down, all aboard will drown. In a global economy, in a time of regional and national economic competition,

stagnation in any one part of North Carolina has an impact on all of the state."

Key Findings

(1) The East's Dependence on Public Employment – Eastern North Carolina is more dependent on public employment than the state as a whole, with local, state, and federal governments employing 23.7 percent of the work force compared to 17.7 percent statewide. In several counties, public institutions are the largest employers. Wal-Mart employs the largest number of private sector workers.

(2) Fewer Manufacturing Jobs – The East has fewer manufacturing jobs than the statewide average, with manufacturers employing 12.9 percent of the eastern work force compared to 15.6 percent for the state as a whole. The Center found that manufacturers were among the three largest employers in 27 of the region's 41 counties, but many of these firms are low-wage, low-skill industries susceptible to international competition. (continued on page 10)

*"You must be
the change that
you want to see
in this world."*

- Mahatma Gandhi



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Vision

Our vision for the eastern counties of North Carolina is a highly skilled workforce with an educational attainment level that meets the needs of the 21st Century workplace, so that local firms can compete in a technologically advanced global economy.

Mission

Our mission is to ensure that our workforce development system is customer focused, demand-driven and accountable in preparing our current and future workforce to meet the changing needs of a highly-competitive global economy.

Value Added

We add economic value to our communities by ensuring that quality education, job training, and employment opportunities are available for job/training seekers and employers alike, thereby improving the quality of life for our citizens throughout eastern North Carolina.

Key Strategies

- Engage business and community leaders in addressing workforce issues and promote strategies to improve education levels & basic workplace skills.
- Strengthen alliances with economic development to identify and address the workforce needs of current and future industries.
- Implement a community awareness plan that promotes the WDB, JobLink Career Centers, and partner services.
- Identify and implement effective employment and training strategies that result in employment opportunities for all citizens.



Director's Corner

Dear Friends,

I dedicate this newsletter in memory and honor of our dear colleague and special friend, Judy Young, age 57, who passed away on March 24, 2006. Judy was diagnosed with terminal cancer just over a month ago. Judy held many positions in employment and training throughout her career. In 2001, Judy retired as Executive Director from the North Carolina Workforce Development Training Institute, however, she continued to be involved in workforce development training initiatives, as she had a great passion to continue to teach others what she had learned throughout her career.

Judy spent the past five years serving as a Training Consultant for the Center For Workforce Learning, and trained hundreds of workforce development professionals [myself included] to become certified as Global Career Development Facilitators. Additionally, Judy traveled around the country training and facilitating a variety of other workforce development training events.

For those of us who were blessed to work with Judy and/or participate in one of her many workforce development or Career Development Facilitator training sessions, we will always remember her joyful spirit, compassionate heart, unique ability to make learning fun, and passion for serving those less fortunate.

It is my prayer that each of us will continue Judy's great legacy of serving and inspiring others to achieve their highest goals.

-Tammy Childers

A Message from the Chairman



I would like to encourage all Workforce Development Board members to attend the next Vision East Strategic Planning Retreat to be held on April 28-29, 2006 at Sea Trails Resort, Sunset Beach, NC.

The retreat will begin Friday at 1:00PM and end on Saturday at 1:00PM. John Metcalf, Corporation For a Skilled Workforce will be facilitating the retreat and presenting our State of the Workforce Report.

If you have not done so already, please call Pat Moss at 252-636-6901 to confirm your attendance.

Sincerely,
Don Harris

***“The greatest good we can do for others is not just share our riches with them—
but to enable them to discover their own.” -Sister Carita***



Judy —always smiling, even when preparing for a Career Development Class of 34 students in New Bern.



Judy made training interesting. To help students learn about Career Development Theorists, she had us sing it to the class.



Judy awarding CDF Certificate to Anthony Farrior in 2002. She always made the final class an exciting event.



2005 CDF New Bern Class

Judy,

A lot of people come in and out of our lives. But only a treasured few make a difference and leave an impression of love that last forever, and only a few are as special as you. You will be greatly missed, but your legacy will continue through each of us who had the honor of working with you. Thank you, for sharing your life with so many.

Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce Sponsors a Military Forum

Military Presence Grows in Onslow County.

The Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce recently sponsored a Military Forum. The forum featured Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who said bringing a large number of new troops to the area was like bringing in a new company. “The arrival of all these new Marines coming in is like landing a major industry,” she said. “When the military prospers, all of North Carolina prospers, and that’s the message that has finally begun to resonate. We have figured out that these folks who help defend our country are part of our communities.”

Maj. Gen. Robert Dickerson added that thousands of troops are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and Onslow County can expect even more in the coming months. The former Camp Lejeune commander who is currently

in charge of Marine Corps Installations East, said during Forum Onslow, that two new infantry battalions and the recent stand-up of the Marine Special Operations Command will bring about 2,600 new troops to the area in the coming months, who will in turn bring about 3,500 dependents. While no specific timetable was mentioned as to when exactly the two new battalions, 1st and 2nd Battalions, 9th Marines, will be fully staffed, Dickerson did say 1/9 was about halfway there while 2/9 was “in process.”

These new troops — along with the roughly 17,000 Marines and Sailors returning from combat — are both an economic boom and a heavy weight on an area already straining with growth. Dickerson said the new troops would receive about \$9 million in gross pay, which most would be spent in area

businesses, but these new residents would need more services, roads, schools, water and sewer taps to accommodate them.

Jan Bean Slagle, Jacksonville’s mayor, said the city’s patriotism will inspire them to overcome any infrastructure challenge that presents itself. “It goes without saying we’ll have to be on our toes, but these newcomers are bringing something money can’t buy,” said Jacksonville’s Mayor, Jan Bean Slagle. “We live in the company of heroes every day. If that is not a reason to be proud, for this city to stand up and do everything in our power to make them feel welcome, then I don’t know what is.”

Source: Jacksonville Daily News

Welcome Home Marines and Sailors! Thank you for your service to our country! We are proud of you!

Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Professionals Association Sponsors “Share the Wealth” Annual Event

Never underestimate what a small group of caring people can do.

The Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Professionals Association held its second annual benefit on March 17 at the House of Wang in Kinston. Over 50 committed workforce development professionals and guests attended this fun-filled event. Several members worked diligently in a collaborative effort

throughout the region to ensure a nice evening for all in attendance, and indeed it was a great night.

There were over 20 very nice items donated for the silent and live auctions as well as several very nice theme baskets from JobLinks across the region. The proceeds from the event will be distributed by the Association to the participating JobLink Centers to

assist low-income customers with emergency needs.

Reid Taylor, the ECWDPA President wishes to thank the ECWDPA's organizing committee for their hard work in making this year's event a great success.

Source: ECWDPA



Pamlico Community College Provides the Training and the Pamlico County JobLink Career Center Finds the Jobs

Graduates make big of the “smallness” of PCC.

“I’ll put her up against any property manager anywhere in North Carolina.” That’s how Larry Gwaltney, owner of Sail Loft Realty in Oriental described the abilities and talents of Glenda Toler. Toler graduated from Pamlico Community College in 2000 with a double major, Accounting and Business Management.

Less than one month after graduation, she was hired by Gwaltney. Toler manages over 100 rental properties for Sail Loft and also does the administrative work for several homeowners' associations.

Toler is a native of Craven County and still lives there. She chose to attend Pamlico Community College primarily because of its size. The institution is the smallest of the state's 58 community colleges. “I would not have made it had it not been for PCC. I would not have this job if it were not for PCC. I had been out of school for several years before I chose to go to college and I knew I needed a small school with small classes,” she said.

John Jones, Dean of Student Services for Pamlico Community College, was credited by Toler for assisting her to procure the necessary financial aid for her college expenses. “I’m not sure a larger college could or would have gone to the extent to help an individual like the people at PCC did,” she said.

Pamlico Community College incorporates the phrase, “The Small College with a Big Heart,” in its logo design. Gwaltney says that is more than just a catchy phrase. “Glenda and Jennifer Sienkiewicz, our office manager, were trained and groomed by Pamlico Community College. I consider that to be part of the reason for their success in business. Though these

ladies came from this small college, there is no job too big for them,” he observed.

Sienkiewicz, who completed her degree in Business Management in December 2005, is responsible for assisting sales associates at Sail Loft with listings, managing the firm's website and data base and scheduling all appointments. She combined working full time with full time studies during her last semester at Pamlico Community College. She graduated from high school in Michigan in 2001. Before moving to Pamlico County she attended a culinary school and traveled extensively. Commenting on her career at PCC, she said, “It was the reason I got my job. I had excellent instructors who took an interest in helping me find a position in the field where I wanted to work.”

Gray Gaskins, Director of Pamlico County's JobLink Career Center was credited by Sienkiewicz for assisting her with meeting college expenses through the Workforce Investment Act. “Mr. Gaskins also helped me find this position with Sail Loft. So just like Glenda, I give credit to PCC for putting me into this career,” she said.

Gaskins recalled Sienkiewicz's tenure at the college with praise for her academic achievement and pleasant demeanor. “She took advantage of the opportunities afforded her by the college and the Workforce Investment Act Scholarship program. She graduated with honors. I remember her as always having a smile on her face and always having a kind word for her instructors. When her present employer called the JobLink Center to advise me of the opening they had, I

immediately thought of Jennifer. Using skills obtained in her academic studies



Glenda Toler and Jennifer Sienkiewicz

along with interviewing skills learned at the JobLink Center, she was hired immediately into a position within her field of study,” said Gaskins.

Gwaltney's observations confirmed those of Gaskins. “You won't find any two better associates than these two ladies. Jennifer has unbelievable organizational skills and holds our office together. But I can also speak about the college from my personal experience. My 18-year old son, Jay, has taken courses there while still in high school. I read a paper he wrote after interviewing a Viet Nam War veteran. I was extremely impressed with the depth and substance of what he recorded,” Gwaltney said.

Al Ward chairs the business department at Pamlico Community College. He observed, “Glenda and Jennifer are two fine examples of how the community college can make such a difference in an individual's life. Creating success stories in the lives of our students is what we're all about. These two fine young ladies can be looked upon as role models for both academic success on campus and career success in the workplace.”

By: Benjamin Casey, PCC

Mission of WIA

“...increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.”

Craven County holds Annual Career Fair

“Ready Resources for Today’s Economy”

On February 16, 2006, the Craven County JobLink partners held their annual Career Fair at the Riverfront Convention Center in New Bern.

Approximately 400 individuals attended this year’s event. Prior to the Job Fair, approximately 75 representatives from local businesses attended the Twin Rivers Career Fair Lunch & Learn session: “Food for Thought: Ready Resources for Today’s Economy.”

The event featured presentations by representatives from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Karen Pappas, Cindy Smith and the Employment Security Commission, Mary Brown.

The speakers facilitated a discussion

on hiring alternatives, including highlighting diversity, and how best to connect with diverse job-seeking candidates with a focus on hiring qualified people with disabilities.

This session was designed to encourage employers to look beyond the disability and consider the abilities of the job candidates.

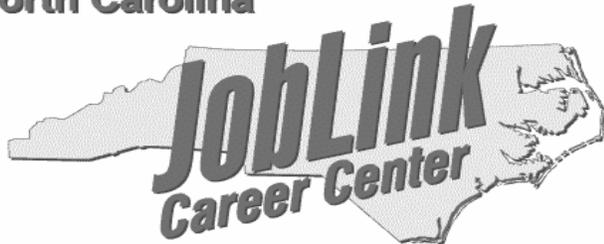
Local employers presented testimonials of their experience hiring people with disabilities and using the local ESC and JobLink services.

Source: Mary Brown, ESC/JobLink



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North Carolina



- ◆ Tax Credit and Hiring Incentive Information
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NC’s JobLinks are an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids & services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

(TTY) 1-800-735-2962

(Voice) 1-800-735-8262

Call your local JobLink Career Center today!

Carteret County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 726-7151

Craven County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 514-4828

Craven County JobLink Information Site

Phone: (252) 444-2384

Duplin County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (910) 296-2024

Greene County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 747-5689

Jones County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 448-5021

Lenoir County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 527-7320

Onslow County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (910) 347-2121

Onslow County JobLink Information Site

Phone: (910) 938-6309

Pamlico County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (252) 249-1633

Wayne County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (919) 731-7950

Wayne County JobLink Career Center

Phone: (919) 658-4926

Rapid Response Team Makes A Difference in Lenoir County

Cliff Bright, WIA participant at Lenoir Community Colleges shares experience.

After being laid off from DuPont with 29 years of service, Cliff Bright, a control mechanic who specialized in electronics and instrumentation, was looking for a new career in the health science field. He listened intently to options presented at Rapid Response meetings and by various agency representatives from the Lenoir County JobLink Center. After much thought, Bright decided to leave the manufacturing environment and train in a health field because of the lucrative and stable future it provides.

Through assistance from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Trade Readjustment Act/Trade Adjustment Assistance (TRA/TAA), all of Bright's educational needs such as counseling, tuition, books, supplies, and transportation are being met.

For three consecutive semesters he has maintained a 4.0 grade point average at Lenoir Community College, and he has

"bright" goals for the future. He plans to continue training at Pitt Community College in nuclear medicine, and he hopes to be one of six chosen for the program. His ultimate goal is to work with three-dimensional PET scanning techniques. If his plans become a reality and he becomes employed in this field, Bright will replace his former wage.

This diligent student is grateful for the opportunity given to him. "The WIA program was such a comfort to me when I was first laid off. I didn't have to worry about the financial burden of training for a new job," he said. "The staff has been very friendly and encouraging to me each step of the way, and I am much more confident now as I move on to the next level of my training," he added.

"The Rapid Response team was so helpful," Bright said. "I was fortunate to meet Renee Sutton, Randi Taylor and Debbie Craven who gave me direction and helped ease the anxiety that goes along with changing careers after so many



Cliff Bright, WIA Participant

years. It's good to know there are people in my own backyard who are willing to help open doors." Job seekers and employers are encouraged to explore the programs offered through the one-stop centers by contacting the Lenoir County JobLink Career Center on the campus of LCC or by calling 527-7320.

Source: LCC

Lenoir County JobLink Partners Sponsor Local Job Fair

More than 800 job-seekers and businesses in attendance.

Gary Hines came to Lenoir County JobLink Jobfair hoping for a minor miracle. After 31 years with DuPont, he was laid off. At 51, Hines is ready for a career change. "I want to go back to work," Hines said. "I would love to go into some lawn-related field, maybe something with Parks and Recreation or something like that. I spent 31 years inside. I'd like to move a little bit." Hines was one of nearly 800 job seekers who showed up at the March 15th job fair in hopes of finding gainful employment. He put in applications with the Lenoir County Clerk of Courts' office and law enforcement agencies that had displays at the fair.

Cmdr. Frankie Howard, with the Kinston Department of Public Safety, was looking to recruit for open positions in the fire and police departments. The public safety department almost always has a table set up at the job fair. "There's usually a good turnout of (basic law enforcement training) students here," Howard said. "We've had a good many stop by."

Nearly every educational field LCC offers was represented by the 122 employers present, said Frances Gaskins, Director of Cooperative Education. Businesses ranging from health care, manufacturing, automotive and culinary fields were all competing for skilled, experienced workers.

That was good news for B.J. Maines-Sutton, who has more than 30 years experience in food service and management but is new to Kinston. She's worked in New Bern for years, but a recent move here has put a strain on her free time and wallet. "The gas money was a problem but time is money, too. I was particularly interested in the Chef and the Farmer," said Maines-Sutton, as she filled out an application for the new restaurant to open in downtown Kinston this spring.

The event is one of the biggest for JobLink. Gaskins and Renee Sutton, JobLink Director, began planning for the annual event in September. "We draw employers from Lenoir, Greene and Jones counties primarily, but there are some

here from Virginia and Georgia," Sutton said. At last year's fair, some folks were hired on the spot.

James Prior had his fingers crossed that one of the applications he filled out Wednesday would turn out to be the one. "I've been looking for work about a month now," Prior said as he completed his first application Wednesday. "I'm going to fill them out when I get them. I plan on staying here awhile."

Source: Kinston Free Press



North Carolina's Incumbent Worker Program Helps Local Companies To Become More Competitive.

Georgia-Pacific shares how NC's Incumbent Worker program resulted in documented improved efficiencies.

Georgia-Pacific Dudley Plywood is a manufacturer of plywood products. It has been in business at the current location since 1979 and has grown to 424 employees. They sell their plywood products to retail stores such as Lowe's and Home Depot.

According to Georgia-Pacific, in order to remain competitive within the industry, the plant needs to maintain the highest levels of up-time and efficiency for all of its equipment. The inability to procure the most modern and advanced manufacturing systems has put a premium on the necessity to maintain the highest levels of maintenance and troubleshooting skills throughout the plant. One of the most pressing needs in this area of expertise has been identified as the support for the currently installed Allen-Bradley PLC 5's. By definition, a PLC is a device (computer-oriented) used to automate monitoring and control of industrial plant equipment. Intellect Controls Group, Inc., was selected as the training provider as they are experts in PLC training in the processes and systems utilized by Georgia-Pacific. Ten employees were trained in all aspects of the Allen-Bradley PLC 5 maintenance & troubleshooting; they are now better able to repair machinery as a result of more complex troubleshooting skills and capabilities; thus lowering downtime and operating costs.

The hands-on training allowed employees to practice trouble-shooting through computerized simulations on the Intellect Controls equipment. Before training, when something would go wrong, employees would call their supervisor at least once or twice in the evenings at home to find out how to handle the problem, resulting in loss of production. Since the training, they are now able to troubleshoot and solve the problems on their own without down time and with documented improved efficiencies.

Ken Shelton, Electrical Superintendent of Plywood for Georgia-Pacific's Dudley plant states, "As a result of the Incumbent Worker training, our electricians are much more knowledgeable in troubleshooting which has resulted in documented improved efficiencies." He said that "the downtime has decreased significantly and the productivity has increased." Chuck Jarrell, Electrical Superintendent-Oriented Strand Board, explained how GP is able to track and record all steps of the production. Mr. Jarrell gave the example that "timber production loads used to be around 113 loads, now they are seeing an average of 125 loads produced."

Both Superintendents interviewed stated: "The employees who participated in this training were certainly more confident in responding to problem situations and capable of better identifying problems and addressing them through proper maintenance and troubleshooting."

Mr. Jarrell also said, "Pre and post-test were given documenting the improved competencies." When asked if any employees were given pay increases as a result of the training, Mr. Jarrell responded that, "employees who completed training will receive a pay increase with their next performance appraisal."

On a recent tour of the Dudley facility, the Executive Director of the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board was able to meet Electricians, Jerry Teasley, Albert Creech and Jason Codie who completed the training. These employees shared their positive experiences the training offered. They each gave examples of how the troubleshooting training assisted them in their daily work. The three incumbent worker participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to participate in training and indicated that they would be

interested in additional training if available.

Charles Black, Manager of Organizational Effectiveness, from the GP Atlantic Office said, "The company was extremely pleased with the IWP training services provided by Intellect Controls Group." He expressed his appreciation for the assistance provided by Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board and concluded by saying: "The Incumbent Worker Program has definitely helped us to be more competitive." Georgia-Pacific has expressed interest in applying for another Incumbent Worker grant within the next year or two.

Source: Charles Black, Georgia-Pacific



Albert Creech, GP Electrician



Jason Britt, GP Electrician

"It's not the employer who pays the wages. The employer handles the money. It's the customer who pays the wages."

-Henry Ford

Greene County Youth Helping To Comfort Kids

WIA Youth takes on Leadership Role.

Many folks in Greene County know Detective Lt. Carolyn Speight at Greene County Sheriff's Department. Detective Speight is responsible for investigating child abuse cases in Greene Co. When children come in, she likes to give them stuffed animals to help them feel at ease with law enforcement.

When the WIA Out of School Youth heard that she was running low on stuffed animals, they wanted to take on the acquisition of collecting more stuffed animals rather than the normal Operation Santa Claus or Toys for Tots.

The WIA Youth felt this was a worthwhile cause, which would affect many lives in Greene County in a positive

way. Through their efforts, the youth initiated a campaign to collect the stuffed animals from local citizens.

"It is through these types of leadership activities, that youth learn to give part of themselves back to their community", says Judy Hill, Case Manager. Greene Lamp wishes to thank those who took the time to donate to make a difference. A special thank you goes to Ms. Roberta Scheffer, a WIA participant, who coordinated this project.

The WIA serves out of school youth ages 16-21 years old. To learn more on the program, contact Judy Hill at (252) 747 3434 at the Lenoir County JobLink Career Center.



Pictured above are Judy Hill, Carolyn Speight and Roberta Scheffer

Submitted by: Greene Lamp, Inc.

Greene Lamp, Inc. Awarded \$8,000 Grant

Youth enrolled in WIA program to participate in new Civic program

Greene Lamp, Inc. was awarded an \$8,000 grant to educate youth ages 16-21 about their civic responsibility and to prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives. Youth enrolled in the Greene Lamp WIA Out-of-School Youth Program in Carteret, Craven, Greene, Jones, Onslow, and Pamlico counties will participate in the year long project.

We anticipate that all youth will be exposed to approximately 26 hours of classroom and/or self-study training. In addition, community service activities will include participation in TEEN Court, voter registration, city and county council meetings, mock elections, debates, quiz bowl and job shadowing to support classroom learning and connect to the real world, says Joy Williams, Greene Lamp Youth Coordinator. The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation funds the grant through the NC Civic Education Consortium.

Submitted by: Greene Lamp, Inc

LCC's Youth Program Developing Future Leaders

Youth demonstrate service above self through volunteerism.

Recently WIA participants of the Lenoir Community College's YELL Club held its annual service project at the Friends of the Homeless Shelter in Kinston, NC. Youth participants assisted by serving the local citizens a hot cooked meal and students served an assortment of desserts

provided by the members. Participants helped local volunteers of the shelter during the lunch hours of 10 am - 11:30 am.

Local citizens were pleased with the outpouring of kindness and generosity by the young adults.

This proved to be an excellent leadership

project that was planned, arranged, and conducted by Lenoir County WIA youth participants.

Submitted by: Tezra Parker, LCC



North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research Releases Report on Eastern N.C. Economy (continued from page 1)

(3) Number of Farms Declining Sharply, But Agriculture Still Important

– Meanwhile, the number of farms, farmers, and farm workers continues to shrink, while farm size and farm values increase. From 1974 to 2004, the number of North Carolina farms decreased by 58 percent, while the size of farms increased by 57 percent. The farm economy faces challenges on a number of fronts. The federal buyout of the tobacco support program changes the business arrangement for raising the region's most lucrative crop. Livestock production and especially hog farms face issues around environmental regulation, waste management, and odor control. And, debate rages about whether consolidation of ownership into larger and more valuable farms is a good thing or a bad thing for the farmer. Ultimately, global competition may render many of these questions moot. Yet Eastern North Carolina continues to have seven of the state's top 10 counties in agricultural production. "Clearly, working the soil still provides a good living for many Eastern North Carolina families," says the Center's McLaughlin. "But the region leans too hard on the plow of agriculture to pull its economy, when agriculture is a troubled economic sector."

(4) The Rising Service Sector in the East

– Three of four workers in the East are employed in the service or retail sectors, but most of them are in lower paying, non-professional jobs. As part of the service sector, tourism is huge along the coast, with beaches in Brunswick, Carteret, Dare, Hyde, New Hanover, Onslow, and Pender counties attracting thousands of visitors and generating millions of dollars in tourism revenue annually.

Historic sites such as the colonial capitals of Edenton and New Bern also draw increasing numbers of visitors.

(5) Heavy Dependence on Military Bases

– The East also relies heavily on the U.S. military, with six major installations providing some 116,000 uniformed jobs and more than 21,000 civilian jobs. The region escaped the latest federal Base Realignment and Closure Act cuts with few net job losses, but could face further reductions in the future. For the present, the East hosts the fourth highest number of troops in the nation, but North Carolina is 23rd in defense contracts and attracts less than 1 percent of U.S. Department of Defense procurement dollars.

(6) Small Businesses Very Important

– Large employers like Nucor Corporation's steel plant in Hertford County are a rarity in the East. "The vast majority of businesses in Eastern North Carolina are small ones, employing fewer than 50 people," say Catherine Moga Bryant, senior research associate at the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center. "These establishments often are overlooked because of their size, but collectively they have a significant economic impact."

Data collected by the Rural Center show that small and medium-sized establishments, measured in terms of employment, comprise most of the businesses in the state and the East. Of the East's 57,243 employers in 2002, 95 percent employed 49 or fewer people, and 86 percent had 19 or fewer employees. Indeed, small business is the major contributor to

the economy of the East, according to Scott Daugherty of the University of North Carolina's Small Business Technology Development Center. "The state as a whole needs to help the East play catch-up, and it's going to take a serious, long-term commitment to do this," says the Center's McLaughlin.

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Copies of the issue of *North Carolina Insight* containing the Center's latest research on opportunities and challenges facing Eastern North Carolina are available for \$20, which includes tax, postage, and handling. To order, write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, call (919) 832-2839, fax (919) 832-2847, or order through the Center's web site at www.nccppr.org.

Job Search Tool Available for North Carolina's Job Seekers

North Carolina's JobLink Career Center system offers jobseekers access to a powerful new search engine through www.ncjoblink.com. This job search engine accesses job openings from both the public and the private sector's webpages. Simply enter the job skills you have or the job you are looking for and type the search area.

North Carolina Employment and Training Association 2006 NCETA SPRING CONFERENCE



Atlantic Beach Sheraton Hotel
Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
April 5-7, 2006

"Partnerships Make the Difference"

The agenda includes workshops focusing on Economic Development, WIA, JobLink, Case Management, Resource Opportunities, Common Measures, EmployOn, Networking Opportunities, and Youth.

The workshops have been designed to address specific needs for your professional development and training. Invited speakers and workshop presenters include: Earl Suttle, Bob Knight, Lynn Deese, Mary Ann Lawrence, Frank Lengel, Michael Hoskins, Martha Cranford and others.

EARLY REGISTRATION FEE (Postmarked before March 20, 2006):

\$175.00 Members \$195.00 Non-Members

LATE REGISTRATION FEE (Postmarked after March 20, 2006):

\$200.00 Members \$225.00 Non-Members

Send registration form and payment to:

LINDA PARKER, NCETA TREASURER

PO BOX 1883

ASHEBORO, NC 27204

Unemployment Rates as of February, 2006

Unemployment down from 6.1% to 5.3% as compared to 2005.

County	Labor Force February 2005	Unemployment February 2005	Labor Force February 2006	Unemployment February 2006
Carteret	30,400	6.2%	31,772	5.0%
Craven	39,543	5.5%	40,535	4.8%
Duplin	23,928	6.9%	22,477	6.0%
Greene	9,166	6.2%	9,151	5.5%
Jones	4,461	5.3%	4,911	5.1%
Lenoir	27,288	6.5%	27,794	6.0%
Onslow	55,543	6.2%	57,928	5.1%
Pamlico	5,515	6.0%	5,672	5.2%
Wayne	51,396	5.8%	51,113	5.3%
Eastern Carolina Local Area	247,440	6.1%	251,353	5.3%
NC (not seasonally adjusted)	4,265,902	5.9%	4,337,790	5.1%
NC (seasonally adjusted)	4,300,358	5.1%	4,374,036	4.6%
National (not seasonally adjusted)	147,649,000	5.8%	149,686,000	5.1%
National (seasonally adjusted)	148,271,000	5.4%	150,449,000	4.8%

Source: Employment Security Commission



Eastern Carolina

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.

ECWDB Staff:

Tammy Childers, Executive Director
Robert Kehres, Assistant Director
Lisa Harvey, WIA Coordinator
Trina Hale, Accounting Technician
Joe McCarthy, Youth Coordinator
Pat Moss, Administrative Assistant
Debbie Simpkins, Fiscal Monitor

Communicate with Us!

1341 South Glenburnie Road
New Bern, NC 28562
Telephone: (252) 636-6901 or (877) 916-6901
Fax: (252) 638-3569

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Youth Council Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 4, 2006, 6:00 pm

Statewide Business Service Representatives Quarterly Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 4, 2006, 9:00 am

Youth Summit

at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center
in New Bern
April 13, 2006, 8:30 am

JobLink Committee Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 13, 2006, 6:00 pm

Youth Service Provider Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 20, 2006, 1:00 pm

Programs Oversight Committee

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 20, 2006, 6:00 pm

Executive Committee Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
April 27, 2006, 6:00 pm

ECWDB Board Meeting

at the ECWDB offices in New Bern
May 4, 2006, 6:00 pm

JobLink Partners Appreciation Luncheon

at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center
May 25, 2006, 10:00 am



Welcome Back

Jeff, Jessie, and Jacob Bode!

As many of you know, Staff Sergeant Jeff Bode recently returned from a seven month deployment to Iraq. During his time away from Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point. Jessie and Jacob returned home to be with family in Wisconsin. For Jessie, this time was not only spent with family, but she completed her Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.

We are very proud of the Bode Family. Jeff, you are our local hero and we appreciate you. Jessie, congratulations on completing your degree and welcome back to work!

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. (TTY) 1-800-735-2962 (Voice) 1-800-735-8262