

REPORT

BRIGHT SPOTS

**Innovative Efforts to
Accelerate Educational
Attainment across
North Carolina**

February 2019

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About nclIMPACT

nclIMPACT, launched by the School of Government at the University of North Carolina (UNC) in 2017, supports North Carolina leaders as they work to find solutions to a wide range of complex policy concerns, from health, education, and economic development to criminal justice, public finance, and the environment. Building on the School's eighty years of collaborative engagement with public officials throughout the state, nclIMPACT provides civic leaders with sound data, high-quality research, and rigorous analysis; shares evidence-based insights and creative policy options to assist policymakers in responding to the most important issues they face; and enhances local understanding of innovative practices being carried out in North Carolina, across the United States, and around the world. For more information about nclIMPACT, please visit our website at ncimpact.org.

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The UNC School of Government works to improve the lives of North Carolinians by engaging in practical scholarship that helps public officials and citizens understand and improve state and local government. Established in 1931 as the Institute of Government, the School provides educational, advisory, and research services for state and local governments. The School of Government is also home to a nationally ranked master of public administration program, the Center for Public Leadership and Governance, the North Carolina Judicial College, and specialized centers focused on community and economic development, information technology, and environmental finance. Visit sog.unc.edu or call 919.966.5381 for more information on the School's courses, publications, programs, and services.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Why Are We Highlighting These “Bright Spots”?

This report profiles ten programs—which we refer to as “Bright Spots”—that demonstrate how local communities are working to increase educational attainment in North Carolina. Their efforts reflect the fact that, across our state, there is a growing recognition that a high school education and a willingness to work hard are no longer sufficient to secure a job with wages that will adequately support a family. Our economy is locked in a global competition for jobs that, increasingly, require training beyond high school. The implication is clear: Unless our plan is to import talent, on top of working to foster home-grown talent, both today and into the future, North Carolina must produce more people with postsecondary educational credentials.

The My Future NC (myFutureNC) Commission recommends that, by 2030, North Carolina should strive to ensure that 2 million of the state’s 25- to 44-year-olds (which is about two-thirds of the projected state population in that age range) obtain a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree. This goal balances a desire to measure and promote ambitious, near-term improvements with the longer time horizon required to realize systemic change across the education spectrum. Success will depend on innovations at both the state and local levels. To get there, we will need many more Bright Spots.

The myFutureNC Commission brought together North Carolina thought leaders in the education, business, philanthropy, and faith-based and nonprofit communities, along with *ex officio* representatives from the North Carolina General Assembly and the governor’s office, to help the State and its communities answer the following key questions:

- What goals should North Carolina set for its education system, taking into consideration the full continuum, from early childhood through postsecondary education and, ultimately, the journey into the workforce?
- What barriers keep us from fully leveraging the resources we currently have?
- What are the primary obstacles to postsecondary educational attainment in North Carolina?
- What reforms and initiatives show promise for improving attainment results?
- What solutions can improve attainment outcomes?

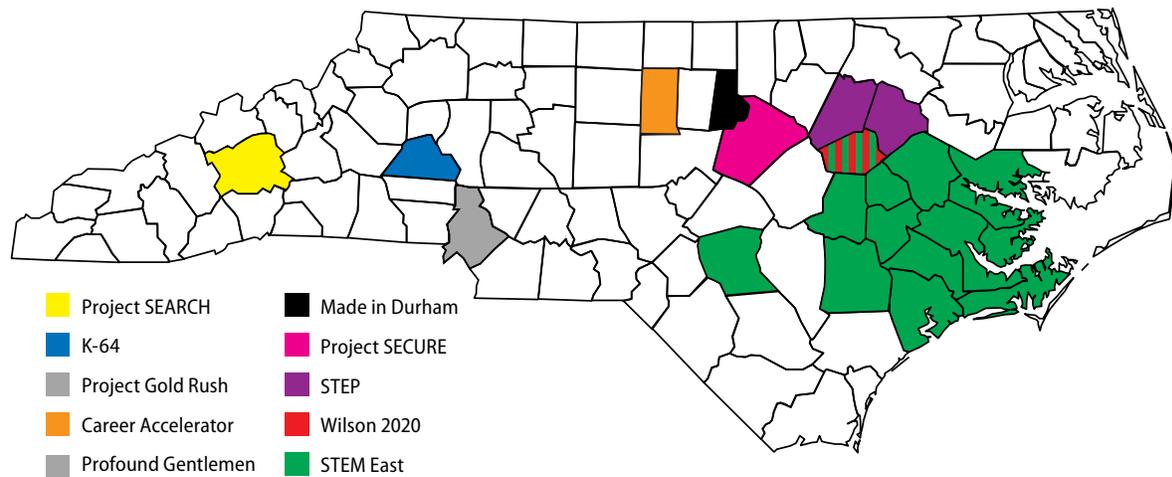
The myFutureNC Commission prepared a full report addressing these and other related questions. It can be accessed on the Commission’s website: <https://www.myfuturenc.org/>.

In addition to convening statewide discussion sessions, the myFutureNC Commission held nine listening events (which, collectively, made up what is referred to as the Commission’s “listening tour”) in communities across North Carolina. Through these events, the Commission learned that many localities and regions in the state were already working—with admirable outcomes—to increase the educational attainment of their respective micro labor forces. As reflected in the question set out above, “What reforms and initiatives show promise for improving attainment results?” the Commission recognized the value of cataloging promising local innovations that respond to the specific challenges and barriers raised in the listening events. The Commission sought to capture a full range of efforts—from early childhood through career-path entry.

How Did We Find the Bright Spots?

In collaboration with EdNC, ncIMPACT worked to identify and highlight promising strategies being employed by local and regional actors in North Carolina to increase educational attainment within their respective labor markets. After soliciting nominations from myFutureNC Commissioners and subject matter experts, as well as from other education experts in the state, ncIMPACT then selected ten programs/initiatives that covered five themes that had emerged from Commissioner recommendations early in the process and that reflected the state's diversity (see the map below). A list of all nominated programs may be found in Appendix A.

Bright Spots Programs by County



ncIMPACT made its selections based on the following three criteria:

1. Did the program/innovation chosen fit one of the Commission's listening tour themes?
2. Did it help to tell the story of North Carolina's changing and diverse economy?
3. Did it add a different perspective on geography?

The five early themes emphasized by the Commission are as follows:

1. **Access to Lifelong Educational Opportunities.** The state must prioritize strategies that intentionally create opportunities for every North Carolinian—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, background, age, location, or experience—to earn a high-value degree and/or credential and to pursue a meaningful, high-wage, high-demand occupation.
2. **Preparation for Education, Career, and Life.** Every student in North Carolina must receive rigorous academic and career preparation from well-prepared teachers and school leaders. In addition, every school in the state must provide each of its students with opportunities to engage in college-level coursework and to explore multiple career pathways.
3. **Comprehensive Support Systems.** Without clear and complementary support systems that work together to inform students about available education and training opportunities, means for accessing them, and methods for succeeding once enrolled, students' opportunities to earn postsecondary credentials and achieve economic success

will be curtailed. To dramatically increase postsecondary attainment in North Carolina, better alignment across and within education and workforce sectors is essential.

4. **Education and Workforce Sector Alignment.** In order to achieve higher matriculation and lower remediation rates in the state, all sectors must share a deeper mutual understanding of what “college and career readiness” means. Also, the entire education system must collaborate with the business community to ensure that the skills and competencies taught to students match the skills and competencies sought by employers.
5. **Coordination, Accountability, and Sustainability.** Meeting this goal will require input and hard work from many actors in all sectors across the state.

Taken together, the profiles of our ten Bright Spot initiatives reflect North Carolina’s geographic and economic diversity. Educational and economic background data for each area profiled appears in Appendix B. A list of the individuals we interviewed in order to compile the profiles is found in Appendix C.

How Did We Develop the Ten Profiles?

To shine a light on and celebrate our Bright Spots, ncIMPACT and EdNC conducted interviews with ninety-eight program leaders, program participants, and other stakeholders. All individuals interviewed were identified by program leaders. We collaboratively designed a script of interview questions, which was used to create both a written profile of each program and a video. The questions we sought to answer are set out immediately below.

- What are each program’s goals? Is the program focused on youth or on the existing workforce? What barriers are being addressed by the program?
- Does the program include a specific educational attainment goal? Do the program’s goals include striving to close degree-attainment gaps based on race and ethnicity?
- What academic supports are offered in the program and why were these specific supports chosen?
- What non-academic supports are offered in the program and why were they selected?
- Does the program feature a governance model that includes key local decision makers or influencers?
- Does the program involve multiple sectors (for example, public, private, and nonprofit) or varying levels of education (such as P–12, community college, four-year degree or higher)?
- What is the commitment of each local player involved in the program—contractual (or quasi-contractual), reputational, and financial?
- Are the program’s efforts data-driven? If so, how is data being collected, shared, analyzed, and produced? Is there documentable evidence of program success?
- Is the program demand-driven? How is the private sector engaged?

After the interviews wrapped up, ncIMPACT crafted the written profiles of the innovations—our Bright Spots—and EdNC created the video stories of the programs.

**BRIGHT
SPOTS
PROFILES**

CAREER ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

(Alamance County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“I am 19 years old and talking to my friends about a 401K.” — *Current apprentice*

“Unless Alamance County grows its own, it will not have the workforce pipeline it needs.” — *Current employer*

What Is the Career Accelerator Program?

The Career Accelerator Program (CAP) is a four-year apprenticeship program that both addresses the immediate need for skilled workers and seeks to grow the next generation of leaders in manufacturing facilities in the Alamance County area. Launched in 2016, the program offers technical career opportunities to motivated high school students and provides them employment after their graduation. Partner companies train these apprentices to fit their highly-skilled, technical job needs, and the students graduate with a guaranteed job and valuable postsecondary credentials. CAP is largely patterned after the award-winning Apprenticeship 2000 program in the Charlotte region and the North Carolina Training Apprenticeship Program in the Research Triangle region. It has been particularly valuable for local employers in the Alamance County area, given their need to build a talent pipeline from within the local labor market.

The estimated scholarship value of a CAP apprenticeship is \$140,000. The program is an intensive, four-year, in-depth combination of on-the-job training at the partner company’s facility and classroom learning at Alamance Community College. CAP is coordinated by the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce. This local chamber’s level of involvement in community educational programming is uncommon.

Who Are the Partners?

- **Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce:** Coordinates the program.
- **Alamance Community College:** Offers an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Mechatronics Engineering Technology, as well as additional training opportunities for stackable certificates and elective classes.
- **Alamance-Burlington School System:** Provides career development coordinators who work with the students while they are in high school.
- **Ten partner companies:** Host onsite apprenticeship training.
- **Mentors:** Support and train apprentices while at employer companies.



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How Does the Program Work?

CAP works closely with the Career Development Coordinators (CDCs) at participating local high schools.

These CDCs and other core subject teachers make referrals to the program. In addition, each fall, CAP representatives hold informational sessions for all faculty and staff, as well as interested students and their parents or guardians. After learning about the CAP apprenticeship requirements and timeline (either at a session or by talking to a CDC), students and their families are required to take a facility tour at a minimum of one CAP company. Thereafter, the student applies to be a CAP apprentice.

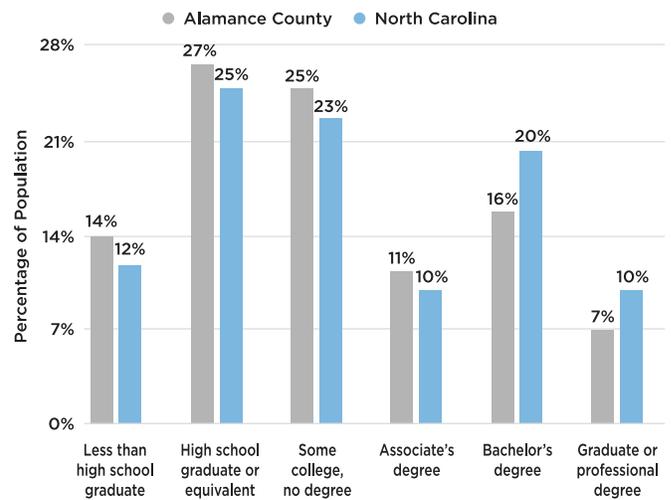
During their first year as apprentices, seniors in high school attend school for two classes in either the morning or afternoon and then train at the partner companies for the remainder of the day. Once apprentices have graduated from high school, they work Monday through Thursday at the companies and attend classes on Friday at Alamance Community College (ACC).

Apprentices receive training at ACC in the following areas: electrical, mechanical, computer technologies, physics, mathematics, automation, and robotics. At the end of the four years, an apprentice will have an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Mechatronics Engineering Technology, a Journeyman Certificate from the N.C. Department of Commerce, and four years (6,400 hours) of on-the-job training. This positions him or her well in a county where only approximately a third of residents ages 25–64 have attained a postsecondary degree, as shown in **Figure 1**.

An apprentice is paid for hours worked at the company both during the high school year and after graduation. After graduation, the apprentice is paid for time spent in classes at ACC. Employers also pay for books, fees, and tuition.

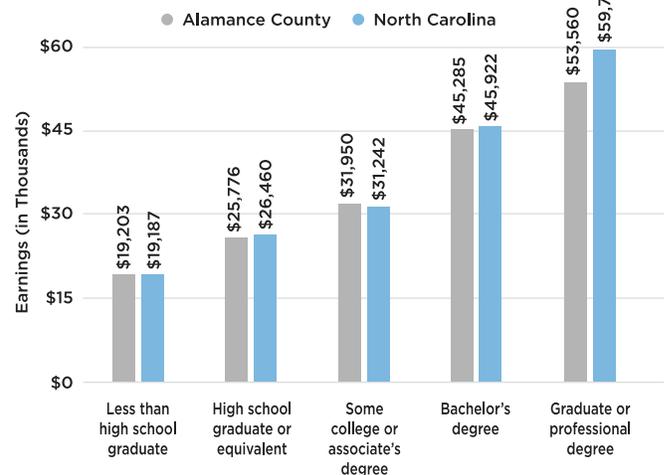
Non-academic supports come from both classrooms and companies. CDCs teach interviewing techniques, conduct skills and interest assessments, and share information about opportunities in the local labor market for students while they are in high school. Once they are out of high school, the apprentices work with their mentors on employability skills and financial literacy. These mentors are given a two-day training session at ACC to prepare them for this work. Finally, there are monthly gatherings aimed at building connectivity among all the apprentices. These gatherings are hosted by participating companies on a rotating basis and typically include a non-job-related presentation on soft skills or finances.

FIG. 1: **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT** (Ages 25–64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIG. 2: **MEDIAN EARNINGS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT** (25+)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

CAREER ACCELERATOR
PROGRAM (ALAMANCE CO.)

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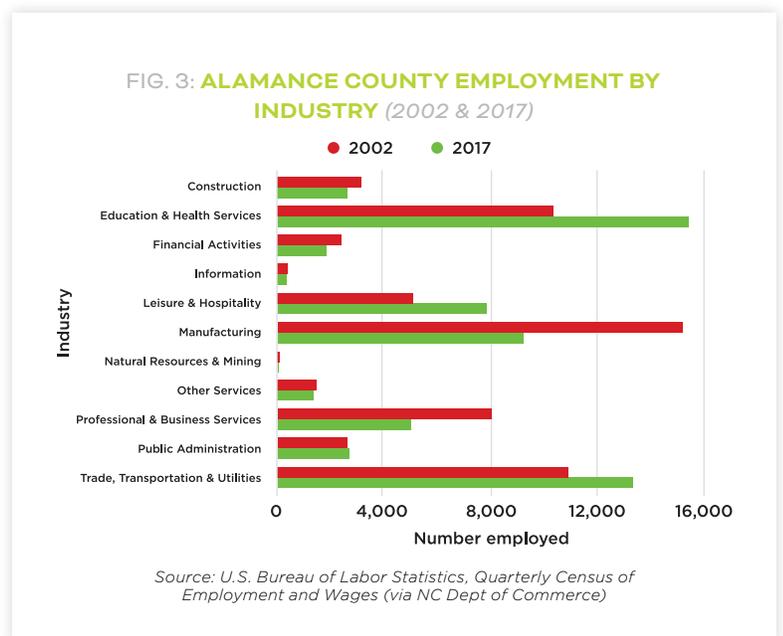
Graduates of the program begin with a salary of \$35,000, which is higher than the median earnings for Alamance County residents ages 25 and over with some college or an associate's degree, as shown in **Figure 2**.

What Is the Governance Structure?

CAP operates on a hub-and-spoke model, with the Chamber of Commerce acting as the hub. The links between and among partners are strong. For example, ACC and participating high schools report that a strong system for supporting each other makes it possible for high school students to take machining classes at ACC, for both institutions to identify students with strong potential for the CAP program, and for reciprocal shadowing programs between faculty from each institution to improve alignment of respective curricula. As another example of strong links, ACC has worked closely with employers to schedule instruction at times that least conflict with the apprentices' job duties. CAP recently received a grant to hire a coordinator who will be tasked with building an even more robust feedback loop between ACC, employers, and apprentices.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

The program has not set a specific goal for the number of apprenticeships it hopes to provide. However, CAP is focused on building a pipeline for the number of job openings expected in manufacturing in coming years. Participating companies expect turnover to reach up to 25 percent over the next decade due to retirements. For one partner company, that means 30 people. For another, it implies 450 open jobs. Everyone involved with CAP recognizes that the employees who replace retirees will need some degree of postsecondary education. When one plant manager was asked how many people with only a high school diploma the company would likely hire in the next five years, he responded, "About zero percent." The school system is now partnering with NC Works to better understand labor market data and the opportunity to build additional pipeline programs. See **Figure 3** for changes in Alamance County's employment by industry over time.



What Are the Indicators of Success?

The first indicator of success is the increasing number of students applying for CAP. The program is building buzz, with 400 students attending information sessions in the third year of the program's existence. The current apprentices deserve much of the credit for the awareness and excitement about the program. They are happy to attend informational sessions and talk to students during facility tours. They also serve as ambassadors in less formal ways and places. One apprentice explained that he just can't stop talking about the program. Retention rates, too, have been encouraging: only one apprentice has left the program in its three years.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

CAREER ACCELERATOR
PROGRAM (ALAMANCE CO.)

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The second indicator is the increasing number of companies seeking to join the program. CAP started with seven companies. They now have ten, with others lined up to join. Companies recognize that, in addition to the apprentices, there is value in the exposure that comes from participating in CAP — especially in a tight labor market. Families hear about participating companies at informational sessions and have a chance to tour individual companies with students. Often, family members themselves end up applying for positions.

The third indicator of success is the growing relationships among the CAP partners. Beyond CAP, employers and the school system are exploring new ways to expand the talent pipeline for manufacturing. They have noted the need for a manufacturing career pathway in high school.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

This program allows students to obtain a degree and valuable, relevant job experience at relatively no cost to them or their families. Even after the apprenticeship ends, students can take advantage of the tuition reimbursement program offered by every participating employer.

There are limits to how much a program that is as human resource-intensive as CAP can scale in Alamance, but the value extends beyond the number of apprentices. Already CAP has spawned new priorities for alignment and explorations of additional ways to build a talent pipeline for manufacturing in the region.



STEP

(Edgecombe and Nash Counties)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“Seeing people who look like them in these positions is the only way students will believe these paths are open to them, too.” — STEP executive director

“I want to be an anesthesiologist, and this program helps me to understand what the job is and how I can become one.” — High school student

What Is the STEP Partnership?

The Strategic Twin Counties Education Partnership — STEP for short — is a unique initiative between several stakeholder groups in Edgecombe and Nash counties. This cradle-to-career effort seeks to build a talent pipeline by ensuring that young people in both counties are exposed to, and fully prepared for, the 21st-century jobs their region has to offer. There is a palpable sense of urgency reinforcing STEP. Edgecombe and Nash counties find themselves in the enviable position of having recently announced economic development projects that will create at least 1,700 new jobs over the next 24 months. The STEP partnership is ramping up efforts to increase awareness about, and skills needed for, these hard-to-fill jobs, which pay higher-than-average wages for the region. Most of these jobs will require some form of postsecondary education.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Edgecombe County and Nash-Rocky Mount Public School Systems:** Prioritize work-based learning opportunities.
- **Edgecombe and Nash Community Colleges:** Emphasize curriculum that aligns with regional employer needs.
- **Employers:** Deploy employees to program activities such as school visits, facility tours, internships, and other work-based learning opportunities.
- **Rocky Mount Edgecombe Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC):** Promote career pathways.
- **Turning Point Workforce Development Board:** Provide data and other insights on career pathways.
- **Early Childhood Learning Organizations:** Represent the interests of critical early learning stakeholders.



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How Does the Partnership Work?

STEP is a partnership among local industries, two county school systems, and two community colleges. The program focuses on creating career exploration and preparation opportunities for students in Edgecombe and Nash counties in three cluster areas: advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation logistics. As reflected in **Figures 1 and 2**, these industries are growing in both counties after periods of decline.

STEP is a direct response to the misperception by many Edgecombe and Nash county residents that “there are no good jobs here,” as well as an attempt by program partners to leverage resources collaboratively. The local employer responsible for catalyzing STEP recognized that, too often, high school students believed that they had to leave home to find “good” jobs, while local employers couldn’t find enough people to fill their “good” jobs. **Figures 3 and 4** present median earnings at various levels of educational attainment in Edgecombe and Nash counties as compared to earnings in the state of North Carolina as a whole.

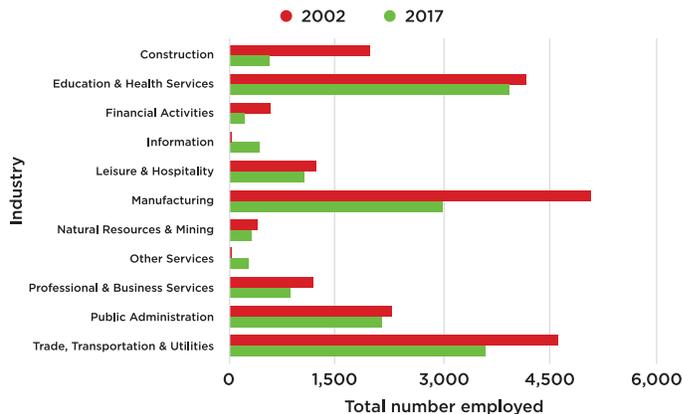
The STEP partnership seeks to enhance students’ understanding of the local labor market through career awareness programs (described in more detail below), as well as to respond to employer needs by developing a local pipeline of talent with the technical and employable skills that are in demand.

STEP has launched a #WorkHERE media campaign across the two counties. The hashtag is visible in printed materials and on social media. It has been so successful as a rallying device for all partners that STEP is in the process of launching a new campaign: #TheWorkStartsHere.

Career awareness programs include in-school activities such as the popular Lunch with Engineers program, where engineers from local companies join high school students in small groups for informal pizza lunches. Students are exposed to companies and careers that are often hidden in plain sight. Organizers emphasize the value of helping students to envision themselves in certain occupations. This is often accomplished by using diverse, homegrown talent as industry spokespersons. Program participants find that students are more inspired when they hear from professionals who grew up in their communities, went to their high schools, and played on their streets.

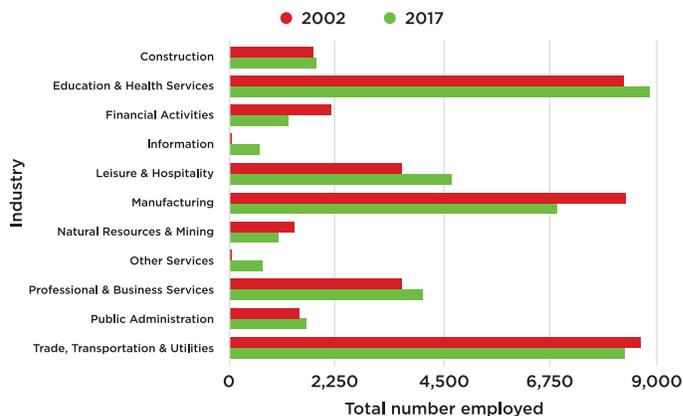
STEP also offers career-cluster showcases at the community colleges for students, teachers, and families, each one focusing on a particular industrial sector, and career connections programming for small groups of students who have expressed an interest in a specific career path. For out-of-school activities, STEP offers job shadowing opportunities and industry tours to students. STEP targets high school teachers and

FIG. 1: **EDGECOMBE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT**
(by Industry, 2002 & 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

FIG. 2: **NASH COUNTY EMPLOYMENT**
(by Industry, 2002 & 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

STEP (EDGECOMBE
& NASH COUNTIES)

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guidance counselors by providing summer learning sessions at the community colleges, training on staff development days, presentations at departmental meetings, hosted industry tours, and special seminars to expose career technical education teachers to best practices in their respective fields.

For skills development, STEP seeks to make the most of the resources at the two school systems and the community colleges. Professionals at these institutions are now working closely together, leading STEP to focus on maximizing local use of Career & College Promise (CCP), North Carolina's dual-enrollment program for high school students. CCP allows eligible North Carolina high school students to enroll, through their high schools, in college classes at state community colleges and universities. Students who successfully complete college courses earn college credits that they can take with them after graduation. In many cases, students can also earn dual credits – meeting high school graduation requirements with college courses.

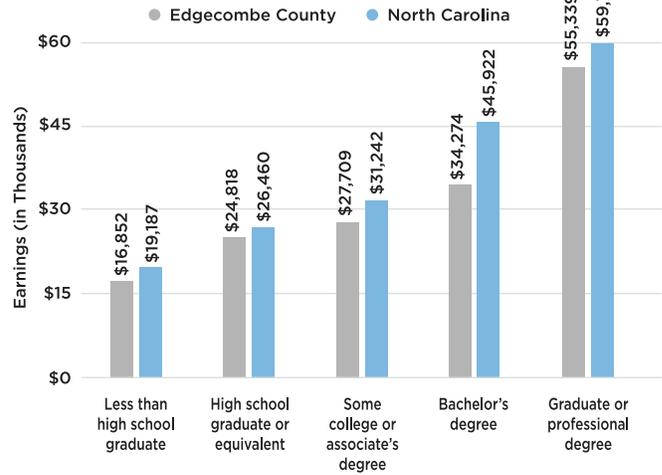
CCP offers students the option to choose from the following pathways:

- **College Transfer:** Designed for students planning to continue their educational careers beyond high school to eventually achieve associate's or bachelor's degrees at community colleges or universities.
- **Career and Technical Education:** Allows students to begin certification or diploma programs in particular technical fields or career areas.
- **Cooperative Innovative High Schools:** At these small public high schools, usually located on the campuses of universities or community colleges, students simultaneously work toward completion of both a high school diploma and an associate's degree, transferrable credit, or a certificate.

While STEP encourages students to explore all options, its goal is to have every student graduate from a public high school with two industry-recognized certificates through career and technical education.

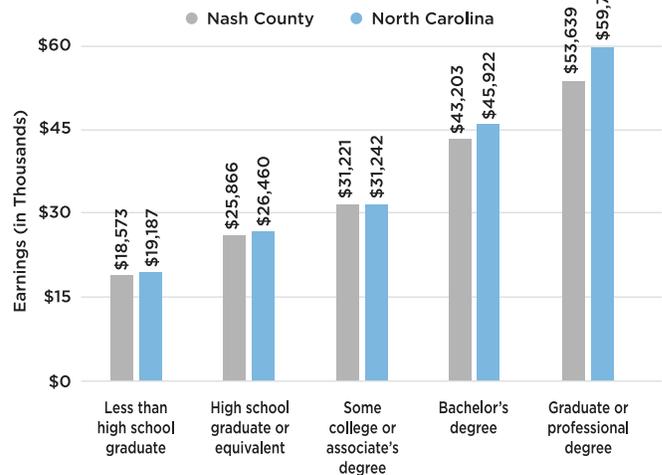
The partnership is successful due in large part to strong support from employers. STEP hosts an annual business leadership summit that enables the various partners to showcase what they have accomplished in the past year. STEP is so proud of this summit, that its leaders applied for and received a national award recognizing the collaboration.

FIG. 3: **MEDIAN EARNINGS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT** (Workers Age 25+)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIG. 4: **MEDIAN EARNINGS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT** (Workers Age 25+)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



P-12



POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

STEP (EDGECOMBE & NASH COUNTIES)

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STEP is ramping up. In its board's three-year work plan, the organization is focused on increasing the number of employers engaged in the partnership; getting more students involved in work-based learning experiences; and tracking the interest in, and impact of, its messaging campaigns. It is important to note that each partner organization has its own priorities and goals. For example, Edgecombe County Schools has developed a complementary goal of ensuring that all students graduate from high school prepared for college, whether or not they choose to matriculate. Its ambitious "College for All" initiative extends the relationship that young people have with the school district from birth through age 25. Young residents can expect communication and support from the school district's director of innovation during that entire cradle-to-career continuum. Nash-Rocky Mount Schools, for its part, is committed to the Future Focused initiative and has pledged to expose all students to all types of careers during their time in K-12. STEP partners not only praised the program for its support of the formal collective goals, but also for its support of the complementary goals of individual partner organizations.

What Is the Governance Model?

STEP has a 16-member board of directors composed of (1) the Edgecombe and Nash-Rocky Mount school district superintendents and (2) the Edgecombe and Nash Community College presidents, among others.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

STEP has set a goal of having all students graduate from high school with two industry-recognized credentials. The program emphasizes "Drive in the Fast Lane" opportunities — high-quality credentials that can be achieved in a year. To operationalize these goals, STEP has spent the past year focused on understanding the baseline. The program is assessing, for example, how many CCP courses are being taken in high schools and community colleges in the region, and it bases its career awareness activities on local workforce data.

According to a three-year plan approved by the STEP board in January 2018, in 2018-19 STEP will begin to track metrics on the number of CCP participants and industry-recognized credentials that are earned by students in high school and community college in the three cluster areas mentioned above. Metrics will be presented on a public report card, which should ensure that STEP and its partners remain responsive.

What Are the Early Indicators of Success?

Today, STEP can point to ever-increasing numbers of students and families participating in programs and reaching out for information. In addition, more industry partners have joined the program, including smaller businesses.

Recently, both Edgecombe and Nash counties expressed strong interest in becoming ACT Work Ready-certified. The ACT Work Ready Communities framework uses its assessment and certification expertise to help community leaders develop sustainable mechanisms for closing skills gaps and collecting workforce skills data.



Powered by the ACT WorkKeys system, the program gives residents verifiable proof to show employers that they are ready to succeed. The willingness and ability of these two counties to work together on ACT certification are welcome indicators of their willingness and ability to work together on postsecondary attainment.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

Edgecombe and Nash counties mirror other rural communities hoping to stem the “brain drain” that occurs as high-achieving youth leave home seeking better options for work and as those who remain see no benefit to postsecondary attainment. By introducing students and parents to opportunities for high-paying jobs for the students in their home counties before they graduate from high school, STEP provides the information and motivation needed for students to employ their higher learning certificates or degrees in their home counties.



K-64 (Catawba County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“Educational attainment goals need to focus on skills, not just degrees.”

— K-64 partner

“We have turned things around. We now get the brightest and the best as interns. There is not an inch of free space at the Manufacturing Solutions Center.”

— K-64 partner



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What Is the K-64 Initiative?

K-64 is a five-year education and economic development initiative in Catawba County that prepares students from pre-kindergarten (K) through retirement (64) to compete in the global economy and supports local companies by creating a highly-qualified talent pipeline. The initiative responds to the reality that Catawba County needs to attract, grow, and retain talent to meet future workforce needs. The initiative focuses on connecting students to opportunities that prepare them for work. From learning in technology-rich environments to experiencing local and global employment possibilities, K-64 actively readies students of all ages for viable and sustainable careers.



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Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Catawba Valley Community College:** Played a critical role in K-64’s ideation and serves as the administrative home for it and many of the county’s postsecondary programs. The college’s president is an active leader of the initiative.
- **Catawba County:** Provided the seed funding for the effort and remains an active leader in the initiative; requires a funding match from local companies.
- **Catawba County Chamber of Commerce:** Provides connectivity to the county’s business community.
- **Catawba County Economic Development Corporation:** Promotes K-64 when recruiting companies to the area.
- **Catawba County Schools, Hickory Public Schools, and Newton-Conover City Schools:** Share best practices and agree to implement evidence-based programs. Also work with postsecondary institutions to further align the respective curricula.
- **Lenoir Rhyne University:** Offers a 50 percent tuition reduction to residents of Catawba who maintain specified grade point averages.
- **Local Companies:** Generously provide work-based learning opportunities to students and work closely with the community college to offer postsecondary learning opportunities for the existing workforce. Local companies are also investing in K-64. Continued Catawba County funding is tied to a private sector match from local companies and grants from funders.



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WORKFORCE

K-64
(CATAWBA COUNTY)

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How Does the Initiative Work?

K-64 supports students, schools, and employers to ensure that Catawba County is an attractive place for a working-age population. Its leaders drive delivery of resources that allow schools and students to distinguish themselves by their marked understanding of workforce needs, developed pathways from school to work (and back to school), and emphasis on adaptable technology skills. In turn, employers find access to the talent pipeline they need.

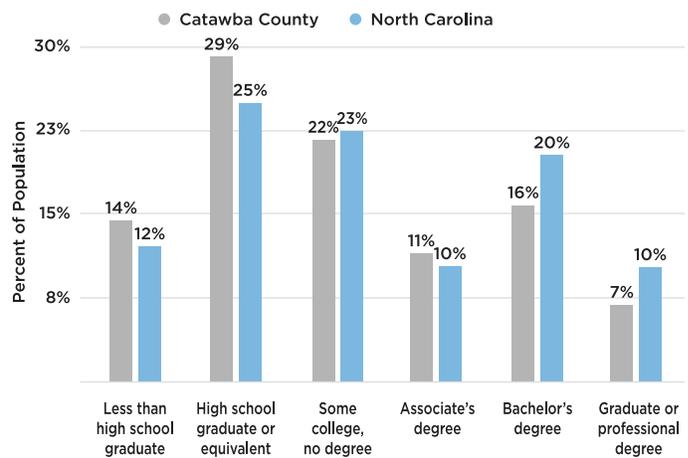
The initiative has six focus areas:

- 1 **One-to-World Technology:** Connecting every student with the technology devices needed to accelerate learning inside and outside the classroom.
- 2 **Character and Soft Skills Development:** Teaching critical soft skills, such as goal setting, interpersonal communication, and team building, to ensure that students are well prepared to engage in work and in life.
- 3 **Tech-Savvy Educators:** Equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to incorporate leading-edge technologies into lesson plans and classroom environments.
- 4 **Work-Based Learning:** Facilitating job shadowing, internships, co-ops, work-study programs, and apprenticeships to connect students with global career opportunities and local employers.
- 5 **Employer Engagement:** Cultivating collaborative partnerships with businesses to invest in the development of a well-prepared and highly engaged workforce of tomorrow.
- 6 **Career Adaptability:** Ensuring access to relevant educational services and training opportunities to help adults develop nimble skill sets and assure career longevity.

K-64 prides itself on not offering only new initiatives and programs. The leaders note that the K-64 focus areas are already evident, to some degree, in individual schools. Leaders say the value of K-64 lies in the ways the initiative identifies high-impact programs and works as a public-private partnership to expand those programs system-wide. If new initiatives are identified as potentially high impact and are not in place due to a lack of funding or resources, K-64 seeks the funding and resources to make these things happen. The underlying theory is that the combination and integration in every school of all six focus areas will differentiate Catawba County's education system from any competition in North Carolina or in the greater southeastern U.S. region. As reflected in **Figure 1**, the county has significant numbers of residents with lower levels of educational attainment than state averages.

One strategy for scaling is reflected in the successful work-based learning efforts in the county. Catawba boasts that it has placed 1,000 K-12 students in work-based learning opportunities with 350 companies. The Manufacturing Solutions Center alone has provided training programming for more than 2,000 students and offers tours to

FIG. 1: CATAWBA COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25-64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



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more than 10,000 students—many, but not all, of whom reside in Catawba County. Also, while K-64 operates only within Catawba County, it is particularly proud of the regional Apprenticeship Catawba program, which is a community collaboration of companies, the Catawba Valley Community College, the North Carolina Department of Labor, and high schools to offer four-year apprenticeships.

In another scaling strategy, K-64 has hired three college and career advocates to assist existing high school guidance counselors and to apprise them of the college and career programs available in the county. Counselors are seen as integral to the heavy emphasis on marketing education as a lifelong activity. In addition, they are able to spread the word on the many ways local educational institutions are building ever-increasing numbers of career pathways with multiple on- and off-ramps. Two very popular programs are the manufacturing and furniture academies at Catawba Valley Community College. The Mechatronics and Engineering community college curriculum begins with junior and senior high school students through the Apprenticeship Catawba program.

All of this work requires resources. In January 2017, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners committed \$2.6 million over two years in seed funding to help launch K-64. In turn, the K-64 board of directors is using this public funding to leverage private contributions and grant funds. One private match comes from a financing plan for \$430,000 from Peoples Bank to fund a one-to-world technology pilot program, providing a Chromebook for every seventh grader in Catawba County. The pilot program was devised based on input from all three school systems, local businesses, and community leaders.

K-64 understands that hardware will not solve digital literacy gaps. In addition to the notebooks, there is training for teachers. Catawba County Schools deploys 17 instructional technology experts throughout the system to help teachers use the technology to facilitate learning. The business community has also been helpful in ensuring that the technology is put to good use. Companies have assigned real projects to students for classroom project-based learning.

Leaders of K-64 insist that their individual efforts have been strengthened through their collaborative participation in the initiative. While the initiative focuses on students, some partners are focused on connecting with people who are currently disconnected from work and school. The local workforce development board is key to reaching out through community and faith-based organizations to share information about learning and work opportunities generated by K-64.

What Is the Governance Model?

K-64 is governed by a 12-person board of directors consisting of four members appointed by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners and eight ex-officio members representing the managing organizations. It is managed by Catawba Valley Community College in collaboration with local businesses leaders, community partners, Catawba County Schools, Hickory Public Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Catawba County Government, Catawba Economic Development Corporation, and the Catawba County Chamber of Commerce.



Is the Program Data-Driven?

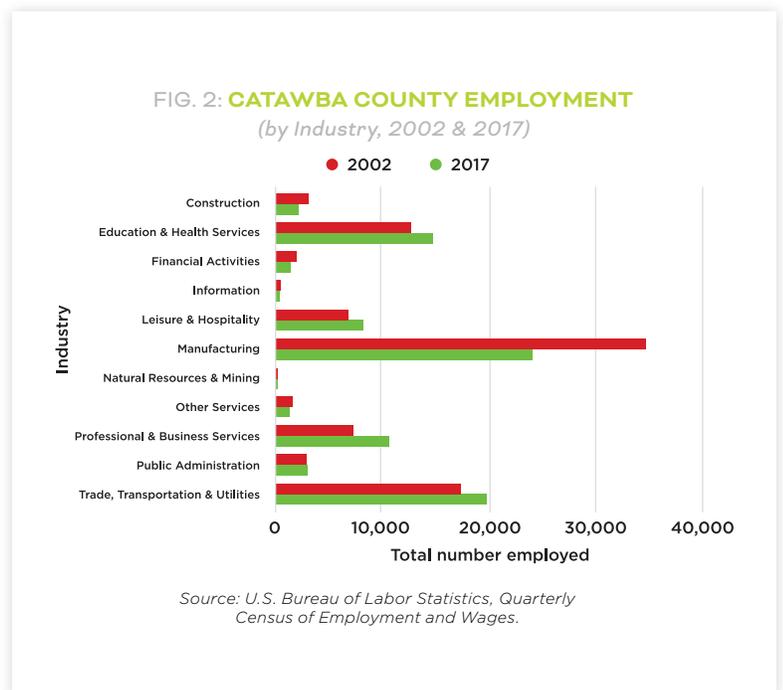
K-64's board of directors is charged with implementing concrete plans that include tangible and timely goals and outcomes. That work is in the very early stages. The initiative has set and is tracking the number of students involved in its technology, training, and work-based learning activities. It is also tracking reductions in absenteeism and tardiness in the three public K-12 systems. To date, the program has not set measurable outcome goals. That work is on the board's agenda for this year.

What Are the Early Indicators of Success?

K-64 has declared war on low educational attainment in the region, and there are signs the initiative is winning early battles. The Catawba County Board of Commissioners has pledged that it will not offer economic incentives to companies that hire people who do not have a high school diploma. Existing local companies are funding postsecondary learning for employees. They also offer flexibility to attend classes. Some of these companies, which at times hire community college students before they have completed their certificate or degree, are working with Catawba Valley Community College to create schedules that allow students to more easily and quickly finish their degrees.

As one example of the potential effect of this work on the region's future postsecondary attainment levels, Lenoir-Rhyne University has announced a new program to provide a minimum of 50 percent off tuition for (1) any first-year undergraduate student who is a Catawba County resident with at least a 3.5 high school GPA or (2) any transfer undergraduate student from Catawba County with more than 30 completed hours from an accredited college and at least a 3.5 GPA. Called the Catawba County Promise, the program will reward local high school and transfer students who have a B+ average with a guaranteed — and significant — minimum level of financial aid.

Finally, the K-64 leaders believe that their collaborative efforts to increase educational attainment will help to diversify the local economy. They point to recent recruitment of out-of-state and international firms as proof that the strategy is working. As noted in **Figure 2**, the county's mix of employment by industry has changed significantly between 2002 and 2017.



What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

K-64 is a testament to the ability of the public and higher education sectors to catalyze innovations in developing the local talent pipeline. Leaders identified successful existing programs that were working, working to remedy each of their six talent concerns. Those concerns, and the lack of coordination among existing



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K-64
(CATAWBA COUNTY)

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programs to address them, underscored the need for a systemic approach to link students' interests and abilities with employers' needs. The K-64 initiative enjoys great support for building on the success of proven practices to identify, inventory, and expand programs that are effective in at least one of three areas: (1) working in partnership with local employers to design educational curricula that correspond with workforce demands, (2) giving students early exposure to career options and associated education and training requirements, or (3) supporting ongoing skills development for adults.

Widespread community support for K-64 is one thing, but the willingness of Catawba's best and brightest to use K-64's pathways is another. In the past, a highly talented high school graduate would leave town and usually not return. Today, that student is likely to seek an internship or fellowship in one of Catawba's many companies.

It's not just that K-64 is causing Catawba to retain its talent. It is also recruiting talent. Entrepreneur Jordan Schindler moved to Hickory from Seattle to create items of clothing at the Manufacturing Solutions Center that will improve the wearer's wellness. The current focus is on delivering wound-healing medications or improved muscle performance through wearable medical garments.



K-64
(CATAWBA COUNTY)

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PROJECT SECURE (Wake County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“I could not find a job. Project SECURE changed that.” — *Project SECURE student*

“Information technology skills are perishable goods. We have to work with employers to stay on top of things.” — *Project SECURE administrator*

What Is Project SECURE?

Wake Technical Community College plans to train 450 people for information technology (IT) jobs in healthcare, cybersecurity, manufacturing, and financial services through Project SECURE — Supporting and Enhancing Cybersecurity through Upwardly-Mobile Retraining and Education. This training will be supported by the federal TechHire Initiative. On March 10, 2015, President Obama announced this initiative to expand local tech sectors by building tech talent pipelines in communities across the country. Through the associated grant program at the U.S. Department of Labor, the Capital Area Workforce Development Board and Wake Technical Community College received a \$3.9 million grant to train 350 young adults with barriers to employment for IT jobs in cybersecurity, network and computer systems administration, and computer user support. IBM is also sending 100 employees to Project SECURE to receive additional training on these topics. Participants who complete the program receive industry-recognized certifications.

Grant winners and TechHire community partnerships focus on the following:

- Data and innovative hiring practices to expand openness to non-traditional hiring.
- Models for training that prepare students in months, not years.
- Active local leadership to connect people to jobs with hiring on-ramp programs.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Wake Technical Community College (Wake Tech):** Provides classroom training to participants.
- **Capital Area and Durham Workforce Development Boards:** Facilitate work experience, on-the-job training, and support services for trainees. These NC Works programs serve as the first point of contact for many participants. They also provide labor market analysis and career pathways.
- **Wake County Economic Development:** Provides labor market analysis and connections to employers.
- **City of Raleigh:** Recruits people interested in IT careers and often feeds recruits to Project SECURE.



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PROJECT SECURE
(WAKE COUNTY)

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- **HCL, IBM, and SAS:** As the program’s business partners, these companies helped develop its curriculum and are prepared to hire its graduates.
- **Other employers:** Offer work-based learning opportunities for students.

How Does the Program Work?

TechHire is for individuals, aged 17-29, looking to go into IT and cyber security careers. These are high-skill/high-demand occupations with established career pathways. In North Carolina, computer user support specialists earn a median wage of \$46,670. From there, one can go on to become a computer network support specialist (\$57,970), a network and computer systems administrator (\$75,130), or a computer network architect (\$100,800). With additional training and experience, the pathway can lead to a job as a computer and information systems manager (\$124,420), a computer systems analyst (\$84,640), or an information security analyst (\$86,180). See **Figure 1** for the median North Carolina wage associated with completion of various training courses at Wake Tech.

FIG. 1: N.C. MEDIAN WAGE BY COURSE TRAINING



Source: Wake Technical Community College.

To qualify for Project SECURE grant funding, a person must:

- Be between the ages of 17 and 29;
- Be out of secondary school;
- Be unemployed or underemployed; and
- Have no education or work experience in cybersecurity.

If accepted, students receive support for tuition, books, and certification testing fees. A student may also be eligible to receive support for expenses such as childcare and travel. In addition, students are supported by career coaches who ensure that they get the academic assistance they need.

To date, the program has served 190 students. These students come to Project SECURE from a variety of backgrounds. Some are coming straight out of high school, others have started college but did not complete a degree or high-quality certificate, some have already been in the workforce, some have been outside the workforce for decades, and others have four-year college degrees but have been unable to secure well-paying jobs.

Figure 2 gives an overview of educational attainment for adults in Wake County.



Employers appreciate that Project SECURE graduates not only have the necessary certifications, but also the work experience that allows them to hit the ground running when hired. Indeed, even as interns, Project SECURE students are well prepared to contribute to their respective companies. The potential impact of this on the labor market is significant, as IT jobs are critical to many fast-growing industries in the region. **Figure 3** presents industry employment trends in Wake County over the past 15 years, which demonstrate the growing importance of technical jobs.

What Is the Governance Structure?

Wake Tech serves as the hub for the program.

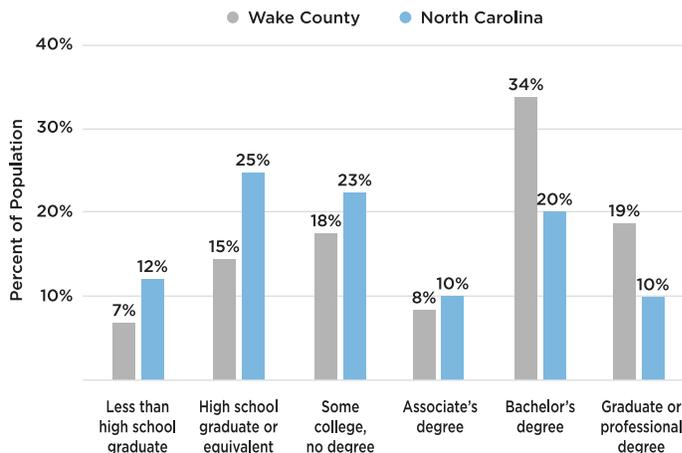
Is the Program Data-Driven?

TechHire grants pay for training projects for American workers that support well-paying, middle- to high-skilled, and high-growth jobs. These cover a diverse group of industries that have increasingly turned to skilled foreign workers under the H-1B visa program. As a grantee, Wake Tech tracks the number of students receiving certificates, and the program is ahead of schedule for providing them. Wake Tech also has tracked data on placement of graduates in specific industries.

What Are the Indicators of Success?

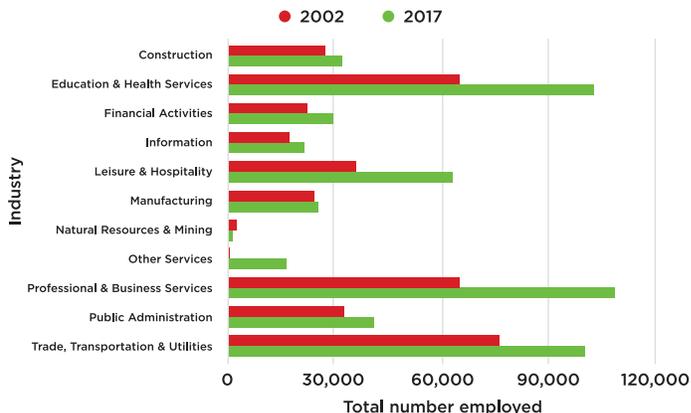
The number of students applying to Project SECURE is the first indicator of success. The second is the high degree of satisfaction among employers. One employer interviewed has been so pleased with his company's participation in the program to date, that he now reserves a spot so that the company is always able to accommodate a Project SECURE intern. The same employer hired an intern into a permanent position after the intern was lauded as the company's employee of the month. Further, Project SECURE expects that it will continue after the federal grant ends. The program has enjoyed such success, its supporters are certain that employers will continue to support it and that students will support a tuition-based model.

FIG. 2: WAKE COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(Ages 25–64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIG. 3: WAKE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT
(by Industry, 2002 and 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.



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PROJECT SECURE
(WAKE COUNTY)

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What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

The promise of the strategy does not lie in the federal dollars but, rather, in the structure of the program. Employers have actively engaged in structuring Project SECURE and they continue to be engaged in refining it. The program is setting new standards for demand-driven curriculum.

Also, a Wake Tech instructor is engaged in a benchmark study that will track the horizontal movement of students between continuing education and a curriculum program in IT. Given how important it is for students to have sufficient entry and exit ramps to upskilling opportunities, the study will no doubt prove insightful to Wake Tech far beyond its intended scope.



PROJECT SEARCH

(Buncombe County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“We believe every student deserves the skills needed to secure employment.”

— Program partner of Project SEARCH

“I love my job.” — Graduate of Project SEARCH now employed at Mission Hospital

What Is Project SEARCH?

In Asheville, Mission Health Project SEARCH helps secure competitive employment for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities through postsecondary education and work-based learning. The international program began in 1996 when Erin Riehle, the Director of the Emergency Department at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, partnered with Susie Rutkowski to fill a handful of jobs with people with disabilities. More than 20 years later, Project SEARCH has grown from one site at Cincinnati Children’s to a comprehensive internship and employment model in more than 400 sites across 46 states and almost a dozen countries. North Carolina has 12 Project SEARCH sites. Although only in its third cohort, the site in Asheville is already seen as a remarkable success. This is due, in large part, to the program’s employer partner, Mission Hospital, which The Arc of North Carolina named its employer of the year in 2017. The Arc is a membership organization committed to securing for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to choose and realize their goals of where and how they will learn, live, work, and play.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

Project SEARCH is driven by collaboration among the following community partners:

- **Mission Hospital:** Hosts the program and supplies the unpaid internships, often hiring interns into permanent paid positions.
- **The Arc of North Carolina:** Supplies the teacher, who serves as the program coordinator, job coach, and case manager for the students and refers students to the program.
- **Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College:** All interns are enrolled college students and the school provides an employability skills training curriculum, which consists of 12 different units that teach skills necessary to succeed on the job.
- **Job Coach:** Works on-site with interns and supervisors.
- **Business Advisory Council:** Offers ongoing insights into local labor market needs.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** Funds job coaching, job development, and provides vocational guidance.



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PROJECT SEARCH
(BUNCOMBE COUNTY)

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- **Vaya Health:** Funds instruction and job coaching after an intern has graduated and completed 90 days in a qualifying permanent job.
- **North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities:** Provided the initial funding for the program.
- **Families:** Support their students through the process and assist with the job search.
- **Students:** Bring their desire to learn and work.

How Does the Program Work?

On average, Buncombe County has a lower percentage of people possessing less than or only a high school diploma or less as compared to the population of North Carolina as a whole (see **Figure 1**).

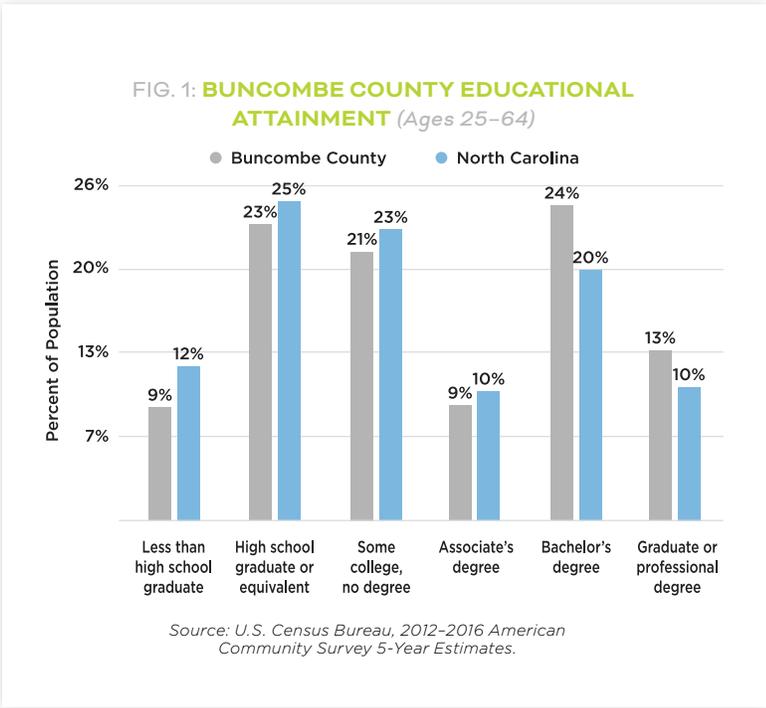
Project SEARCH is working to make Buncombe County’s percentage even lower by focusing on special education students who have completed high school. Both Asheville City Schools and Buncombe County Schools are common referral sources for these students, but service providers and social clubs also refer some interns. The program hosts informational sessions for parents and families at Mission Hospital to expose them to the program and host site. During the sessions, partners explain their respective contributions to the program and current interns share their experiences.

Applicants must interview, provide references, and participate in hands-on assessments. The final selection is based on performance and overall aptitude, as well as on the applicant’s demonstrated desire to work in the community at the end of the program. Over the three years of the program, there have been approximately 13 applicants per year, with a participant limit of 12 per cohort.

Interns begin with a four-week summer boot camp at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech). The camp runs classroom instruction for four hours a day, five days each week. There are also some on-site learning trips. Thereafter, there is classroom instruction from 8:30-9:15 a.m. and from 2:30-3:15 p.m. Students receive adult basic education content standards consistent with the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act.

This classroom training is supplemented with on-site job coaching by someone located at Mission Hospital who gives guidance and support to interns and managers. Much of the coach’s time is spent teaching managers how to get the most out of the interns.

All interns are placed at Mission Hospital or its related facilities, including the childcare facility and the laundry. Interns are placed in a variety of departments and settings for the three required internship rotations. The first placement seeks to match the intern’s expressed interests and strengths. The second is designed to be more of a stretch experience, often pairing the intern with a position he or she finds challenging. For example, an intern who prefers to work in a more social setting might be placed in a position that requires working alone for periods of time. The third experience is usually tailored to the type of position in which the intern would excel. The interns engage in systematic tasks that are time-intensive, equipment-intensive, or administration-intensive. Some examples include organizing the



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PROJECT SEARCH
(BUNCOMBE COUNTY)

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many instruments on surgical trays, cleaning and sterilizing equipment, stocking supplies, performing maintenance on patient rooms and public areas, and customer service. Taking these tasks from the job duties of existing employees allows those employees to focus on other productivity-enhancing tasks for Mission Hospital.

A new iPad application has been a game changer for the program by offering easily navigable work autonomy supports. The WorkAutonomy app, by Able Opportunities, includes production charts that help each intern manage daily tasks and messaging that helps him or her communicate with the supervisor and team. Interns have made such significant gains using the iPads at Mission Hospital, that the program now seeks to ensure that all graduates of the program have them at their places of employment.

Finally, Project SEARCH hosts a recognition ceremony for its graduates. At the ceremony, all graduates receive a certificate of program completion.

What Is the Governance Structure?

The program is business led, operating on a hub-and-spoke model with the instructor serving as the hub. Program guidance is provided by a Steering Committee of stakeholding partners. There is also a Business Advisory Council, which meets quarterly.

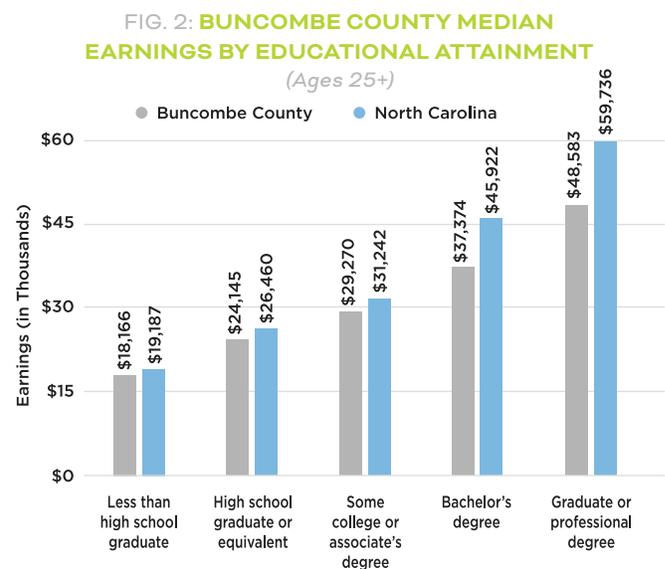
Is the Program Data-Driven?

The program pays close attention to the number of interns who secure permanent employment, whether at Mission Hospital or elsewhere. Students are required to work at least 16 hours per week to be considered employed.

In addition, the program provides skills and educational attainment assessments of interns at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the program. Project SEARCH interns consistently make greater gains on the midpoint and end-of-program assessments than those in a control group.

What Are the Indicators of Success?

Core partners continue to expand investments and involvement in Project SEARCH. Already, Mission Hospital has made permanent offers to a third of Project SEARCH graduates, while almost all of the other graduates are employed elsewhere in the county. Graduates make between \$11–\$12 per hour; \$11.50 per hour — approximately \$24,000 per year for full-time work — is considered a living wage in Buncombe County. This is comparable to the median earnings for high school graduates in Buncombe County, as shown in **Figure 2**. As a whole, Project SEARCH graduates are well-prepared and there’s an expectation that they will require less training on the job.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



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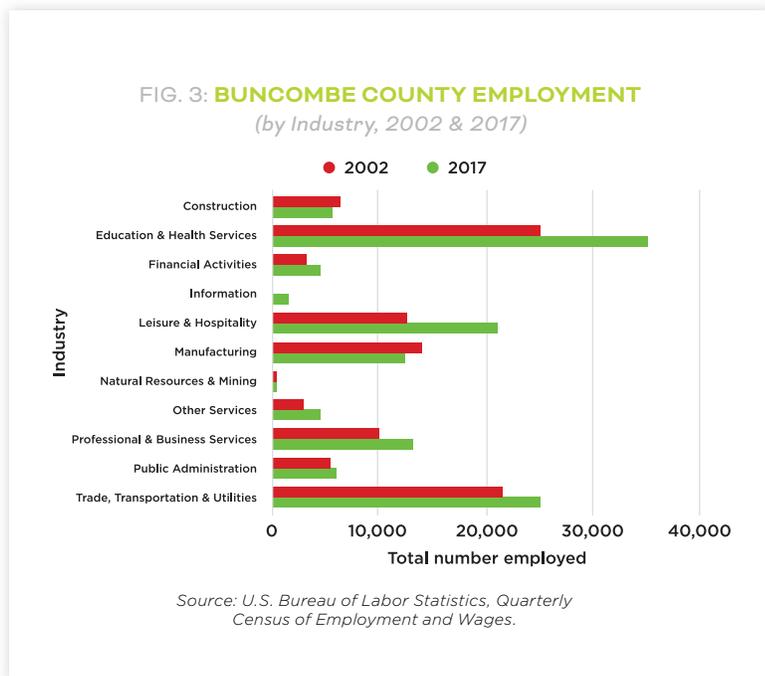


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PROJECT SEARCH
(BUNCOMBE COUNTY)

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Furthermore, A-B Tech is building a Hospitality Certificate internship program through its Continuing Education program that will resemble Project SEARCH. It could even include graduates if they choose to further explore a career in the industry. This program will give students a certificate from the Guest Services Professional Industry. The expansion is not surprising. Some of Buncombe County's largest hospitality industries are represented on the Business Advisory Council (Biltmore Farms and Biltmore Estate). There is also participation from the growing craft beer brewing industry. With a 3.1 percent county unemployment rate as of August 2018, these employers often must bus employees into Buncombe from surrounding counties. As such, they are eager to mine the promise of Project SEARCH to expand the available local labor force. See **Figure 3** for employment trends in Buncombe County over the past 15 years of available data, with Leisure and Hospitality being one of the county's growing industries.



What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

The promise lies in the ability to deliver this program in more communities in North Carolina and the impact that replication will have on employees who do not have disabilities. First, people with disabilities are facing a national unemployment rate in excess of 50 percent. In the Bureau of Labor Statistics Jobs Report released October 5, 2018, the employment-to-population ratio for working-age people with disabilities was 31.4 percent for September 2018. In comparison, for working-age people without disabilities, the employment-to-population ratio was 74.0 percent for the same period.¹ Also, the research literature affirms Mission Hospital's experience. Making accommodations for interns with disabilities results in benefits for all employees. Incorporating the principles of universal design in plans for office buildings, terminals, hotels, stadiums, and other facilities promotes integration and inclusion for people with disabilities. The concept also applies to "soft" elements of the workplace. Participating in a truly inclusive environment allows all workers, including individuals with disabilities, to achieve their employment goals.

1. Anna Brennan-Curry, Research on Disability, Employment Policy and Measurement, Rehabilitation and Research Training Center, *nTIDE September 2018 Jobs Report: Promising Job Gains for Americans with Disabilities* (Oct. 5, 2018), <https://researchondisability.org/epm-rrtc/epm-news/2018/10/05/ntide-september-2018-jobs-report-promising-job-gains-for-americans-with-disabilities>.

PROFOUND GENTLEMEN (Mecklenburg)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“Profound Gentlemen creates this environment where more male teachers of color have that critical mentor and can, in turn, impact boys of color.” — *Co-founder*

“Profound Gentlemen has given me the tools to be a better leader inside and outside the classroom.” — *Math teacher in a Charlotte-Mecklenburg middle school*

What Is the Profound Gentlemen Program?

Profound Gentlemen (PG) aims to improve the academic performance of students by ensuring a diverse teaching pool. In particular, the organization focuses on retaining the relatively few male educators of color in the sector. Launched in Charlotte in 2014 by two former middle school teachers, the program seeks to accelerate the personal, professional, and leadership development of emerging and current male educators of color.

As the program points out, of the 10,000 educators in Charlotte, fewer than 450 are male teachers of color — and 27 percent of that cohort are projected to leave the profession after the first year. These numbers are particularly troubling, given that research indicates that having an African-American teacher improves the social, emotional, and academic progress of all students, especially of low-income boys of color. Specifically, having at least one African-American teacher in grades 3–5 reduces by 39 percent the probability of a low-income African-American male dropping out before completing high school.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Profound Gentlemen:** Delivers high-impact programming to educators of color.
- **UNC Charlotte’s Urban Educators Program:** Provides research and evaluation support for the PG program.
- **Charlotte Mecklenburg School District:** Hosts PG members at new teacher hiring fairs, invites them to speak at retreats and training events, and includes PG among the opportunities for teachers’ professional development.
- **ShermCo:** A national strategic planning partner helping to develop the expansion blueprint.
- **Social Venture Partners Charlotte:** Part of a global network of strategic philanthropists helping to strengthen high-impact organizations that are attacking social and economic inequality.
- **Programs that recruit teachers to the profession:** Offer PG a pipeline to new teachers.



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PROFOUND GENTLEMEN
(MECKLENBURG)

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How Does the Program Work?

PG has experimented with several models in several states in its short history. At one point, PG had local programming in five cities — Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Memphis, and Washington, D.C. — and a special emphasis on connecting educators in the same feeder school pipelines in each of these cities. These are all cities with strong economies in sectors requiring postsecondary educational attainment. As shown in **Figure 1**, Mecklenburg County residents' post-secondary educational attainment is, on average, 50 percent higher than the state as a whole.

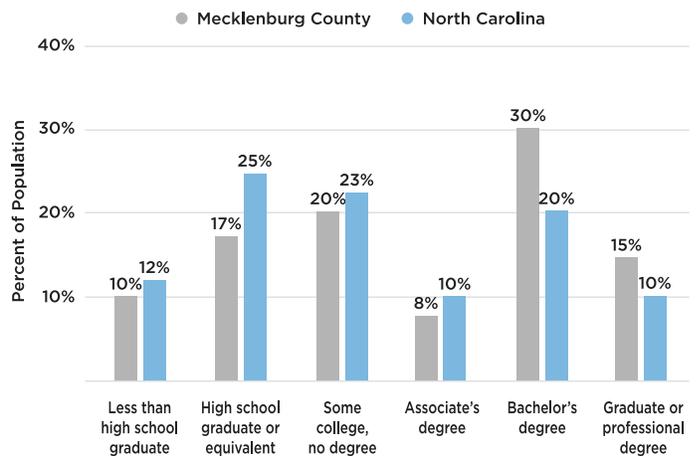
Today, the focus is on expanding the full-time cohort model that was developed in Charlotte. This model responds to research from Dr. Chance Lewis at UNC Charlotte on the four main reasons male educators of color leave the classroom:

1. Barriers to navigating the profession
2. Lack of mentorship
3. Lack of professional development
4. Lack of career opportunities to help them advance

PG focuses on direct peer mentorship, sponsoring professional development activities, and facilitating community-building through participant gatherings. Current and aspiring male educators of color (the “Gentlemen”) join PG primarily through its website. Almost three out of every four Gentlemen are encouraged to join by a current member. Other applicants are recruited during PG events at schools, school district-wide events, and the annual PG conference in March. Applications are accepted in August, January, and March of each academic year. Of the 410 spots available this year, applicants in August secured 360. This level of demand is not unusual; each year there are between 50-60 educators of color placed on a waiting list for the next academic year.

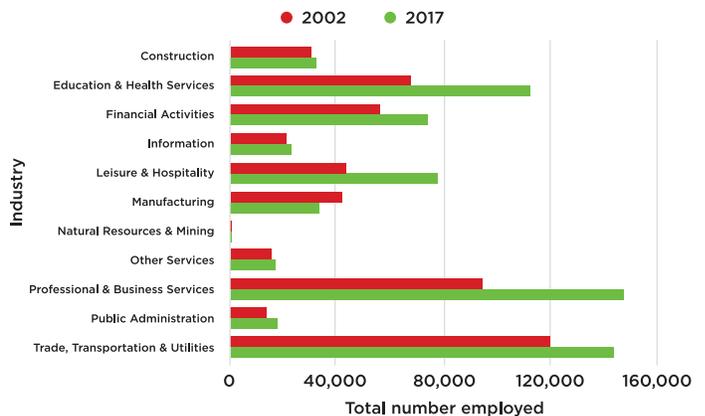
PG places each accepted applicant in a small cohort of 15-20 Gentlemen. Cohorts are led by an Impact Leader who serves as a life/career and instructional coach for the Gentlemen. Each Gentleman receives an Impact Professional Development Plan to document goals and develop an education leadership pathway to further impact his community. Participants are required to have at least 20 hours of contact with their Impact Leader per year. They are also expected to take advantage of PG's varied and plentiful programming. There are monthly in-person and virtual workshops that are led by Gentlemen to encourage peer learning. There are also content-rich weekend retreats featuring outside speakers and an annual three-day conference held in Charlotte. Finally, there are multiple casual social meet-ups. During many

FIG. 1: MECKLENBURG COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25-64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIG. 2: MECKLENBURG COUNTY EMPLOYMENT (by Industry, 2002 & 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

PROFOUND GENTLEMEN
(MECKLENBURG)

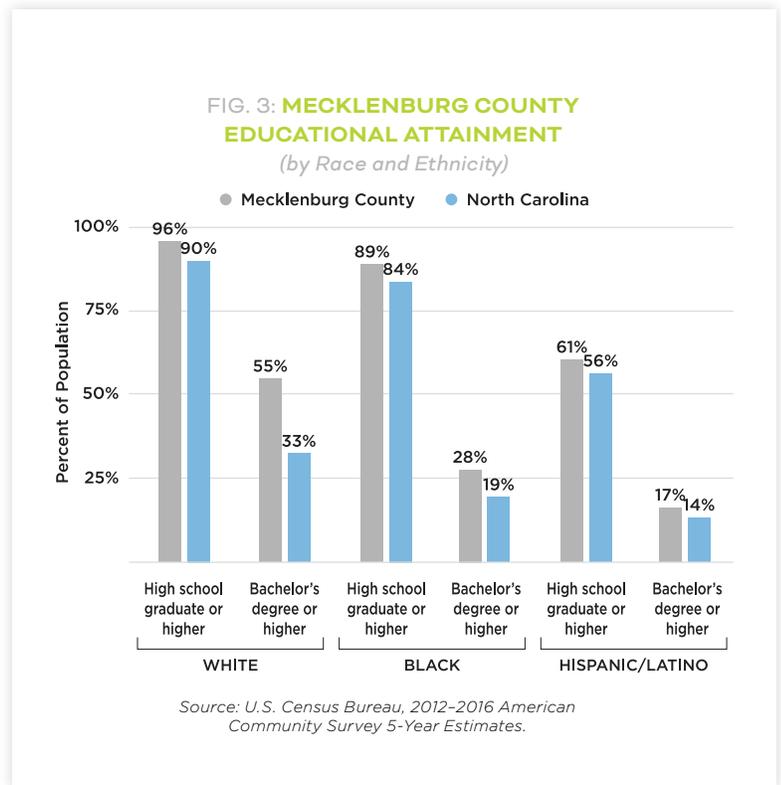
myFUTURENC

of these programs, participants have the chance to connect their teaching to the goal of preparing young people for the changing labor market in Charlotte, as detailed in **Figure 2**.

In addition to providing its own programming, PG sponsors educators to attend relevant conferences hosted by statewide and national organizations. The diversity of programming available to Gentlemen seeks to cater to the diverse needs of these educators. Gentlemen are not expected to participate in all programming, but they must meet the 20-hour minimum with their Impact Leader and attend the three-day conference in order to remain in the cohort.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

Profound Gentlemen has an ambitious goal of returning 90 percent of program participants to the educational sector each year better prepared to impact all students. More specifically, they hope to see 70 percent of Gentlemen return to the school site the year after participating in a cohort. It is their belief that these metrics will lead to 90 percent of boys of color matriculating through their K-12 experience, amply prepared for college and career opportunities. This, in turn, would help to close the educational attainment gap for residents of color in Mecklenburg County (**Figure 3**).



What Are the Indicators of Success?

Over the program’s three years, more than 90 percent of Gentlemen participants have returned to the field of education. In the 2017-18 school year, 98 percent of the male educators of color in the network returned to the field, while in the previous school year, 100 percent of participants returned.

Beyond retention, another important early indicator of success is the increase in leadership roles and responsibilities assumed by Gentlemen after participating in PG. The program goal is to have 40 percent of the participants take on a leadership role. In 2018, 80 percent of participants reported engaging in leadership activity in the field.

What Is the Promise of this Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

PG responds to two important areas of research. First, as is true for much of the nation, North Carolina struggles to retain male educators of color in the profession. Only 2 percent of teachers in public schools are men of color. Second, PG’s mission is directly responsive to research indicating that, when students of color have an educator of color during K-12, they are more likely to graduate from high school, experience increased self-esteem, and have a greater chance of pursuing a four-year college degree.

Further, school districts often struggle with retaining male educators of color, who are five times more likely to leave the education profession than other demographic groups. Although PG's membership likely consists of educators already motivated to stay in the field, it has demonstrated not only an ability to retain males of color but to prepare them for leadership. As noted above, 80 percent of Gentlemen participating in 2016-17 took on leadership roles in their communities in 2018.

PG has developed a strategic plan to expand across North Carolina. The program has already opened a site in Edgecombe County and begun recruitment of cohorts in eastern North Carolina and the Triangle. Interest in the program is as high in other parts of the state as it has been in Charlotte.

As part of the new strategic plan, PG hopes to go as deep as it goes broad. The group now seeks to work with large percentages of males of color within a given school district. For example, PG has plans to work directly with a third of the males of color in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district by 2019-20. This will allow PG to test whether their participants are making a meaningful difference in the classroom. At present, 87 percent of participants say they are using PG resources and believe they are better teachers because of it. Now, PG has an opportunity to use student surveys of teachers and scores on student growth and proficiency tests to demonstrate the impact of Gentlemen in the classroom.



WILSON 2020 YOUTH MASTER PLAN

(Wilson County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“We want our best and brightest committed to this region.”

— Wilson educator

“We need to figure out what is working and do more of that.”

— Wilson County employer



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What Is the Wilson 2020 Youth Master Plan?

In 2014, stakeholders in Wilson County developed a comprehensive master plan to improve life outcomes for local youth. Participating stakeholders included educators, parents, community members, nonprofits, businesses, churches, law enforcement, and government agencies. The groups identified five key interrelated areas for focus — K-12 Academic Achievement, Safety, Out-of-School Time, Education and Workforce, and Health and Wellness. Wilson Forward, a community capacity-building organization, is charged with evaluating and communicating the progress toward the Youth Master Plan’s goals.



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Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Wilson Forward:** Serves as a backbone organization for the Youth Master Plan.
- **Wilson County Schools:** Focuses on providing a safe environment while giving students the skills they need for success in the future.
- **Wilson Community College:** Works with employers and other institutions of learning to offer coordinated programming that responds to the labor needs of the workforce.
- **Barton College:** Offers postsecondary learning opportunities.
- **Local Employers:** Engages in educational programming and provides academic and non-academic program supports.
- **Wilson County Public Health Department:** Places health centers on school grounds.



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How Does the Program Work?

The Youth Master Planning process began with a landscape mapping survey to identify the resources and resource gaps that existed in Wilson County to support youth. From there, planners identified five interrelated areas for focus: K-12 Academic Achievement, Safety, Out-of-School Time, Education and Workforce, and Health and Wellness. The Youth Master Plan lists 16 desired outcomes across the five focus areas, along with specific goals. The plan could help to reduce Wilson County’s high school



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

WILSON 2020
YOUTH MASTER PLAN
(WILSON COUNTY)

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dropout rate, which, at 10.1 percent, is more than twice the state average (4.6 percent), and ultimately increase the number of high school graduates who go on to attain bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees (see **Figure 1**).

There has been a significant number of new programs launched as a result of the Master Plan, including the well-regarded Wilson Applied Technology Academy. Below, two of the new programs are described.

A Gentleman's Agreement

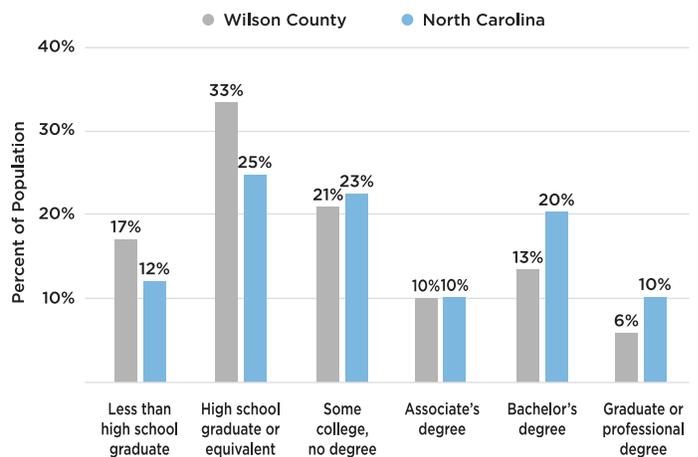
In 2014, student achievement in Wilson County Schools ranked in the bottom quartile of North Carolina public schools, and there were significant disparities based on race. The achievement rates for African-American males were particularly troubling. The community recognized that without a focus on equity, they would not make the progress they desired. See **Figure 2** for details on educational attainment by race and ethnicity in the county.

To help reach the goal of having 100 percent of high school students prepared to succeed after graduation, the school system partnered with for-profit and nonprofit community organizations to launch A Gentleman's Agreement.

The program focuses on male African-American high school students. Participant numbers are kept intentionally small — approximately 25 per school — to ensure a robust experience. With the help of faith-based and other community-based organizations, law enforcement, and local businesses, the program offers five components: academic supports, individual mentorship, experiences leading to cultural and postsecondary educational exposure, parental engagement, and an end-of-year celebration. Students enter the program during ninth grade. The program recruits students who may be struggling academically but show potential for peer leadership. The theory is that if these students become focused on academic achievement, they will influence others who are not in the program to become similarly focused.

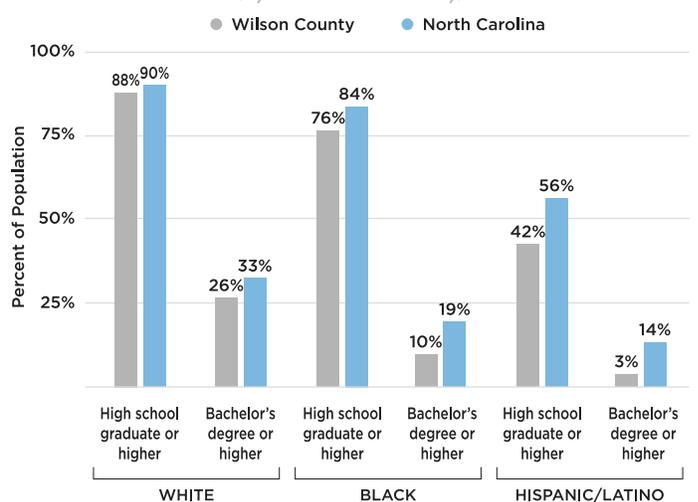
The program outcomes have been impressive. Of the first graduating cohort, all pursued some form of postsecondary education, with one student receiving a full academic scholarship to Winston-Salem State University. Intermediate outcomes include increased attendance, decreased suspensions, and improved academic performance. Word of the program has spread quickly. Last year, Wilson County Schools presented on A Gentleman's Agreement at the National School Boards Association Conference.

FIG. 1: WILSON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25–64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIG. 2: WILSON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (by Race and Ethnicity)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

WILSON 2020
YOUTH MASTER PLAN
(WILSON COUNTY)

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The program is possible because of the broad community support it enjoys. Local companies conduct workshops and donate food for meetings. One company secured tickets for a trip to the Durham Performing Arts Center. Others helped with a visit to the National Museum of African-American History in Washington, D.C. And when the young men needed proper attire for an event, one local store gave each of them a shirt and tie. In terms of supporting the students after graduation, Barton College and Wilson Community College have committed to presenting a full scholarship to one graduating senior each year.

A Gentleman's Agreement is now expanding to six middle schools and five elementary schools. In addition, the school system has launched a companion program for African-American girls: Her PRIDE, which stands for Positivity, Respect, Intelligence, Determination, and Excellence.

Health Centers in Schools

The Wilson County community is working to bridge the gap between education and health. Community members have focused on data demonstrating that (1) children perform better academically when they are healthy and (2) high rates of absenteeism are a predictor for low academic achievement. As a response, they have focused their efforts on creating community-supported school-based health centers. In 2017, they opened the first on-campus health center at a middle school. In 2018, they expanded to one high school. Telemedicine will be used, when feasible, to allow staff to care for patients at either site.

For the 2017-18 school year, 325 Forest Hills Middle School students were enrolled at the Wilson Area Student Health Center. That's about 60 percent of the school's total student population. Teachers also used the services.

Registered nurses and a nurse practitioner staff the centers. In addition to being able to handle common bumps and bruises, as well as required physicals for athletics, the health centers provide close observations of students with chronic diseases, such as asthma and diabetes. They are also able to sometimes diagnose problems that go beyond illness. For example, it turned out that a child who presented with a stomachache was actually facing chronic hunger. The health center was able to refer the child to a nonprofit program that feeds children on the weekend.

The health centers seek to keep children in the classroom, rather than see them sitting in a doctor's office or at home waiting for appointments for medical matters that are not serious. The school-based health centers have been made possible through the Healthcare Foundation of Wilson, which recently awarded the health department a \$175,000 grant that will continue to fund the center at Forest Hills Middle School and the new one at Beddingfield High School.

Surprisingly, the centers have had minimal impact on absenteeism, but tardiness has improved dramatically.

What Is the Governance Structure?

Wilson Forward has a board of directors numbering 24. Half of the members are elected and half serve in an ex officio capacity. The board meets six times a year. A smaller executive committee meets in the months in which the full board does not meet. The executive director works closely with partner organizations to carry out programs, track data, and host community conversations.



Is the Program Data-Driven?

Wilson Forward tracks activities toward desired community outcomes and community-level indicators. There are early efforts to also track program data. For example, A Gentleman's Agreement tracks academic achievement and leadership activity of participants in high school. The program also documents when participants begin postsecondary education. Similarly, the schools with health centers track attendance, tardiness, and academic achievement.

What Are the Indicators of Success?

A Gentleman's Agreement has sent 100 percent of its graduating participants on to college or to careers requiring further training, such as at the firefighter academy or in the military. The health centers are a newer innovation. As such, it is too early to know what effect they will have on academic achievement, and while there has been minimal change in absenteeism thus far, they have reduced tardiness at the middle school. Another immediate benefit is that students are likely to be healthier if center staff successfully encourage them to participate in school-sponsored physical activities.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

A Gentleman's Agreement and school-based health centers are both programs seeking to solve particular challenges. In many school systems, African-American males are not reaching their full potential. While the program is labor intensive, it is showing significant promise with young men who did not appear to be on a college-ready track in the ninth grade. Similarly, given the emerging focus on the serious effects of absenteeism on academic achievement, school-based centers are an intervention to watch.



GOLD RUSH GRANT

(Mecklenburg County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“People want to finish what they started.” — UNC Charlotte administrator

“I cried when I got the call.” — Gold Rush Scholarship recipient

What is a Gold Rush Grant?

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) launched its Gold Rush Grant program in 2016. The program seeks to mitigate barriers to timely graduation through the granting of one-time completion micro-grants of \$1,500. The Gold Rush Grant is offered by invitation only to selected students who are within two semesters of graduating from UNC Charlotte and have demonstrated financial need during their senior year. In order to receive the grants, students must agree to participate in two activities designed to help them be more successful in their future careers. These activities may include developing a degree-completion plan, having a resume reviewed, attending a career workshop, or participating in an online financial literacy training module.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **UNC Charlotte, Office of the Provost, Division of Enrollment Management:** UNC Charlotte created and implements the Gold Rush Grant program. Staff there engage in active peer learning and research with other universities seeking to boost completion rates through micro-grants.
- **UNC Charlotte Career Services:** Provides some of the activities grant recipients are required to attend.
- **UNC Charlotte Foundation Board:** Pledged \$1 million in matching support for the grant program.
- **Private donors:** Various donors underwrite many of the grants.

How Does the Program Work?

UNC Charlotte had a problem — almost 700 academically eligible students “stopping out,” or leaving school before completing their degrees and re-enrolling later, each year. Of that number, 63 percent had a grade point average over 2.5, and 32 percent had a grade point average over 3.0. UNC Charlotte surveyed the students to understand why they were leaving school before completing their degrees. Seventy-four percent cited financial reasons. Many had holds on their university accounts that prevented them from registering. Others found themselves needing to return to the workforce, but with no degree and significant student loans. (The average student loan debt was \$28,000.) Seeing this, the university’s Vice Provost for Enrollment Management stepped in with an idea that is turning things around at UNC Charlotte.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

**GOLD RUSH GRANT
(MECKLENBURG COUNTY)**

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Each year, the Gold Rush Grant program mines its database for eligible students. To qualify, a student must have a 2.0 grade point average, have earned 105 credit hours, be a North Carolina resident, and be Pell grant-eligible without having declined financial aid. The scholarship is a one-time grant award of \$1,500 to students within two semesters of graduating. The students identified are invited through a randomized process to apply and demonstrate financial need. Eligible students who are not selected are placed into a control group, which receives “business-as-usual” financial aid, messaging, and supports provided to all students.

As a condition of receiving this grant and to help ensure future career success, each recipient must complete two of the following “skin in the game” activities:

1. Write a degree completion plan that describes which courses the student will take to complete his or her degree in the appropriate amount of time.
2. Have a resume reviewed and approved by a career advisor.
3. Attend a career fair or workshop for resume writing and/or or improving interview skills.
4. Participate in a mock interview.
5. Participate in financial literacy online modules to learn effective ways to save, spend, and budget money in college and after graduation.

Each of these services is open to any UNC Charlotte student, but Gold Rush Grant recipients report that they find them especially valuable and likely would not have engaged in them had they not been required to do so by the program.

What Is the Governance Structure?

The program is now governed by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences grant program.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

UNC Charlotte surveys its students to determine short- and medium-term effects of the Gold Rush Grant. In addition, the campus is leading the way on robust evaluation of “finish line” grants. It is working with the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) and nine other institutions in a U.S. Department of Education grant to (1) refine its predictive analytic models for identifying students who could benefit from completion grants, (2) assess impacts of the grants on students’ social-psychological well-being, and (3) measure students’ persistence outcomes. UNC Charlotte will also learn more about the effectiveness of its messaging, its cost per participant, and its cost effectiveness.

What Are the Indicators of Success?

Gold Rush Grant recipients are surveyed every semester. Results indicate that students have to work fewer hours; are better able to secure school resources, such as books; and have higher persistence rates.



What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

North Carolina has a whopping 905,000 residents who have some college education but no degree or high-quality certificate (see **Figure 1**).

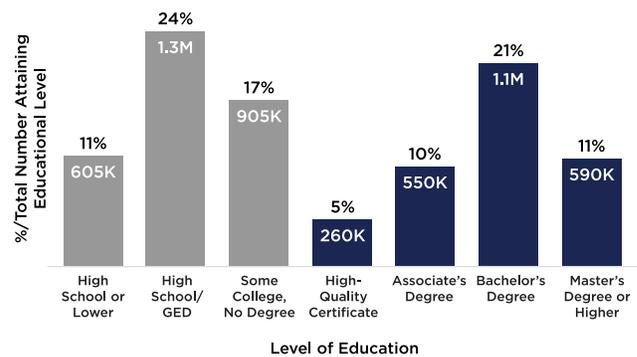
To be sure, some individuals included in that number are still pursuing degrees. Many are not. Given the data demonstrating that “some college, no degree” on average does not result in any significant wage premium, there is pressure on institutions of higher learning to get more students across the finish line. The Gold Rush Grant program offers two areas of promise for North Carolina.

First, the program is part of an emerging national trend that involves using emergency money — often relatively modest amounts — as a tool to help retain and graduate upperclassmen. The Coalition of Urban Serving Universities and the APLU published a 2016 study, entitled “Foiling the Drop-out Trap,” about grants “for retaining and graduating students.” The study acknowledged that evaluation of the programs “is fairly limited” and that more research needs to be done before the grants can be definitively described as boosting graduation rates. The impact “can be difficult to isolate” among many other factors that affect a student’s ability to graduate. In its work with APLU, UNC Charlotte is offering to share the outcomes of a robust evaluation. We will all learn from that work. In addition, while it described such aid as important, the same study said the grants would be “ineffective” as standalone efforts and need to be part of a wider campus culture dedicated to “increasing retention, graduation, and overall success for all students.” UNC Charlotte has made that commitment to all students.

Second, the Gold Rush Grant program is informing, and has been informed by, efforts to help those who have already dropped out return to campus for degree completion. Since 2006, UNC Charlotte has implemented a 49ers Finish Program for non-completers who have attained at least 90 credit hours. The university scans its records to find these former students, reaches out through postcards, offers a customized website, waives the application fee, and offers a special academic concierge program that supports students as they interface with departments on campus. Nine hundred non-completers have graduated from this program since its inception in 2006. These students are specifically recognized by the Chancellor at UNC Charlotte graduation ceremonies.

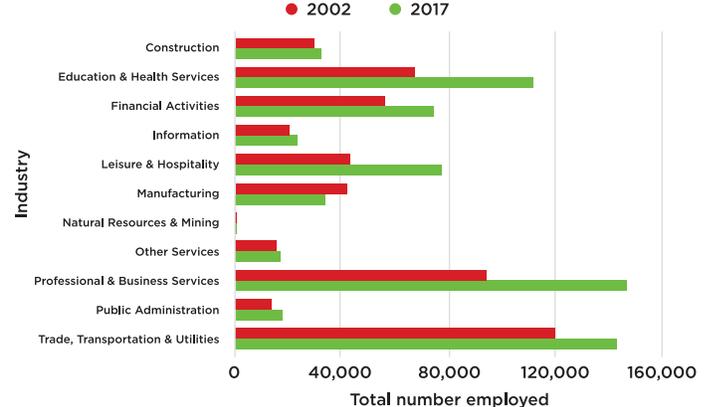
Now, UNC Charlotte seeks to extend the program to students in the Charlotte area who started at other institutions. This new effort will use much of the same approaches used for former 49ers, but it will also rely heavily on digital marketing. This effort is sure to be well-received by employers in the Charlotte region’s industries that increasingly require high-skill workers as they grow (see **Figure 2**).

FIG. 1: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AMONG NORTH CAROLINA ADULTS (Aged 25–64, 2016)



Source: myFutureNC.

FIG. 2: MECKLENBURG COUNTY EMPLOYMENT (by Industry, 2002 & 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

GOLD RUSH GRANT
(MECKLENBURG COUNTY)

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MADE IN DURHAM

(Durham County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“Made in Durham gives youth a voice to advocate for themselves.” — *Made in Durham Youth Network member*

“In the most successful communities, enlightened leaders of educational institutions create partnerships and connections with the business community in order to stay relevant and adapt.” — *CEO of major employer*

What is Made in Durham?

Made in Durham (MID) is a community partnership made up of educators, businesses, government units and employees, youth-serving nonprofits, and young people mobilized around a shared vision that all of Durham’s youth will complete high school and a postsecondary credential and begin a rewarding career by the age of 25. In pursuit of this mission, the organization focuses on employer engagement, career pathways, youth engagement, data for decision-making, and opportunity youth, or young people who are disconnected from both school and work.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Local business leaders:** These individuals make up the majority of Made in Durham’s board of directors. They fund the organization and partner with public agencies to provide work-based learning opportunities.
- **Youth leaders:** Participate in the Youth Network and represent youth on the board of directors and advisory team.
- **City of Durham:** The city provides funding and the city manager serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham County:** The county provides funding and the county manager serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham Public Schools:** The school system provides in-kind support and the superintendent serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham Technical Community College:** The community college provides in-kind support and the president serves on the board of directors.
- **Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber’s president serves on the board of directors.
- **MDC:** MDC launched and incubated Made in Durham until it became an independent organization. The president of MDC serves on the board of directors.
- **North Carolina Central University:** The university provides in-kind support, including an intern for Durham Futures, and the chancellor serves on the board of directors.
- **A collaborative of youth-serving nonprofit organizations:** Serve on the advisory team.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

MADE IN DURHAM
(DURHAM COUNTY)

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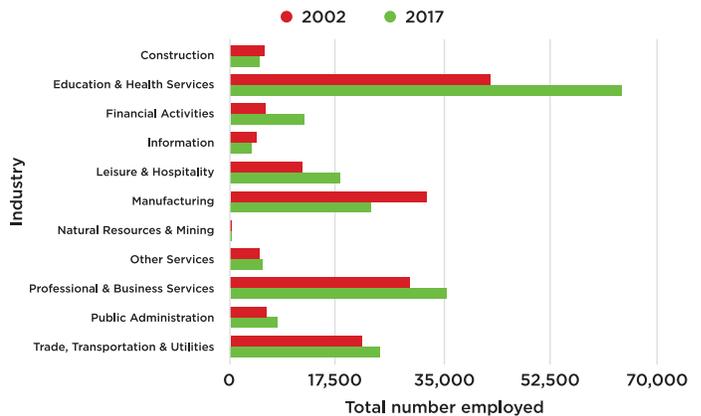
How Does the Program Work?

MID is not a program, as partners quickly explain when asked to describe the partnership and its strategies for pursuing alignment and systems change in Durham. Rather, this nonprofit organization conducts its work by convening partners and aligning their individual strategic efforts into a collective one through task forces and action teams, which are supported by MID staff.

MID is focused on systems change, and the following two examples demonstrate how the organization works. First, a Business Engagement Team evolved from the organization's goal to "engage employers in developing an education-to-career system that establishes a robust talent pipeline to meet their labor needs." This team coordinates education partners in their efforts to collaborate with employers in designing programs to meet their workforce needs, resulting in a more effective and streamlined approach to growing the local talent pool. For example, Duke Energy awarded a grant to Durham Technical Community College to create an electrical line technician program that will prepare students to fill the numerous jobs available in this field, and Durham Public Schools will implement programming to build career awareness about this sector. Durham employers welcome this efficiency made possible by MID as they continue to need evolving skills from employees in their respective industries, as reflected in **Figure 1**.

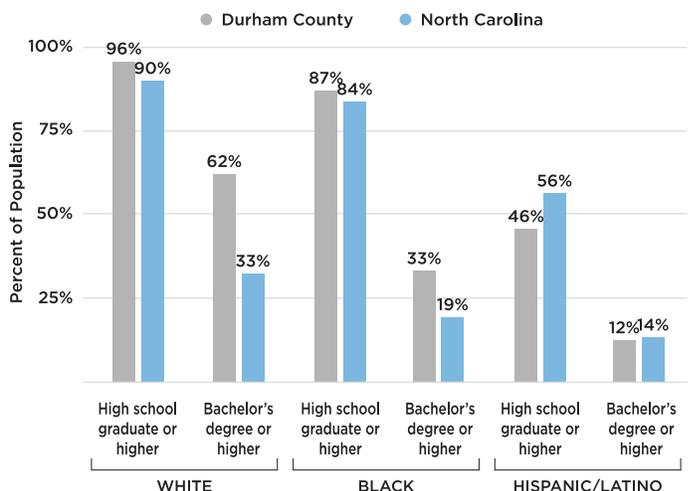
Second, a Racial Equity Task Force developed in response to findings from the Made in Durham Youth Network, which indicated that inadequate counseling services and racial inequities in schools created barriers to educational attainment. MID established the task force with representation from private and public sector organizations to better understand the barrier of racial inequities and recommend solutions. The Youth Network derived from the organization's goal to "ensure youth and young adults in Durham inform and fully participate in creating and evaluating our education-to-career system." Diverse youth involved in the network meet twice each month to participate in trainings designed to enhance their skills for community analysis and leadership, provide their active voice in program and policy initiatives, and develop and implement action projects designed to reduce factors that lead to educational attainment disparities in their public high schools. Data provided in **Figure 2** indicate that the educational disparities based on race are most pronounced for the Hispanic/Latino residents of Durham. Sample action projects include efforts to address the disproportionate representation of students of color in school disciplinary

FIG. 1: DURHAM COUNTY EMPLOYMENT
(by Industry, 2002 & 2017)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

FIG. 2: DURHAM COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(by Race and Ethnicity)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



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POSTSECONDARY



WORKFORCE

MADE IN DURHAM
(DURHAM COUNTY)

myFUTURENC

actions to increase the number of students of color who enroll in and complete advanced placement courses.

The work outlined above focuses on students enrolled in the educational system. MID’s engagement with the Durham Futures initiative involves aligning partners and strategies that support “opportunity youth” who are currently disconnected from school and work. This work ensures that these 14- to 24-year-olds “earn high school diplomas or equivalent credentials and transition to and persist in a postsecondary degree or credentialing program that qualifies them for life-sustaining work.” Partners pilot academic and social supports for students enrolled in five alternative education programs. North Carolina Central University provides an intern from its master’s degree in social work program to support Durham Futures and the Youth Network.

What Is the Governance Structure?

MID’s board of directors includes executives of major employers, government units and employees, educators, philanthropists, and civic leaders, all providing influence and financial contributions. An advisory team reflects a cross-section of partner organizations capable of proposing strategies and ensuring their implementation once approved by the board. Both the advisory team and the Made in Durham Youth Network advise and report to the board. Youth Network representatives serve on the board of directors and advisory team.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

MID continues to work toward its goal to “develop and maintain a common set of measures that will guide decision-making and chart progress toward success.” Leaders explained that access to meaningful data has proven challenging, but they recently contracted with the Social Science Research Institute at Duke University to identify critical data elements and measure them over time. They are also in the process of negotiating data-sharing agreements that will improve data access and shared measures.

FIG. 3: WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



What Are the Indicators of Success?

Evaluation to date centers on organizational outcomes. Results of MID's efforts include more efficient allocation of community resources, such as sharing mental health services, merging two organizations with similar missions, and addressing transportation barriers by successfully advocating for youth to receive free bus passes. Student measures will become available once data-sharing agreements are complete in 2018.

MID and its partners focus on increasing work-based learning opportunities in the county. Career and technical education personnel from the Durham Public Schools served as architects of the local Work-Based Learning Initiative that seeks to ensure that every high school student engages in career awareness, exploration, and experiences (see **Figure 3**).

One high school is the pilot site for the full initiative in the 2018-19 academic year that will be rolled out in all Durham high schools over the next three years. MID partners will provide many of the work-based learning opportunities, and the school system will track outcomes such as career readiness and postsecondary enrollment to measure success.

The Durham YouthWork Internship Program represents an integral component of the Work-Based Learning Initiative. Durham Public Schools cover one-third of the costs for summer interns, as well as personnel and facilities for trainings associated with the program. The City of Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development administers the internship program, and other public and private sector partners provide placements and funding. In the summer of 2018, 180 youth completed paid internships in Durham businesses and public agencies (selected from more than 400 applicants who completed requirements and interviewed for positions). The program recruits applicants online and through a career fair. Those selected completed a five-week summer internship and employability skills training. Partners have a goal to provide 1,000 summer internships annually by 2021.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

MID understands that in order to increase educational attainment, Durham will have to address racial inequities that exist in its education systems. MID helps the community tackle the issue directly through its Racial Equity Task Force. It also provides opportunities for youth to lead the way.

The second area of promise lies in engagement of business leaders. MID makes it easier for companies to contribute to the early development of talent and returns value to those employers for their contributions.

Finally, Durham and MID have high ambitions for work-based learning. If the county delivers on its plan to engage every high school student in high-quality programming, research suggests that more students will graduate from high school and seek postsecondary credentials.



STEM EAST

(12 Counties)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“We are advancing the economy here by helping young people know what to do when they don’t know what to do.” – STEM EAST partner

“Our business and industry understand that if they want a different product, then they have to invest in getting it.” – STEM EAST partner

What Is the STEM East Program?

The STEM East Network (STEM East) is a collaborative focused on ensuring that students across a 12-county region in Eastern North Carolina have opportunities to engage in real-world science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning that directly aligns with career opportunities. STEM East is specifically determined to provide ample opportunities for problem-based and inquiry learning for students who are in school, out of school, online, and at home. From this perspective, leaders think of the acronym STEM as standing for Strategies That Engage Minds. The collaborative includes 12 school districts, regional businesses, economic development organizations, private foundations, youth programs, local governments, and other community and regional organizations.

Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Superintendents of school districts:** Serve on the Eastern North Carolina Employers and Superintendents Council, where they collaborate with regional STEM employers.
- **Employers:** Regional industry leaders who contribute ideas, time and funding to implement innovative education and workforce development programs.
- **Museums and science centers:** Deliver “STEMtastic” activities for students and families. STEM East hosts a quarterly convening of eastern North Carolina museums and science centers to help strategize alignment of programs with schools and after-school programs.
- **After-school and summer programs:** Provide informal learning environments for students. STEM East has helped secure funding for STEM after-school (Science Action Clubs) and summer programs through Burroughs Wellcome Fund grants.
- **NC East Alliance (regional economic development organization):** Serves as the backbone organization for STEM East.
- **Kenan Fellows Program:** Offers opportunities for teachers to expand their STEM knowledge and skills while being prepared as leaders.
- **NC State University’s Friday Institute for Educational Innovation:** Provides evaluation support.



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How Does the Program Work?

Superintendents from member school districts serve on the Eastern North Carolina Employers and Superintendents Council, where they collaborate with regional STEM employers. Together they determine what programming is needed to provide students with the education and skills required for the regional workforce.

Figure 1 presents an overview of that workforce's educational attainment, compiled from Census estimates for the 12 counties associated with STEM East.

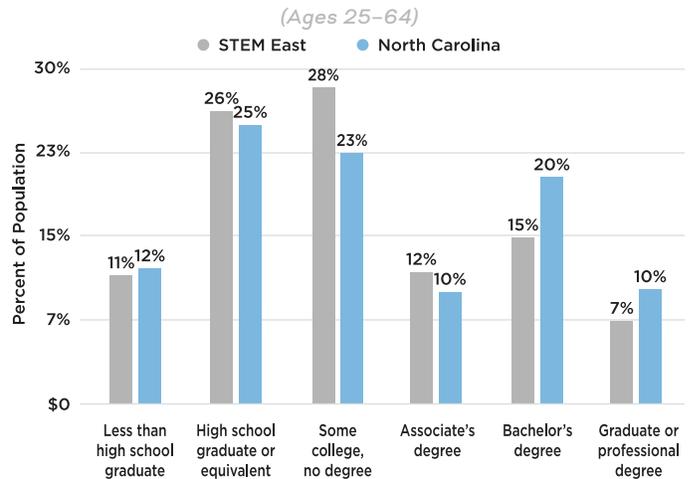
Figures 2 and 3 present data on industry change, 2002–2017, for two of the counties served by STEM East. As the charts indicate, each county has its own mix of technical jobs that have been gained or lost over time (and may now be growing again, even if the chart shows a net loss since 2002).

As a result of this focus by leaders on both the supply and demand sides of the talent pipeline, STEM East investments have supported STEM labs in more than 90 percent of STEM East middle schools. The labs provide a unique method for skills development and STEM career exploration and act as a college and/or career pathway focal point for students. Regional employers directly support these labs and programs. In many cases, employers are integral to the design of specific modules used to sharpen needed workforce skills. These employers understand that they are creating their future talent pipeline.

These school district programs are bolstered by the support of national experts on STEM curriculum. For example, staff from each of the STEM East school districts have attended the Strategic Planning Institute hosted by the Smithsonian Science Education Center using grant funds from partners at Duke Energy and the North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center. Each institute session focuses on providing training on relevant materials and resources, curriculum design, managing change, and tactics for building community involvement. While at the Institute, each school district team works to create a K–12 STEM education strategic plan that aligns its disparate efforts, including, but not limited to, core STEM curriculum and career/technical education programming. The planning instruction has been invaluable to each district, and cross-district collaboration has emerged as one of the many positive spillover effects.

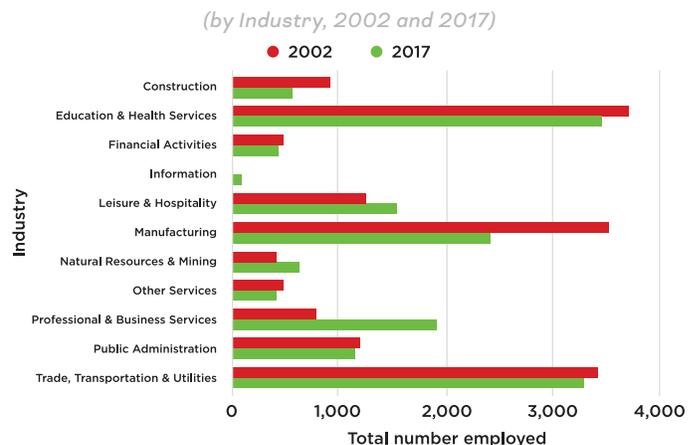
STEM East also makes materials available to school districts. Each participating district has been invited to take part in the pilot implementation of a kit-based inquiry science curriculum by the North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center. Participating classroom teachers have been provided training in inquiry teaching

FIG. 1: STEM EAST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

FIG. 2: BEAUFORT COUNTY EMPLOYMENT



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.



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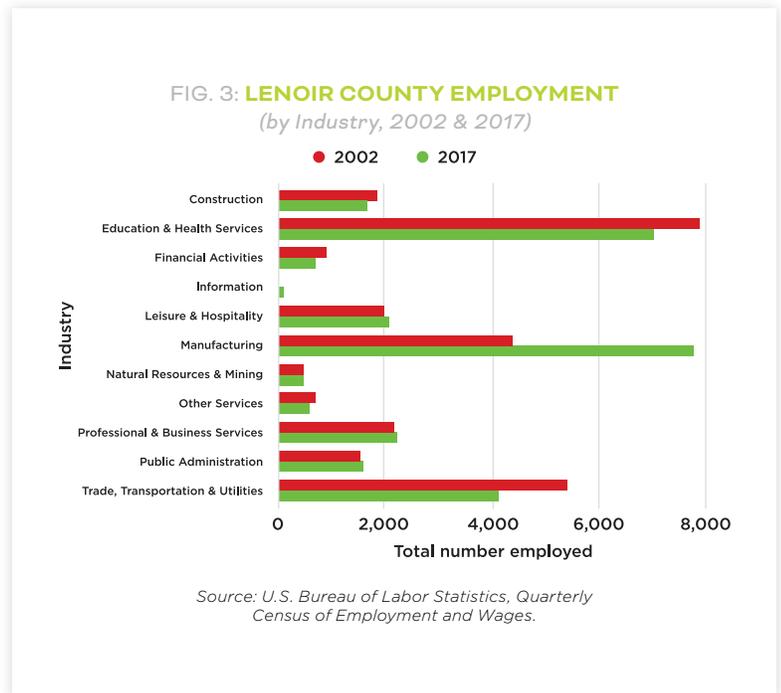
STEM EAST
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and are given access to kit curriculum.

Importantly, leadership across STEM East school districts starts with these classroom teachers. Significant resources are directed toward helping teachers continually improve their ability to effectively guide student instruction. The following two examples are illustrative. First, STEM East has partnered with N.C. State University’s Kenan Fellows Program to help identify and recognize master teachers as Fellows. Fellows are provided with opportunities to expand their STEM knowledge and skills while being prepared as teacher-leaders to guide instructional planning and professional development. Second, using a grant from the Golden LEAF Foundation, STEM East has partnered with the North Carolina Business Committee for Education to implement the Teachers@Work program. STEM East teachers participate in summer externships with participating regional employers to better understand the demands of the changing workforce and develop lessons that challenge students to demonstrate mastery of content to solve real-world problems through problem-based and inquiry learning activities. These teachers earn industry credentials and bring their insights back to the classrooms to share with students and other instructional staff.

Significantly, STEM East partners pursue opportunities as a single network, a subset of the network, and individually. Each partner retains the necessary autonomy to pursue unique interests but is also able to use the network and its partners to meet individual and collective goals.



What Is the Governance Structure?

STEM East is managed by the NCEast Alliance, a regional economic development partnership. Superintendents from member school districts serve on the Eastern North Carolina Employers and Superintendents Council, where they collaborate with regional STEM employers.

Is the Program Data-Driven?

STEM East school districts all agree to gather and analyze impact data on student learning and effective implementation with the help of external funding. The N.C. State University Friday Institute is working with the districts to create a program evaluation plan. Through funding from the Golden LEAF Foundation, the Friday Institute has assisted each district in creating a program logic model and sustainability plans that include evaluative procedures for revision and improvement. The focus on data extends across programming and aids districts in embedding the science of continuous improvement into instructional practice to increase student outcomes and enhance students’ career and college readiness to increase economic mobility.



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What Are the Indicators of Success?

The most insightful indicators are the growing numbers of school districts and companies seeking to be involved with STEM East. Business and industry professionals see STEM East as a pipeline for their future workforces, while schools regard the network as a lifeline to connections that provide currency to educational offerings. When employers noted that they could not fill machining jobs, one school district responded by opening a program that covered this sector of the workforce at one of its high schools. As one interviewee indicated, “Industry needs are ever changing, and STEM East helps me to stay up to date with those changes.”

The second indicator of success is one that makes STEM East partners particularly proud: despite constant change in school district leadership, no school district has ever sought to leave the network. Partners see this sustainability as evidence of the value the network brings to education leaders. One of the original partner superintendents recently moved to a new district outside of the current footprint and immediately petitioned STEM East for district membership, clearly demonstrating the value of the relationships fostered by the STEM partnership.

The third important indicator is the number of other regional STEM networks forming across the state as a result of leaders in other regions seeing evidence of STEM East’s impact. STEM East is a member of the nationally recognized STEM Ecosystem project, where it provides a model for organizing regional STEM partnerships.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

STEM East is building a network focused on preparing students for work and life. It prides itself on focusing on “Strategies That Engage Minds.” It is linking problem- and inquiry-based learning models to job opportunities, with the expectation that all students will benefit from its programs, irrespective of whether they pursue a traditional STEM discipline after high school or enroll in college.

Equity of access to STEM experiences is at the core of the STEM East network vision. The experience of one program in Greene County suggests that the students who might benefit the most are those who often face significant challenges — those with Individual Education Plans and those for whom English is a second language. In another program in Craven County, female students demonstrated higher science gains than male students. STEM East recently took a team to Howard University to pursue strategies for recruiting and retaining minority STEM educators.

The breadth of the network is illustrative of the future of education — learning counts wherever it happens. By engaging out-of-school programs, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, and cultural community assets, such as museums, the program is maximizing the opportunities for students to get aligned approaches to STEM. Students are also encouraged to make use of online resources.

There is research to support STEM East’s claim that its approaches are leading to greater student engagement, skills development, and knowledge attainment. Sixth- and seventh-grade students taking a STEM elective in one county scored 20.1 percent higher on the 2016–17 Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) science test than did members of a control group at a nearby middle school.



Conclusion

What Did We Learn?

Two key observations captured the attention of the myFutureNC Commission. First, communities in North Carolina are finding novel ways to align with each other across educational systems (early childhood, K–12, community colleges, and universities). Many are also engaging in partnerships with local employers. Second, focusing on kindergarten through 12th grade students alone isn't enough. While very few of the efforts profiled focus on existing workers or working-age individuals who have dropped out of the labor market, many of them noted that if each and every one of the state's graduating high school seniors were to stay in North Carolina and train for open jobs that require postsecondary education over the next decade, the state would still face a skills gap. The communities that understand this reality have recognized that, to close their gaps, they must also provide opportunities that encourage those outside the traditional pipeline—disconnected youth and adults, for instance—to increase their education and training.

In addition to the two observations discussed above, the myFutureNC Commission noted the following topics that recur in most, if not all, of the programs profiled.

Scaling and Replicating

There are four distinct groups of efforts profiled. Some of the Bright Spot programs, especially those that have rigorous evaluation components, are tailor-made for early scaling, provided external resources are made available. Indeed, North Carolina's new Finish Line Grants, for example, represent an effort to scale a model similar to the Gold Rush Grant profiled in this report. In another group are programs such as the featured Project SECURE model, which could easily be made available to other programs that educate individuals for high-demand occupations. Another set of programs highlighted in these pages, including the Profound Gentlemen initiative, have ambitions to expand, at minimum, to statewide scale. Within this third group are Bright Spot efforts that will reach scale through replication in other regions and communities. STEM East falls into this category. The explicit goal of its supporters is to create "an ecosystem of ecosystems" across the state. Finally, there is a group of selected programs, including K-64, Made in Durham, STEP, the Career Accelerator Program, Project SEARCH, and the Wilson 2020 Youth Master Plan, that are necessarily built around a specific local context. North Carolina will need much more of the demand-driven, cross-sector collaboration that characterizes this final set of initiatives if it is to reach its future educational and workforce goals. Despite the significant insights that can be gleaned from this last group of programs, simply replicating any one of them will not be possible. Instead, a community seeking to leverage the advantage offered by their collaborative infrastructure will need to build its own construct to respond to its own unique challenges and needs.

Marketing Matters

Despite the enormous volume of material about careers and support resources generally available (online and otherwise) to our Bright Spot programs, every program profiled identified a specific information challenge that it believed needed to be solved. Some—Project SECURE, for example—noted that many students in North Carolina are unaware of high-paying job opportunities in particular sectors across the state. Others—such as STEP, K-64, and Career Accelerator Program—are also cognizant of this information gap and are focused on helping students,

parents, and advisers recognize the good employment opportunities that exist in their own communities. All of these programs are also clarifying the skills sought by employers to fill a series of progressively more-advanced jobs in given industries. Project Gold Rush is helping students take advantage of available on-campus resources, many of which they were otherwise unaware. Such marketing efforts on the part of programs have spillover effects: One employer from the Career Accelerator Program indicated that parents sometimes apply for employment themselves after accompanying their teenage children on program-related tours.

Coordination Counts

The programs profiled in this report reflect the fact that communities are wrestling to align the priorities, curricula, and measurements of different actors in the educational pipeline. For instance, STEP coordinates its efforts with two school systems and two community colleges. Wilson Forward (the driving force behind the Wilson 2020 Youth Master Plan) and STEM East coordinate with educational, out-of-school, and other civic organizations to provide services. K-64 and Made in Durham leverage relationships with employers to connect students to internship, apprenticeship, and job opportunities. These connections do not happen without intentionality and infrastructure.

Many of these Bright Spot efforts are succeeding in

- mapping out the ways jobs within an industry form a career path of progressively more-skilled and higher-paying positions;
- clarifying the skills that employers demand for the various jobs in their given industries;
- designing a series of connected education programs that correspond to each step along a career path; and
- matching jobseekers to employers who seek their skills and vice versa.

Keeper of the Torch

As is the case in most successful endeavors, within our Bright Spot programs, the involvement of the right individual is critical. In every one of these efforts, there is a person who serves as the “keeper of the torch.” This is the person whom everyone credits with keeping the stakeholders around the table, making sure information gets to the right people, pushing for greater innovations, and celebrating successes. For most, it is an executive director or a similarly titled leader. For a few, such as an instructor in Project SECURE, it is someone who has just “stepped up” to ensure that the program succeeds.

On- and Off-Ramps

Most of the Bright Spot programs seek to create more accessible and transparent on- and off-ramps for postsecondary educational attainment. The Career Accelerator Program is a good example. The initiative offers high-value certificates, but some students end up using the program as a stepping stone to earning associate and bachelor degrees in engineering.

The Importance of Data

While all of the Bright Spot programs seek to be data-driven, few have reached that goal. But there are success stories. Working with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), Project Gold Rush participates in a formal program evaluation performed by an outside provider to evaluate the impact of the program against a control group. STEM East has partnered

with the Friday Institute at North Carolina State University to develop a set of long-term outcome measurements to track the organization's success. Finally, Made in Durham has collaborated with Duke University to develop a set of interim measurements, such as students' progress toward earning certifications, to make sure that the organization is on track for meeting long-term goals.

These examples serve to demonstrate the important role that higher education can—and must—play in providing rigorous evaluations of community innovations. They foreshadow also the role that the myFutureNC Commission might play in supporting local innovations to raise postsecondary attainment rates.

The myFutureNC Commission recommends tracking the following educational continuum indicators to ensure that progress across education sectors will be achieved and maintained and will help the state meet its overall educational attainment goal:

1. Pre-K enrollment (share of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K)
2. 4th grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) proficiency, reading
3. 8th grade NAEP proficiency, math
4. Share of ACT test-takers with composite mean score of 17 or above
5. K–12 student chronic absenteeism rate (percentage of students identified as chronically absent/year)
6. Five-year cohort high school graduation rate
7. Share of qualified high school seniors completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
8. Postsecondary enrollment rate (ages 18–24)
9. Postsecondary persistence rate
10. Postsecondary completion rates (two-year; public four-year; private four-year)

The Commission also suggests focusing on the following labor market outcome measures to ensure that progress toward the educational attainment goal is having a positive impact on the state's social, educational, and economic well-being:

1. Share enrolled in school or working (ages 16–24)
2. Labor force participation rate (ages 25–64)
3. Share with family income at or above a living wage (ages 35–44)

It would be highly beneficial if more programs would track their success against some of these benchmarks. Exemplary workforce development providers use labor market data and job projections to tailor training to growing industries and to eliminate irrelevant programs. All organizations may not have the resources to conduct outside program evaluations, but they all must, nonetheless, focus on outcomes. Simply tracking funders' requirements is not enough. While criteria like the number of students who graduate, job placements, job retention after one year, and average wages are important, they fail to tell the whole story. By creating and using performance-based measures that go beyond the limits of basic criteria, local programs can identify areas of weakness and strategies for improvement.

Appendix A. Bright Spots Nominations Table

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Alamance Youth Leadership Academy (AYLA)	Alamance County	Founding members identified the middle school years as a time of critical personal development and saw an opportunity to engage area middle school students in leadership and service. AYLA currently serves more than 175 7th and 8th graders from eleven different middle schools in Alamance County. Students apply to participate in a two-year program committed to building strong foundations for future leaders.	Empower youth through the connections of civic engagement and leadership development for a greater Alamance County.	Support
Blue Ribbon Commission for Educational Equity	Edgecombe County	A diverse group of Edgecombe County stakeholders lead an ongoing community conversation about their collective vision for graduates in the Edgecombe County Public Schools. Blue Ribbon Commission members include students, parents, teachers, principals, board of education members, individuals from local businesses, faith-based and nonprofit leaders, and General Assembly representatives.	Facilitate conversations that highlight innovative practices happening in local schools and solicit community input on Edgecombe's vision for county public school graduates. The Blue Ribbon Commission uses feedback to inform district officials about ways to continue improving services.	Access to opportunity
Bridges to Employment	Edgecombe County	Keihin Carolina System Technology in Tarboro sponsors programs and works with education officials and students at every level—high school, community college, and university—to provide apprenticeships, cooperative education opportunities, internships, and future employment with the company. The partnership between Edgecombe Community College and Keihin allows schools to be responsive to the needs of the company.	Partnerships between businesses and educational institutions aim to meet the need for more highly-trained workers.	Preparation Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Career Accelerator Program (CAP)	Alamance County	Today's companies need well-trained, highly-skilled workers to be successful. CAP is a four-year training partnership between local manufacturing companies, Alamance Community College, and the Alamance Burlington School System. CAP recruits and matches high school juniors and seniors with participating companies to receive training for future careers. At the end of the program, an apprentice may earn \$35,000 to \$50,000 per year.	Provide comprehensive preparation for a career in manufacturing by combining education with practical experience. The four-year program offers hands-on training with an employer that supports college classes offered at Alamance Community College.	Preparation
Career Ready	Hoke	The Hoke County Schools require all high school seniors to take the ACT WorkKeys test as part of their postsecondary plans of action. This assessment measures both foundational skills required for success in the workplace and workplace skills that affect job performance.	Assess graduating seniors and prepare them for the workplace.	Preparation
Careers4All—Charlotte Works	Charlotte	Charlotte Works brings workforce, economic development, educational, and industry partners to the same table to align the city's workforce system. Stakeholders work to strengthen partnerships, guide policy, and promote career pathways.	Close the gap in accessibility to workforce resources, specifically, services that prepare individuals for employment and provide family-sustaining wages. Create stronger workforce partnerships and policies. Increase opportunities that lead individuals to career pathways.	Alignment
Central Carolina Community College Construction Program	Pittsboro	The community college's program trains young and second-career students for construction trades. Around 30 percent of the students at the school are women—a notable fact for an industry where only 9 percent of workers are female according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.	Recruit women and underrepresented populations into high-demand construction sector training.	Access to opportunity

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Crosby Scholars	Forsyth County	A unique college-access program for Forsyth County Public School students in grades 6–12. Students participate in a series of academic and personal enrichment workshops that cover topics such as test-taking, studying, time management, and conflict resolution skills, and also take courses to prepare them for college admission.	Crosby Scholars help students academically, financially, and personally to achieve the goal of successful college enrollment.	Preparation Support Access to opportunity
Davidson County Community College First Generation Efforts: TRiO Talent Search, TriO Upward Bound	Davidson and Davie Counties	When students are the first in their families to attend and complete college, this often means that they and their families are not familiar with what to expect from the college experience. The community college's student support services' (TriO) Talent Search and Upward Bound programs offer eligible, first-generation students necessary additional support. Talent Search assists Thomasville and Lexington students in grades 6 through 12, while West Davidson High School and Central Davidson High School students in grades 9 through 12 are helped by Upward Bound. Both programs offer services free of charge. However, an application is required to ensure that students meet certain federal requirements.	Enhance relationships with local middle and high schools through the TRiO Talent Search and TRiO Upward Bound federal grant programs. Both Talent Search and Upward Bound have been crafted to engage students prior to the start of college—from the preparation and application process stages to the acquisition of skills necessary to succeed academically at the college level.	Preparation Support Access to opportunity

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Developing academic skills for improved college assessment performance	Hoke	This county program uses strategic and purposeful design tactics to simultaneously hone students' test-taking skills in the math, English, and science subject areas, ultimately improving student performance on ACT/SAT assessments.	The county program addresses challenges faced by students undergoing high-stakes assessments, which can include teaching test-taking and time management strategies. The program uses a cross-content assimilation of knowledge model and offers high-level instruction to help students prepare for and compete at four-year universities.	Support
Durham YouthWork Internship Program	Durham	YouthWork is a core component of the education-to-career system being created by business, education, government, and nonprofit partners through the Made in Durham initiative. It offers Durham youth ages 14–24 the opportunity to gain work experience and develop skills through paid summer internships in local businesses, nonprofits, and city or county government offices.	YouthWork aims to create a system of career pathways and supports that will enable all students in Durham to graduate from high school, earn a postsecondary credential, and secure living-wage work by age 25.	Alignment
Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC)—All American Veterans Center	Cumberland County	With more than a million troops returning from military service and transitioning to civilian life in the past decade, it is critical that our nation's channels to higher education and job training stand ready to put our veterans to work. The All American Veterans Center is managed and staffed by veterans. As such a peer organization, it provides comfort and inspires confidence among the community college's students who are veterans.	The center was created to honor veterans. It is a place for veterans to gather, find assistance, and receive the support they need to ensure their success at FTCC and beyond.	Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Finish First	Wake County	Finish First uses software to audit all student transcripts to determine qualification for educational credentials. The software notifies students of and awards them with qualifying credits, which helps boost their community college completion rates.	Actively and accurately increase the number of community college degrees and credentials awarded.	Support
Gold Rush Grant	Charlotte	Unmet financial need remains a significant barrier to degree completion for many low-income students, especially those who may have exhausted financial aid or savings or those who may have to work fewer hours (and earn less money) because of the greater demands of higher-level course work. The Gold Rush Grant program awards one-time micro grants of \$1,500 to selected students who are within two semesters of graduating from UNC Charlotte and have demonstrated financial need during their senior year at the university.	The goal of the micro grant program is to help students "cross the finish line" and complete their degrees. Students participate in two future-building activities designed either to help them complete their degrees or to prepare for their futures.	Support
Healthy Kids Collaborative (HKC)—Down East Partnership for Children (DEPC)	Nash and Edgecombe Counties	The DEPC initiative reaches out to families with children ages 0–8, assesses their needs, and connects them with a continuum of services. DEPC uses a service model which is founded on research-based practices and twenty+ years of experience with what works/ does not work to support children and families. The program is evaluated at several levels (individual child, family, program, community) to ensure that service providers meet their goals and continuously improve the program.	HKC is a collaboration between Nash and Edgecombe counties that strives to reduce childhood obesity. HKC community partners work to impact policies and practices that will increase access to healthy food and outdoor resources for physical activity for all members of the community.	Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
James Sprunt Community College—transportation services	Duplin County	As of August 2017, James Sprunt Community College provides transportation for enrolled students at seven pick-up/drop-off sites throughout Duplin County. To access this service, students simply provide a current identification card from the school.	Remove transportation barriers that affects many of the community college's students.	Support
K-64	Catawba County	K-64 is turning education inside out by directly connecting local students with a world of opportunities, from learning in technology-rich environments to experiencing local and global employment possibilities. K-64 actively engages students of all ages and prepares them for viable and sustainable careers throughout their lifetimes.	K-64 increases access to school-based programs that are grounded in proven best practices for preparing a qualified workforce. K-64 identifies and expands programs that are effectively <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. collaborating with local employers to align courses of study with workforce needs; 2. exposing students to real-world careers and related curriculum choices earlier; and 3. enabling adults to update their skills and enhance their employability in a dynamic work environment. 	Preparation
Launch Rocky Mount—program for aspiring entrepreneurs	Nash County	Launch is a free, twelve-week program for qualified entrepreneurs, followed by a full year of coaching. Participants attend regular training events, have access to mentors from the community, and are provided funding opportunities.	By the end of ten three-hour classes, participants will have produced a working business plan to open their business or, if already in business, to reach more customers.	Not focused on increasing educational attainment levels

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Leading on Opportunity	Mecklenburg County	This initiative's Opportunity Task Force, a group of twenty community members, spent eighteen months in 2015 and 2016 focusing on the inheritance factor of intergenerational poverty and its negative impact on far too many of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's children and youth. The Task Force believes that focusing on systems and structures versus programmatic intervention is a more effective way to tackle intergenerational poverty and to break down barriers to economic opportunity.	Leading on Opportunity targets underlying policies, practices, and mindsets that produce negative outcomes in the lives of children and families. The program's highest aspirations include creating a culture of caring that expands opportunities across the entire community so that all young people gain access to the experiences, education, resources, and other support needed to succeed as adults.	Access to opportunity
Made in Durham	Durham County	Made in Durham is a community partnership of educators, business leaders, government employees, youth-serving nonprofits, and young people mobilized around a shared vision: that every youth in Durham will graduate from high school, complete a postsecondary credential, and begin a rewarding career by the age of 25.	Made in Durham community partners collaborate on six strategies to build an education-to-work system for Durham that effectively links work and learning for area youth.	Alignment Preparation Coordination
Made in Henderson County—Changing misconceptions of manufacturing careers	Henderson County	Under the Made in Henderson County program, the county's Partnership for Economic Development's Existing Industry Committee works to connect manufacturers with the county's Public Schools. This initiative's campaign and programs tell the story of manufacturing in the community, the products that are made there, and the people who make them.	Made in Henderson aims to reach out to the "workforce of tomorrow," promote community awareness, and generate interest in manufacturing jobs.	Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Michael's Angels Girls Club	Edgecombe County	Michael's Angels is a sustainable organization focused on transforming young ladies in Edgecombe County, ages 8 to 18 and of diverse backgrounds, into a sisterhood united through service, education, and personal empowerment.	This program strives to enhance the lives of young girls and help them reach their full potential; to inspire optimism while working to turn weaknesses into strengths; and to provide a healthy, fun, and safe place for girls when they are away from home.	Support
NC STRIVE	North Carolina student veterans	Founded in 2014 as a N.C. Governor's Working Group project, NC STRIVE provides services and supports to student veterans in two- and four-year public and private institutions of higher education in North Carolina.	NC STRIVE held four regional conferences in the spring of 2018 and has similar events planned for 2019. These conferences provide student veterans with assistance, tools, and resources to facilitate a smooth transition from the military to higher education and from higher education to the workplace.	Support Alignment
NC VetBiz	North Carolina veterans	The North Carolina Veterans Business Association, Inc. (NC VetBiz) was founded in Charlotte in April 2008. Since then, the organization has grown to become the state's recognized private sector advocate and voice for veteran business owners and professionals.	NC VetBiz was formed to assist professionals and business owners who are veterans. As a member-operated association of veterans who work in and own businesses, NC VetBiz develops and strengthens the veterans' business network in North Carolina.	Not focused on increased educational attainment
North Carolina Manufacturing Institute	Rowan and Cabarrus Counties	Under this program, the Centralina Workforce Development Board and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College lead a collaboration between private and public sector partners and investors that links and leverages assets and resources to close an identified manufacturing skills gap; improve the image of manufacturing employment; and assist in improving recruitment, selection, and retention of talent in this industry.	The Manufacturing Institute delivers training, systems, and other services to more effectively match job seekers with available jobs in the manufacturing sector. The program also improves the image of manufacturing employment among job seekers, students, parents, and school personnel.	Preparation

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Northeast Academy for Aerospace and Advanced Technologies (NEAAAT)	Elizabeth City	NEAAAT is a world-class, innovative science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) school that inspires and prepares students through the provision of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to pursue the high-demand jobs and careers of the future.	This regional STEM school is designed as a statewide model that will graduate students who have earned up to two years of college credit along with their high school diplomas. In addition, students will gain credentials and certifications valued by employers.	Preparation Coordination
Partners for Youth Opportunity (PYO)	Durham	PYO is the product of a 2014 merger between YO: Durham and Partners for Youth, two organizations serving young people in Durham.	PYO partners with the community to provide Durham youth with opportunities to connect, develop, and contribute through mentorship, employment, and educational supports.	Access to opportunity Preparation
Partnership for Excellence in Early Childhood Education	Buncombe County	Partnership for Excellence expands access to quality early childhood education in the region. Spearheaded by Warren Wilson College in collaboration with the Verner Center for Early Learning, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Buncombe County Schools, and others, the program's model will establish a pipeline for developing high-quality education professionals.	By bringing partners together across multiple sectors, this innovative program will help build a strong community workforce in the field of early childhood education.	Preparation (Teachers) Coordination
Profound Gentlemen	Charlotte region	This program is working to build a community of male educators of color whose primary mission is to make a profound impact on boys of color. Profound Gentlemen seeks to dismantle the cradle-to-prison pipeline by establishing a cradle-to-career pipeline for boys of color.	It is the goal of the Profound Gentlemen initiative that 90 percent of educators in the region return to the education sector better prepared to impact all students. Additionally, the program aims to have 90 percent of boys of color in "Code Orange" matriculate through their K-12 experience prepared for college and career opportunities.	Preparation Access to opportunity Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Project L.I.F.T— Opportunity Culture	Mecklenburg	<p>Opportunity Culture schools change their management structures to put more instructional responsibility into the hands of excellent teachers. They reallocate existing funds to pay teachers significantly more than the prevailing rate to lead small teams and to be accountable for student learning outcomes.</p> <p>The end result allows great teachers to reach more students, gives all teachers support to improve their skills, and creates a career ladder that makes it possible for excellent teachers to advance professionally while continuing to teach.</p>	<p>Barriers and challenges addressed by the Opportunity Culture program include the fact that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. great teachers are leaving the classroom to achieve higher pay elsewhere, 2. teachers are receiving insufficient daily support to individualize their instruction and strengthen their practices, 3. a limited numbers of students are being exposed to a given school's strongest teaching talent, and 4. prospective teachers are turning away from the profession because of a perception that it lacks advancement potential. 	Preparation Access to opportunity
Project SEARCH—Asheville	Asheville	<p>Project SEARCH is a partnership between Mission Health, the Arc of North Carolina, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, the State of North Carolina's Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Vaya Health, and the state Council on Developmental Disabilities that aims to prepare young people with significant disabilities for success in integrated, competitive employment. The model used by the program involves extensive skills training and career exploration; innovative adaptations; long-term job coaching; and continuous feedback from teachers, skills trainers, and employers.</p>	<p>A one-year internship program for students with developmental disabilities, Project SEARCH's goal is to help the students, ages 18 to 30, achieve the goal of securing meaningful, competitive employment.</p>	Access to opportunity

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Project SECURE (Supporting and Enhancing Cybersecurity through Upwardly- mobile Retraining and Education)	Wake, Johnston, and Durham Counties	Project SECURE will serve at least 350 out-of-secondary-school youth, between the ages of 17 and 29, who lack the skills, education, or work experience to secure full-time employment in high-skill jobs. The program has partnered with area employers, including HCL America, Inc., SAS Institute Inc., and IBM. Nonprofit partners include Capital Area Workforce Development, Durham Workforce Development Board, the City of Raleigh, and Wake County Economic Development.	Coursework will prepare students to earn the following credentials: CompTIA A+, Server+, Network+, CompTIA Security+, CCNA, CCNA Security, Linux+, and Certified Ethical Hacker.	Preparation Support Alignment
Restorative practice at Northampton High School	Northampton County	Students who are impacted by traumatic experiences, whether it is growing up in a high-poverty environment or losing a parent at a young age, make up a large percentage of students at Northampton High School. Under the restorative practice initiative, education providers attend training and explore how to strengthen relationships between and among these students and other individuals, as well as how to foster social connections within communities.	The focus of restorative practice is to repair the harm done to students due to various types of conflicts and traumas. The ultimate goals of the initiative are a more harmonious school culture, less fighting, and fewer suspensions. To this end, school officials sometimes arrange conferences with affected parties to settle brewing issues.	Support
Rural Opportunity Institute	Eastern North Carolina— Edgecombe County	Founded by former teachers who support the creation of trauma-informed systems and communities in Eastern North Carolina, The Rural Opportunity Institute believes that the moment of birth is the critical moment when poverty transfers from one generation to the next.	The Rural Opportunity Institute uses human-centered design to learn from and work alongside families. The program builds better support systems for parents (both soon-to-be and current) and their children aged prenatal to 5.	Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Say YES to Education	Guilford County	Say Yes works with cities and counties to transform civic infrastructure. The program operates with the belief that every public school student must not only graduate high school, but also be prepared to attain, afford, and complete a postsecondary education.	<p>Chief goals of Say YES to Education include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. postsecondary educational access and success for all children; 2. data-driven, continuous improvement in the program; 3. the establishment of a pathway to success (prenatal to career); 4. cross-sector and cross-government collaboration to achieve goals; and 5. scale and sustainability. 	Support
STEM East	Twelve eastern counties (based in Greenville)	STEM East is developing networks to improve students' learning experiences through the collaborative efforts of regional businesses, school districts, economic development municipalities, private foundations, state and local government units, and many others.	Students across the region will engage in real-world STEM learning opportunities that directly align with career opportunities in Eastern North Carolina.	Preparation Coordination Alignment Access to opportunity
STEP (Strategic Twin-Counties Education Partnership)	Edgecombe and Nash Counties	STEP is working to improve cradle-to-career educational opportunities for students in the Twin Counties by facilitating collaboration between schools, community colleges, community-based organizations, and employers.	STEP's aim is to close the information gap by helping students learn what to do when they don't know what to do. Work-based activities expose students to local professionals, skills, credentials, and critical careers in three employer sectors: advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics/distribution.	Coordination Alignment Preparation Support Access to opportunity

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Success by Design (Opportunity Culture)	Charlotte- Mecklenburg	Success by Design's operating principles include allowing school principals to be flexible with their resources to adjust staffing allotments (or Average Daily Membership) from the state; giving great teachers ("great" as determined by a program rubric) more students to reach and, regarding those with the ability to lead adults and coach, providing a caseload of teachers to build their capacity.	Success by Design utilizes innovative classroom redesign models that offer highly effective teachers opportunities to advance in their careers without leaving the classroom. Great teachers positively impact academic achievement for more students, build capacity among their teams, and earn more.	Preparation (Teachers) Access to opportunity
Talent Alignment Strategy	Piedmont Triad	Regional business and education leaders are initiating a Talent Alignment Strategy for the Piedmont Triad. The purpose of the strategy is two-fold. First, to ensure that education and workforce development efforts are aligned with the needs of employers. Second, to coordinate existing education and workforce development initiatives throughout the region.	Ultimately, the project aims to create the next generation workforce needed by the Piedmont Triad to propel its economy forward.	Alignment

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
The Education Task Force	Iredell County	The Education Task Force was developed as the result of strong working relationships between Mitchell Community College, Iredell County's public schools and county commissioners, the City of Mooresville, the City of Statesville, and the Iredell County Economic Development Board. Through this partnership, stakeholders have come to understand the significance of an identified skills gap, unmet industry needs, and the need to develop a well-trained workforce.	Specific goals not provided.	Coordination
Wilson 2020 Youth Master Plan	Wilson County	A partnership of Wilson 20/20 Community Vision and the Wilson County Schools, the Youth Master Plan brings together educators, parents, community members, nonprofits, businesses, churches, law enforcement personnel, and government agencies to work on five key focus areas where attention and action were deemed warranted: education and workforce, K-12 academic achievement, health and wellness, out-of-school time, and safety.	The Master Plan's primary goals are as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wilson youth will have expanded access to college through increased support avenues, effective communication channels, and funding opportunities. 2. Wilson youth will be prepared for employment after graduation from high school or completion of a high school equivalency exam. 	Support

Program/Initiative	Community/ Population Served	Brief Description of Program's Strategy	Specific Program Goals	Challenge Area(s) Addressed
Work in Burke	Burke County	This program was created to ensure that young people and their parents become and remain aware of the diverse range of career opportunities available in Burke County. Information campaign leaders help students make informed decisions about career pathways and emphasize the importance of postsecondary education, gaining marketable skills, and being lifelong learners.	This initiative seeks to showcase unique local career opportunities in Burke County. It does this by employing techniques such as using—across multiple platforms, including social media, direct mail, paid ads, and presentations—photos and videos that highlight local people who have received support from the area's education system and found fulfilling careers in Burke County.	

Appendix B. County Data for Communities Served by Bright Spots

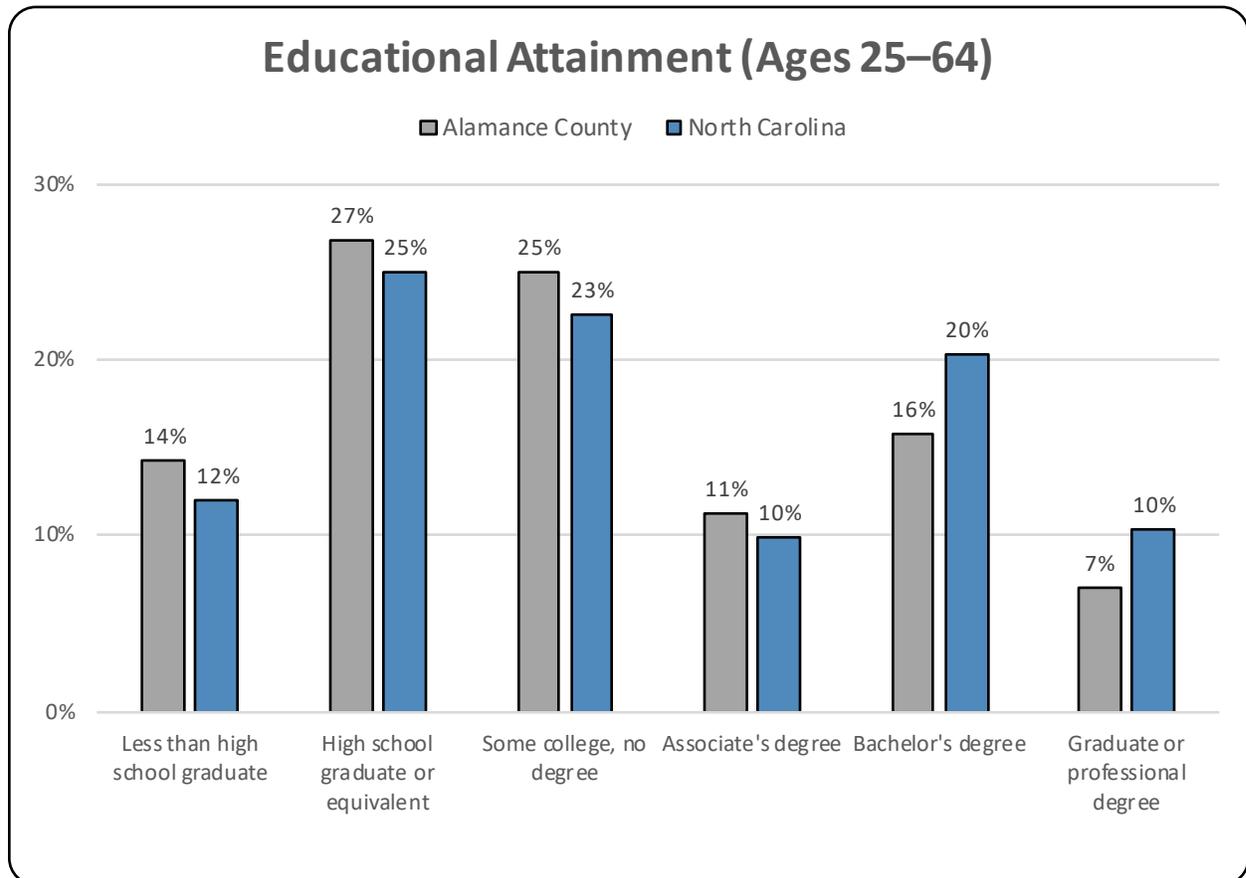
Alamance County

	Alamance #	N.C. #	Alamance %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	9,554	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	690	24,161	7.2%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

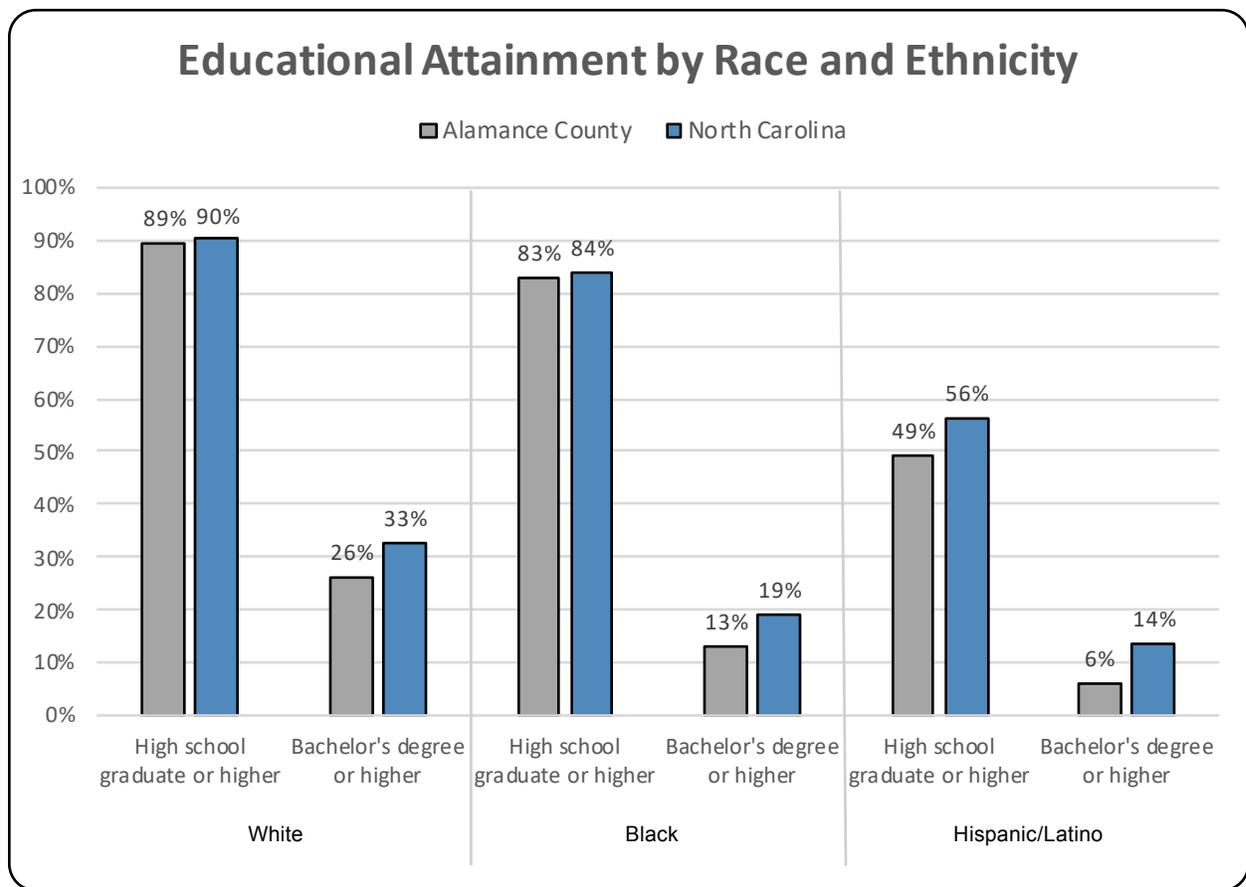
	Alamance #	N.C. #	Alamance %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	79,993	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	11,401	625,915	14%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	21,363	1,301,581	27%	25%
Some college, no degree	20,007	1,179,130	25%	23%
Associate's degree	9,048	518,632	11%	10%
Bachelor's degree	12,563	1,058,715	16%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	5,611	541,369	7%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



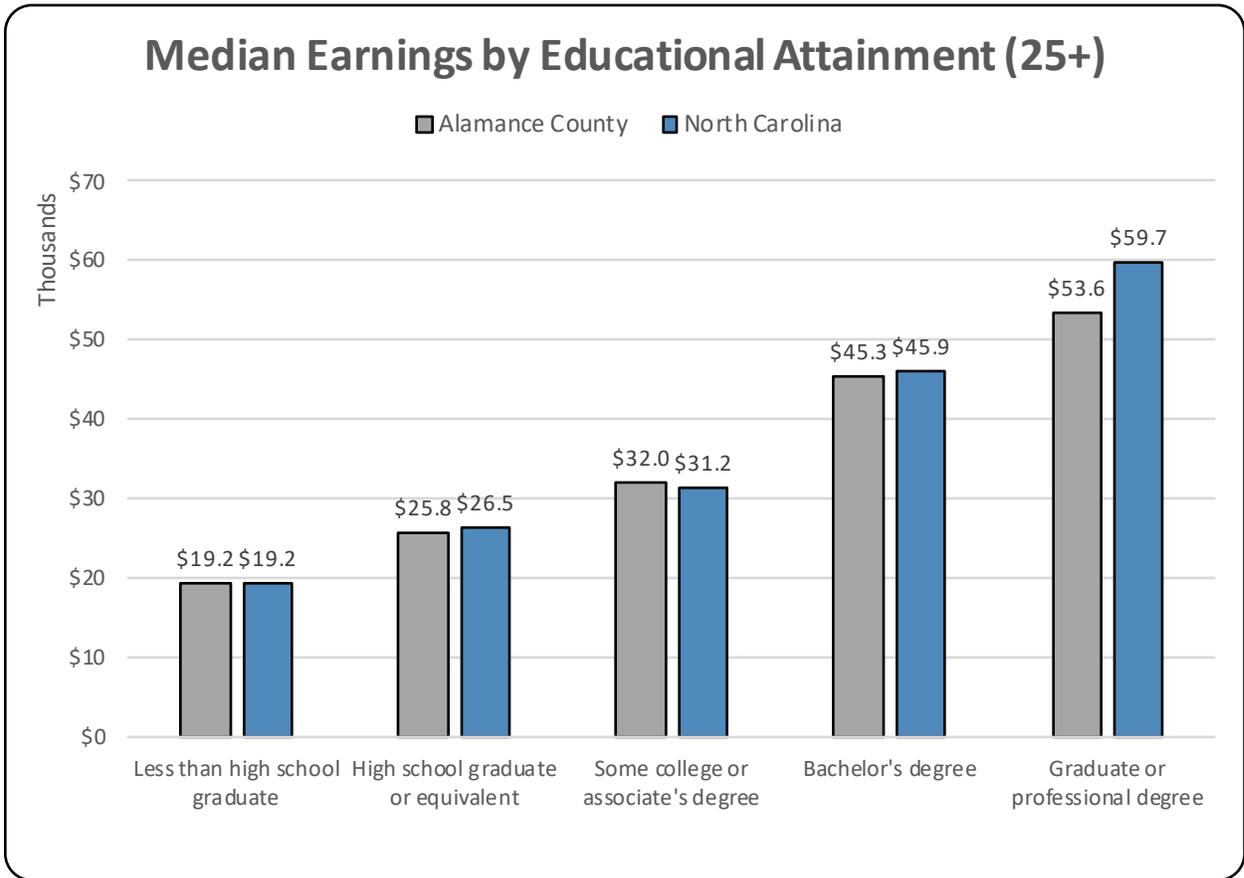
	Alamance %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	89%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	26%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	83%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	13%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	49%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	6%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



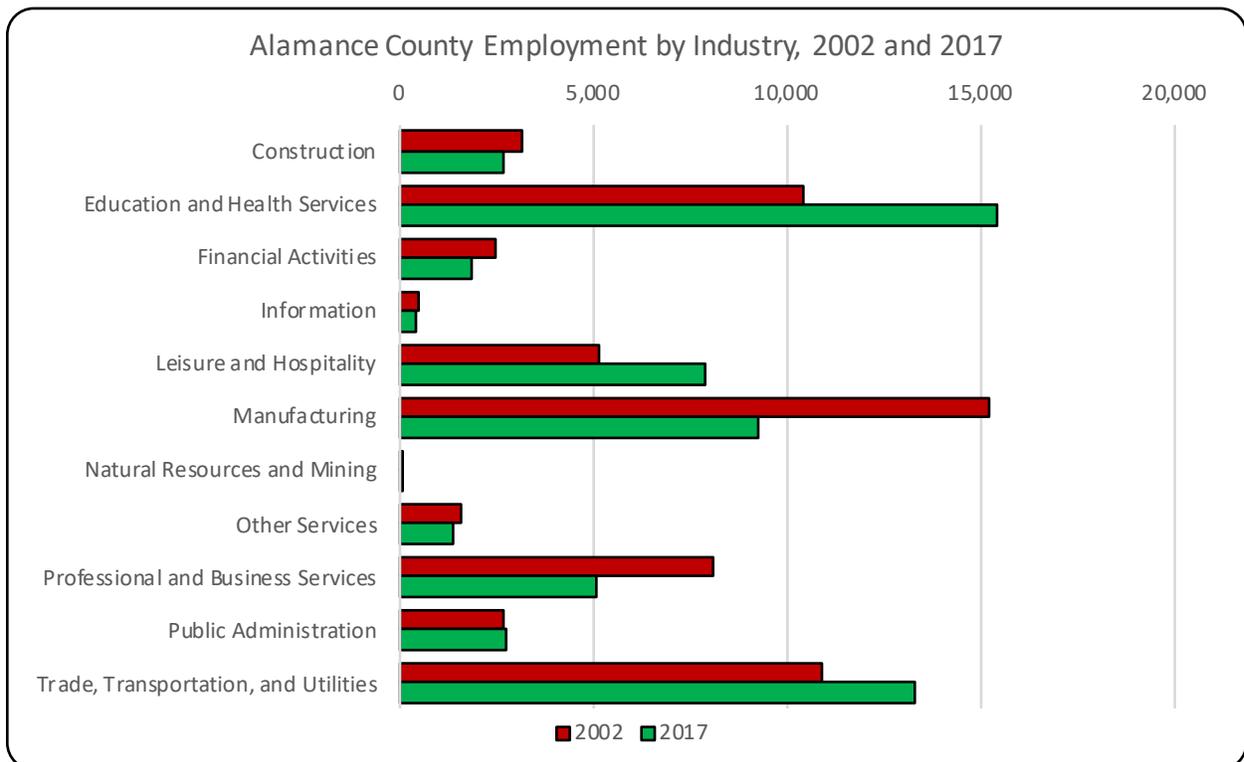
	Alamance \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (Ages 25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$19,203	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$25,776	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,950	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$45,285	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$53,560	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Alamance)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	3,198	2,671	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	10,455	15,448	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	2,475	1,899	184,151	227,142
Information	482	449	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	5,126	7,880	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	15,187	9,240	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	130	127	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,587	1,386	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	8,093	5,096	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	2,677	2,753	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	10,940	13,325	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



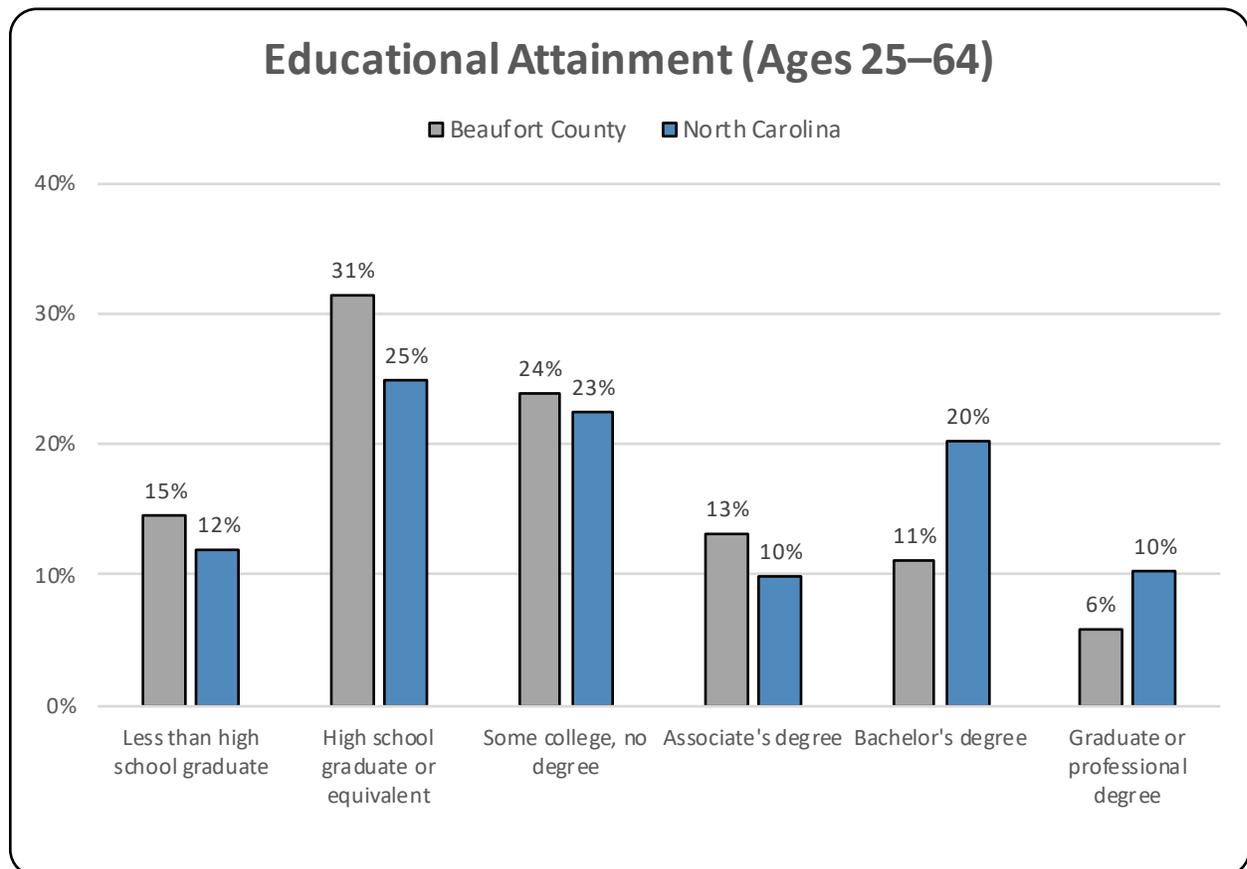
Beaufort County

	Beaufort #	N.C. #	Beaufort %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	2,112	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	139	24,161	6.6%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

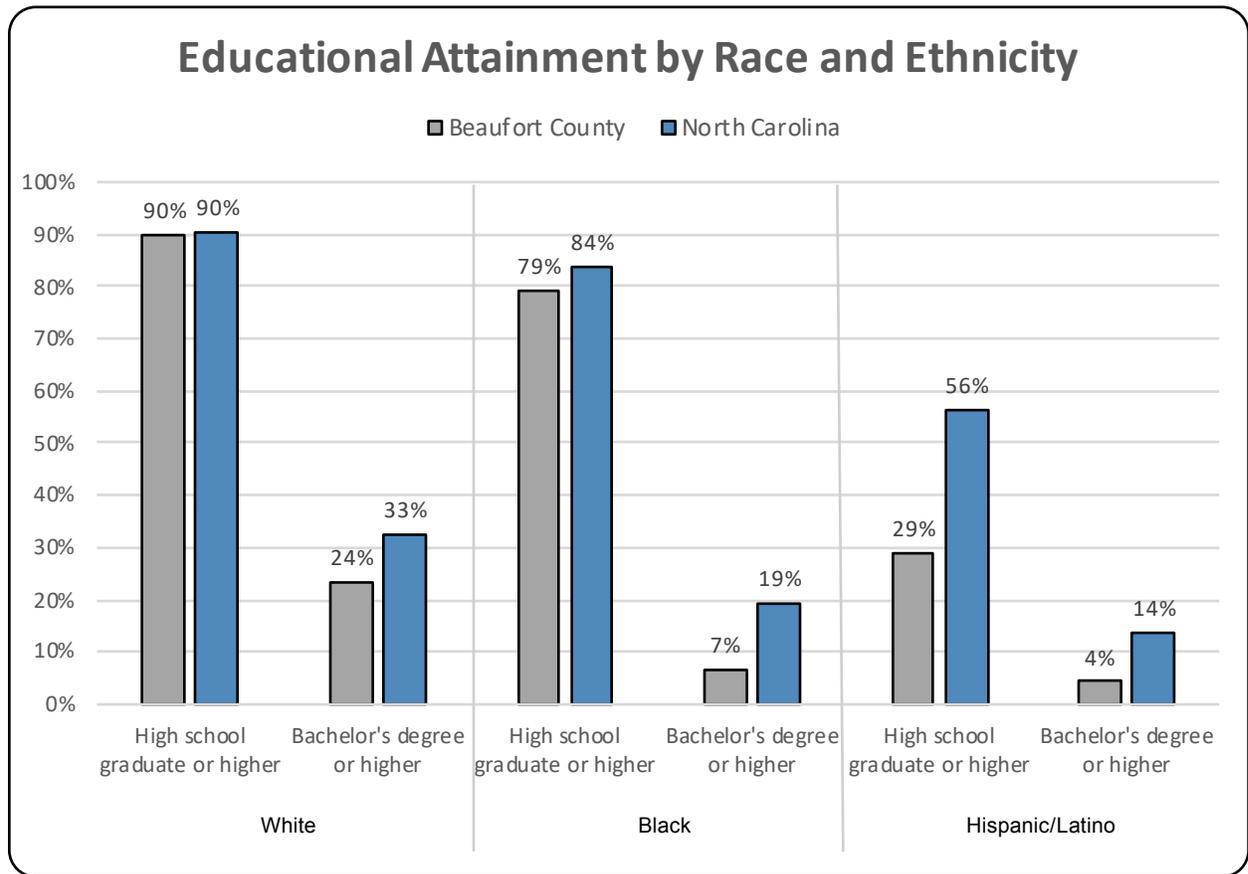
	Beaufort #	N.C. #	Beaufort %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	23,559	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	3,438	625,915	15%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	7,398	1,301,581	31%	25%
Some college, no degree	5,636	1,179,130	24%	23%
Associate's degree	3,094	518,632	13%	10%
Bachelor's degree	2,631	1,058,715	11%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	1,362	541,369	6%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



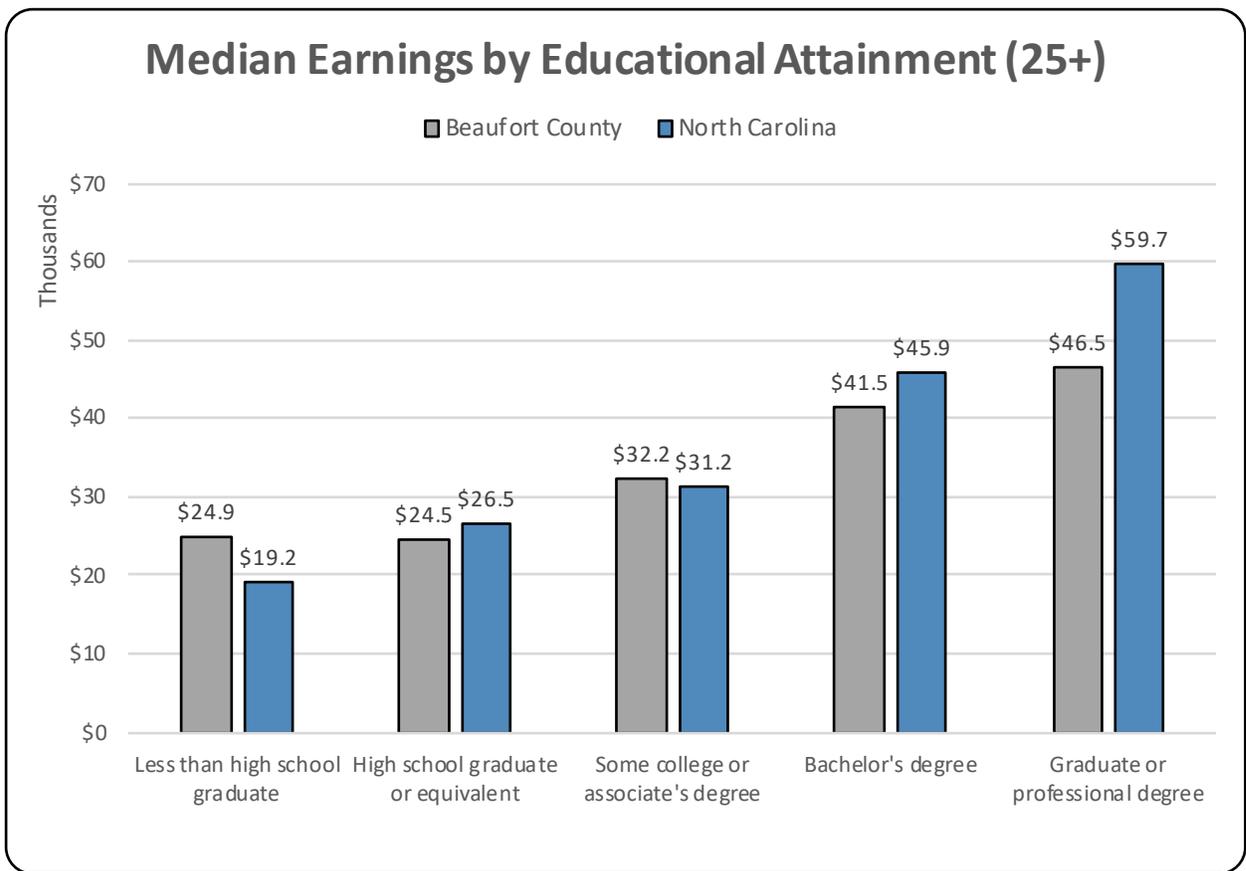
	Beaufort %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	90%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	24%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	79%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	29%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	4%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



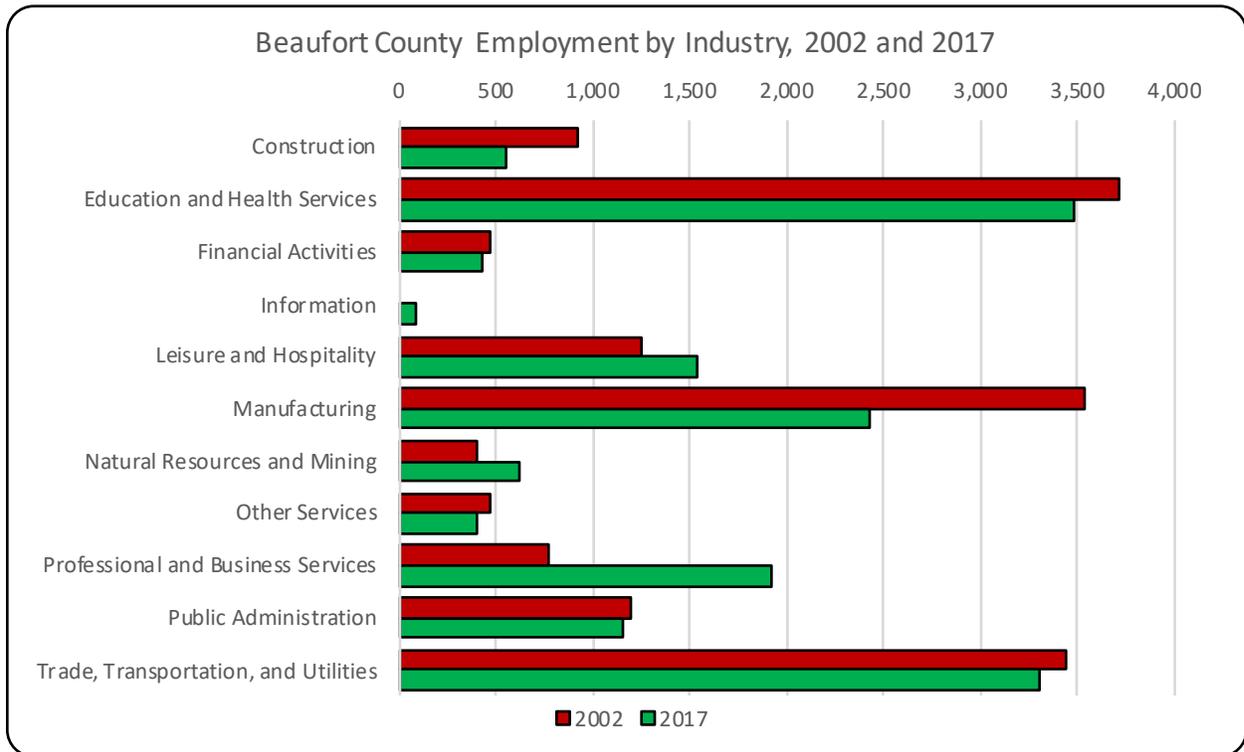
	Beaufort \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$24,931	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$24,490	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$32,238	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,503	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$46,525	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Beaufort)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	916	554	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	3,716	3,479	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	475	434	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	91	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	1,251	1,536	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	3,542	2,422	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	404	624	35,606	30,908
Other Services	475	409	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	773	1,915	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	1,193	1,150	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	3,436	3,301	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



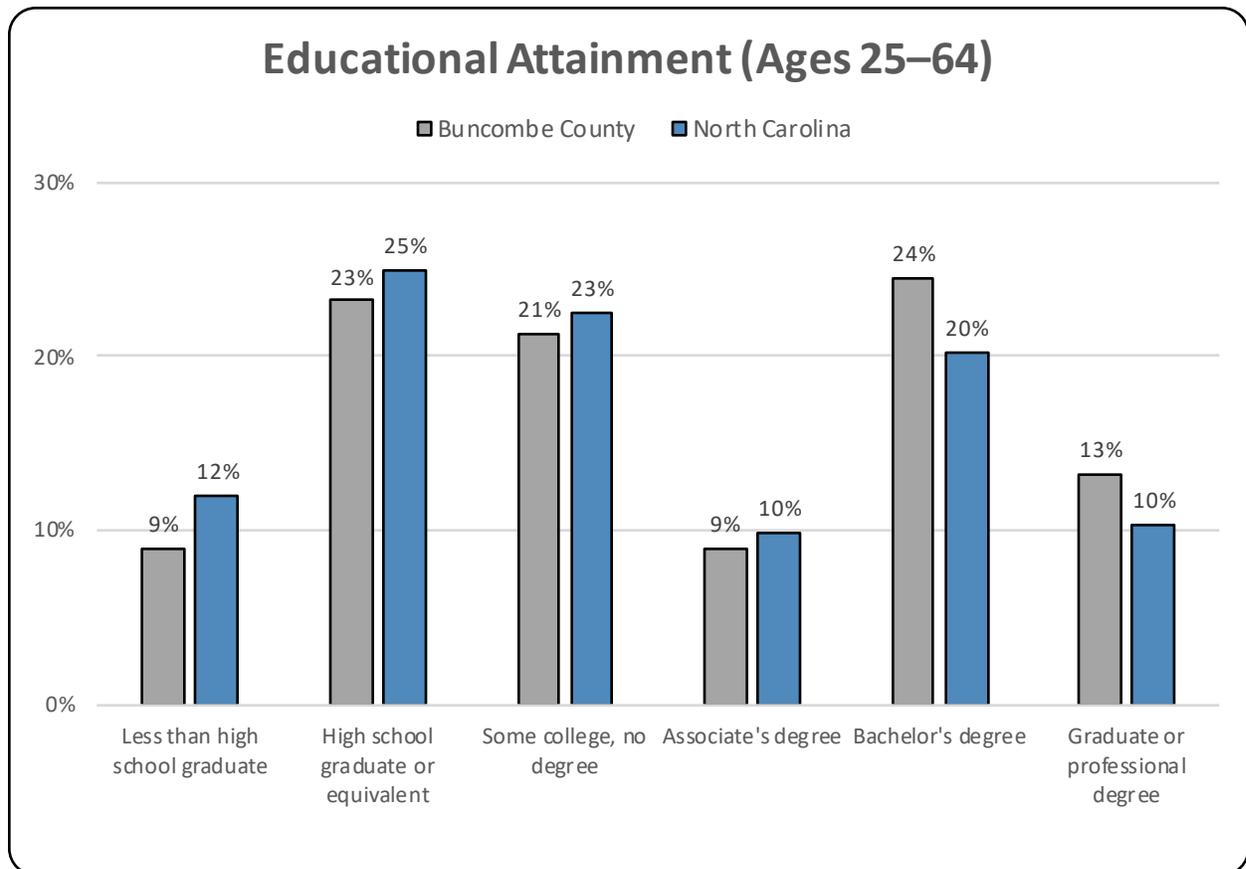
Buncombe County

	Buncombe #	N.C. #	Buncombe %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	10,943	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	465	24,161	4.3%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

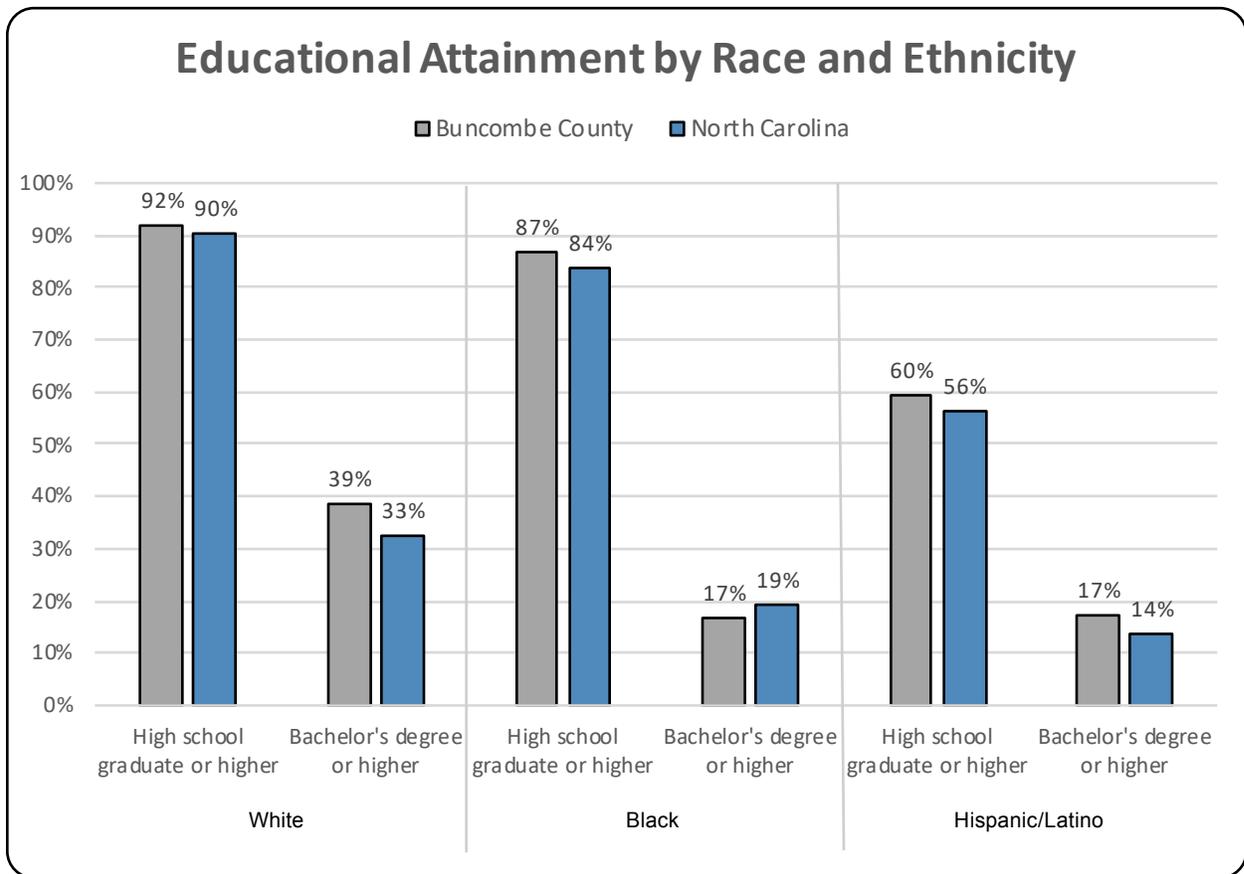
	Buncombe #	N.C. #	Buncombe %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	136,114	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	12,139	625,915	9%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	31,564	1,301,581	23%	25%
Some college, no degree	29,055	1,179,130	21%	23%
Associate’s degree	12,122	518,632	9%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	33,244	1,058,715	24%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	17,990	541,369	13%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



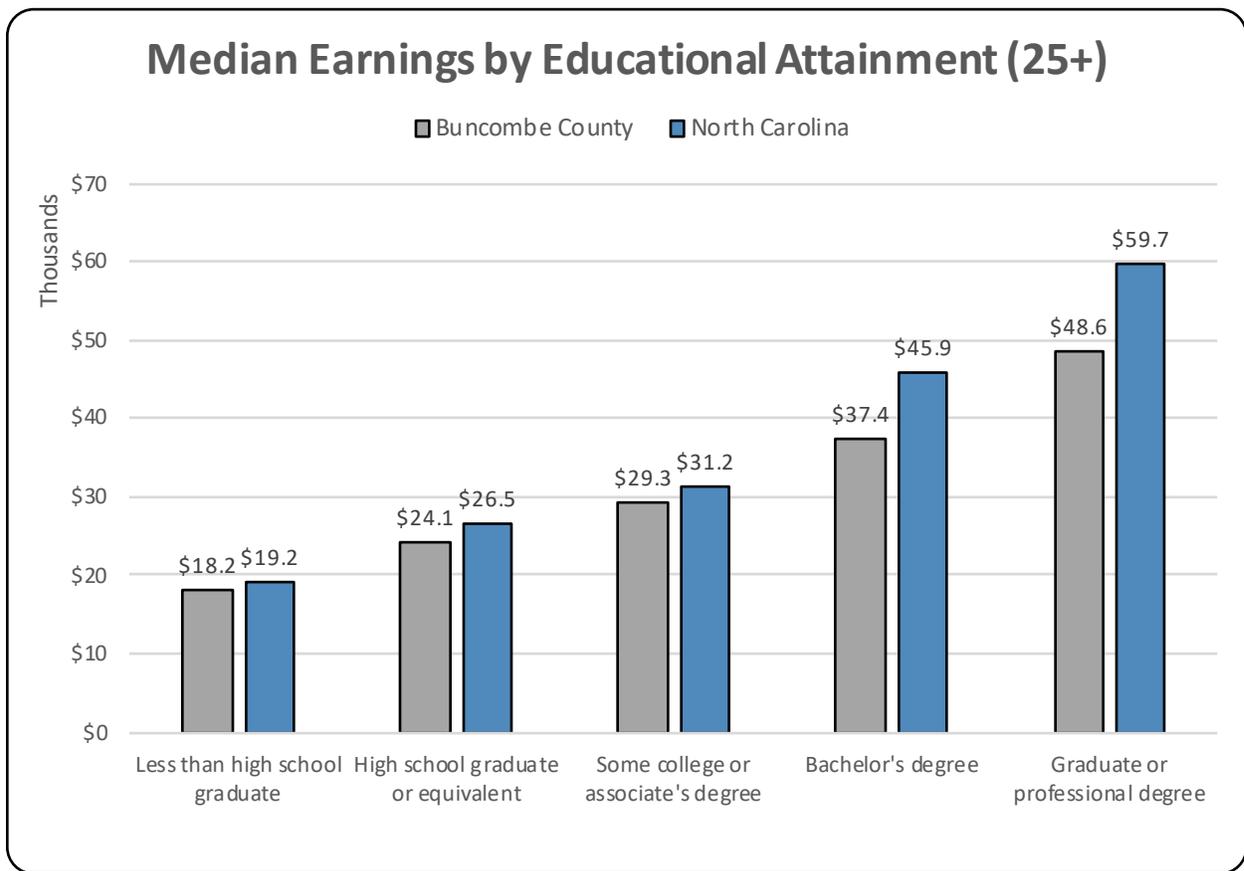
	Buncombe %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	92%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	39%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	87%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	17%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	60%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	17%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



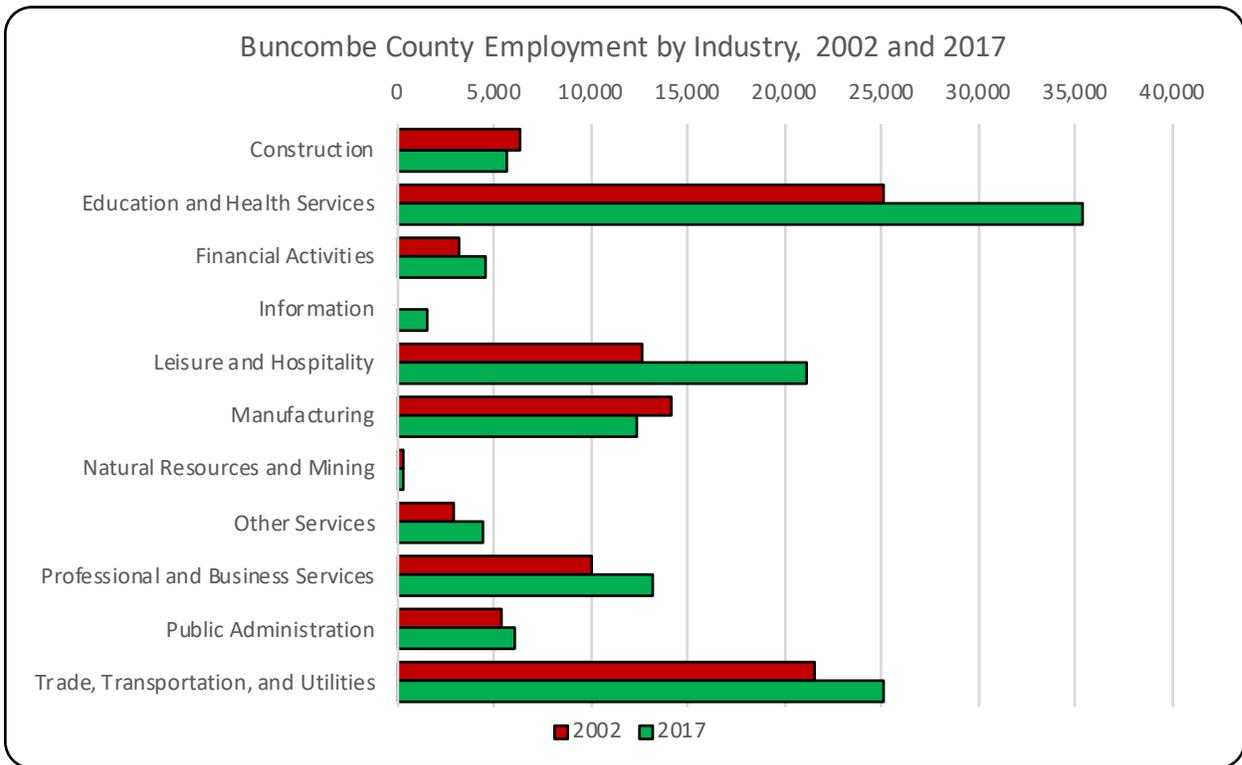
	Buncombe \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$18,166	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$24,145	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$29,270	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$37,374	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$48,583	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Buncombe)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	6,400	5,669	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	25,162	35,325	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	3,266	4,536	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	1,568	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	12,709	21,158	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	14,137	12,395	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	337	362	35,606	30,908
Other Services	2,926	4,424	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	10,057	13,230	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	5,409	6,023	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	21,563	25,095	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



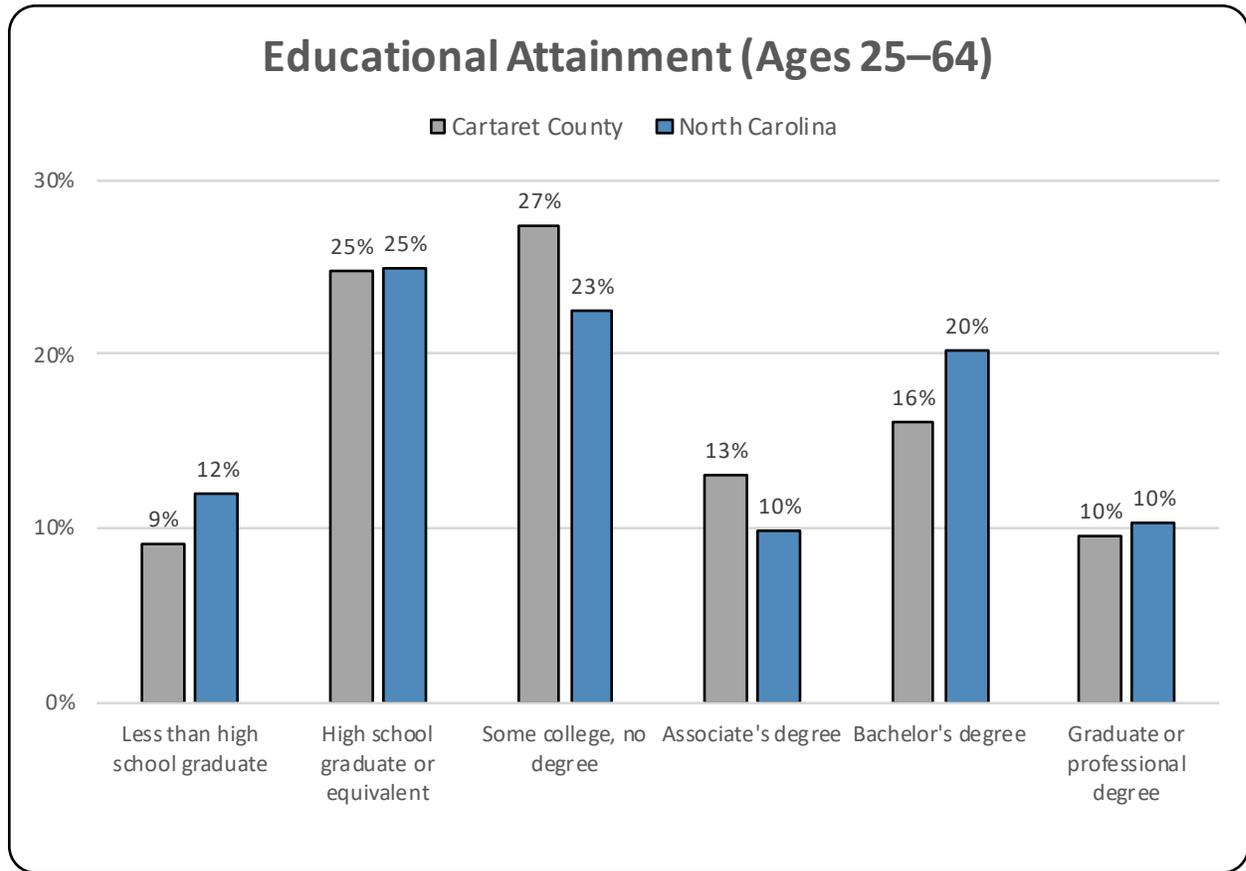
Carteret County

	Carteret #	N.C. #	Carteret %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	2,690	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	207	24,161	7.7%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

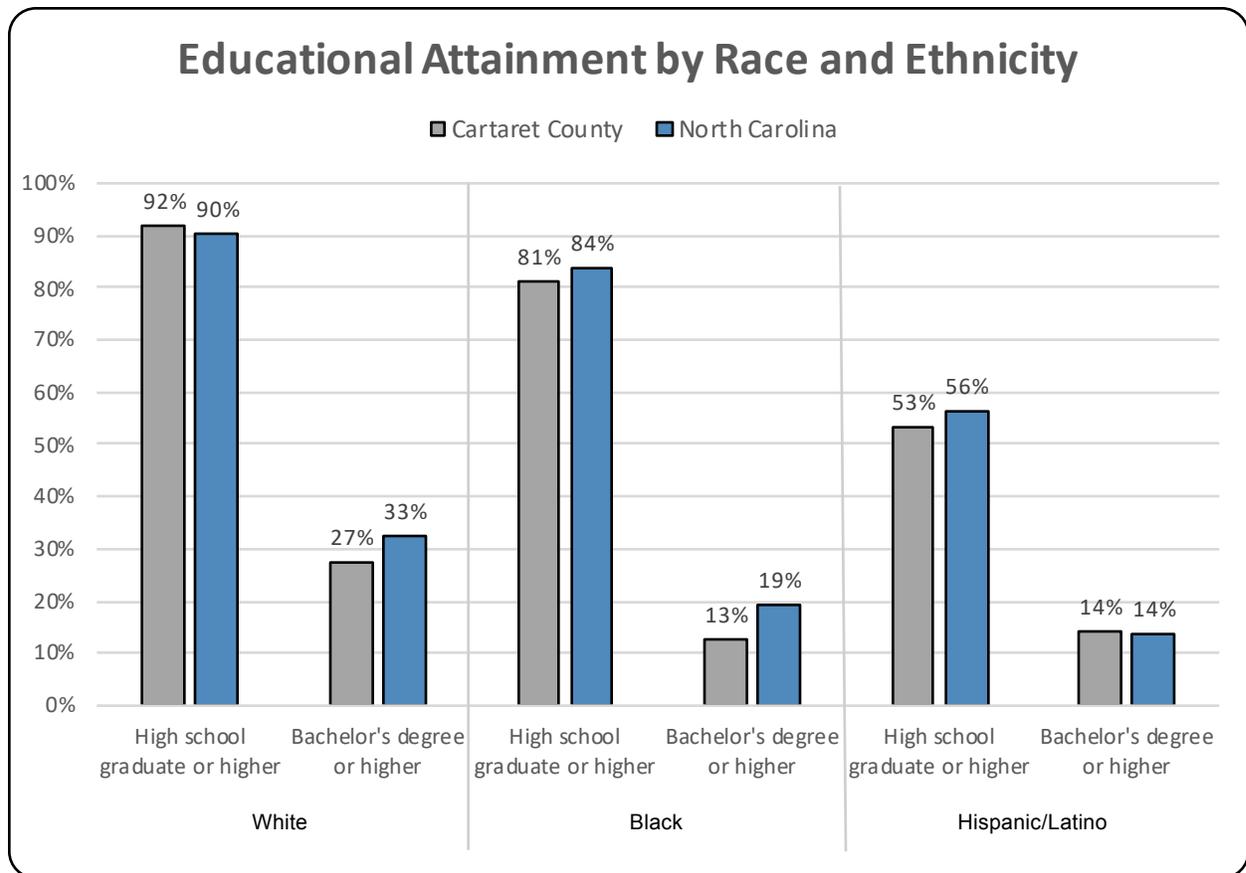
	Carteret #	N.C. #	Carteret %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	36,208	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	3,298	625,915	9%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	8,972	1,301,581	25%	25%
Some college, no degree	9,918	1,179,130	27%	23%
Associate’s degree	4,733	518,632	13%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	5,829	1,058,715	16%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	3,458	541,369	10%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



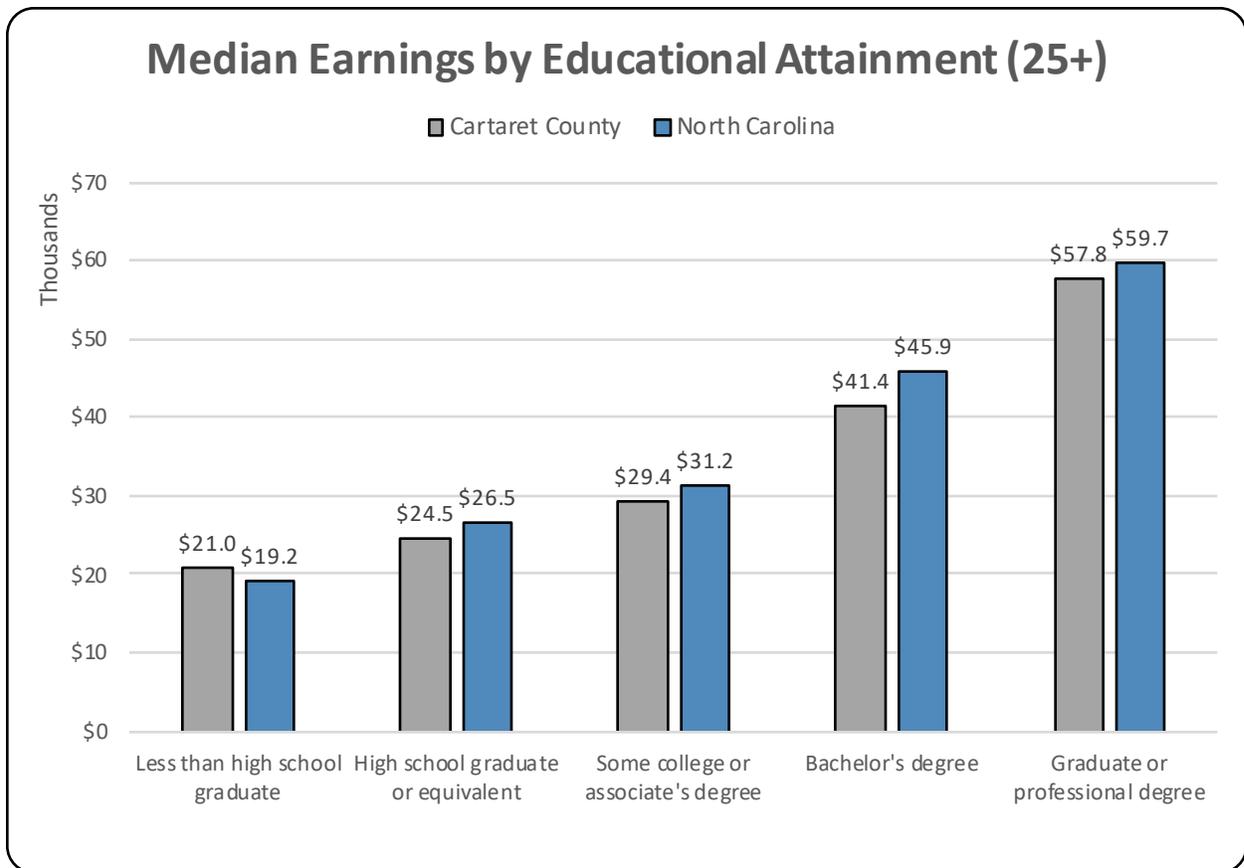
	Carteret %	NC %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	92%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	27%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	81%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	13%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	53%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	14%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



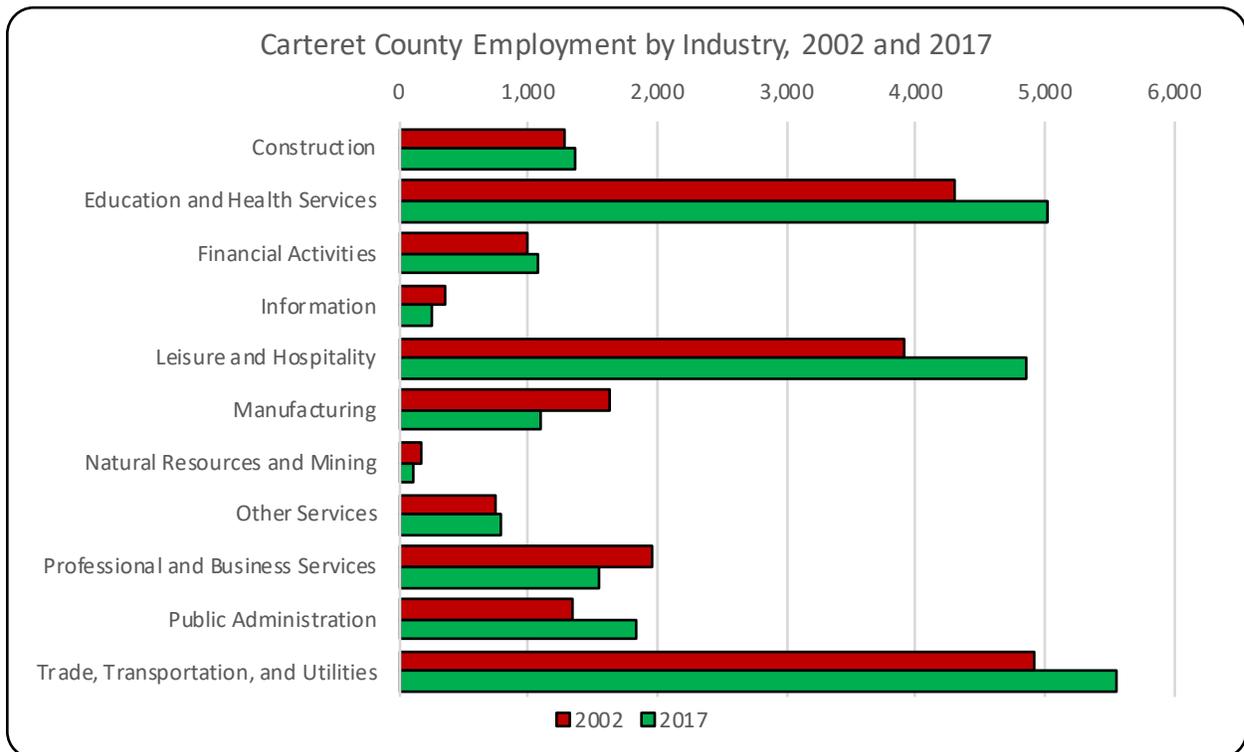
	Carteret \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$20,985	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$24,493	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$29,429	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,350	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$57,773	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Carteret)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	1,287	1,368	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	4,306	5,015	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	985	1,083	184,151	227,142
Information	367	253	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	3,901	4,857	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	1,627	1,102	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	168	117	35,606	30,908
Other Services	738	779	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	1,960	1,545	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	1,338	1,835	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	4,917	5,559	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



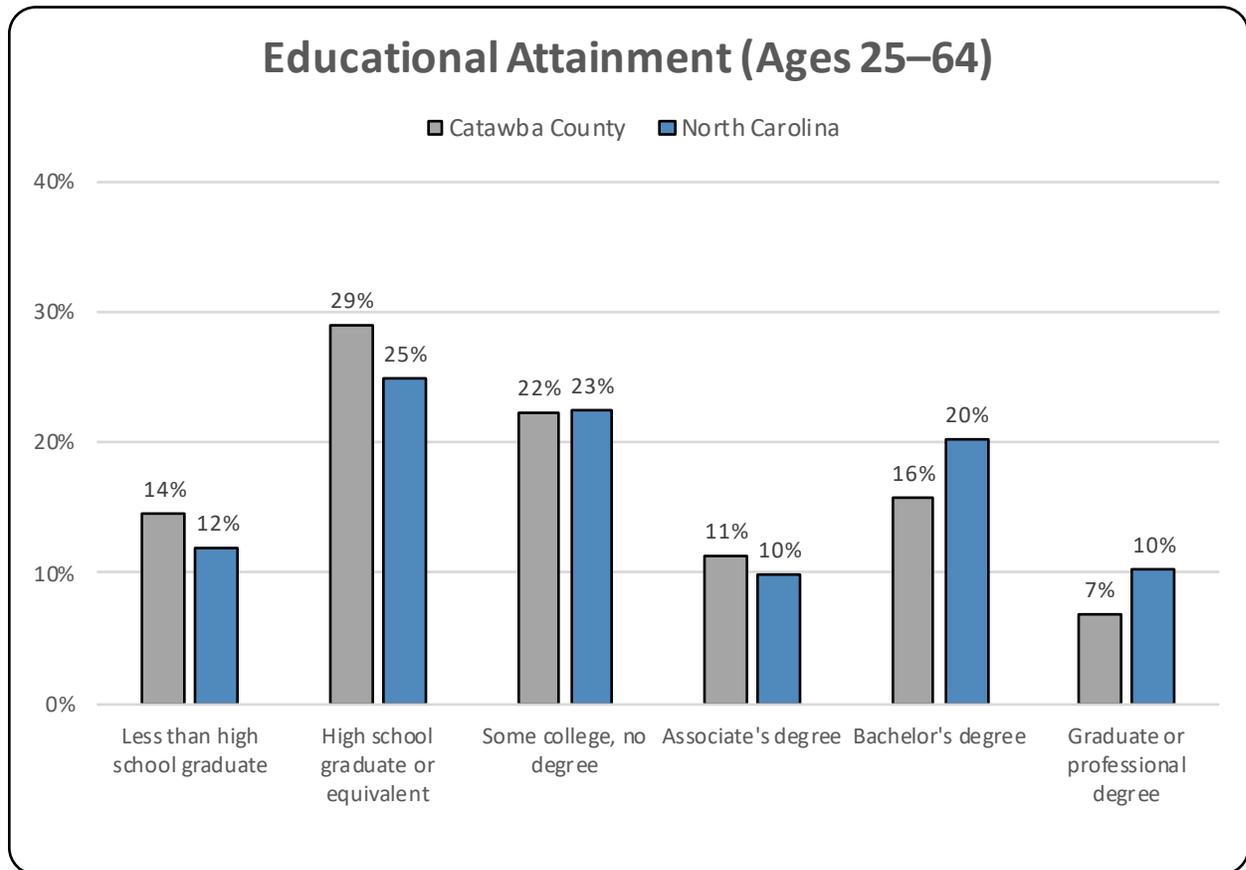
Catawba County

	Catawba #	N.C. #	Catawba %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	8,028	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	299	24,161	3.7%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

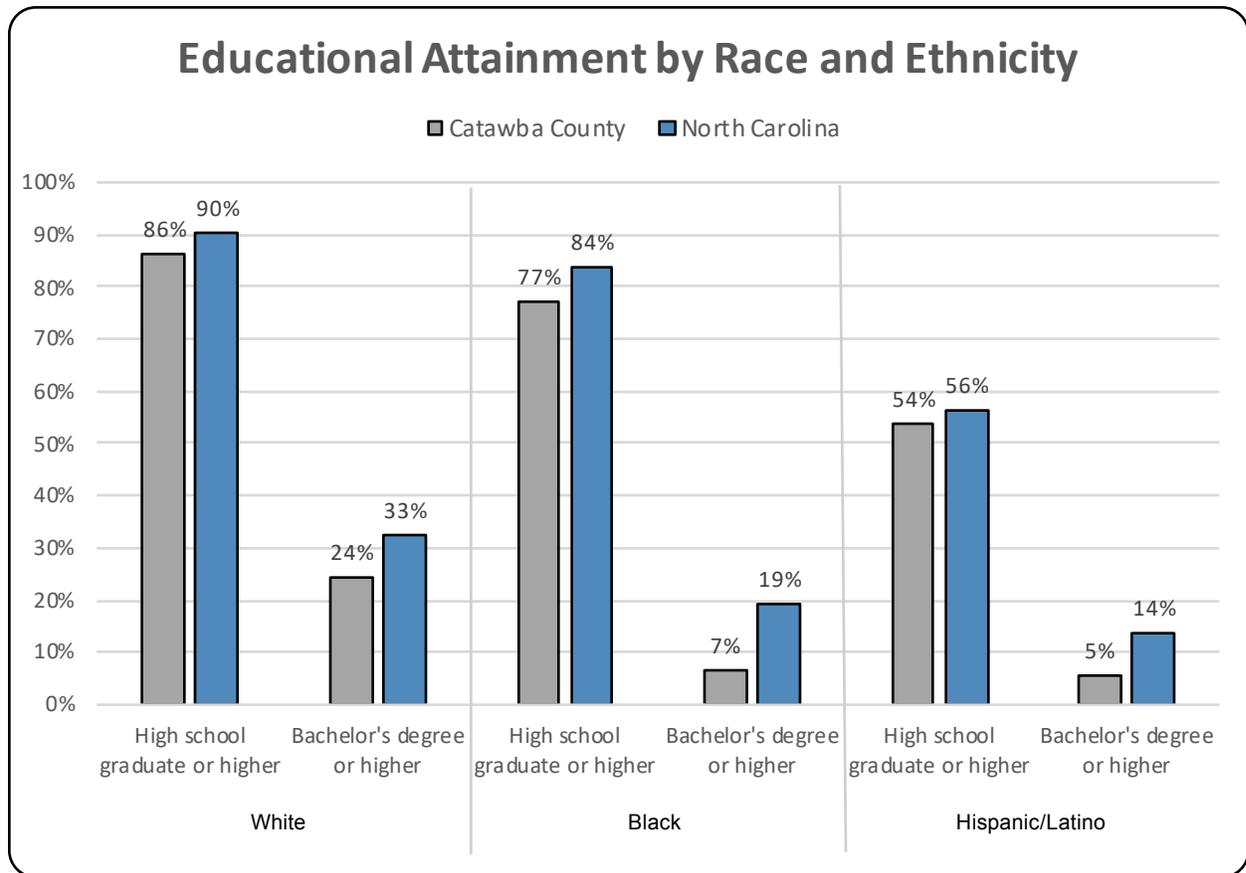
	Catawba #	N.C. #	Catawba %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	81,590	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	11,814	625,915	14%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	23,698	1,301,581	29%	25%
Some college, no degree	18,189	1,179,130	22%	23%
Associate’s degree	9,295	518,632	11%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	12,951	1,058,715	16%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	5,643	541,369	7%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



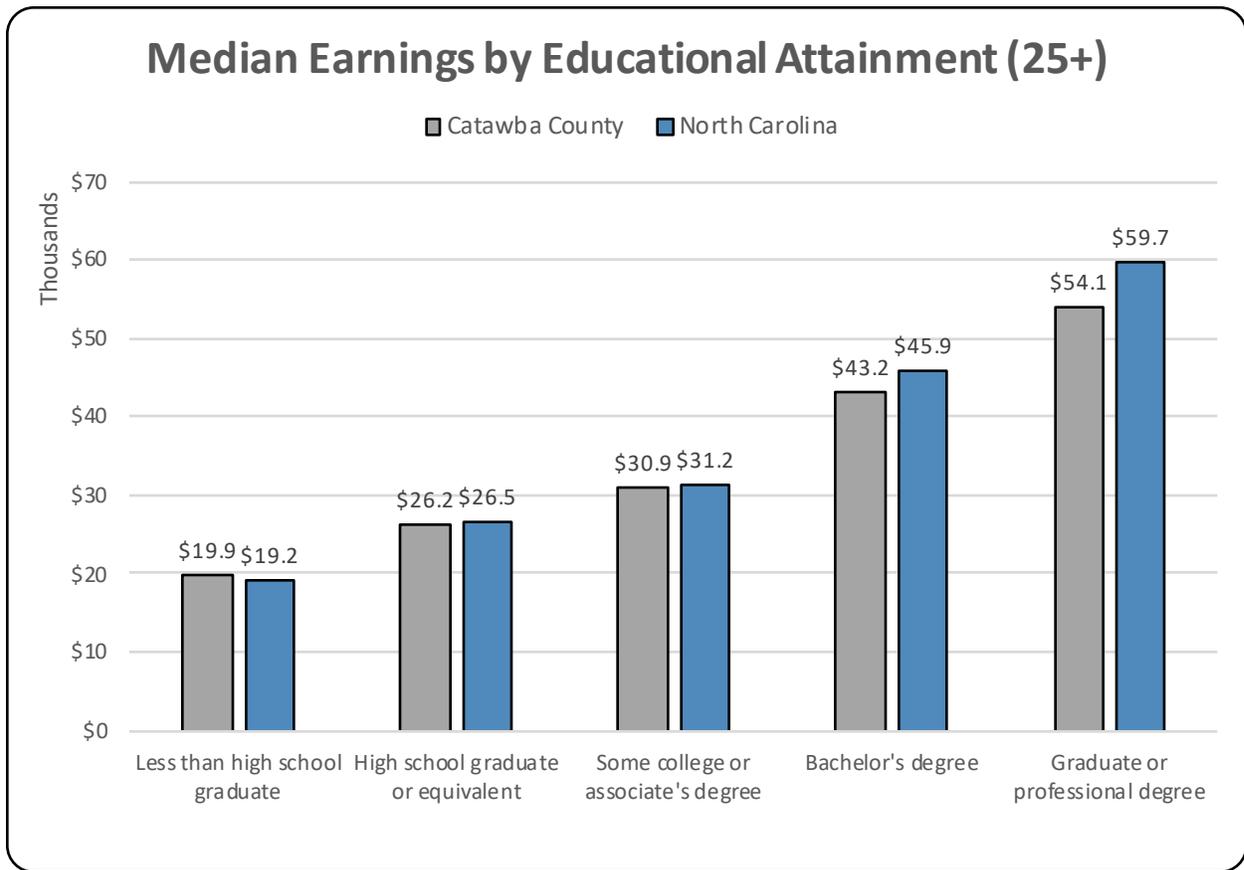
	Catawba %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	86%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	24%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	77%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	54%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	5%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



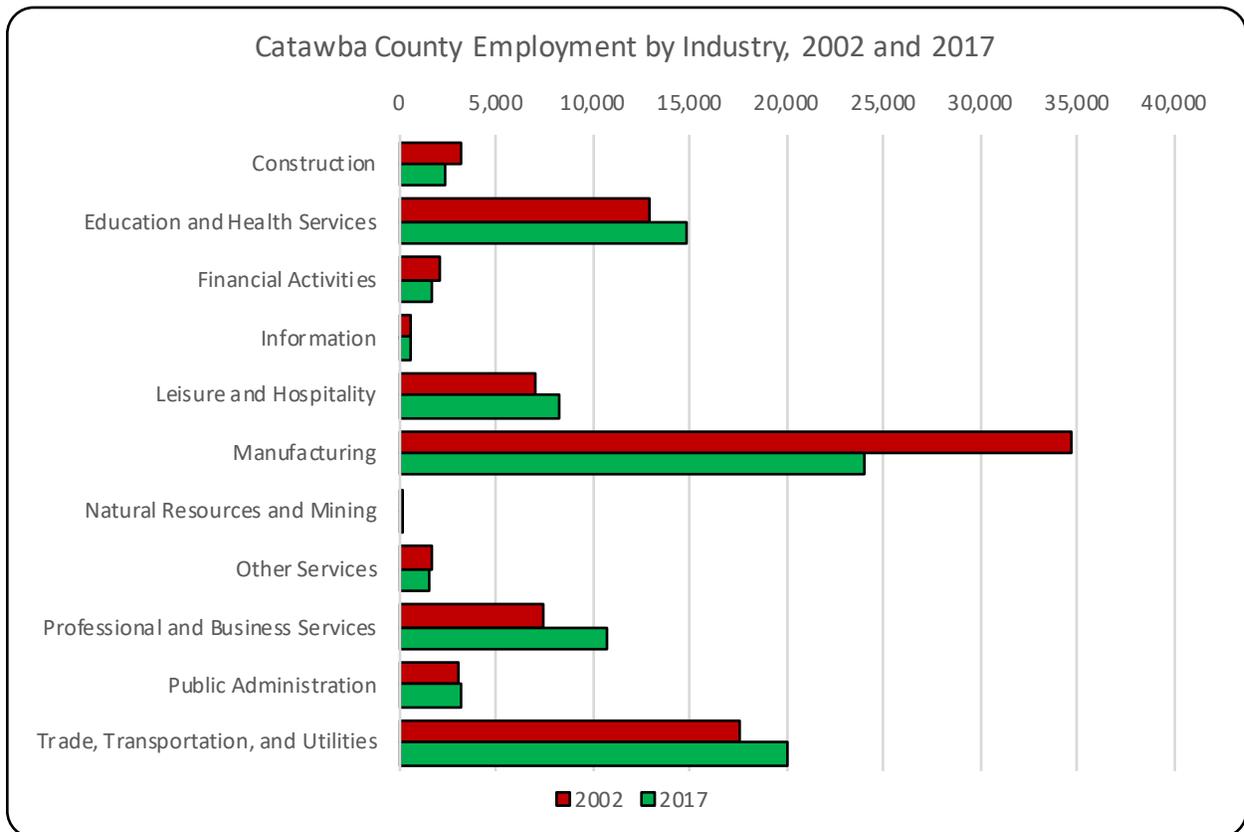
	Catawba \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment		
Less than high school graduate	\$19,854	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$26,230	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$30,865	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$43,198	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$54,105	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Catawba)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	3,269	2,367	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	12,879	14,807	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	2,156	1,646	184,151	227,142
Information	644	574	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	7,001	8,336	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	34,673	24,019	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	172	144	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,707	1,540	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	7,423	10,765	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	3,002	3,148	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	17,523	19,969	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



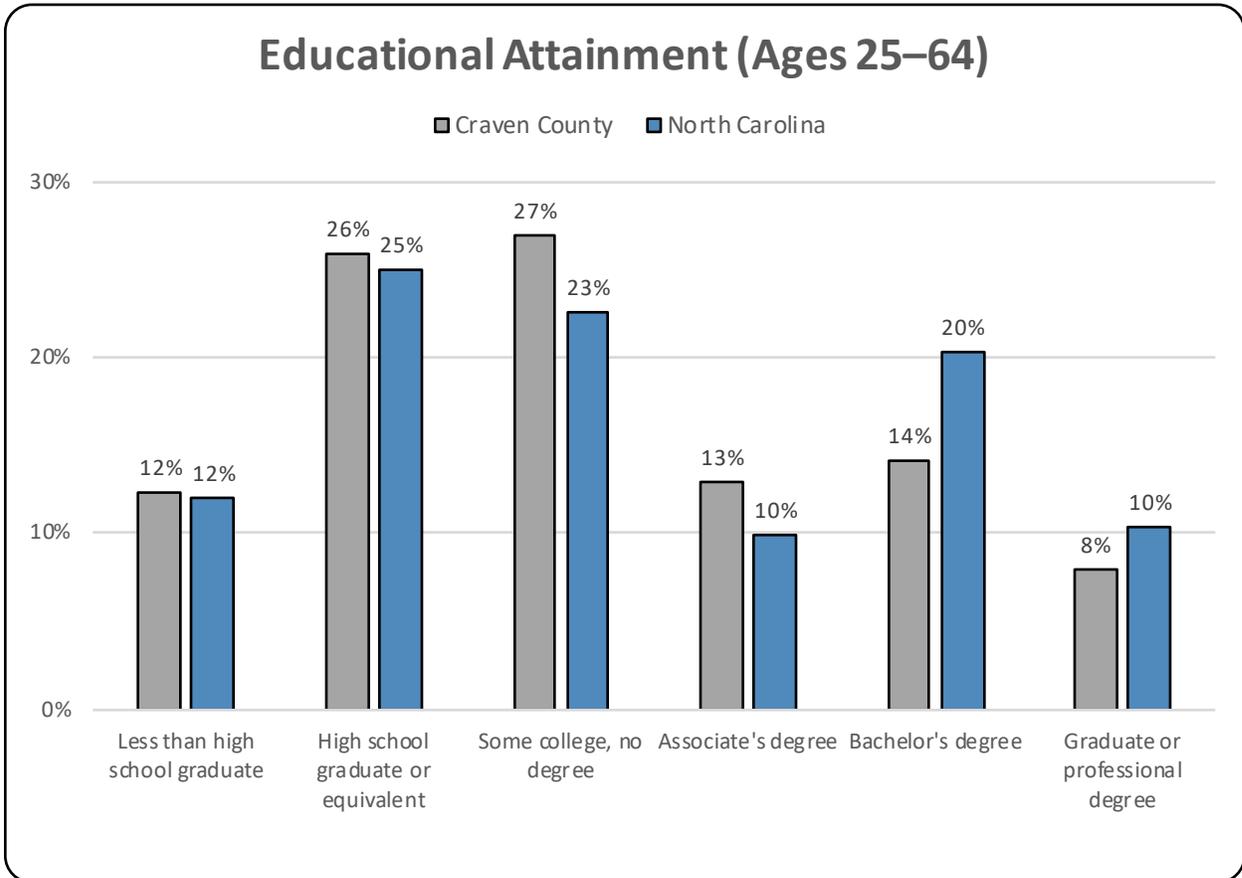
Craven County

	Craven #	N.C. #	Craven %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	5,098	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	212	24,161	4.2%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

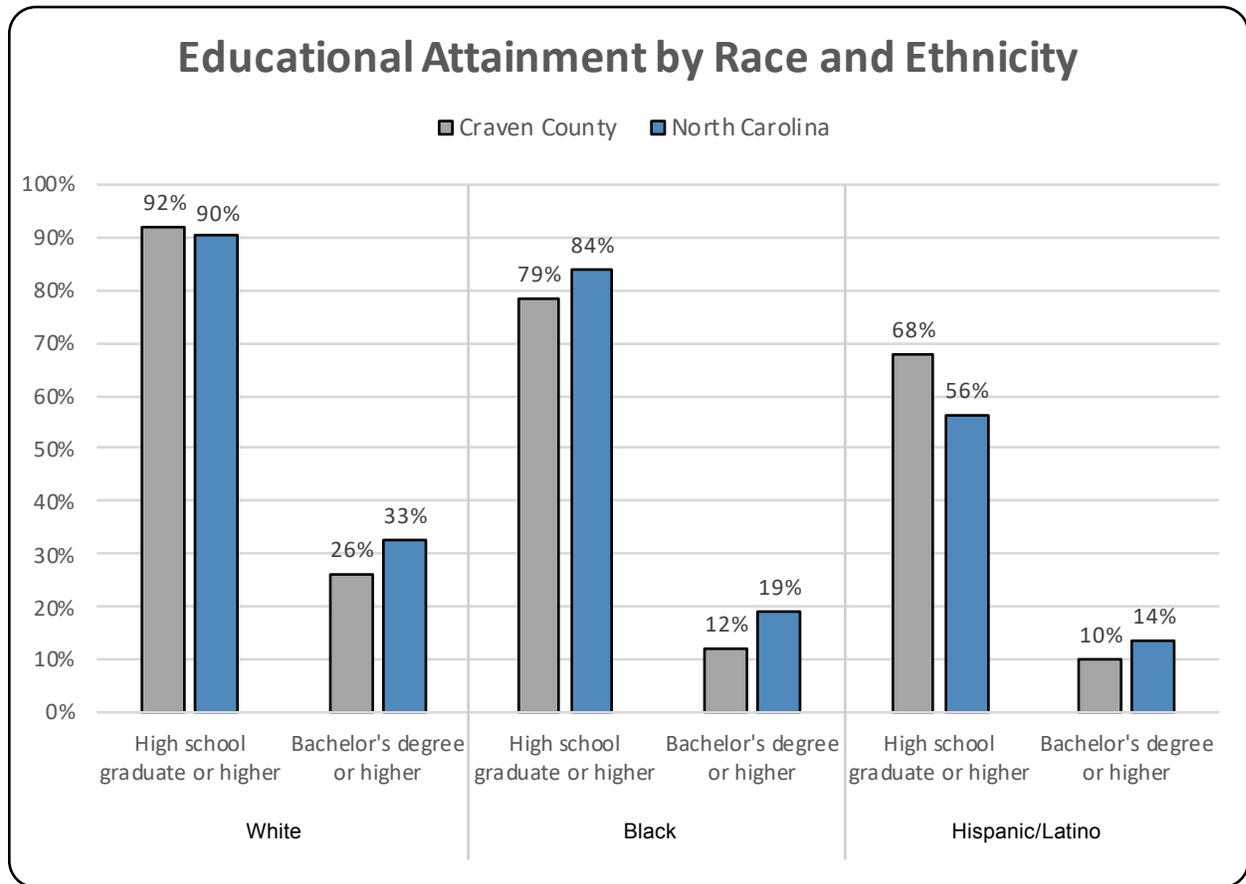
	Craven #	N.C. #	Craven %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	49,641	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	6,091	625,915	12%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	12,808	1,301,581	26%	25%
Some college, no degree	13,382	1,179,130	27%	23%
Associate’s degree	6,421	518,632	13%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	7,021	1,058,715	14%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	3,918	541,369	8%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



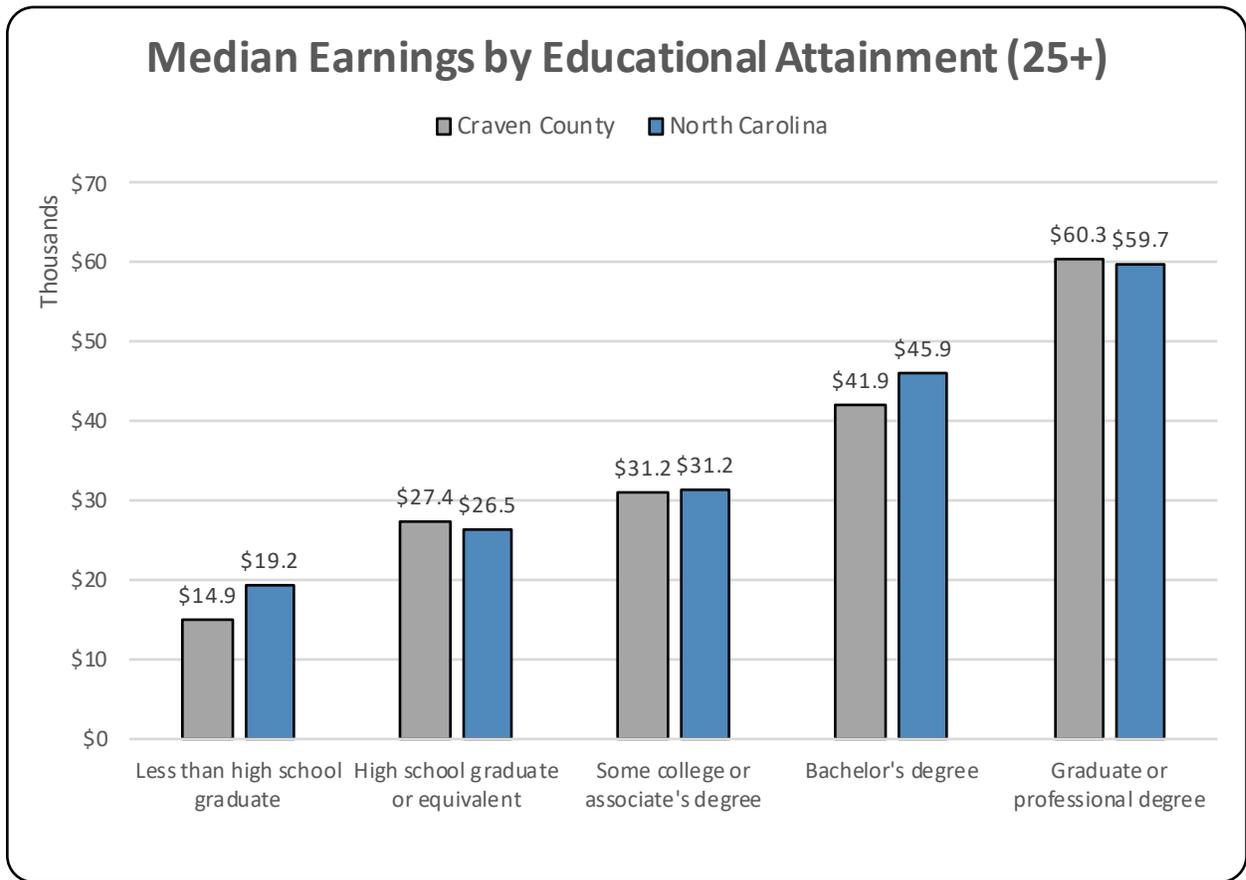
	Craven %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	92%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	26%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	79%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	12%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	68%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	10%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



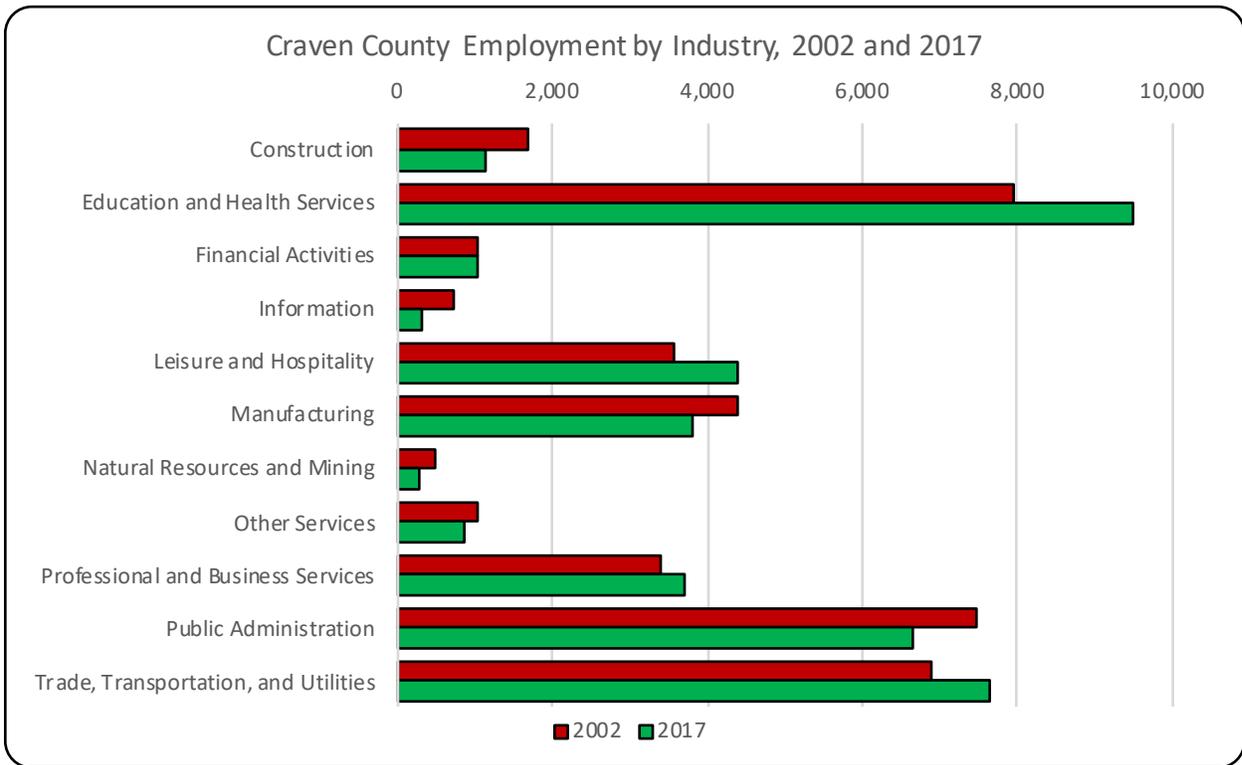
	Craven \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$14,859	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$27,434	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,181	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,918	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$60,284	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Craven)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	1,702	1,137	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	7,952	9,480	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	1,028	1,025	184,151	227,142
Information	748	326	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	3,559	4,404	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	4,405	3,825	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	495	289	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,043	861	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	3,417	3,707	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	7,478	6,639	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	6,885	7,644	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



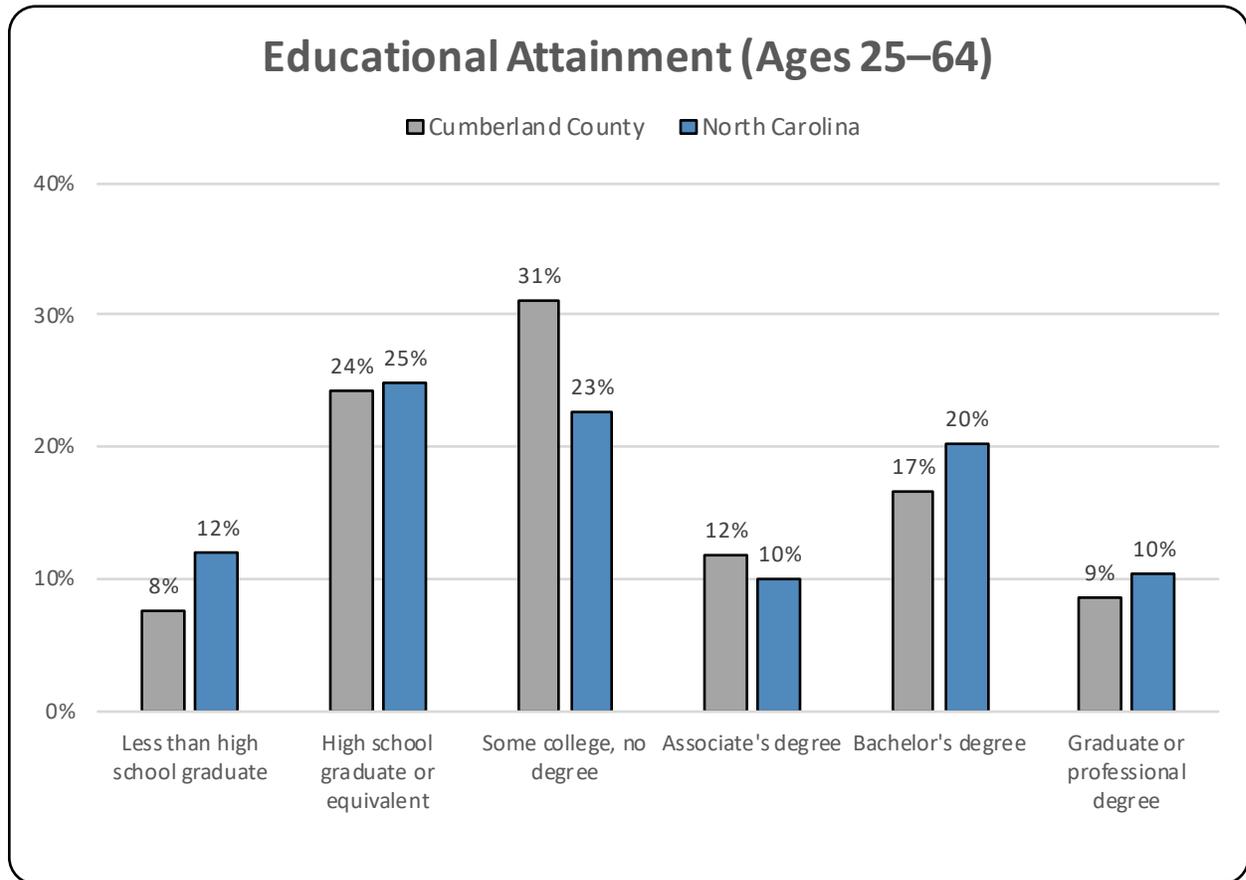
Cumberland County

	Cumberland #	N.C. #	Cumberland %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	17,963	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	606	24,161	3.4%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

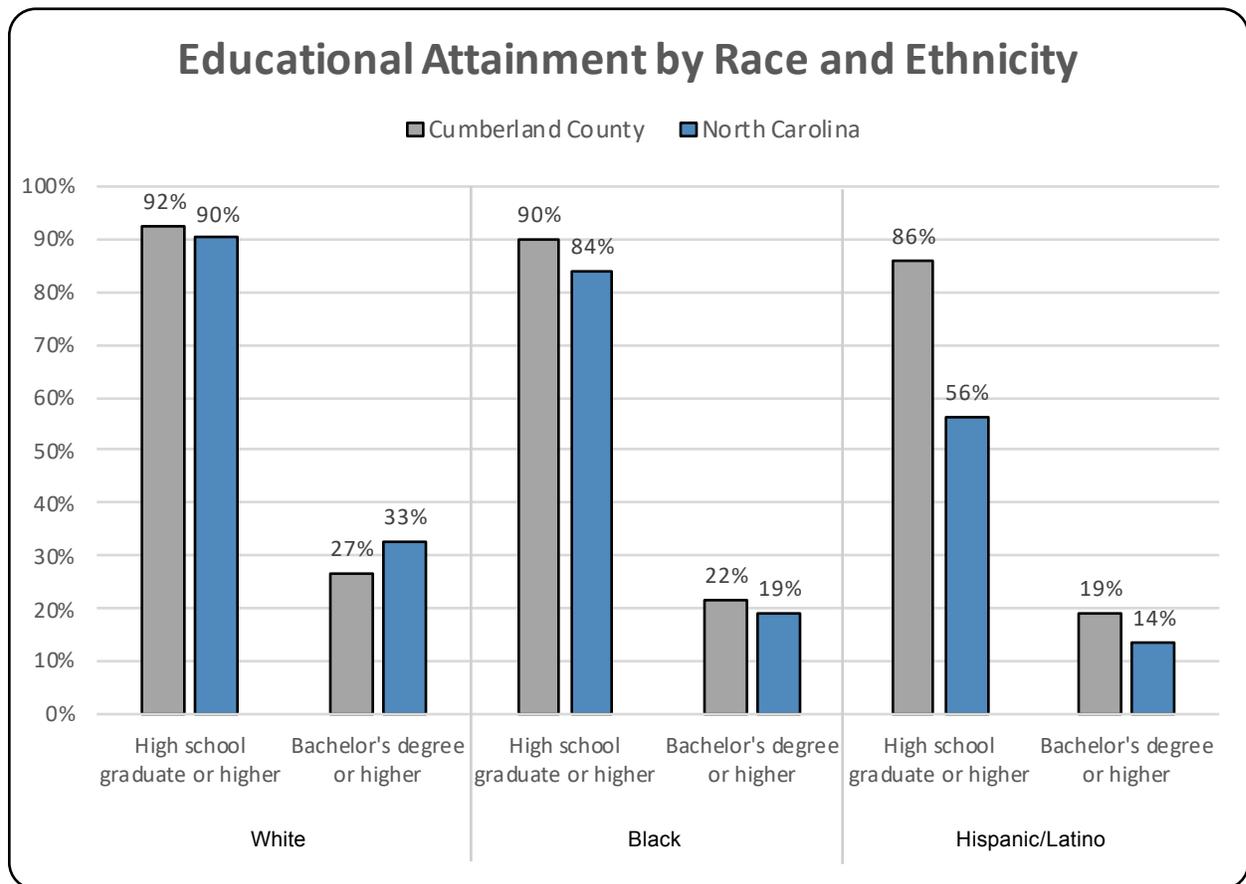
	Cumberland #	N.C. #	Cumberland %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	165,935	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	12,686	625,915	8%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	40,149	1,301,581	24%	25%
Some college, no degree	51,701	1,179,130	31%	23%
Associate’s degree	19,544	518,632	12%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	27,718	1,058,715	17%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	14,137	541,369	9%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



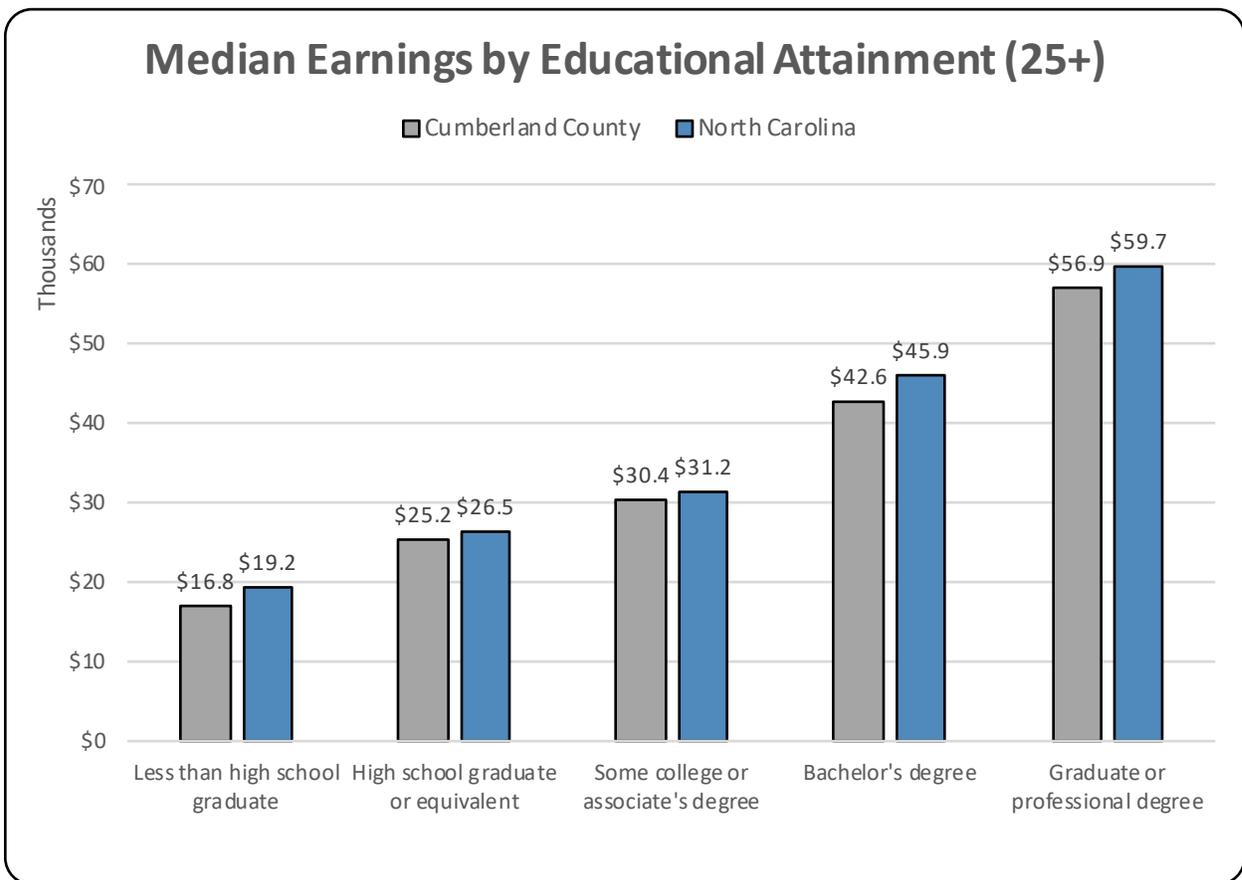
	Cumberland %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	92%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	27%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	90%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	22%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	86%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	19%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



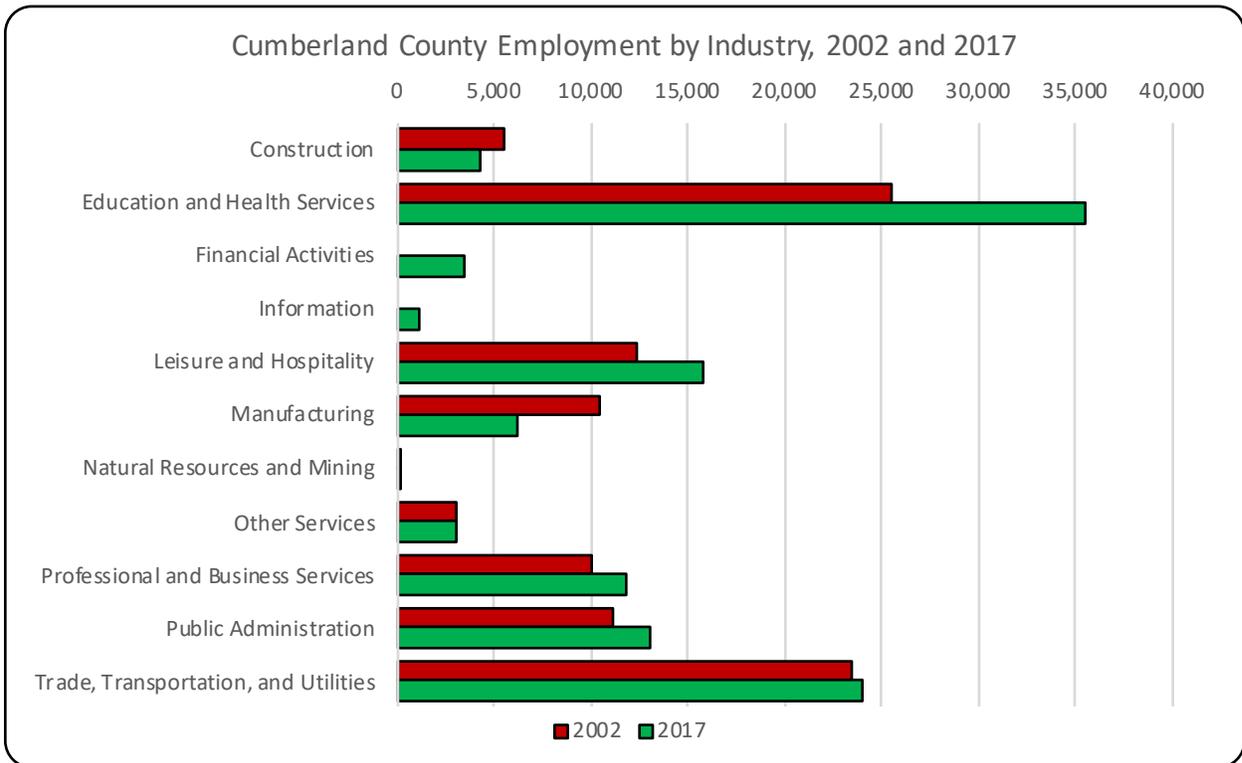
	Cumberland \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$16,837	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$25,246	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$30,356	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$42,576	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$56,943	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Cumberland)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	5,540	4,361	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	25,537	35,456	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	n/a	3,515	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	1,216	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	12,348	15,794	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	10,477	6,264	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	186	228	35,606	30,908
Other Services	3,116	3,023	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	10,059	11,834	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	11,075	13,120	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	23,512	23,947	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



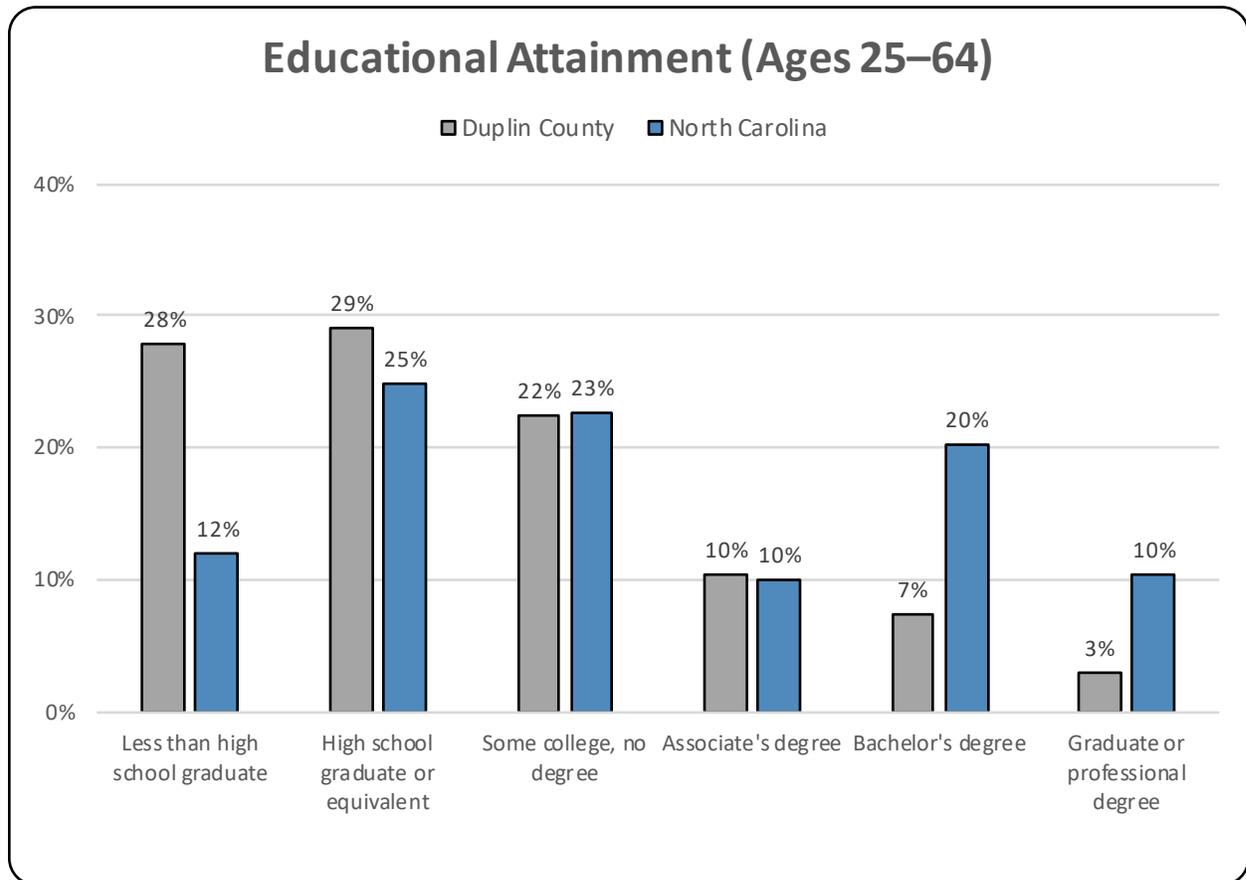
Duplin County

	Duplin #	N.C. #	Duplin %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	2,791	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	202	24,161	7.2%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

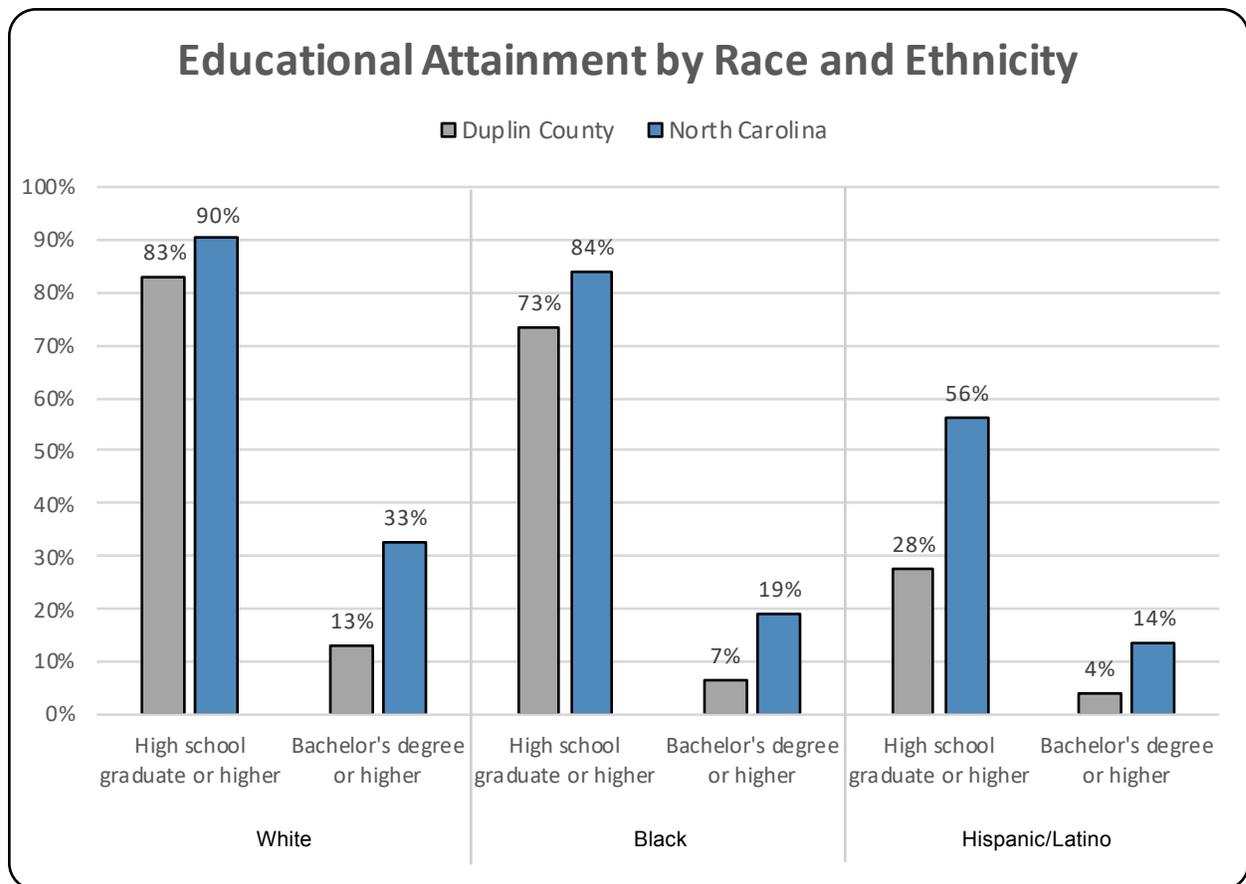
	Duplin #	N.C. #	Duplin %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	30,092	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	8,377	625,915	28%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	8,754	1,301,581	29%	25%
Some college, no degree	6,755	1,179,130	22%	23%
Associate’s degree	3,099	518,632	10%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	2,200	1,058,715	7%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	907	541,369	3%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



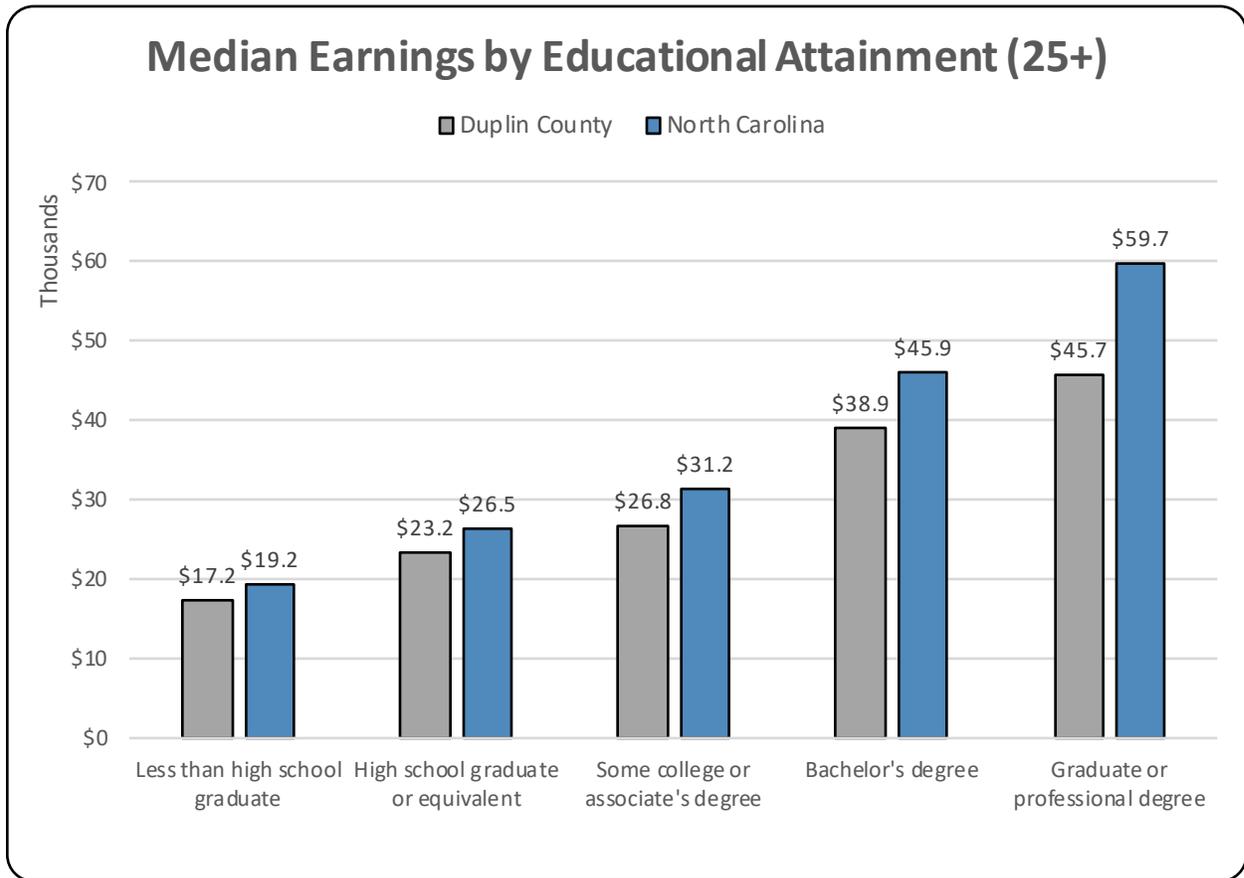
	Duplin %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	83%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	13%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	73%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	28%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	4%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



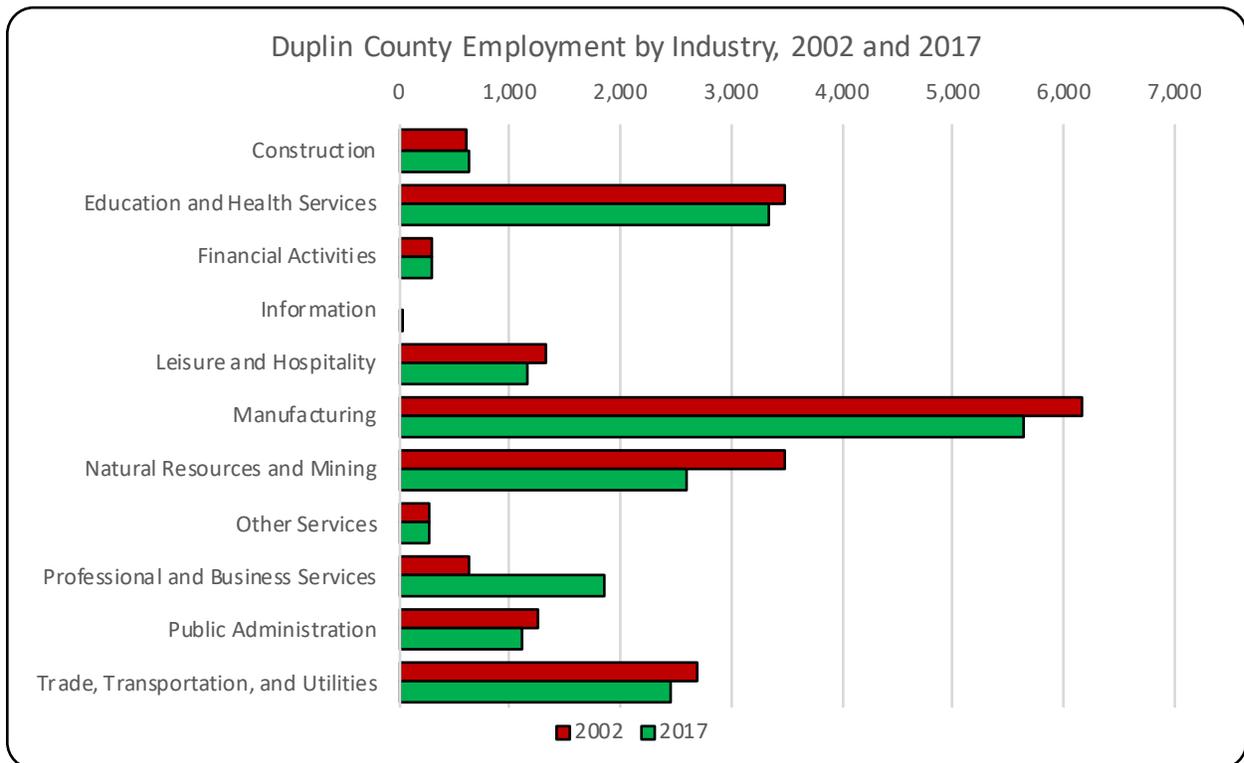
	Duplin \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$17,196	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$23,246	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$26,835	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$38,913	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$45,664	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Duplin)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	610	630	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	3,474	3,341	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	309	296	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	40	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	1,334	1,162	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	6,171	5,638	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	3,490	2,587	35,606	30,908
Other Services	274	283	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	636	1,842	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	1,252	1,104	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,695	2,441	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



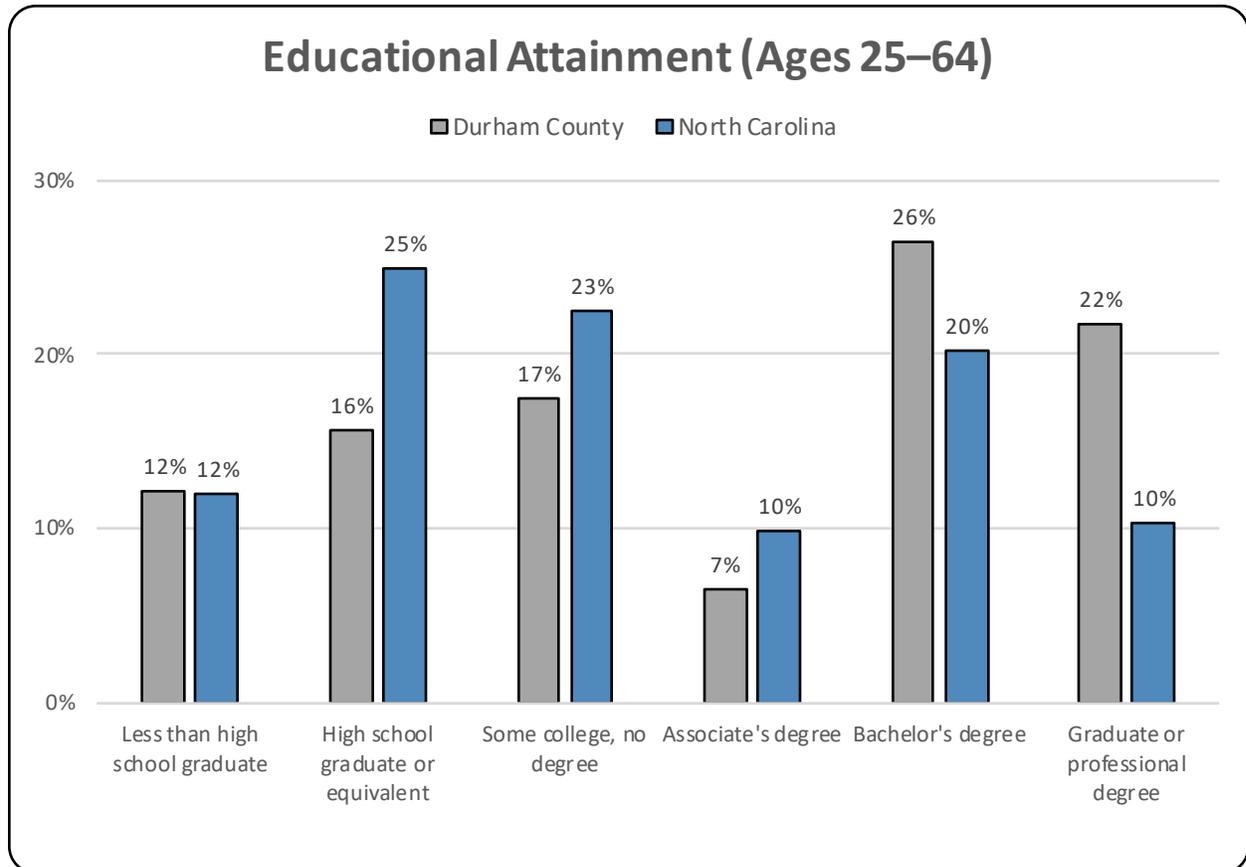
Durham County

	Durham #	N.C. #	Durham %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	15,144	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	587	24,161	3.9%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

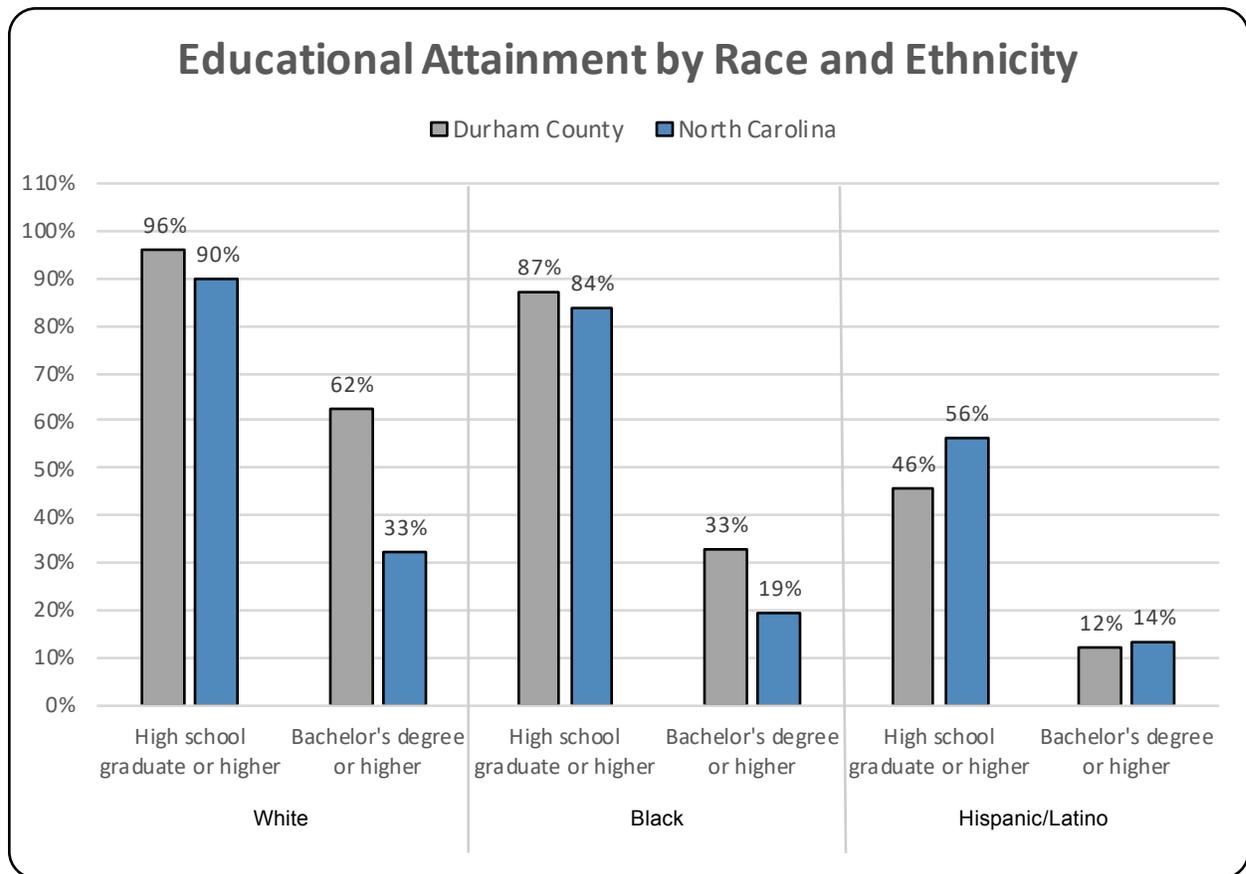
	Durham #	N.C. #	Durham %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	166,224	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	20,237	625,915	12%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	26,034	1,301,581	16%	25%
Some college, no degree	29,040	1,179,130	17%	23%
Associate’s degree	10,903	518,632	7%	10%
Bachelor’s degree	43,967	1,058,715	26%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	36,043	541,369	22%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



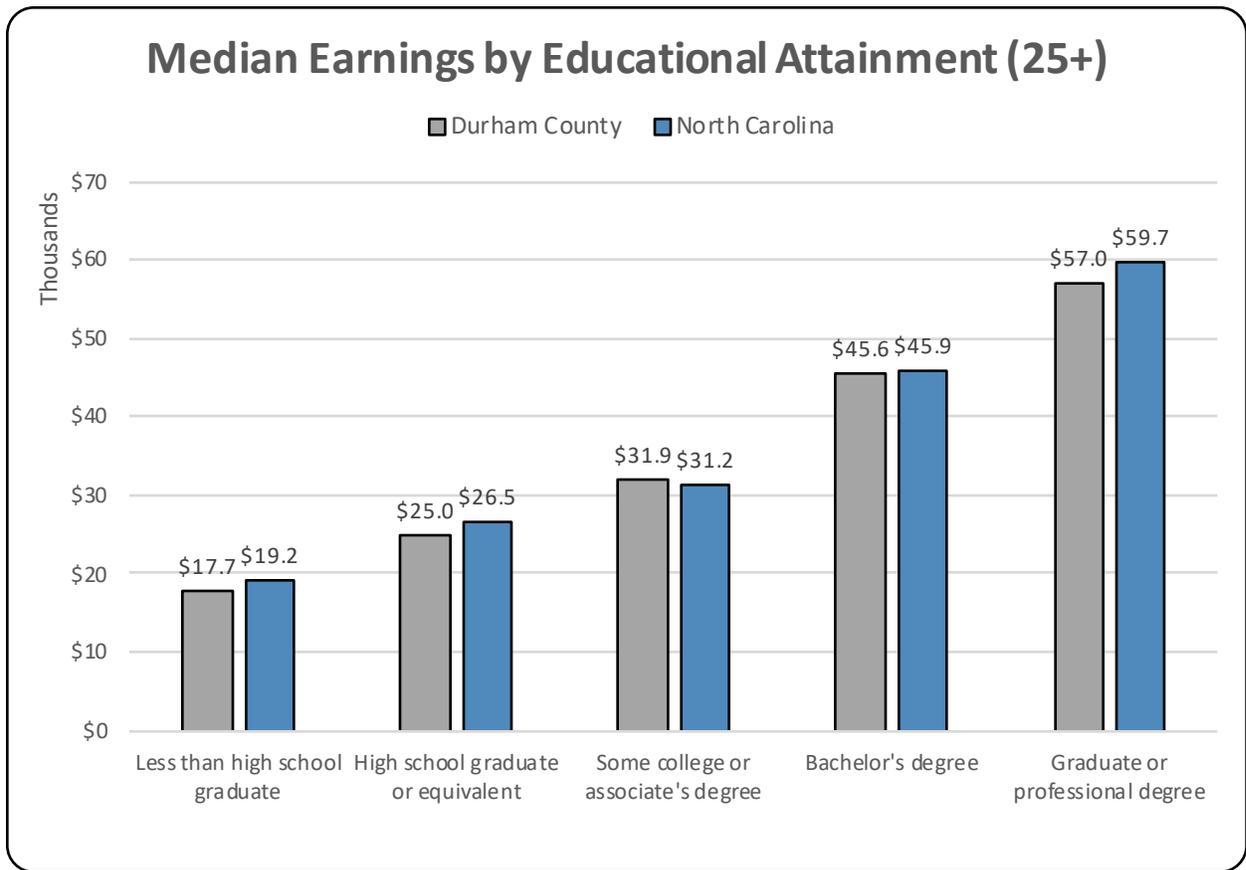
	Durham %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	96%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	62%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	87%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	33%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	46%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	12%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



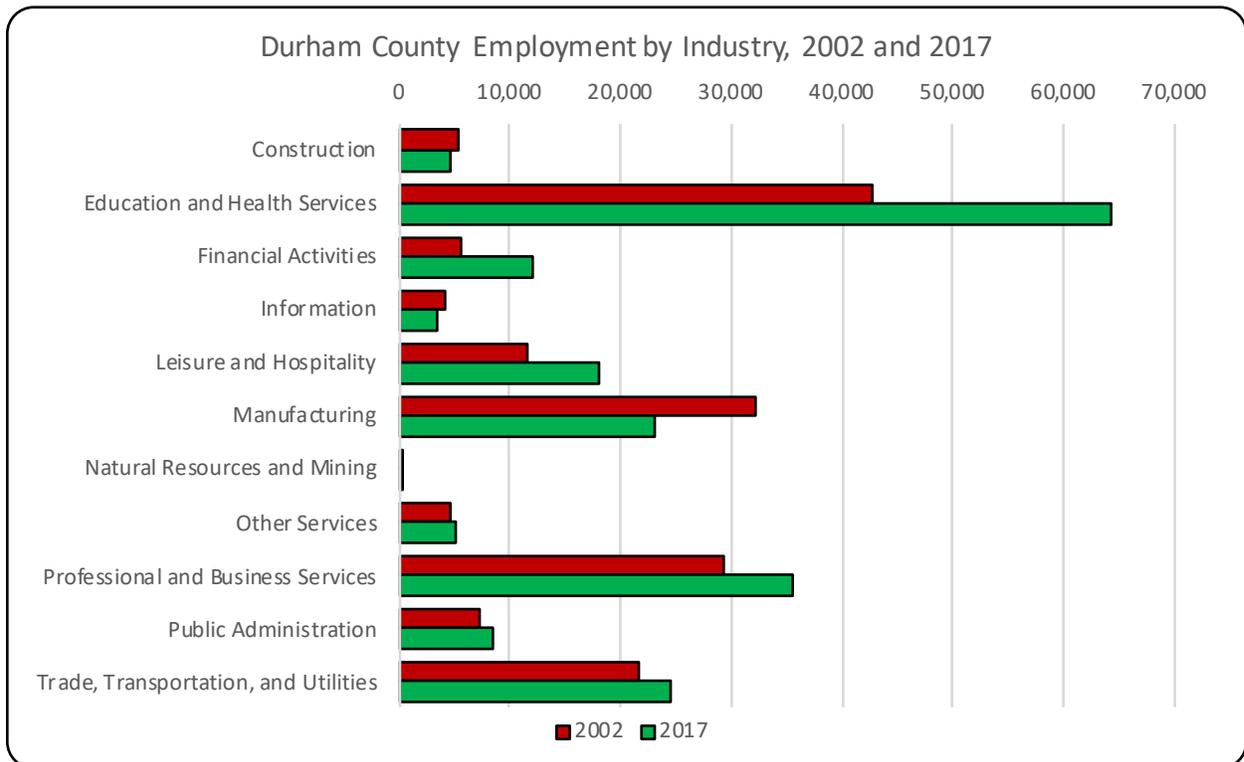
	Durham \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment		
Less than high school graduate	\$17,749	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$24,995	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,853	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$45,638	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$57,019	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Durham)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	5,277	4,676	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	42,734	64,311	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	5,663	12,011	184,151	227,142
Information	4,142	3,410	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	11,620	17,948	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	32,156	22,973	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	118	234	35,606	30,908
Other Services	4,590	5,104	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	29,408	35,634	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	7,166	8,480	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	21,571	24,509	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



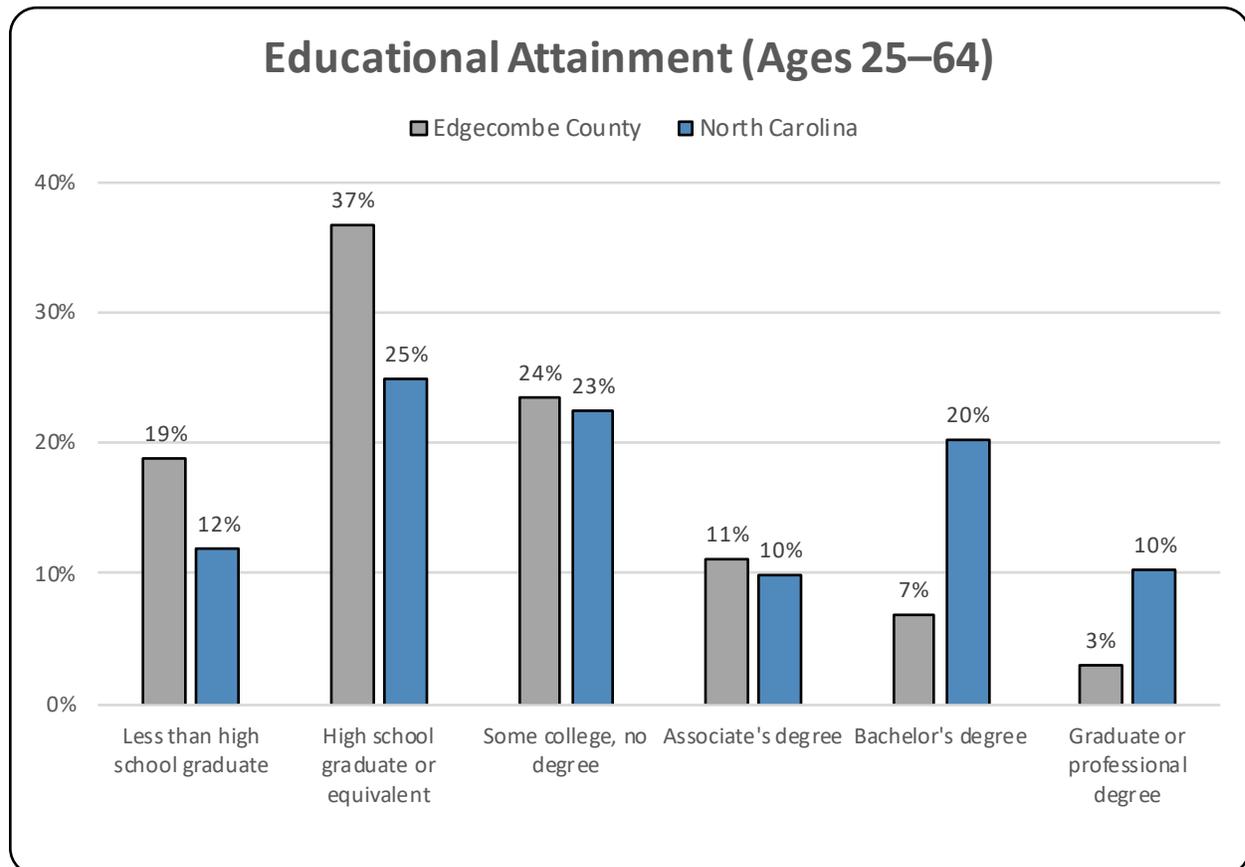
Edgecombe County

	Edgecombe #	N.C. #	Edgecombe %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	2,747	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	192	24,161	7.0%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

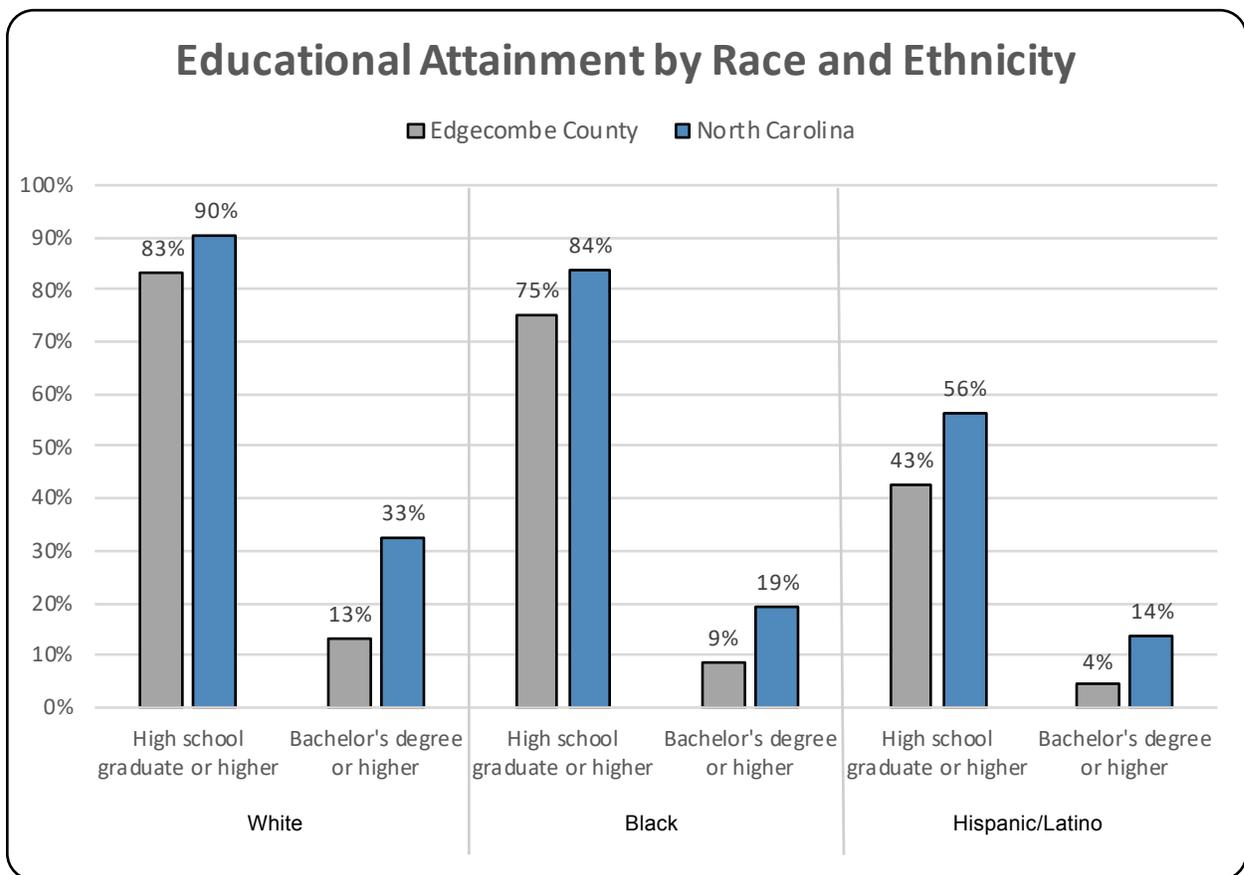
	Edgecombe #	N.C. #	Edgecombe %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	27,757	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	5,225	625,915	19%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	10,194	1,301,581	37%	25%
Some college, no degree	6,534	1,179,130	24%	23%
Associate's degree	3,066	518,632	11%	10%
Bachelor's degree	1,901	1,058,715	7%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	837	541,369	3%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



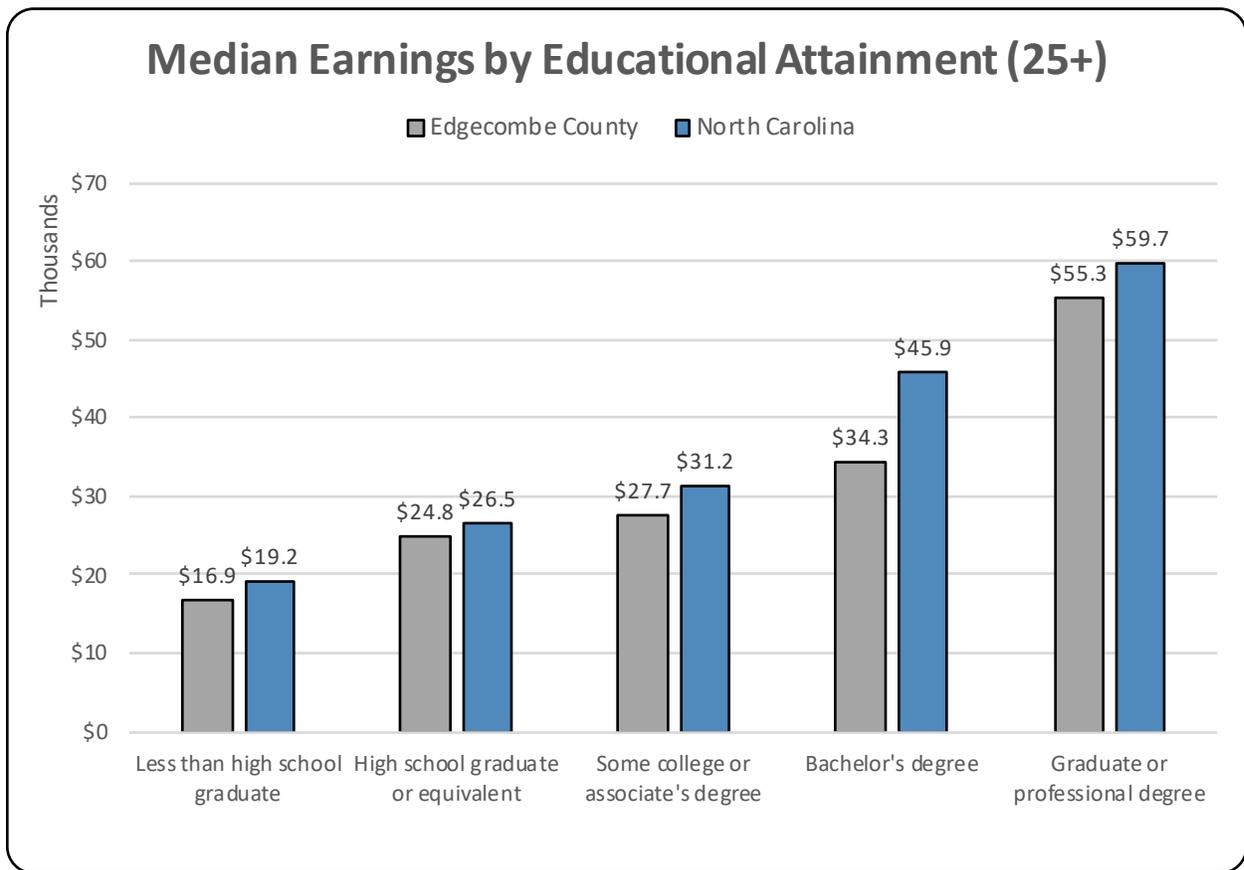
	Edgecombe %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	83%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	13%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	75%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	9%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	43%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	4%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



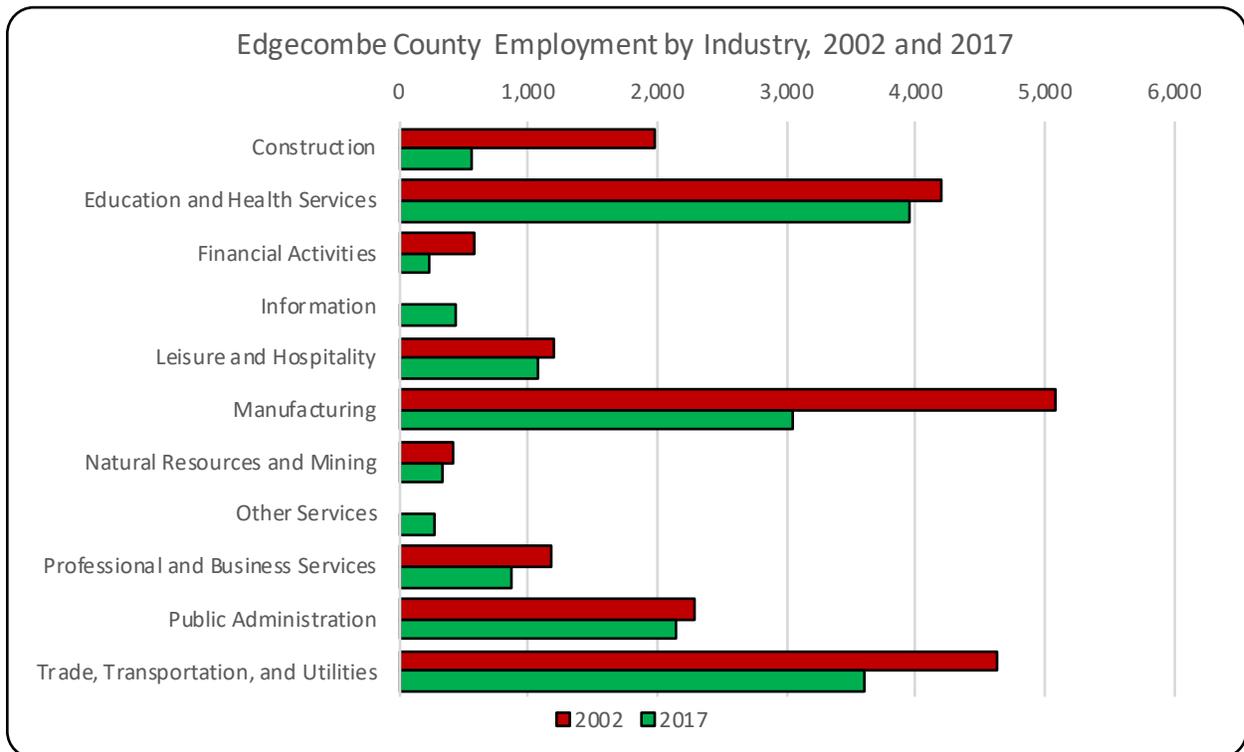
	Edgecombe \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$16,852	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$24,818	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$27,709	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$34,274	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$55,339	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth Type of Industry	Average Employment (Edgecombe)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Construction	1,979	568	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	4,189	3,945	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	588	227	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	434	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	1,198	1,070	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	5,084	3,040	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	414	334	35,606	30,908
Other Services	n/a	279	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	1,186	863	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	2,289	2,149	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	4,627	3,600	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



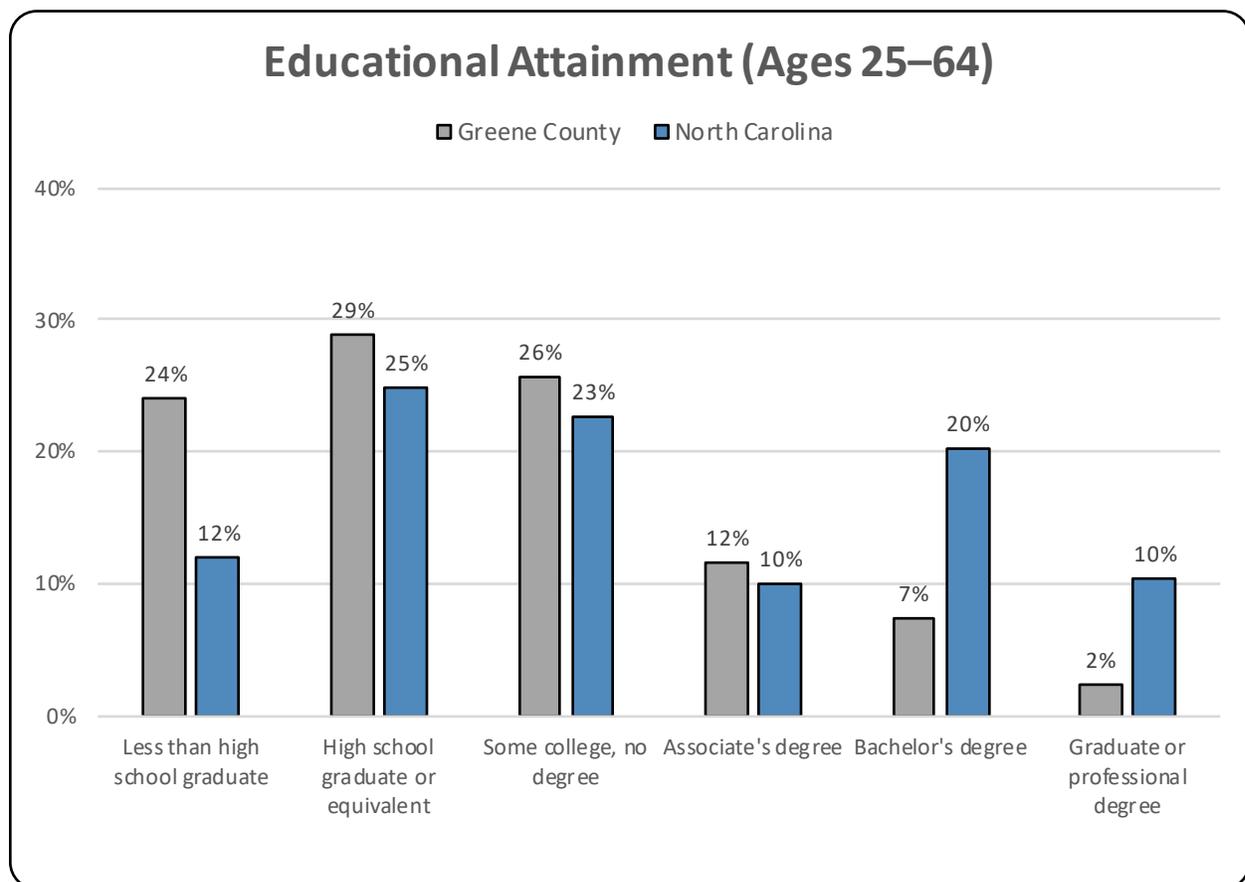
Greene County

	Greene #	N.C. #	Greene %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	1,017	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	82	24,161	8.1%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

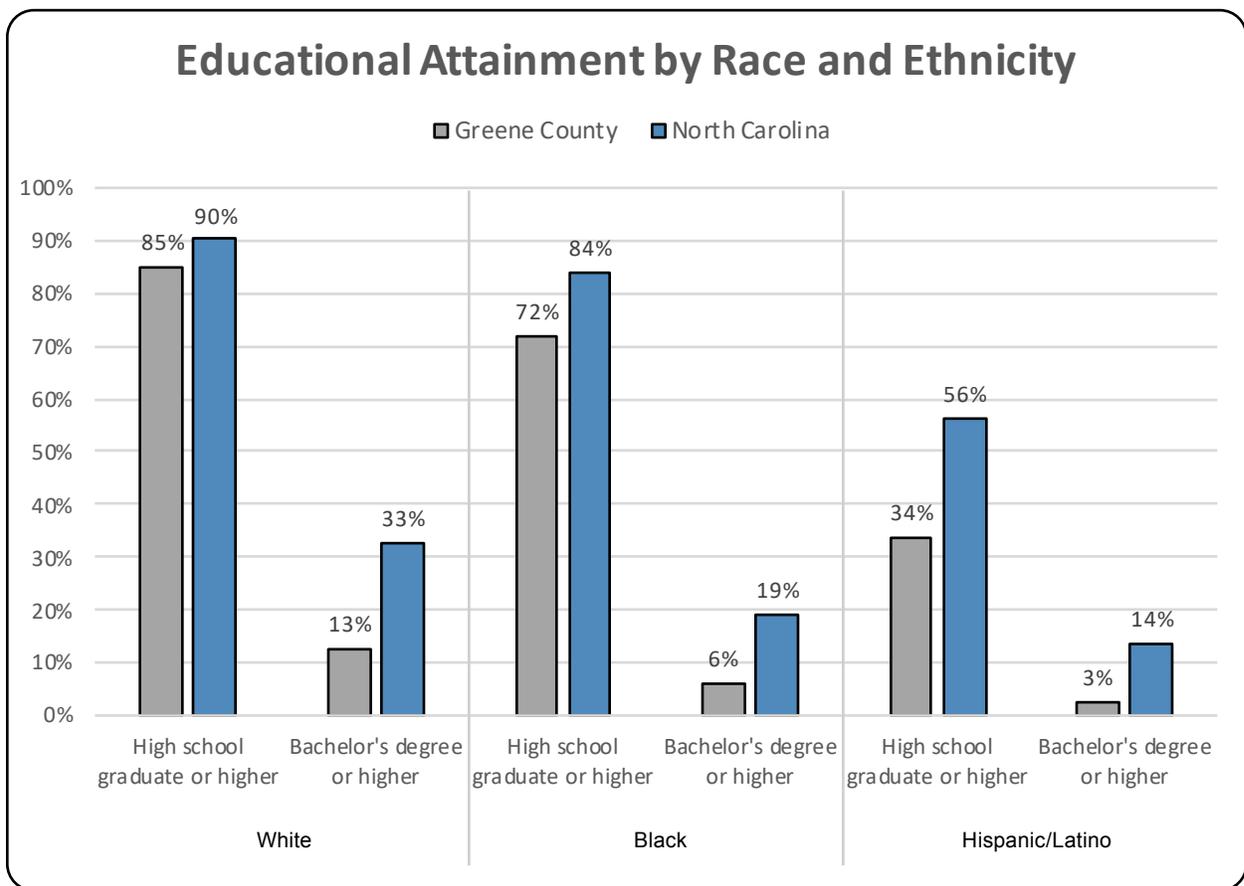
	Greene #	N.C. #	Greene %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	11,835	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	2,855	625,915	24%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	3,420	1,301,581	29%	25%
Some college, no degree	3,040	1,179,130	26%	23%
Associate's degree	1,370	518,632	12%	10%
Bachelor's degree	872	1,058,715	7%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	278	541,369	2%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



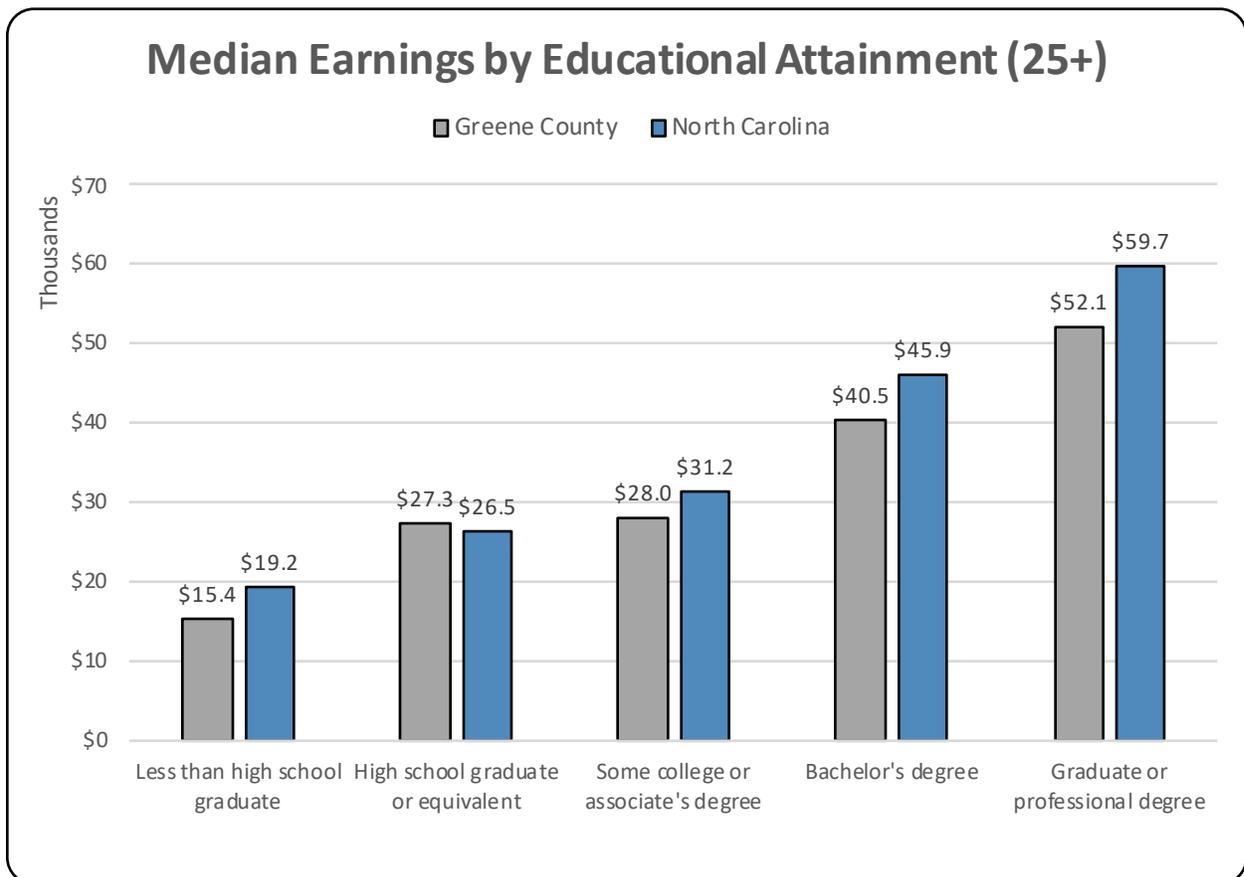
	Greene %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	85%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	13%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	72%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	6%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	34%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	3%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



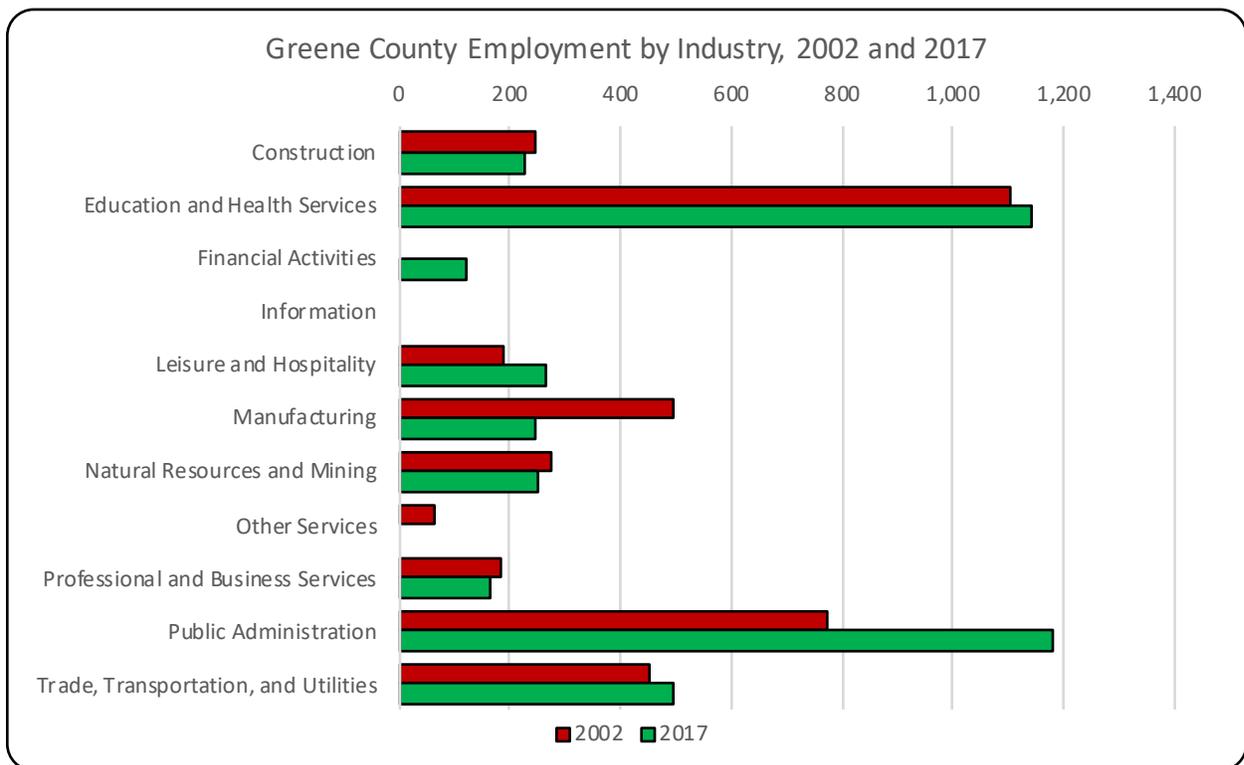
	Greene \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$15,392	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$27,299	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$27,957	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$40,524	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$52,115	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Greene)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	244	227	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	1,105	1,143	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	n/a	122	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	n/a	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	188	267	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	497	244	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	275	253	35,606	30,908
Other Services	62	n/a	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	182	167	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	772	1,180	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	452	495	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



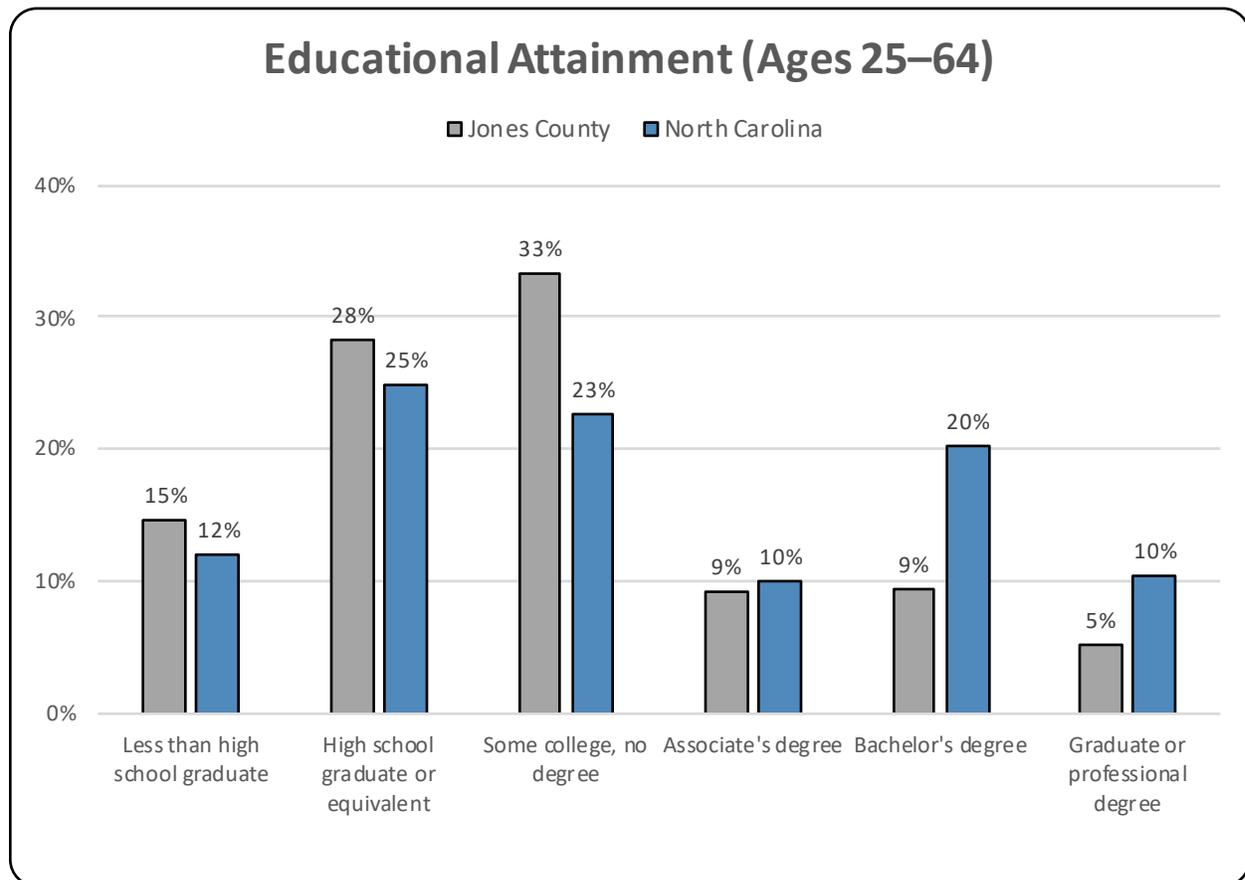
Jones County

	Jones #	N.C. #	Jones %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	446	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	37	24,161	8.3%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

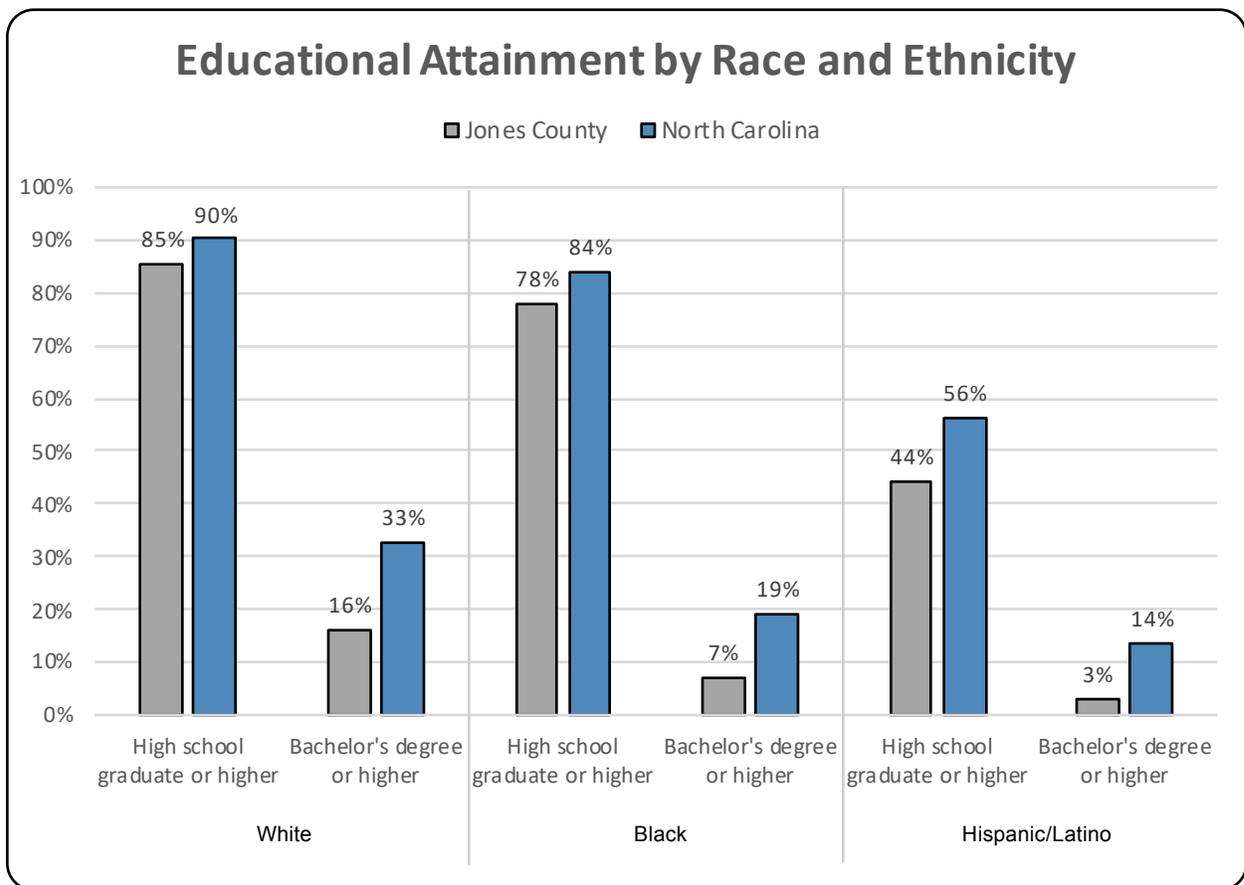
	Jones #	N.C. #	Jones %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	5,234	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	761	625,915	15%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	1,484	1,301,581	28%	25%
Some college, no degree	1,742	1,179,130	33%	23%
Associate's degree	479	518,632	9%	10%
Bachelor's degree	494	1,058,715	9%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	274	541,369	5%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



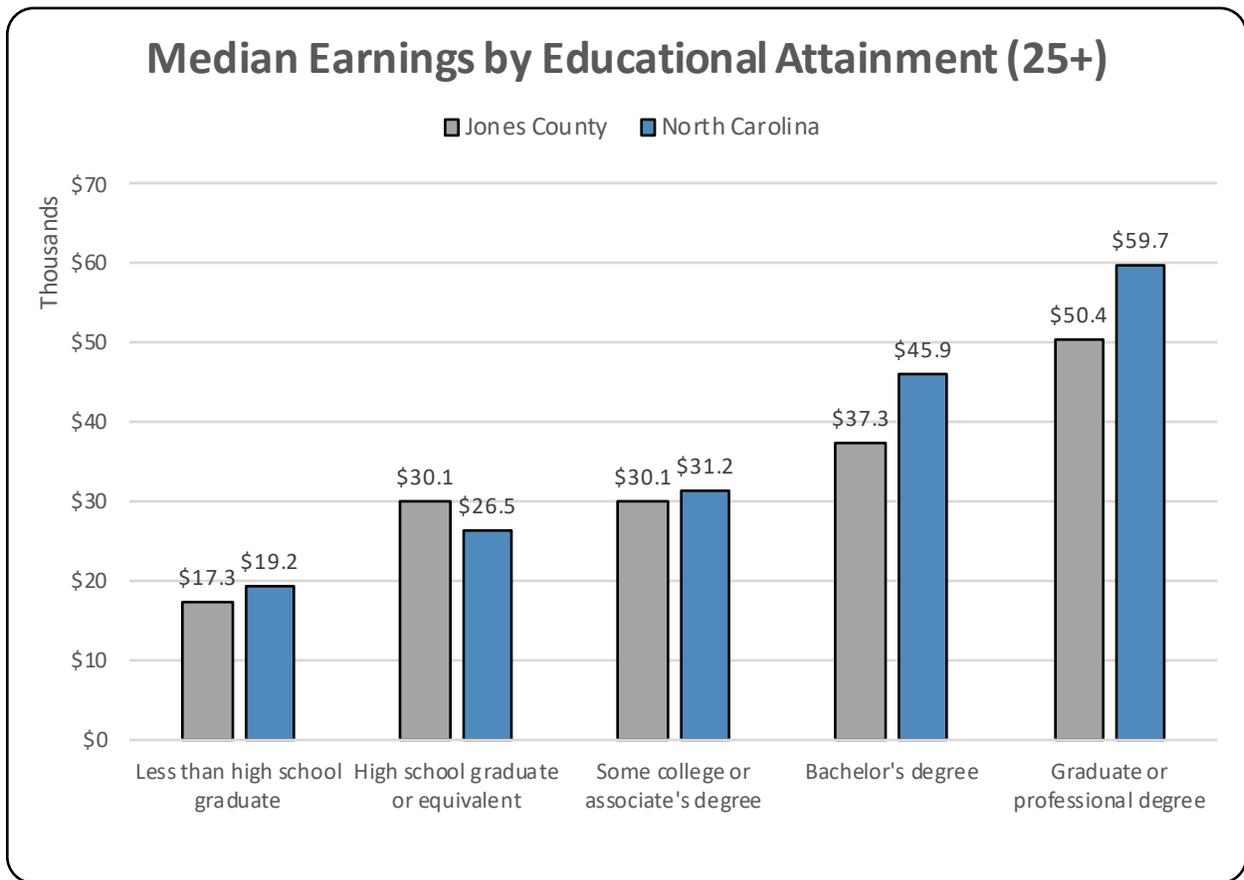
	Jones %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	85%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	16%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	78%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	44%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	3%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



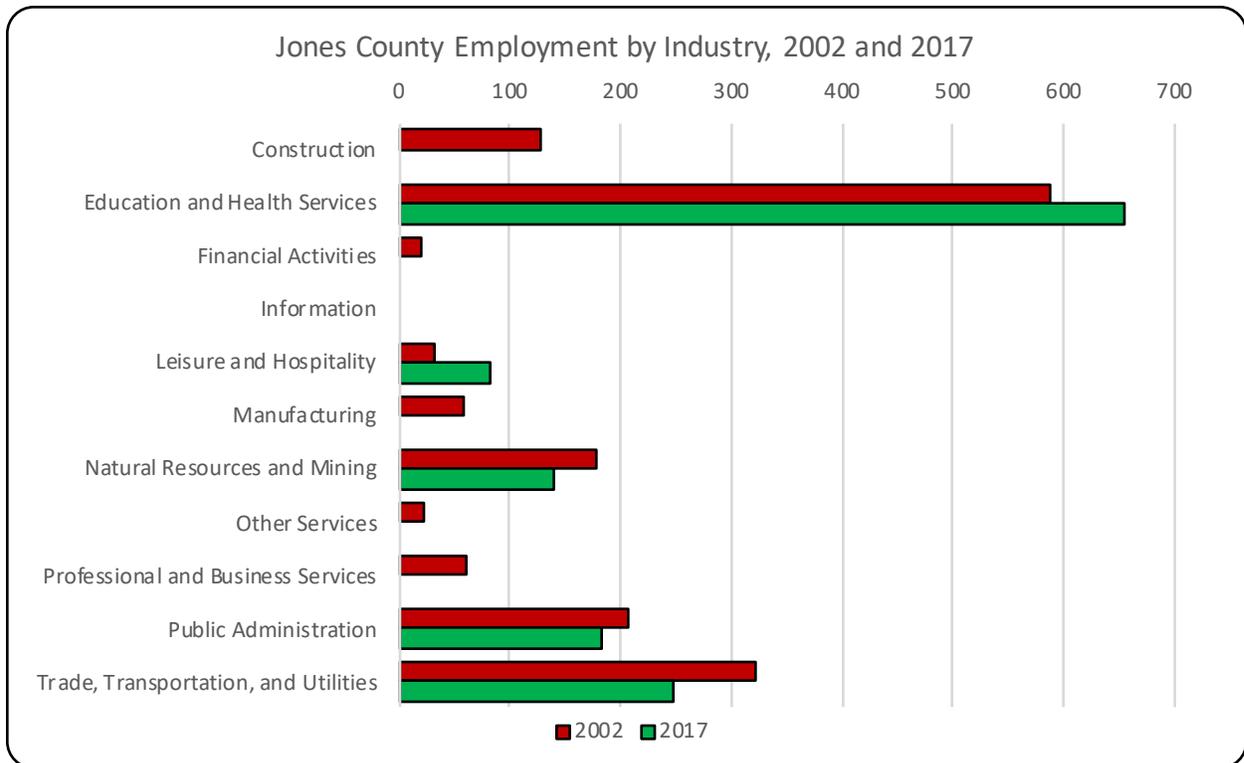
	Jones \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$17,304	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$30,145	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$30,101	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$37,273	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$50,398	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Jones)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	127	n/a	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	587	654	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	21	n/a	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	n/a	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	31	83	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	59	n/a	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	179	141	35,606	30,908
Other Services	22	n/a	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	60	n/a	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	206	184	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	321	248	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



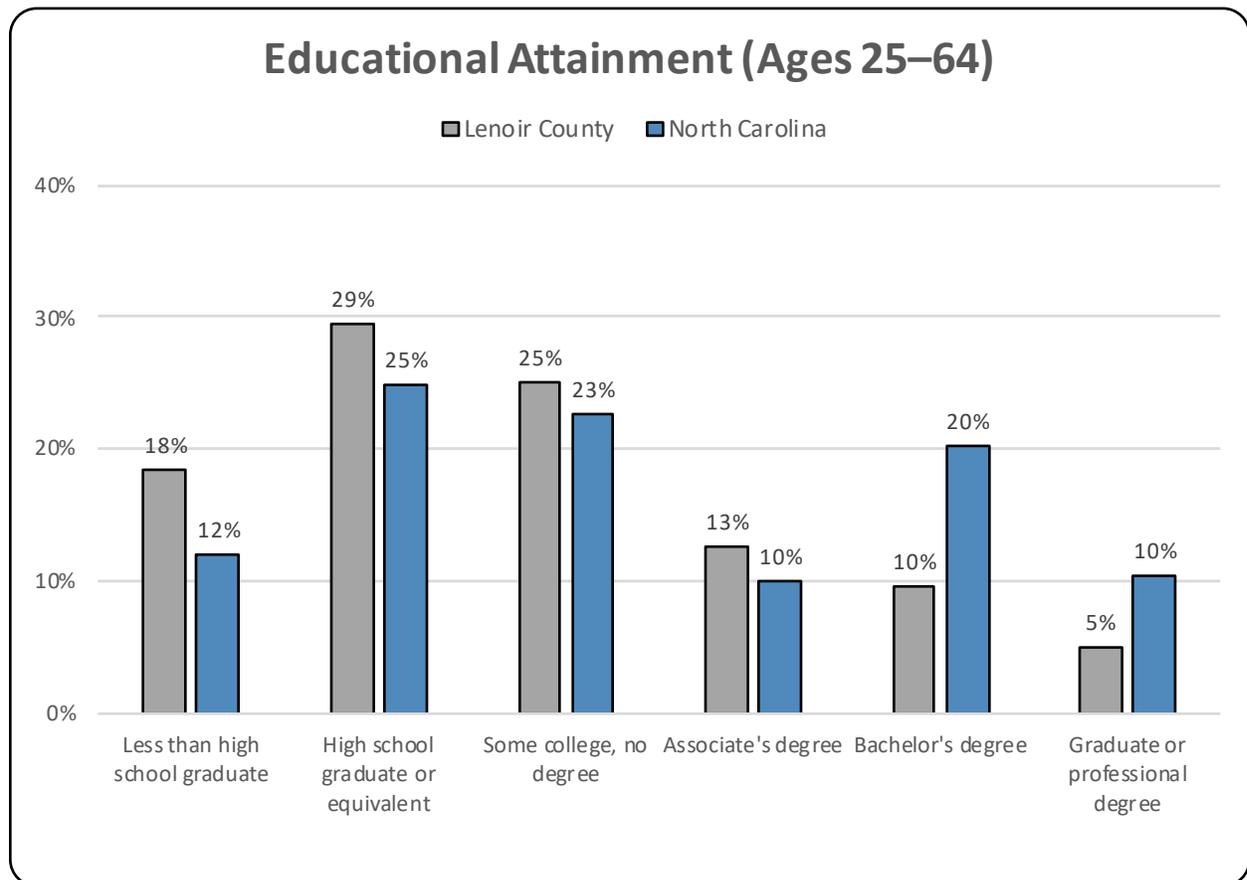
Lenoir County

	Lenoir #	N.C. #	Lenoir %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	3,090	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	137	24,161	4.4%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

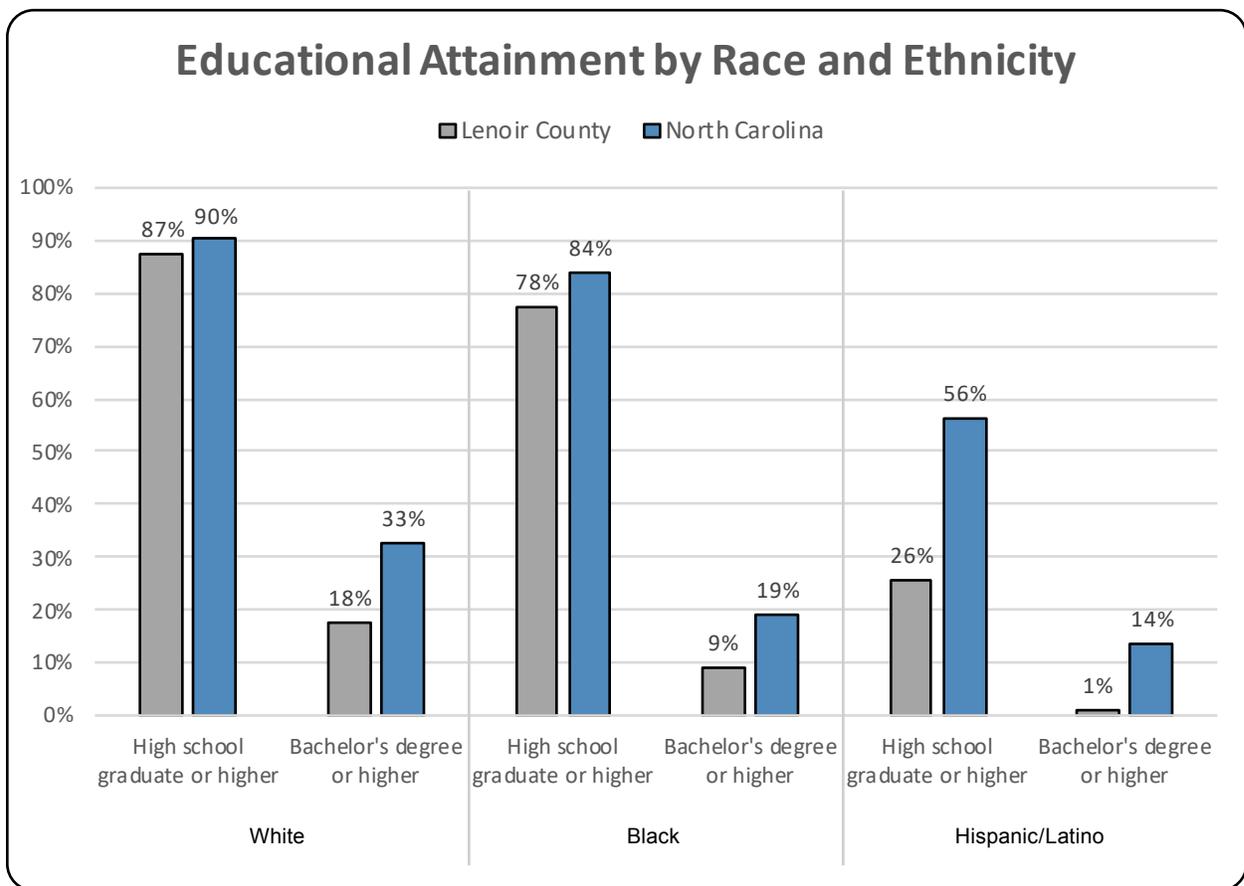
	Lenoir #	N.C. #	Lenoir %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	29,786	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	5,483	625,915	18%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	8,771	1,301,581	29%	25%
Some college, no degree	7,460	1,179,130	25%	23%
Associate's degree	3,778	518,632	13%	10%
Bachelor's degree	2,845	1,058,715	10%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	1,449	541,369	5%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



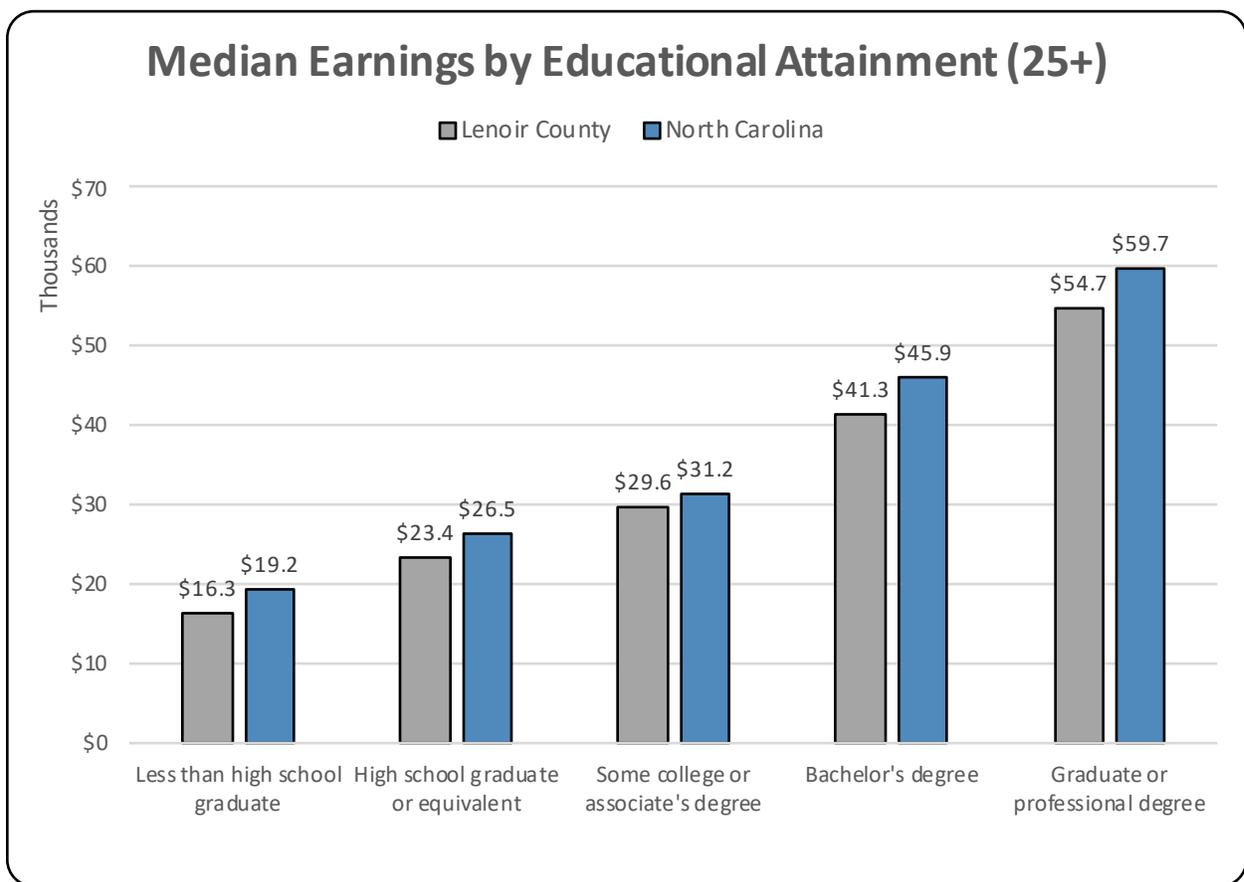
	Lenoir %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	87%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	18%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	78%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	9%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	26%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	1%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



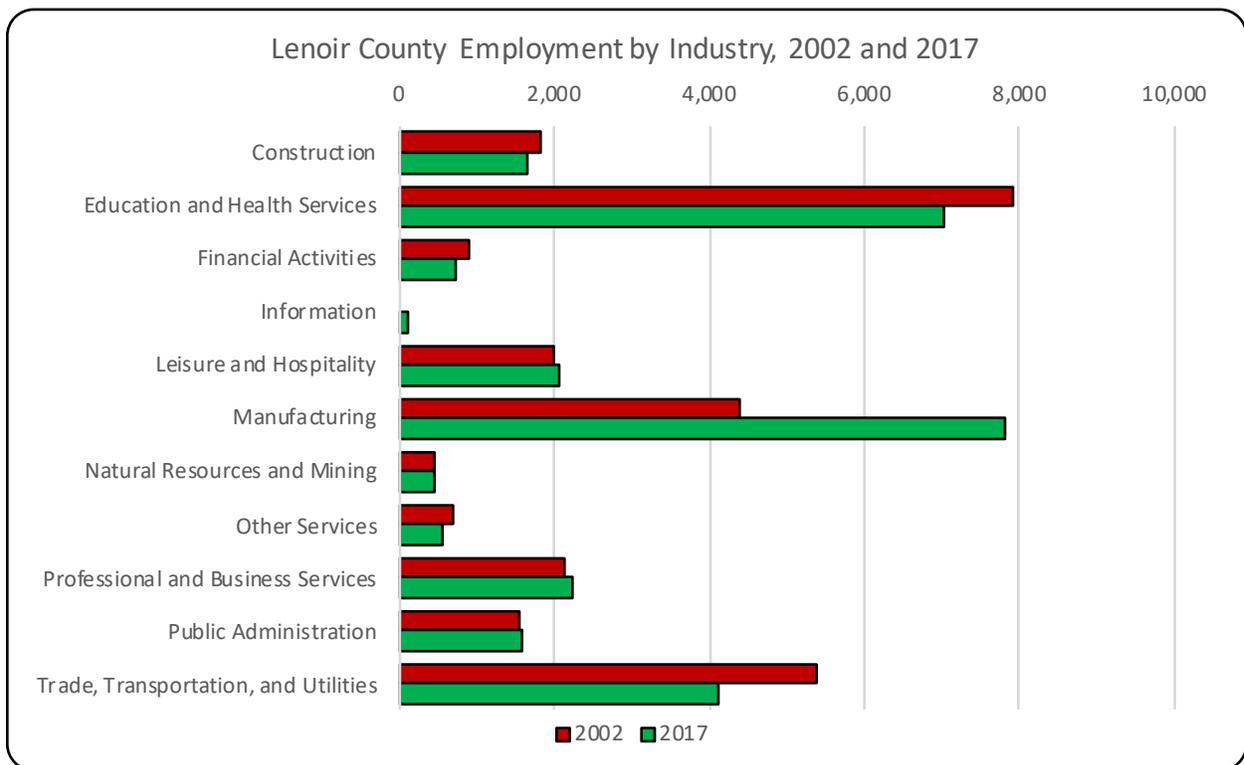
	Lenoir \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$16,293	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$23,436	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$29,605	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,349	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$54,655	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Lenoir)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	1,833	1,671	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	7,904	7,040	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	896	717	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	118	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	1,985	2,065	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	4,393	7,798	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	471	448	35,606	30,908
Other Services	682	573	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	2,150	2,224	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	1,541	1,579	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	5,379	4,131	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



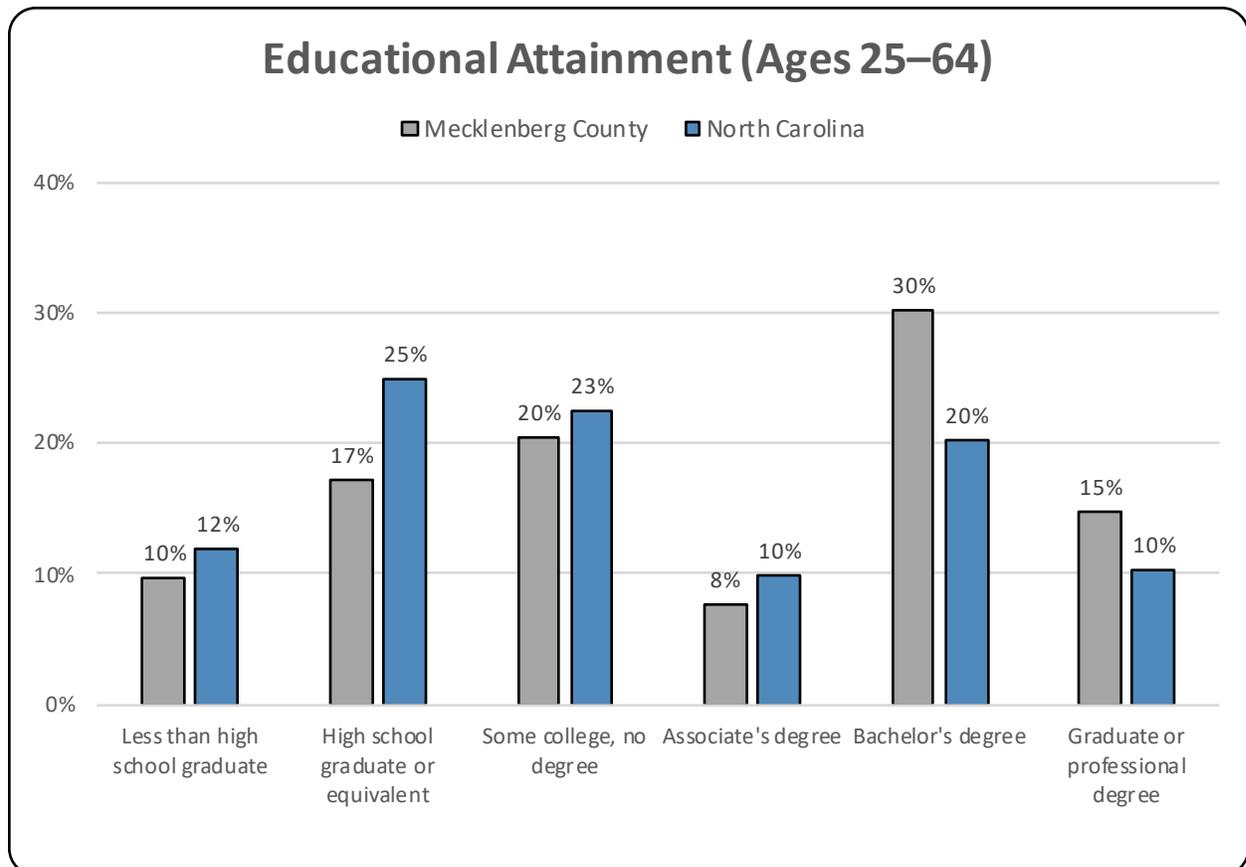
Mecklenburg County

	Mecklenburg #	N.C. #	Mecklenburg %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	51,129	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	1,489	24,161	2.9%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

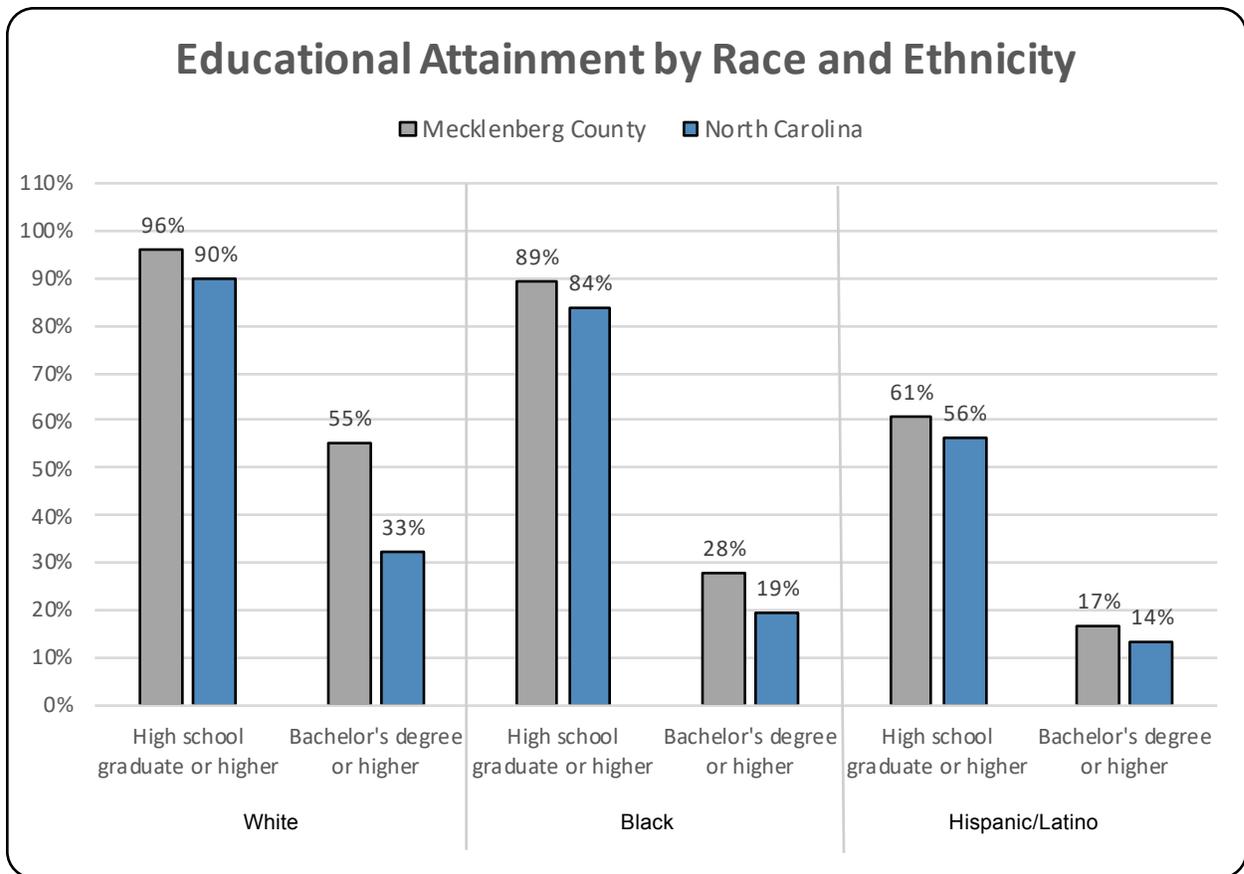
	Mecklenburg #	N.C. #	Mecklenburg %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	568,306	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	55,258	625,915	10%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	97,727	1,301,581	17%	25%
Some college, no degree	115,732	1,179,130	20%	23%
Associate's degree	43,997	518,632	8%	10%
Bachelor's degree	171,725	1,058,715	30%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	83,867	541,369	15%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



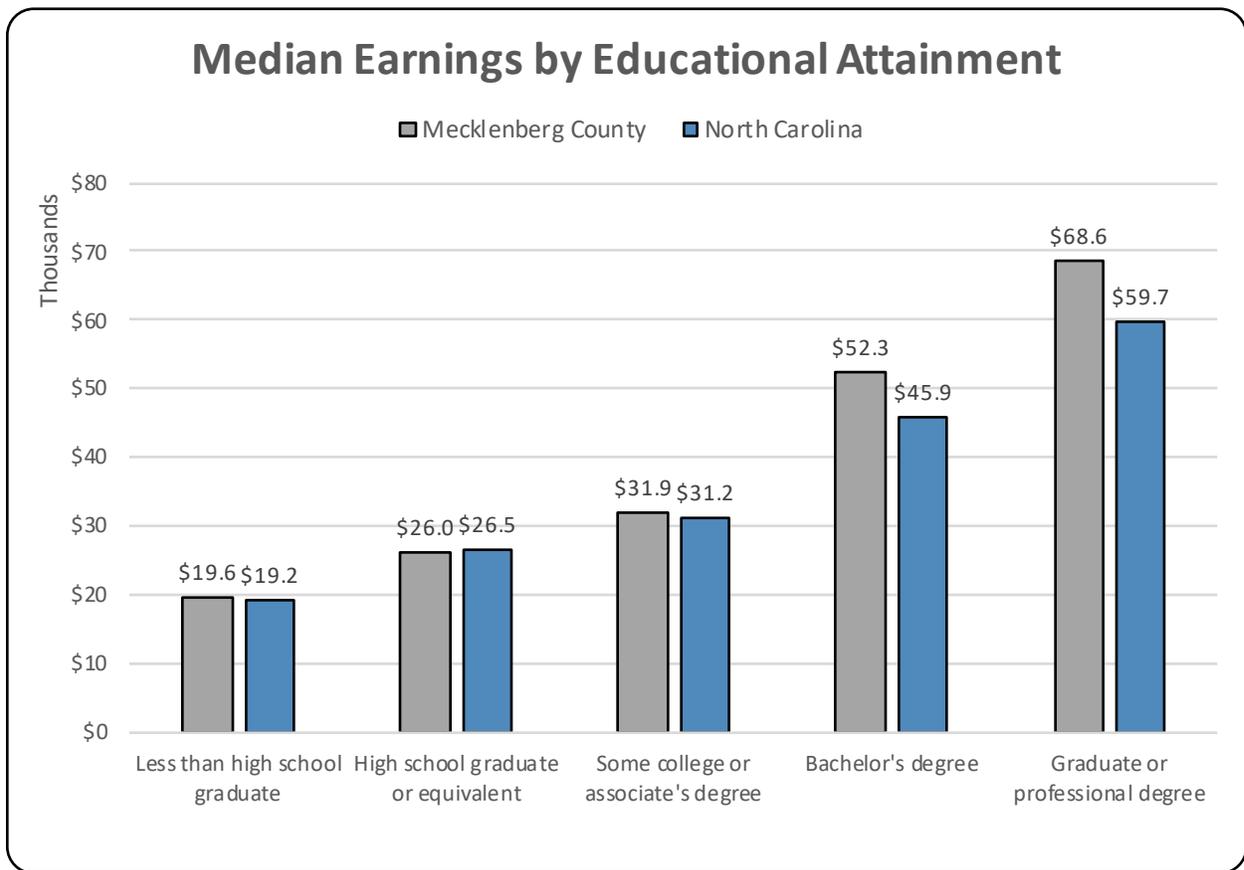
	Mecklenburg %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	96%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	55%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	89%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	28%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	61%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	17%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



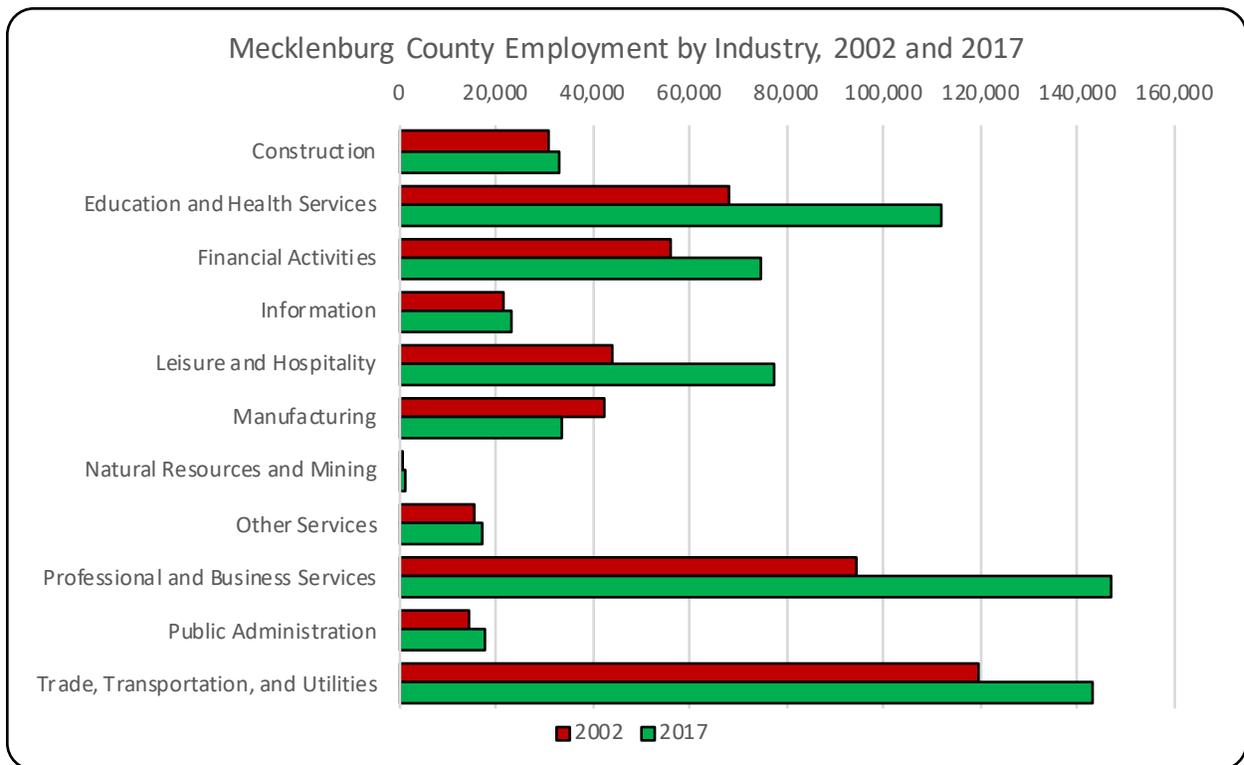
	Mecklenburg \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment		
Less than high school graduate	\$19,616	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$26,041	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,903	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$52,297	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$68,629	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Mecklenburg)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	30,711	32,833	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	67,866	112,103	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	56,162	74,532	184,151	227,142
Information	21,332	23,195	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	43,905	77,359	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	42,314	33,569	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	877	1,242	35,606	30,908
Other Services	15,543	17,393	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	94,400	146,997	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	14,225	17,986	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	119,808	143,212	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



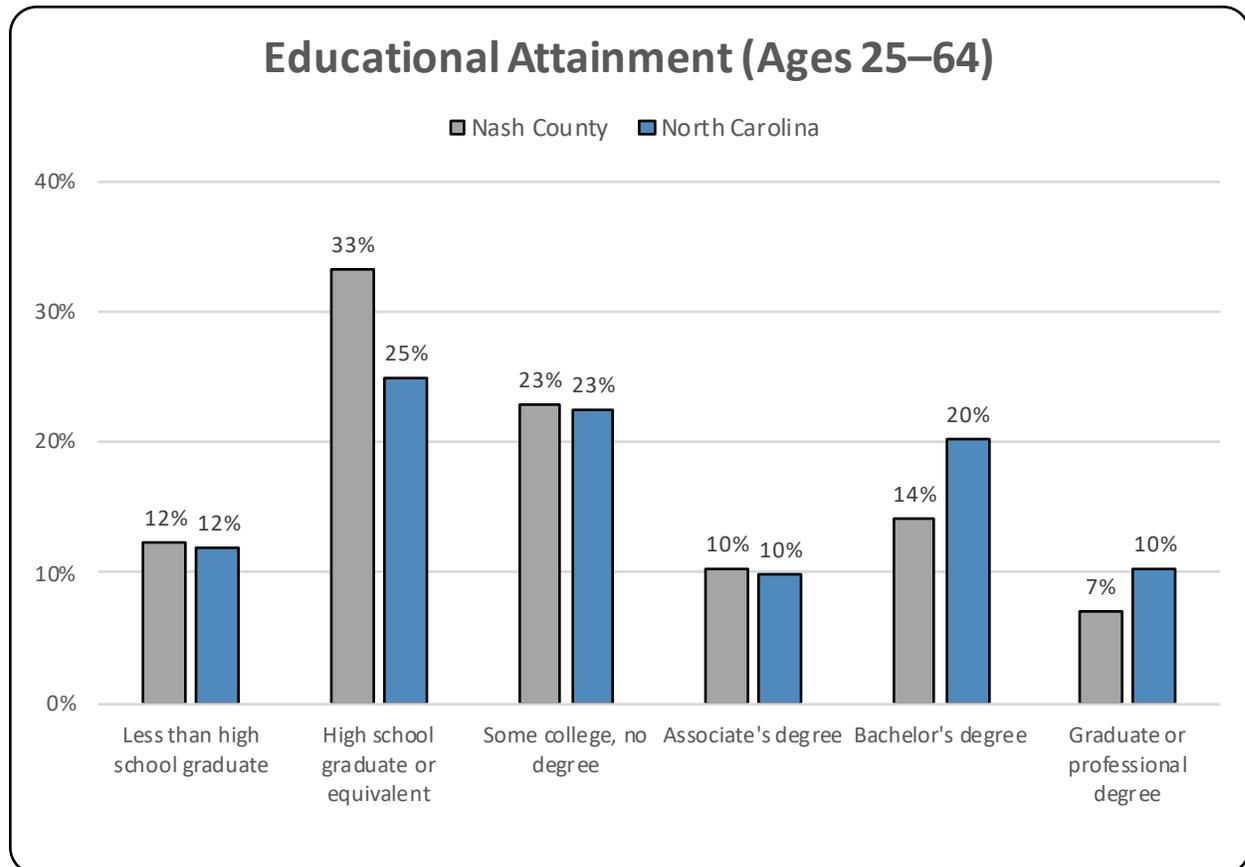
Nash County

	Nash #	N.C. #	Nash %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	5,152	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	192	24,161	3.7%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

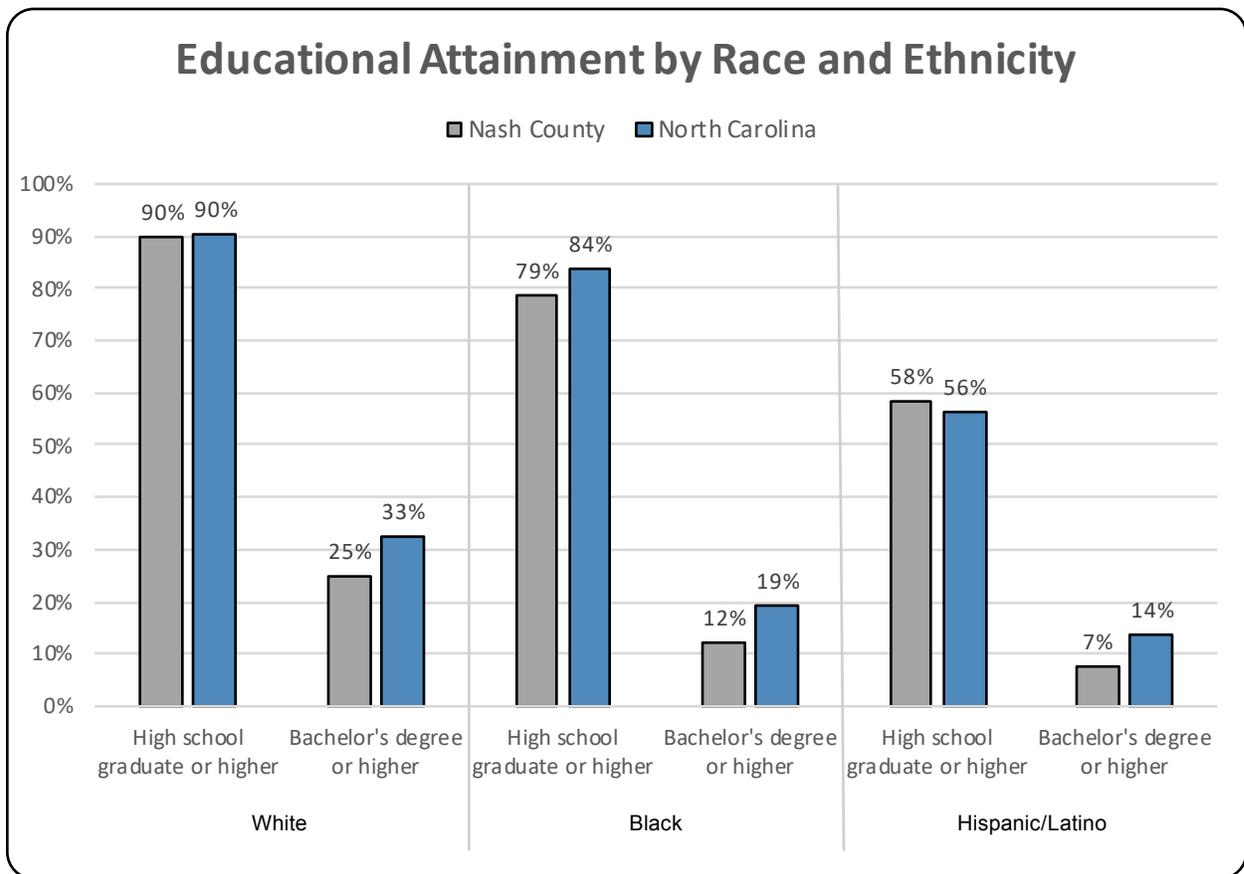
	Nash #	N.C. #	Nash %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	49,049	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	6,075	625,915	12%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	16,266	1,301,581	33%	25%
Some college, no degree	11,269	1,179,130	23%	23%
Associate's degree	5,057	518,632	10%	10%
Bachelor's degree	6,945	1,058,715	14%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	3,437	541,369	7%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



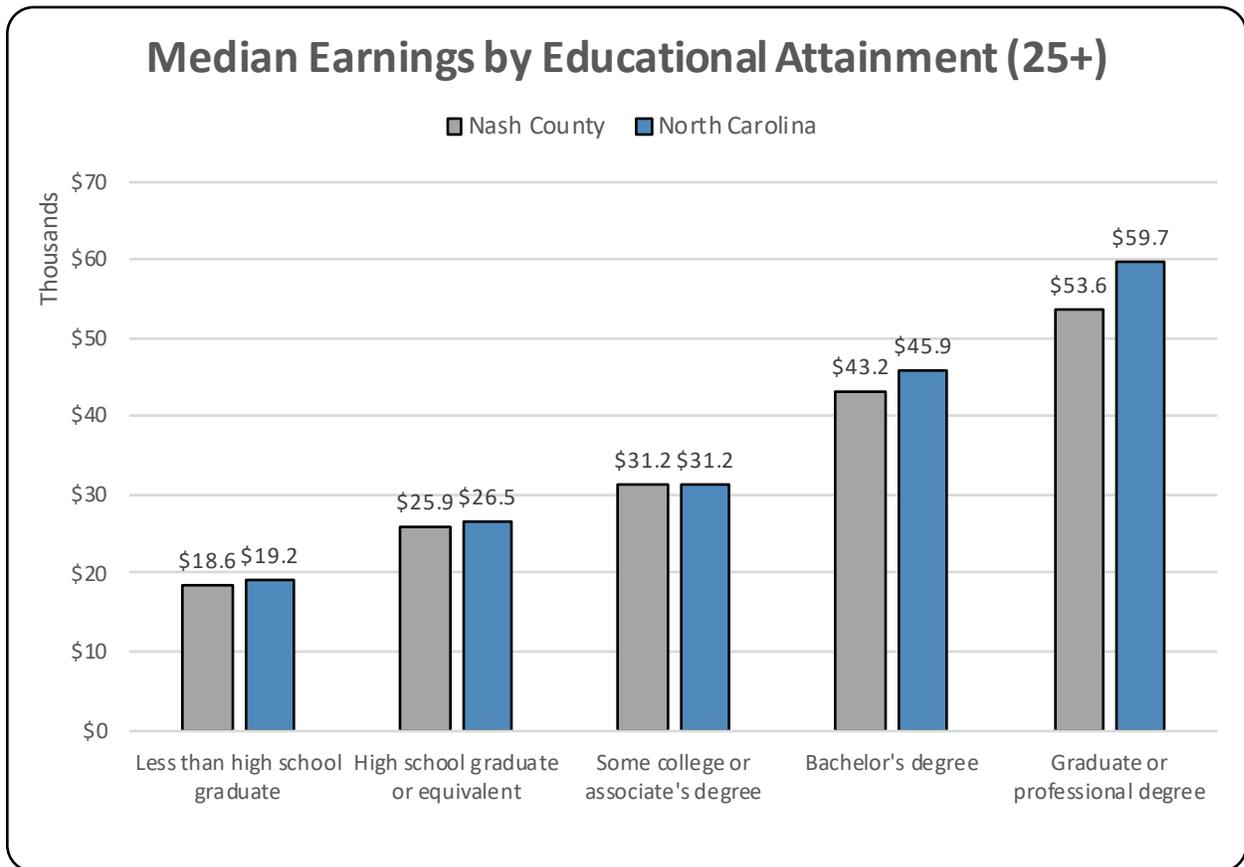
	Nash %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	90%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	25%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	79%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	12%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	58%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	7%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



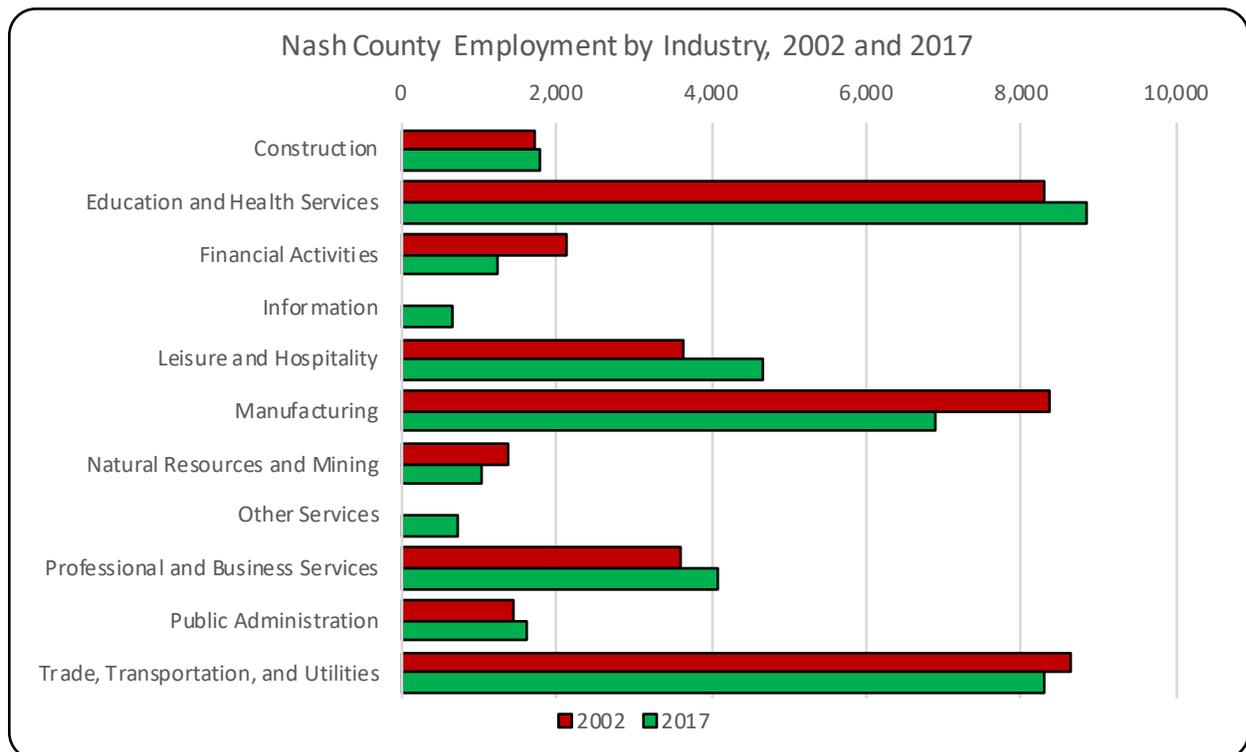
	Nash \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment		
Less than high school graduate	\$18,573	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$25,866	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,221	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$43,203	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$53,639	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Nash)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Type of Industry				
Construction	1,737	1,796	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	8,290	8,829	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	2,145	1,252	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	651	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	3,652	4,678	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	8,351	6,881	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	1,370	1,027	35,606	30,908
Other Services	n/a	717	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	3,618	4,073	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	1,466	1,635	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	8,643	8,301	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



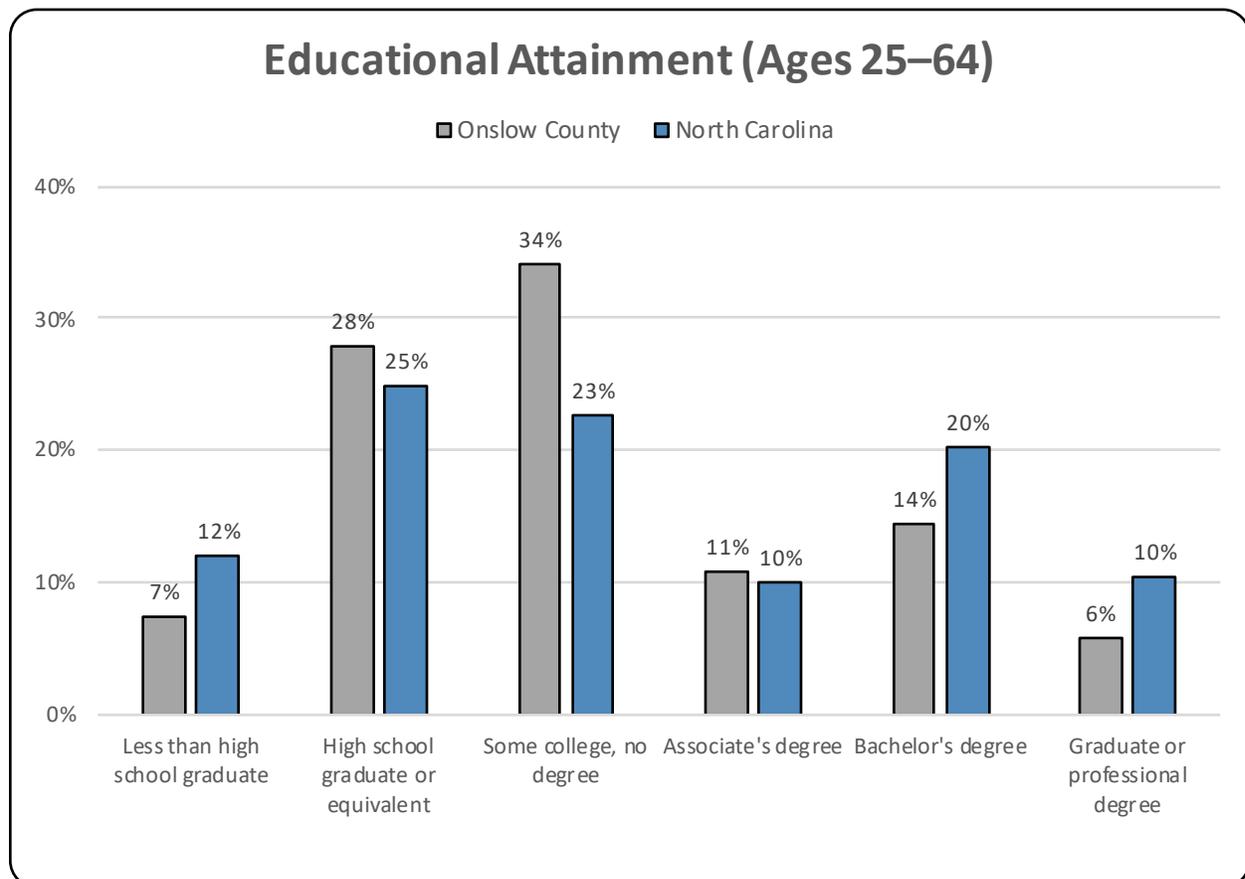
Onslow County

	Onslow #	N.C. #	Onslow %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	10,671	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	371	24,161	3.5%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

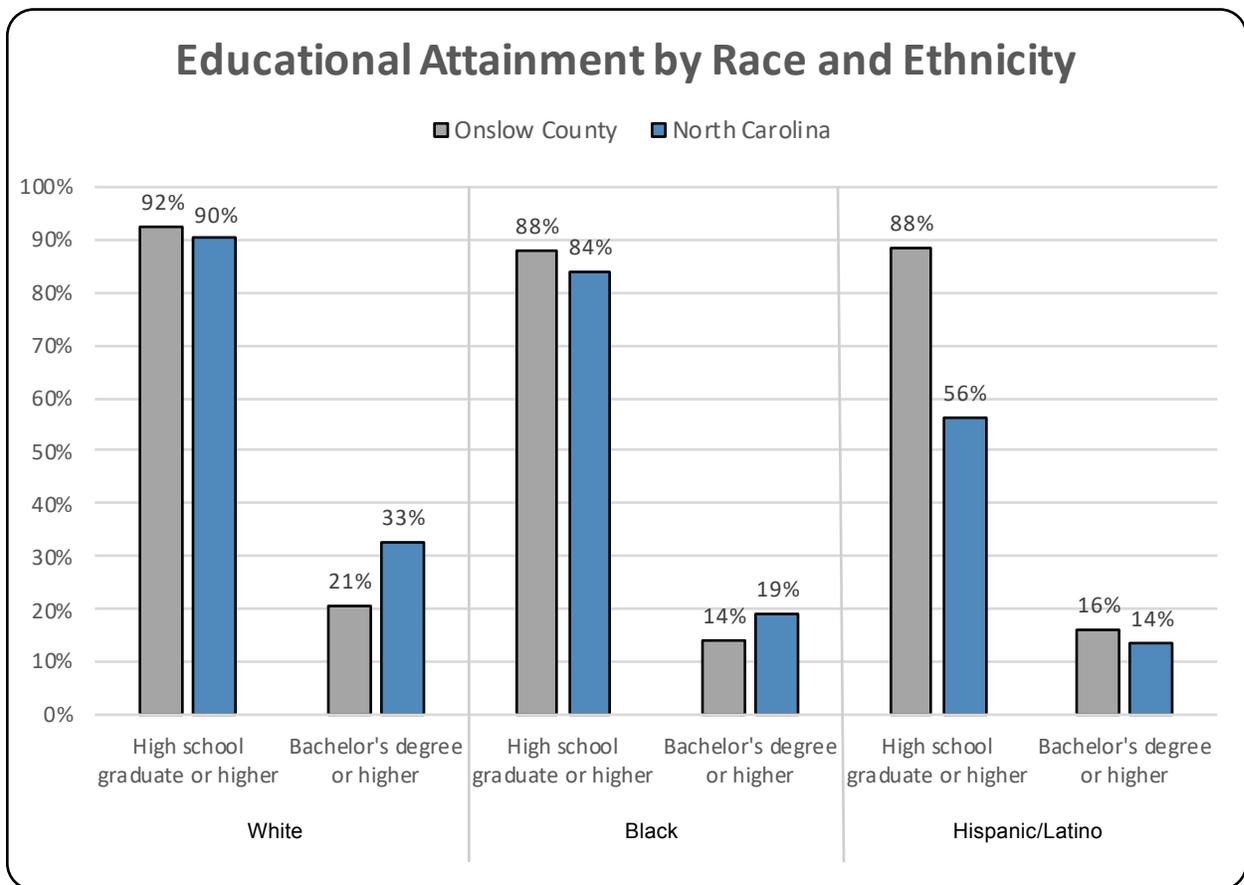
	Onslow #	N.C. #	Onslow %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	84,017	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	6,124	625,915	7%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	23,354	1,301,581	28%	25%
Some college, no degree	28,611	1,179,130	34%	23%
Associate's degree	9,039	518,632	11%	10%
Bachelor's degree	12,089	1,058,715	14%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	4,800	541,369	6%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



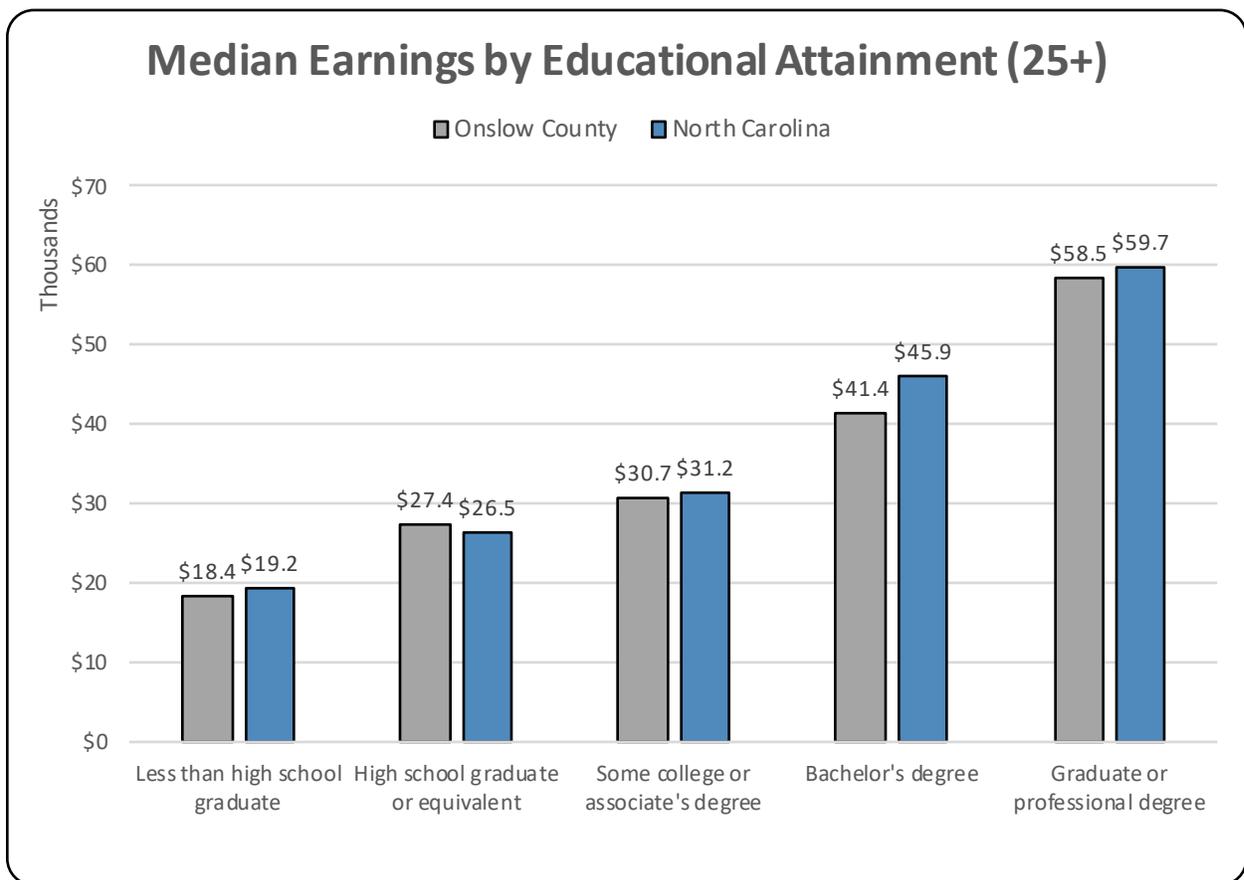
	Onslow %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	92%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	21%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	88%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	14%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	88%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	16%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



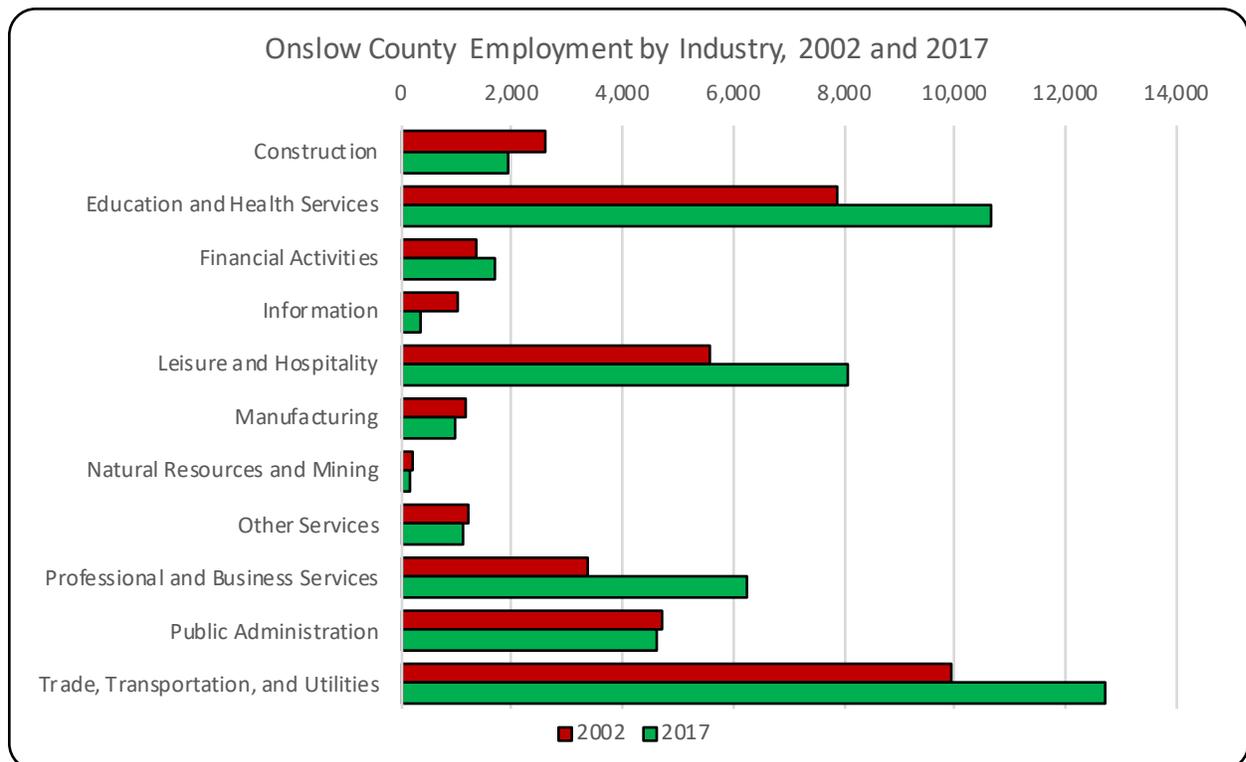
	Onslow \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$18,398	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$27,377	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$30,655	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,437	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$58,474	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Onslow)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	2,622	1,945	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	7,886	10,660	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	1,370	1,678	184,151	227,142
Information	1,043	348	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	5,585	8,082	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	1,175	991	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	228	154	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,196	1,118	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	3,356	6,235	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	4,719	4,631	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	9,939	12,731	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



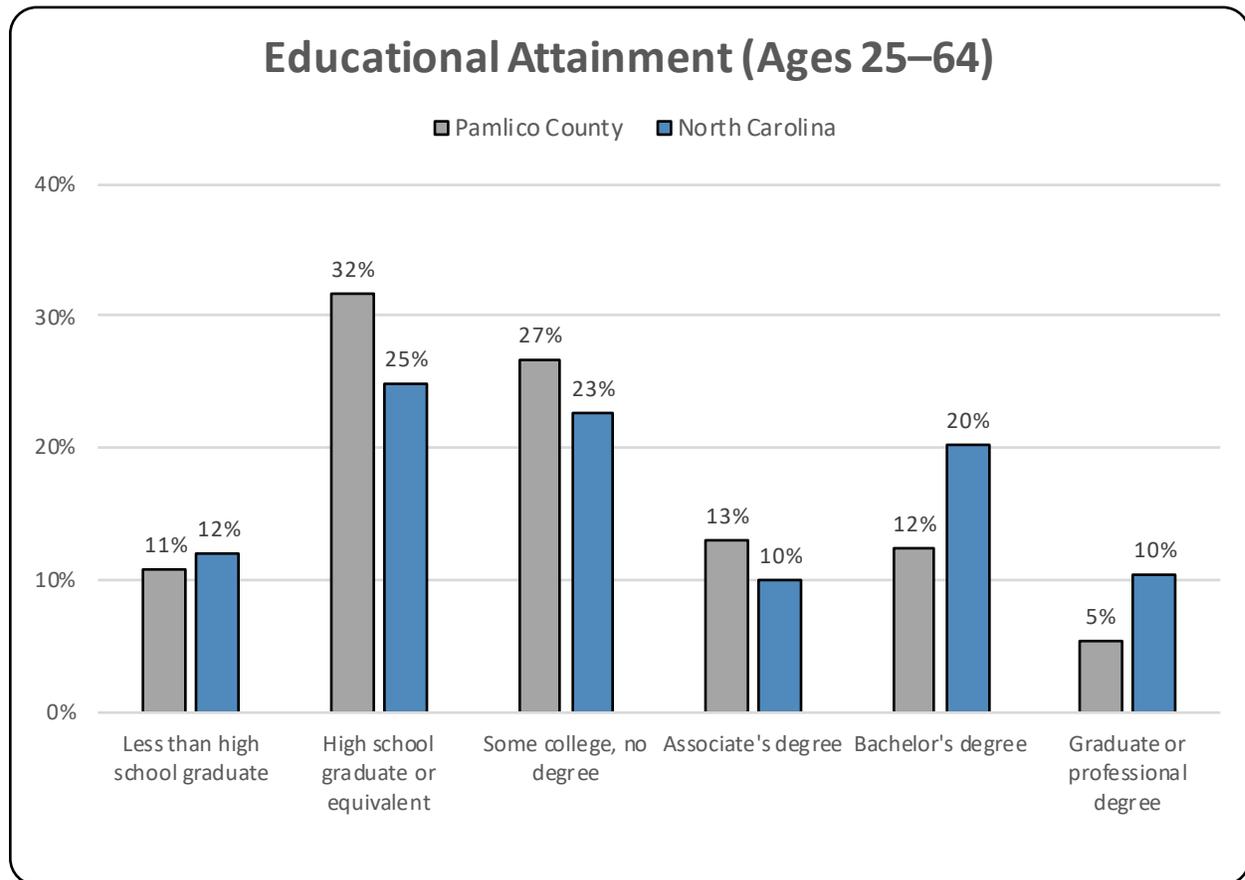
Pamlico County

	Pamlico #	N.C. #	Pamlico %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	505	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	19	24,161	3.8%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

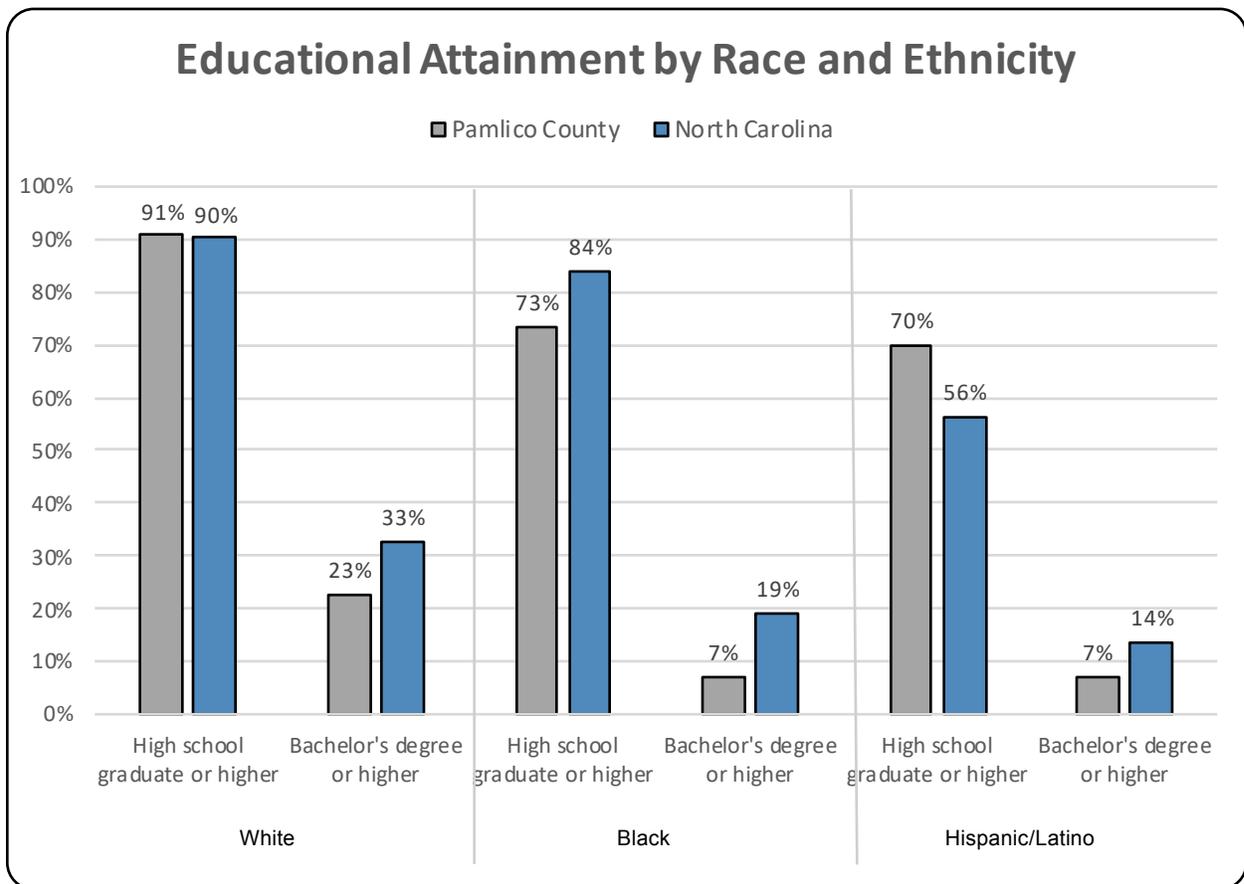
	Pamlico #	N.C. #	Pamlico %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	6,509	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	704	625,915	11%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	2,063	1,301,581	32%	25%
Some college, no degree	1,738	1,179,130	27%	23%
Associate's degree	848	518,632	13%	10%
Bachelor's degree	807	1,058,715	12%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	349	541,369	5%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



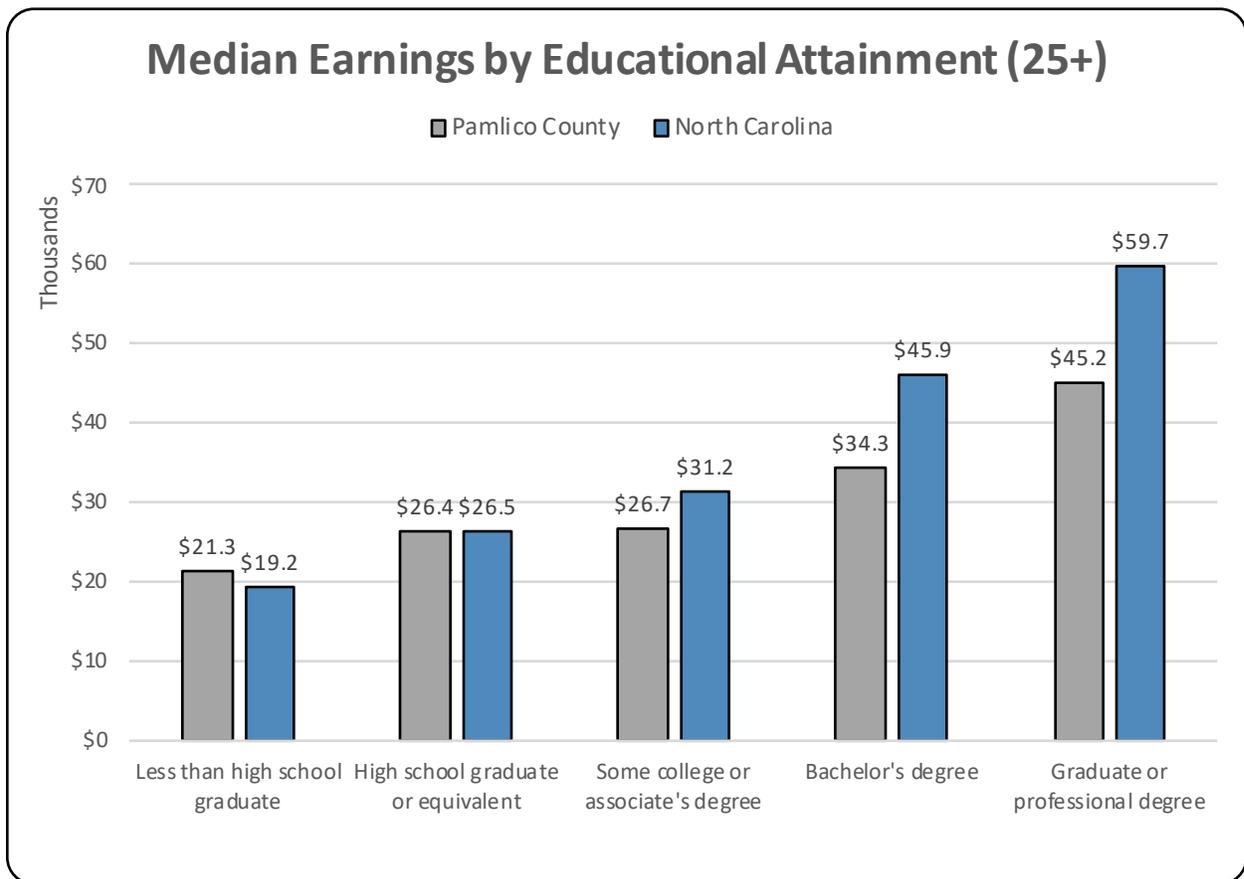
	Pamlico %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	91%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	23%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	73%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	70%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	7%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



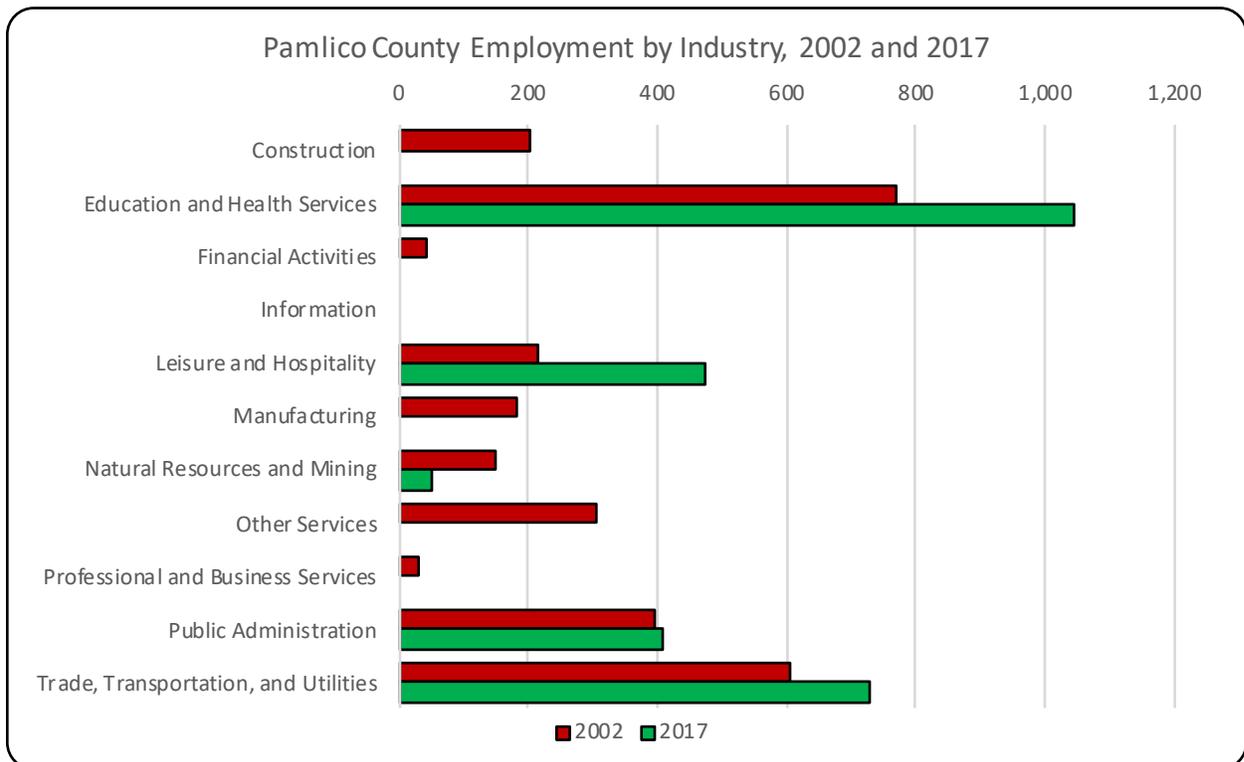
	Pamlico \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$21,311	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$26,419	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$26,716	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$34,286	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$45,217	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Pamlico)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	201	n/a	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	770	1,045	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	44	n/a	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	n/a	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	214	475	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	182	n/a	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	151	53	35,606	30,908
Other Services	306	n/a	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	30	n/a	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	394	409	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	607	730	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



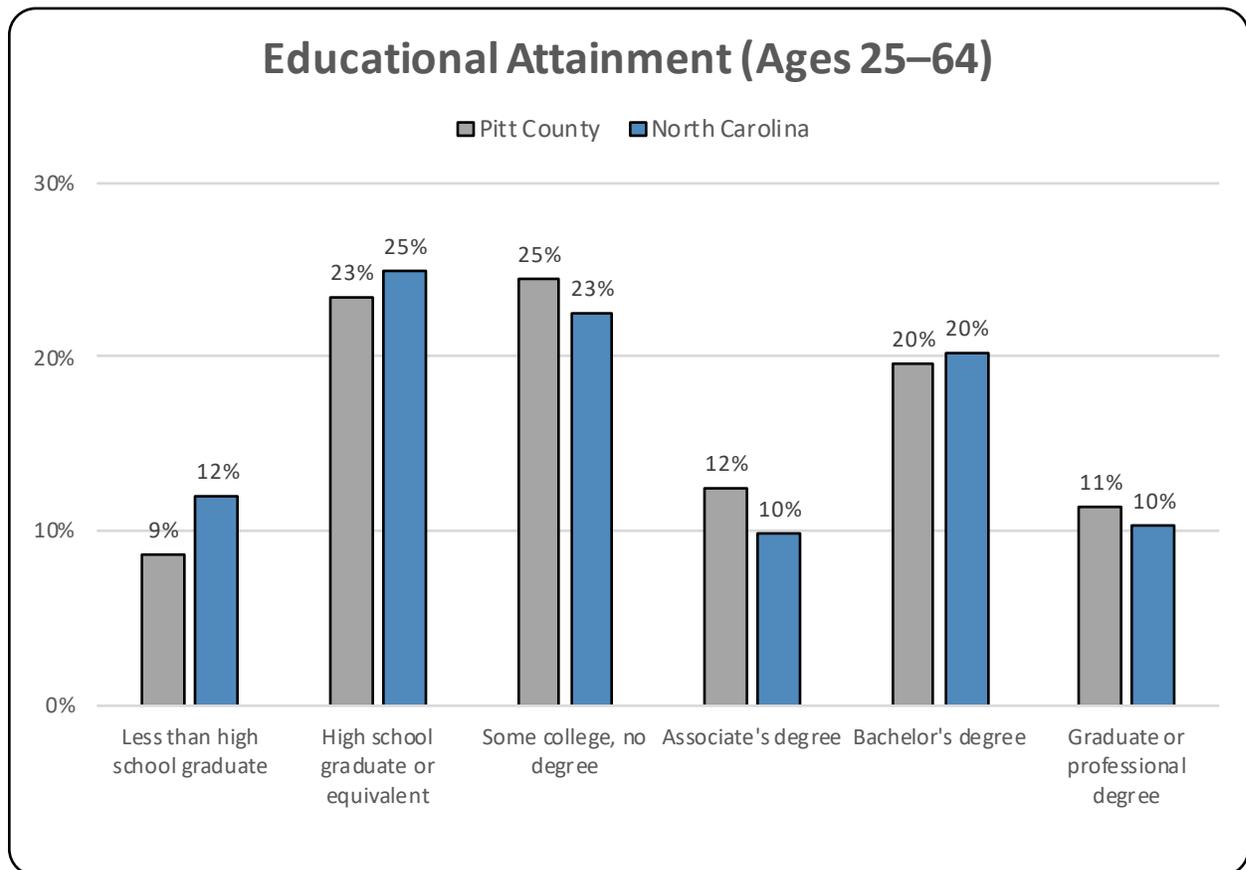
Pitt County

	Pitt #	N.C. #	Pitt %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	13,050	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	205	24,161	1.6%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

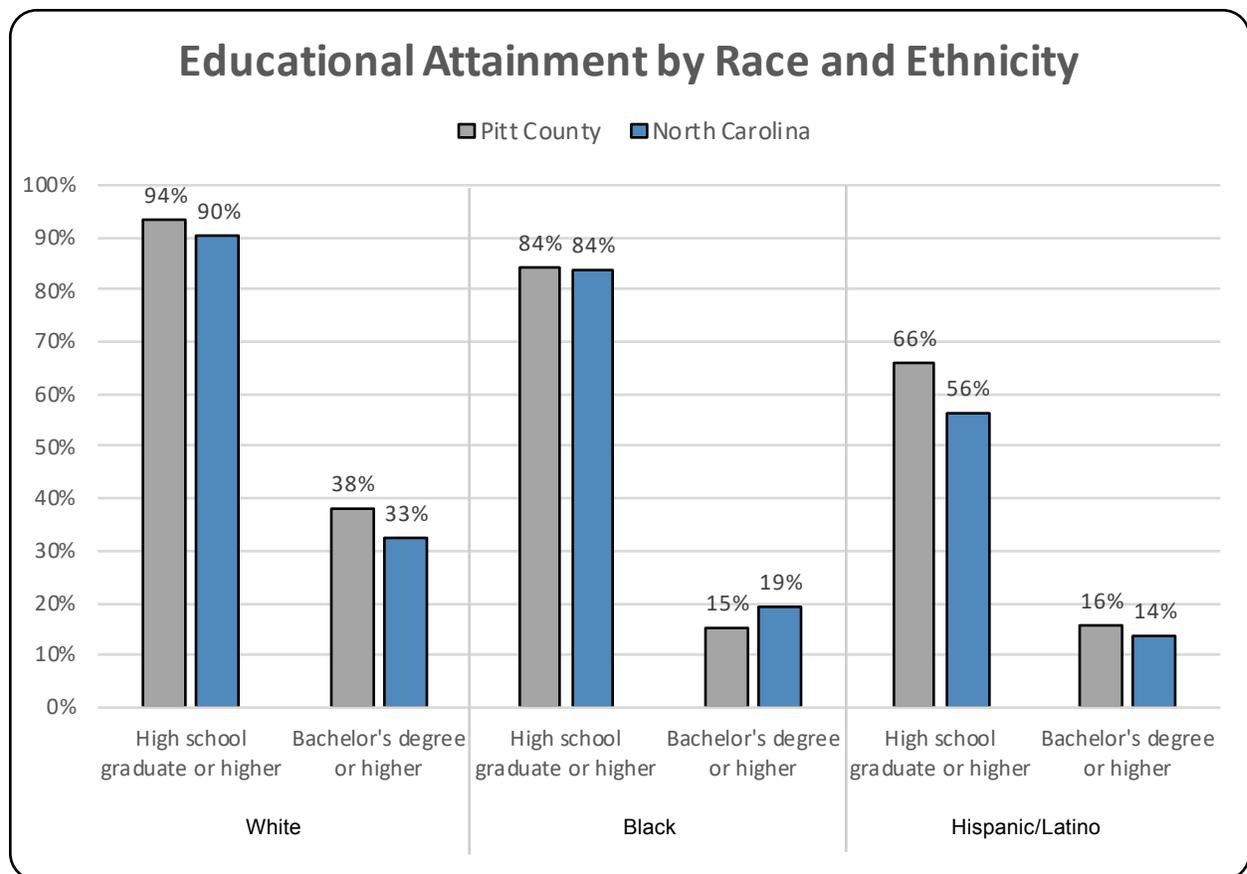
	Pitt #	N.C. #	Pitt %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	83,857	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	7,261	625,915	9%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	19,588	1,301,581	23%	25%
Some college, no degree	20,566	1,179,130	25%	23%
Associate's degree	10,459	518,632	12%	10%
Bachelor's degree	16,486	1,058,715	20%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	9,497	541,369	11%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



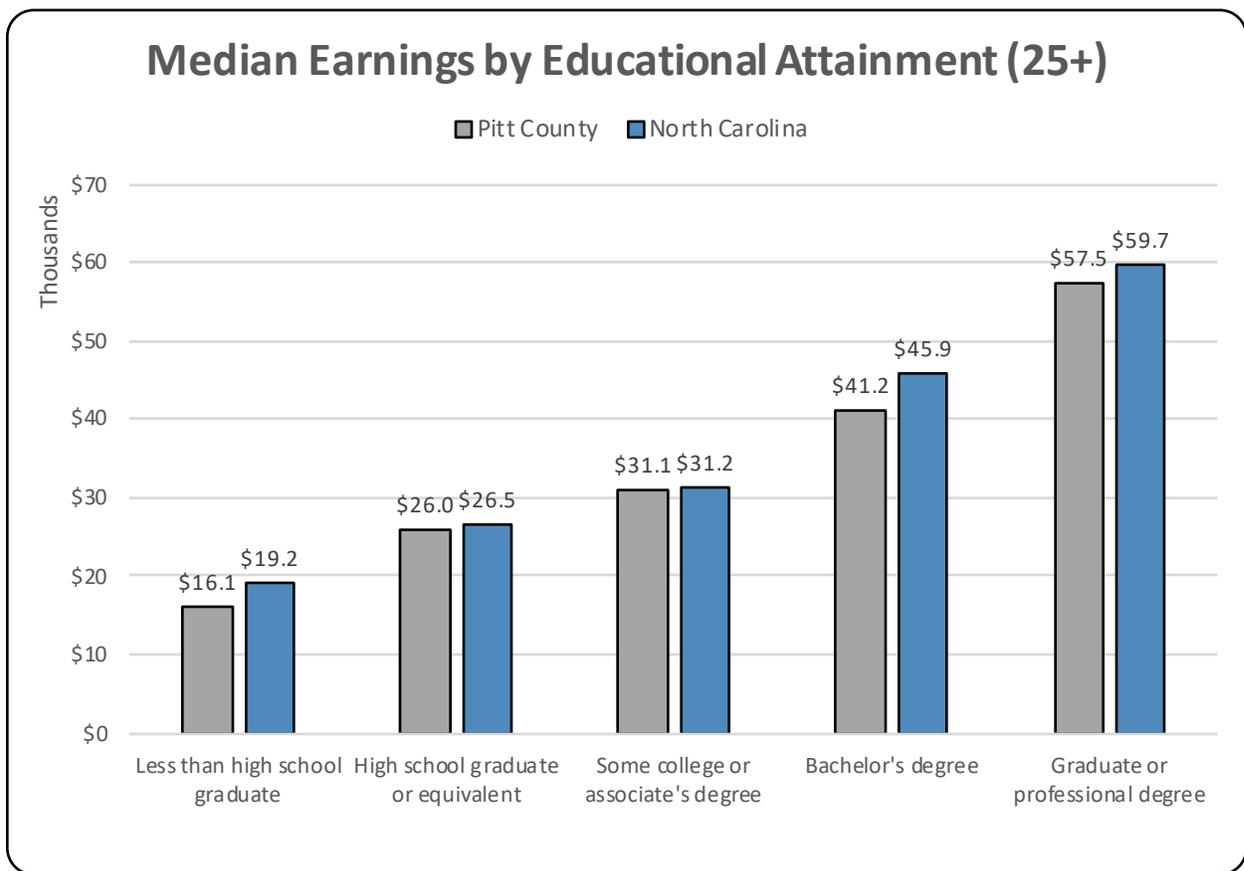
	Pitt %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	94%	90%
White—Bachelor’s degree or higher	38%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	84%	84%
Black—Bachelor’s degree or higher	15%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	66%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor’s degree or higher	16%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



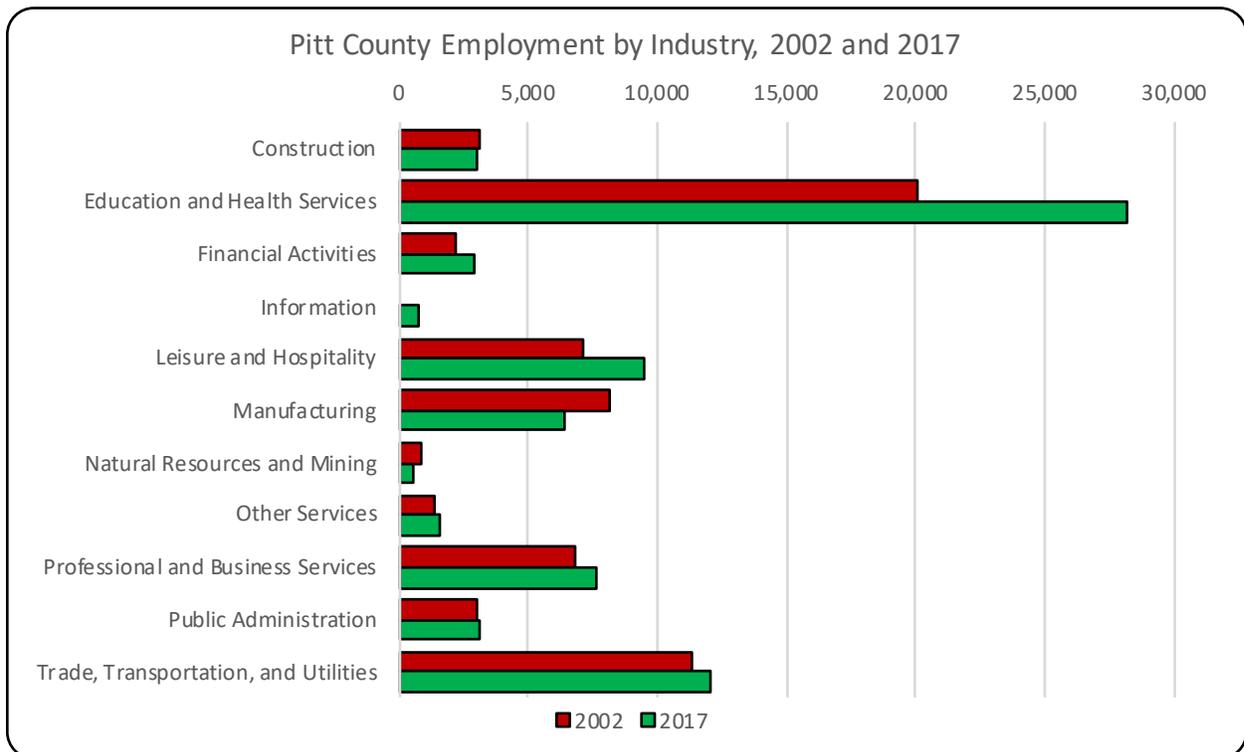
	Pitt \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$16,095	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$25,967	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,083	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$41,217	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$57,506	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Pitt)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	3,133	3,035	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	20,011	28,145	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	2,217	2,896	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	807	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	7,099	9,525	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	8,178	6,441	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	853	601	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,368	1,546	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	6,816	7,614	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	3,003	3,160	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	11,361	12,091	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



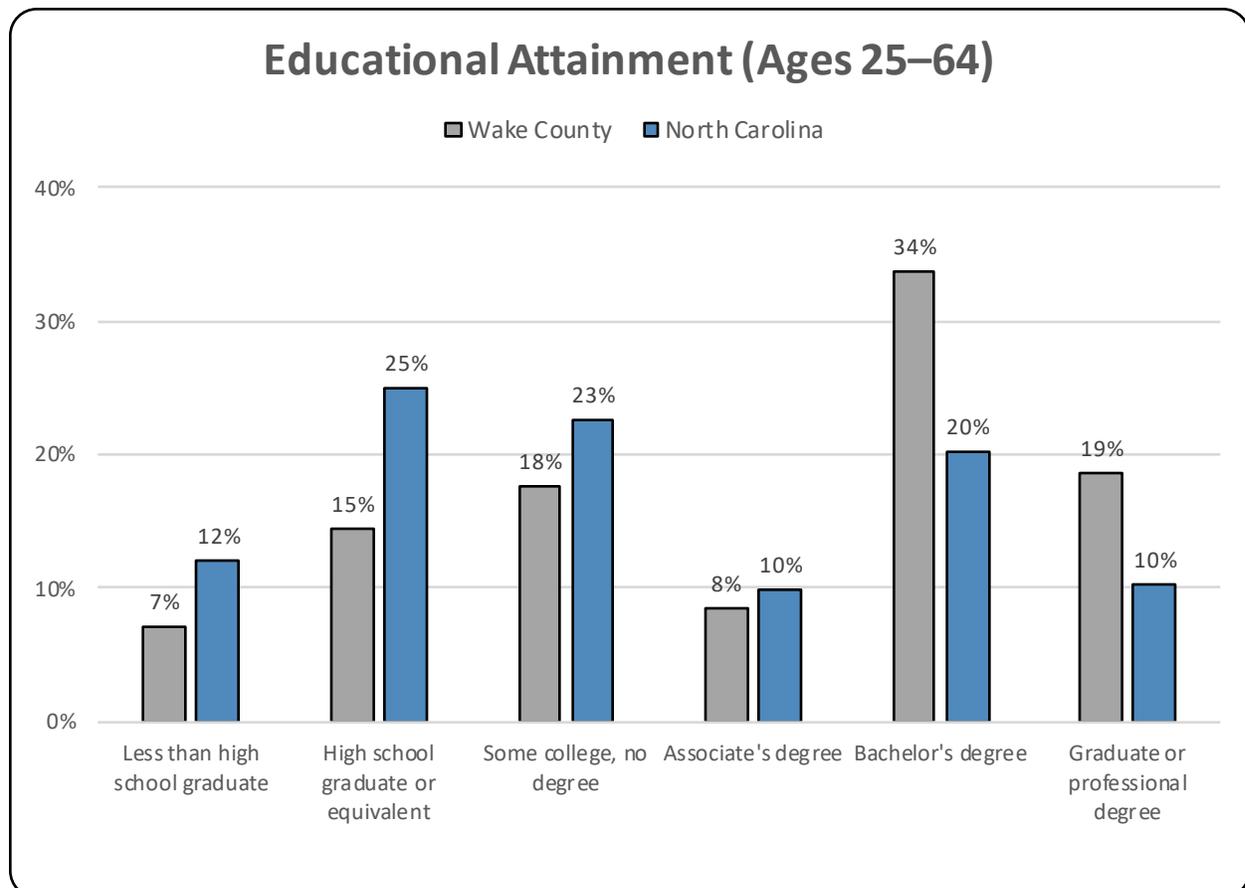
Wake County

	Wake #	N.C. #	Wake %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	55,210	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	1,604	24,161	2.9%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

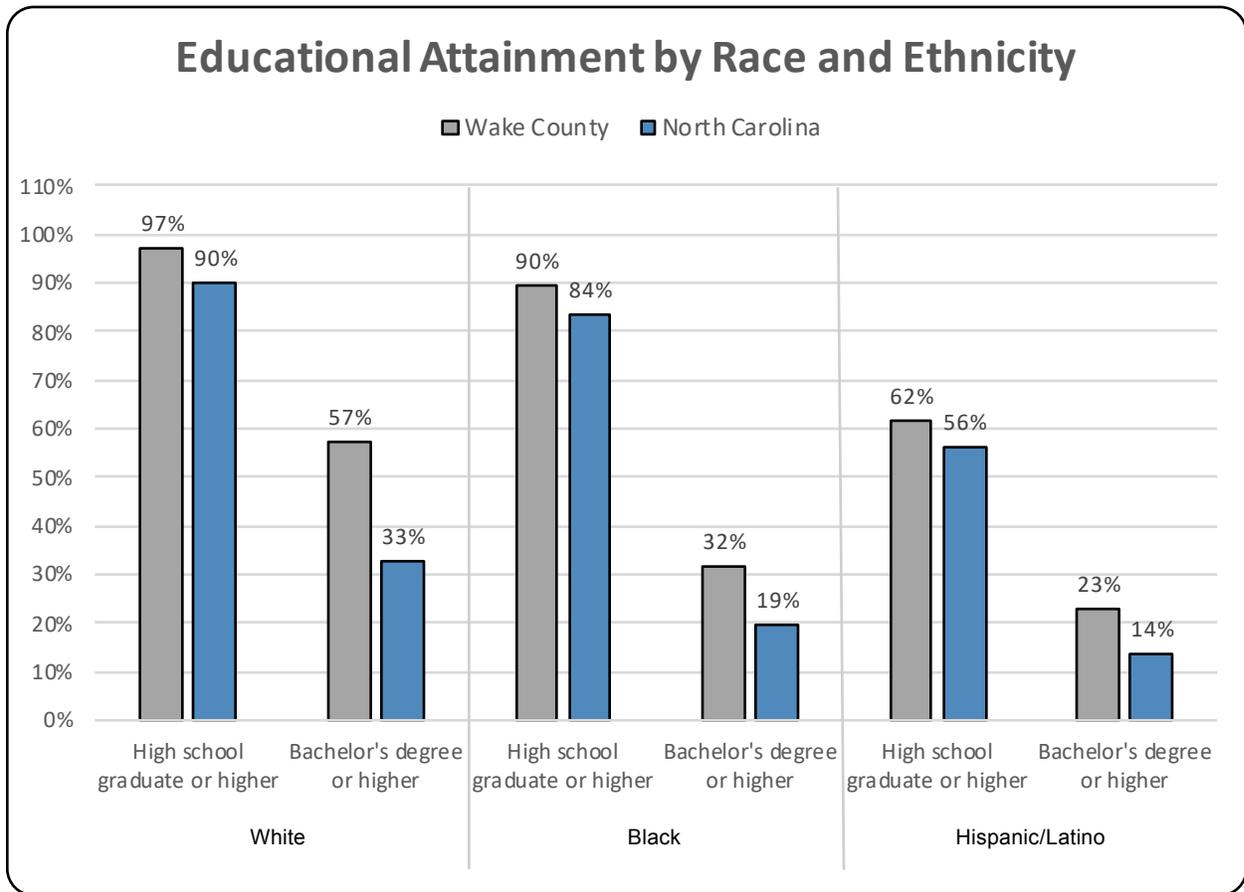
	Wake #	N.C. #	Wake %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	556,382	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	39,079	625,915	7.0%	12.0%
High school graduate or equivalent	80,845	1,301,581	14.5%	24.9%
Some college, no degree	97,743	1,179,130	17.6%	22.6%
Associate's degree	47,230	518,632	8.5%	9.9%
Bachelor's degree	187,918	1,058,715	33.8%	20.3%
Graduate or professional degree	103,567	541,369	18.6%	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



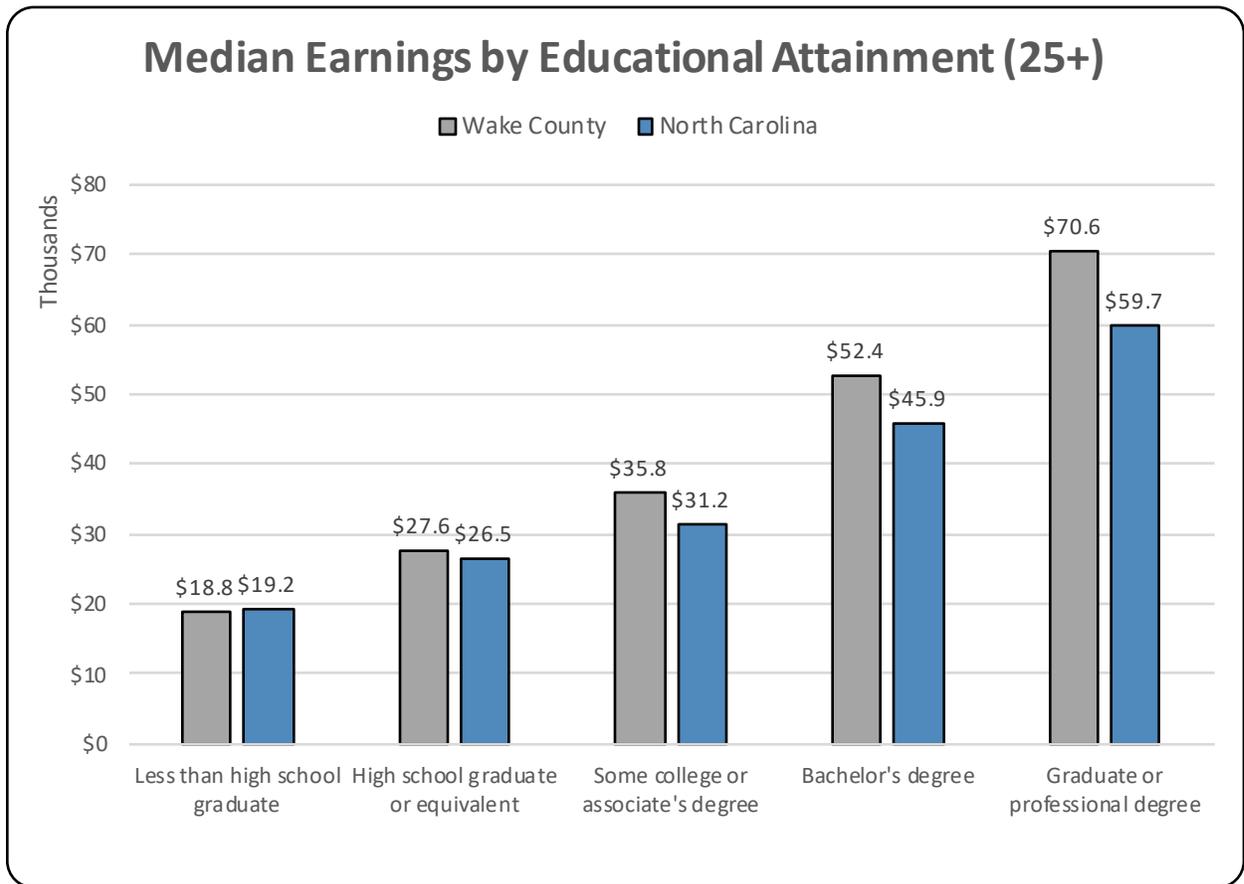
	Wake %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	96.9%	90.1%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	57.1%	32.6%
Black—High school graduate or higher	89.7%	83.7%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	31.5%	19.4%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	61.6%	56.2%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	22.7%	13.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



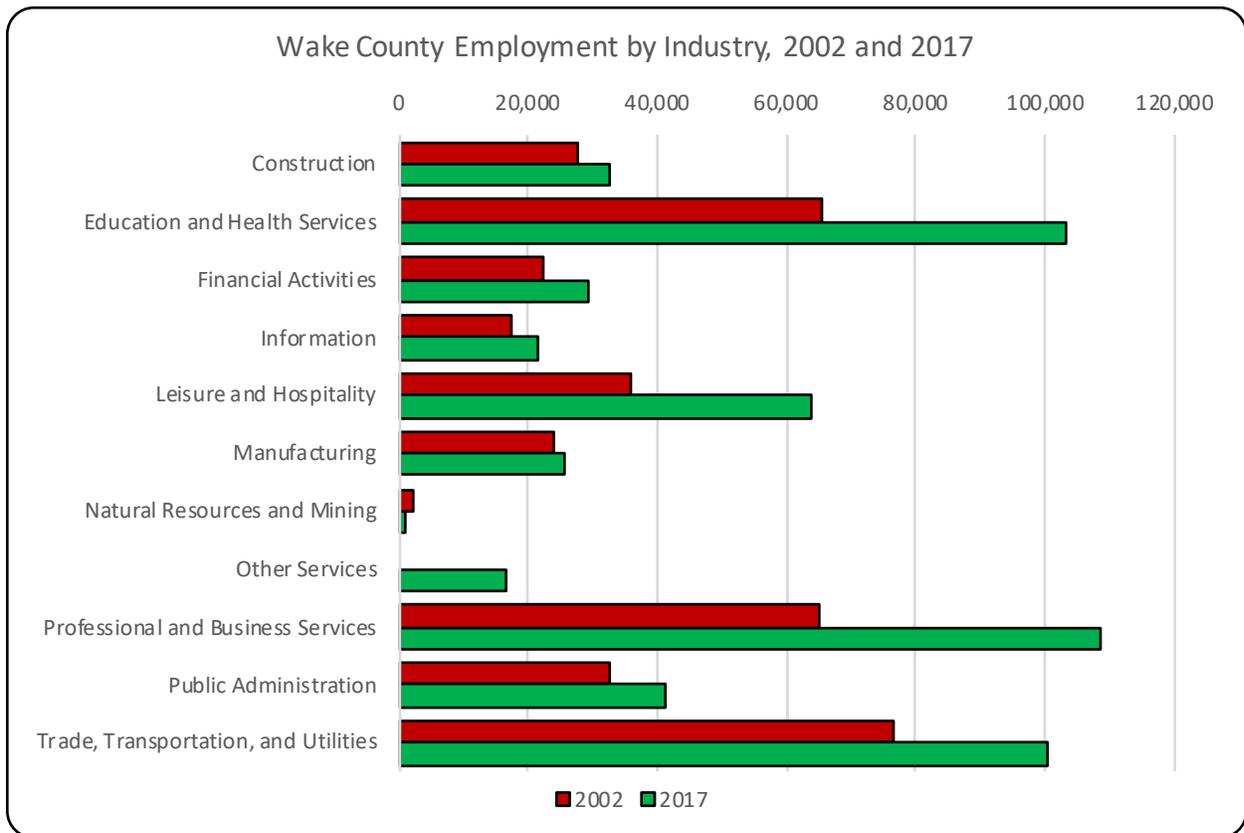
	Wake \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$18,834	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$27,634	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$35,793	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$52,443	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$70,566	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Wake)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector	2002	2017	2002	2017
Construction	27,655	32,526	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	65,266	103,147	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	22,344	29,437	184,151	227,142
Information	17,438	21,521	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	35,752	63,602	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	24,031	25,517	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	2,220	1,138	35,606	30,908
Other Services	n/a	16,522	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	65,169	108,515	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	32,677	41,129	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	76,362	100,402	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



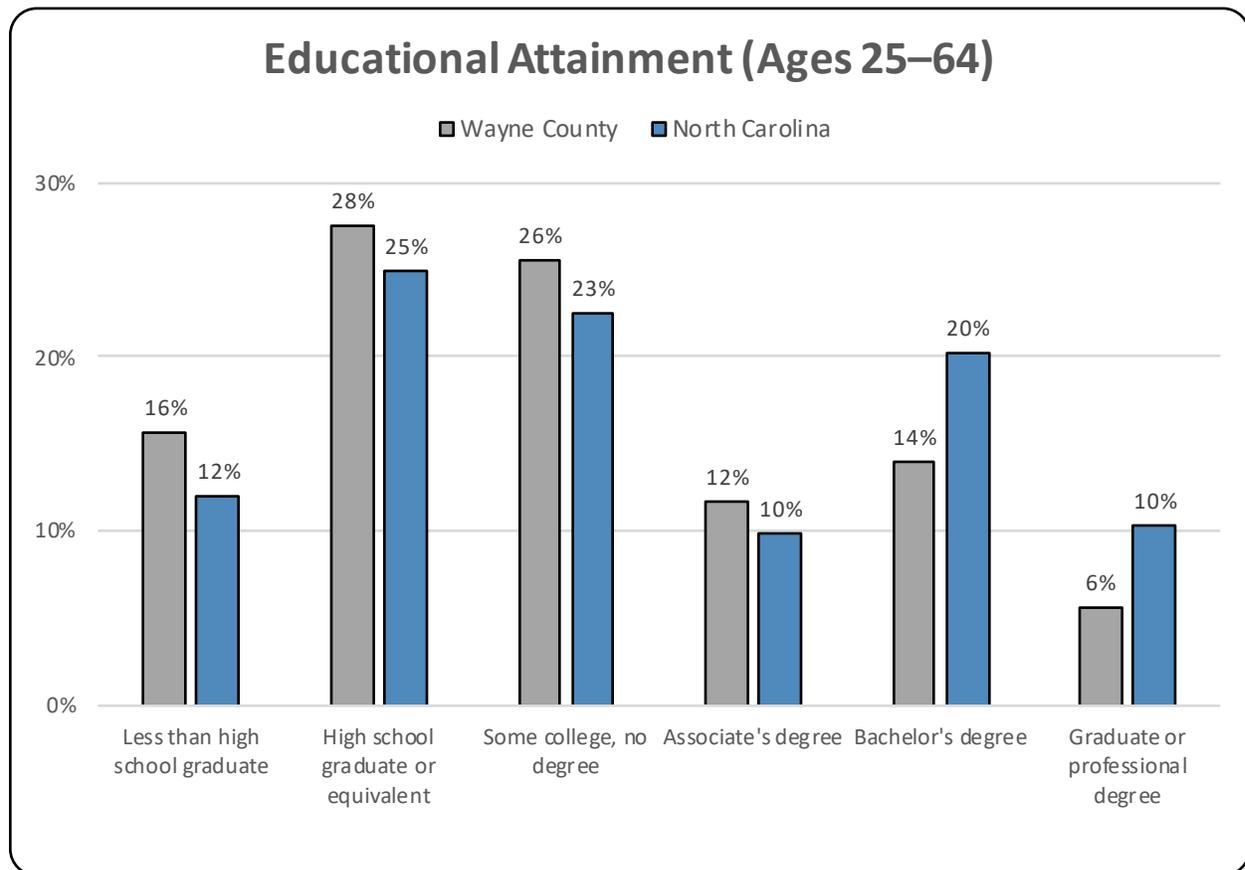
Wayne County

	Wayne #	N.C. #	Wayne %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	6,388	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	480	24,161	7.5%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

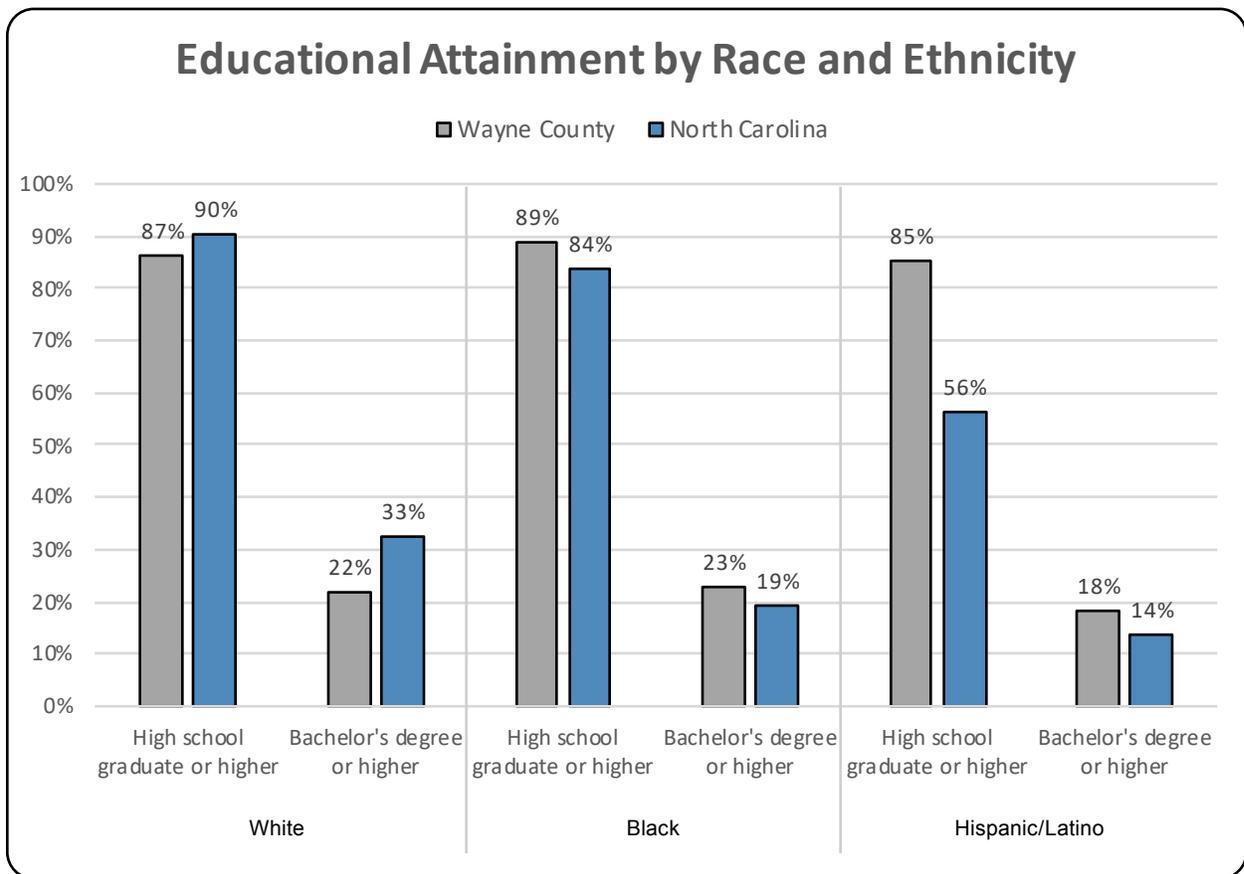
	Wayne #	N.C. #	Wayne %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 Years	64,076	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	10,033	625,915	16%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	17,650	1,301,581	28%	25%
Some college, no degree	16,383	1,179,130	26%	23%
Associate's degree	7,516	518,632	12%	10%
Bachelor's degree	8,950	1,058,715	14%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	3,544	541,369	6%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



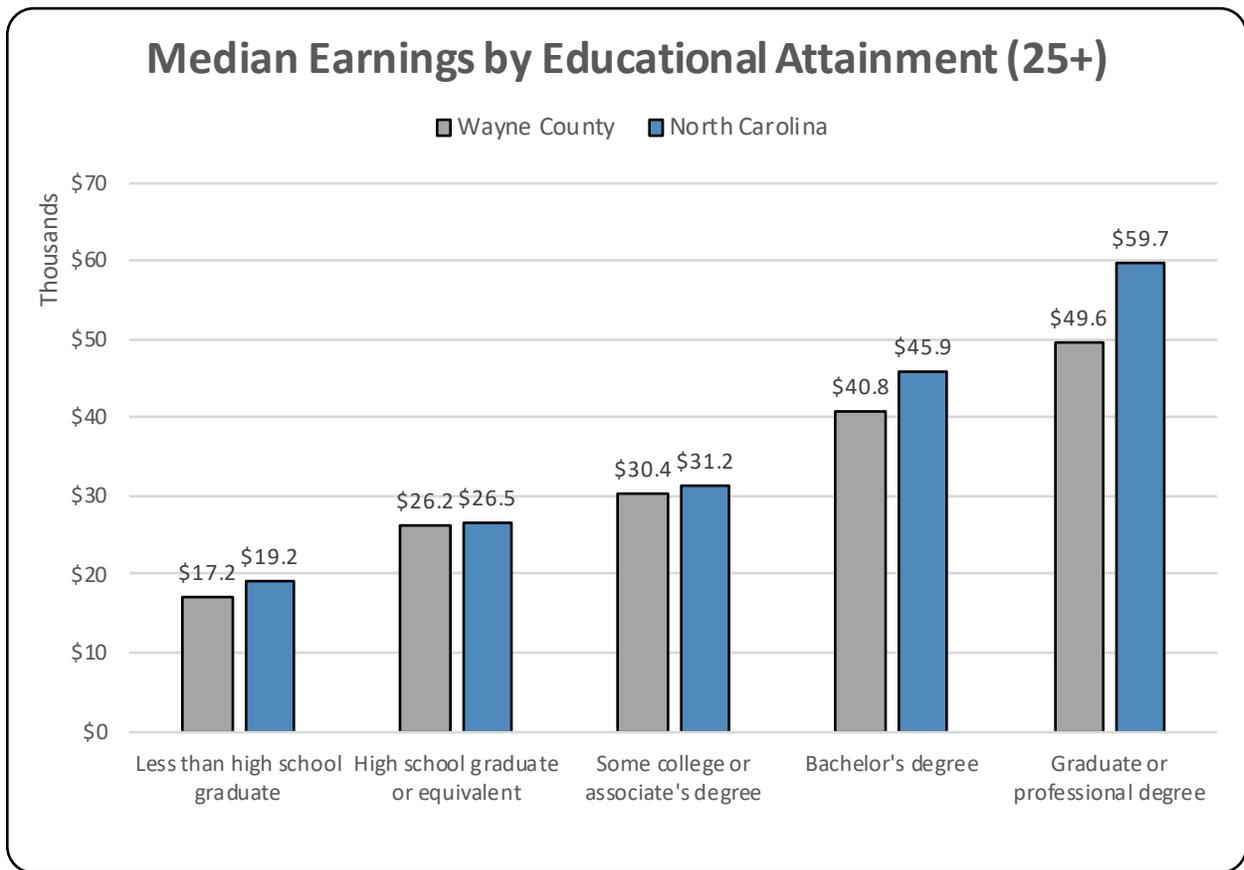
	Wayne %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	87%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	22%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	89%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	23%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	85%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	18%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



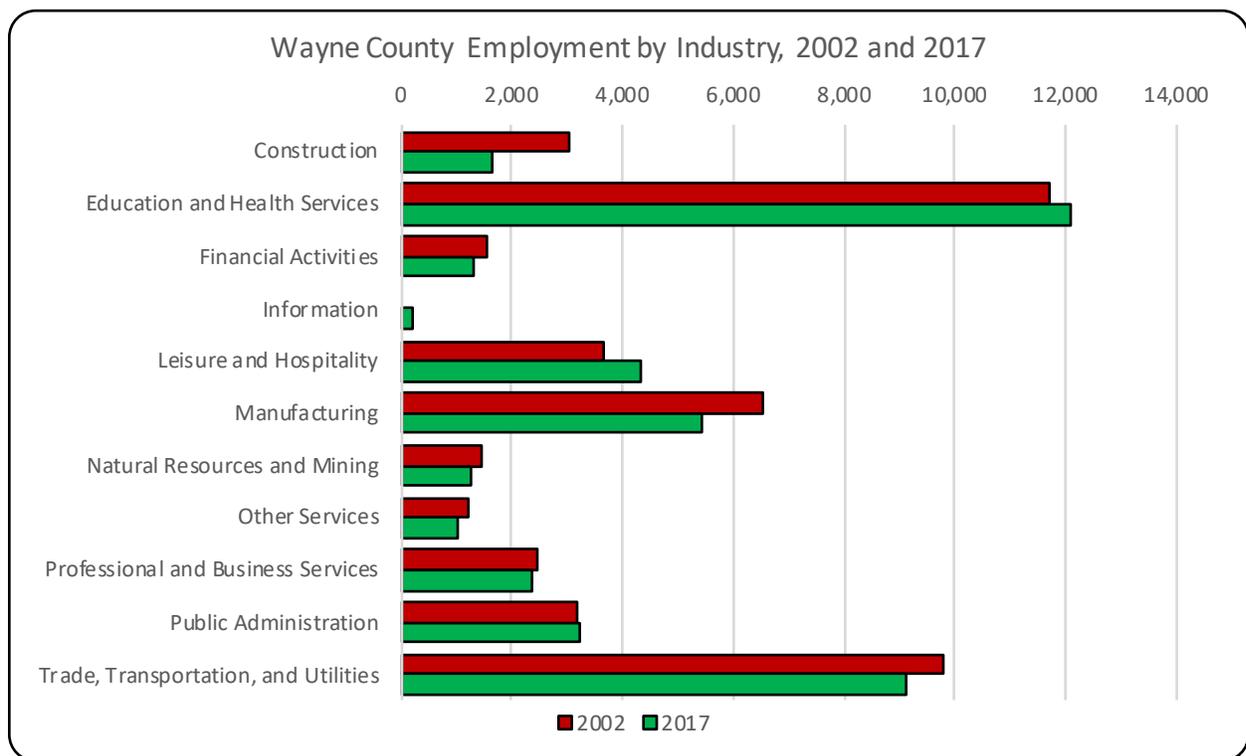
	Wayne \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment (25+)		
Less than high school graduate	\$17,196	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$26,186	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$30,449	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$40,829	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$49,583	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Wayne)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	3,055	1,658	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	11,720	12,099	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	1,532	1,293	184,151	227,142
Information	n/a	228	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	3,644	4,353	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	6,534	5,445	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	1,445	1,283	35,606	30,908
Other Services	1,228	1,049	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	2,449	2,382	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	3,161	3,245	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	9,789	9,120	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



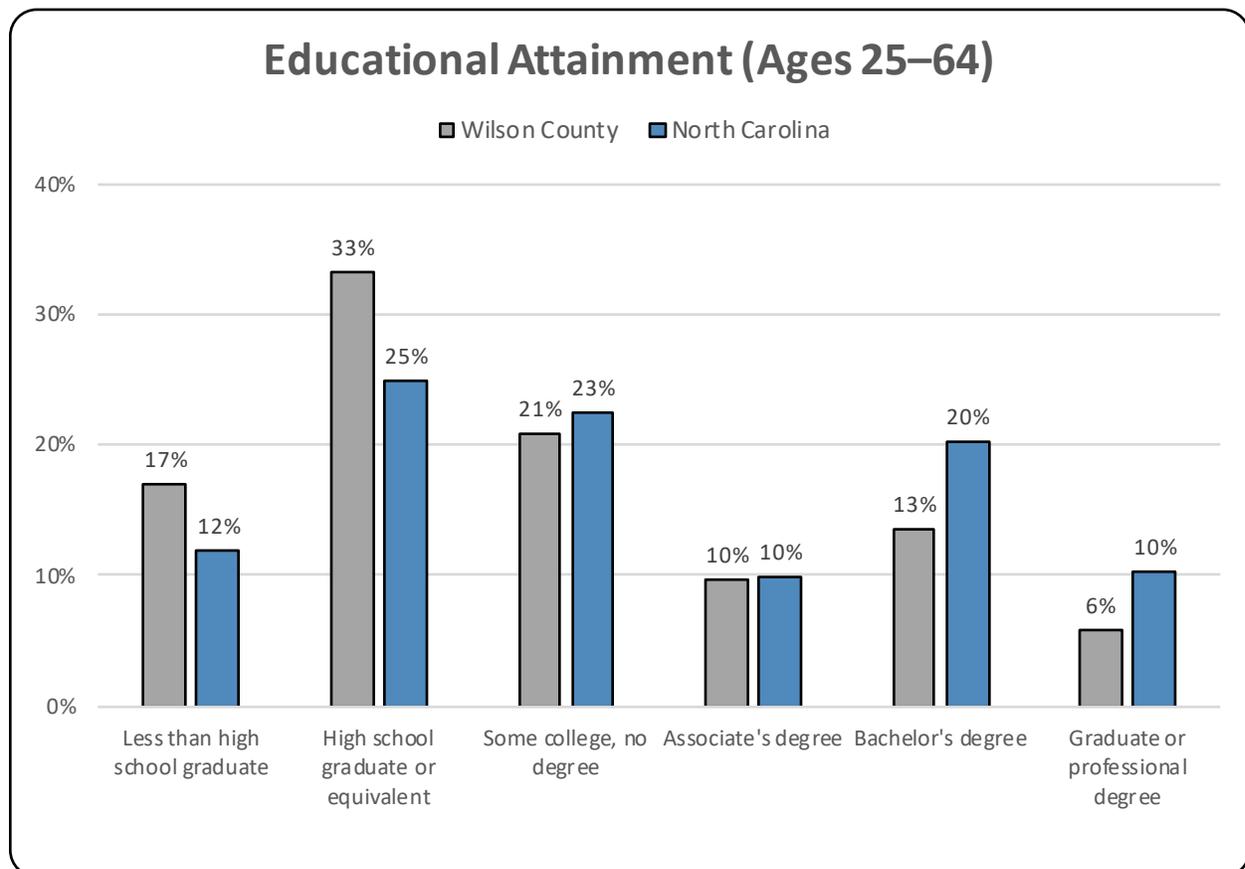
Wilson County

	Wilson #	N.C. #	Wilson %	N.C. %
1. Population 16 to 19 Years	4,206	527,783		
Not a high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped out)	425	24,161	10.1%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

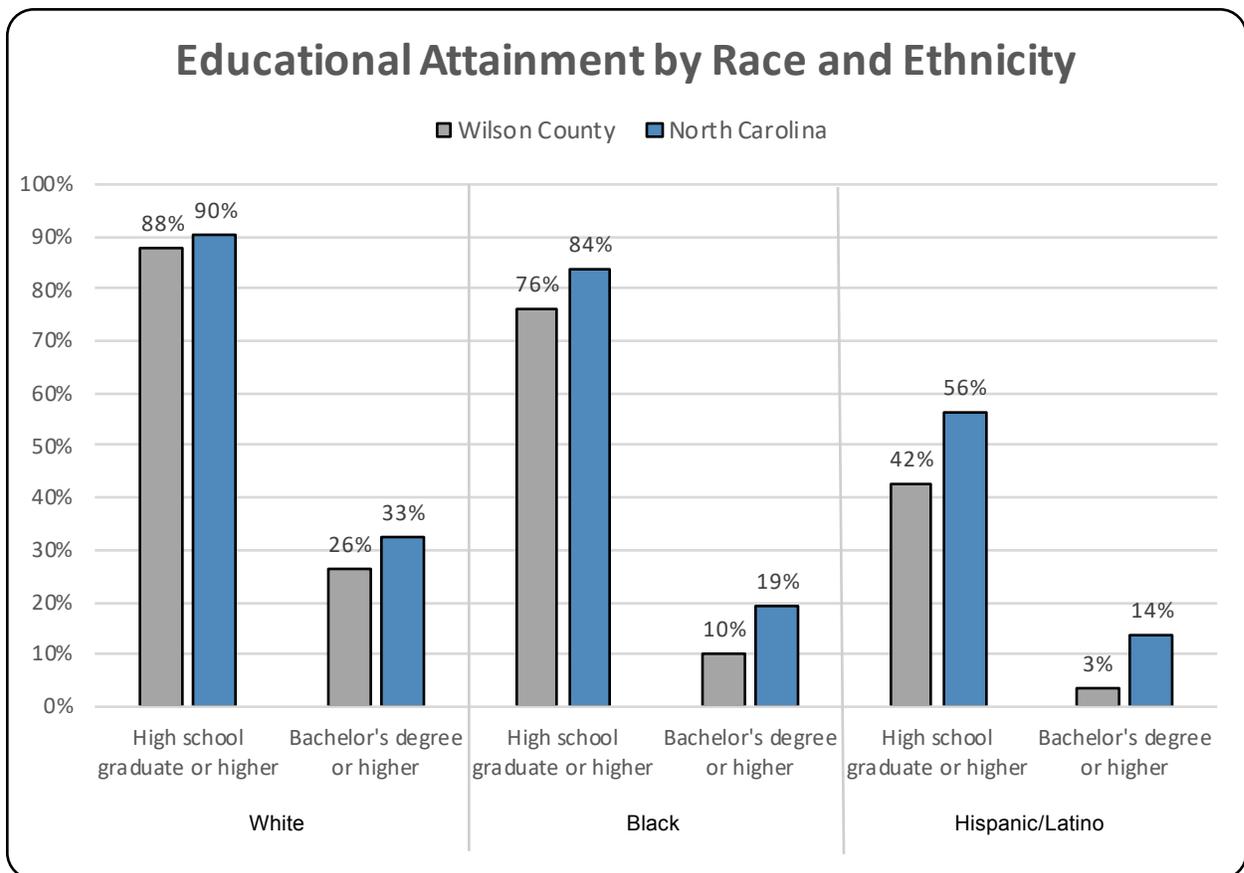
	Wilson #	N.C. #	Wilson %	N.C. %
2. Population 25 to 64 years	41,640	5,225,342		
Less than high school graduate	7,060	625,915	17%	12%
High school graduate or equivalent	13,857	1,301,581	33%	25%
Some college, no degree	8,673	1,179,130	21%	23%
Associate's degree	4,024	518,632	10%	10%
Bachelor's degree	5,618	1,058,715	13%	20%
Graduate or professional degree	2,408	541,369	6%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



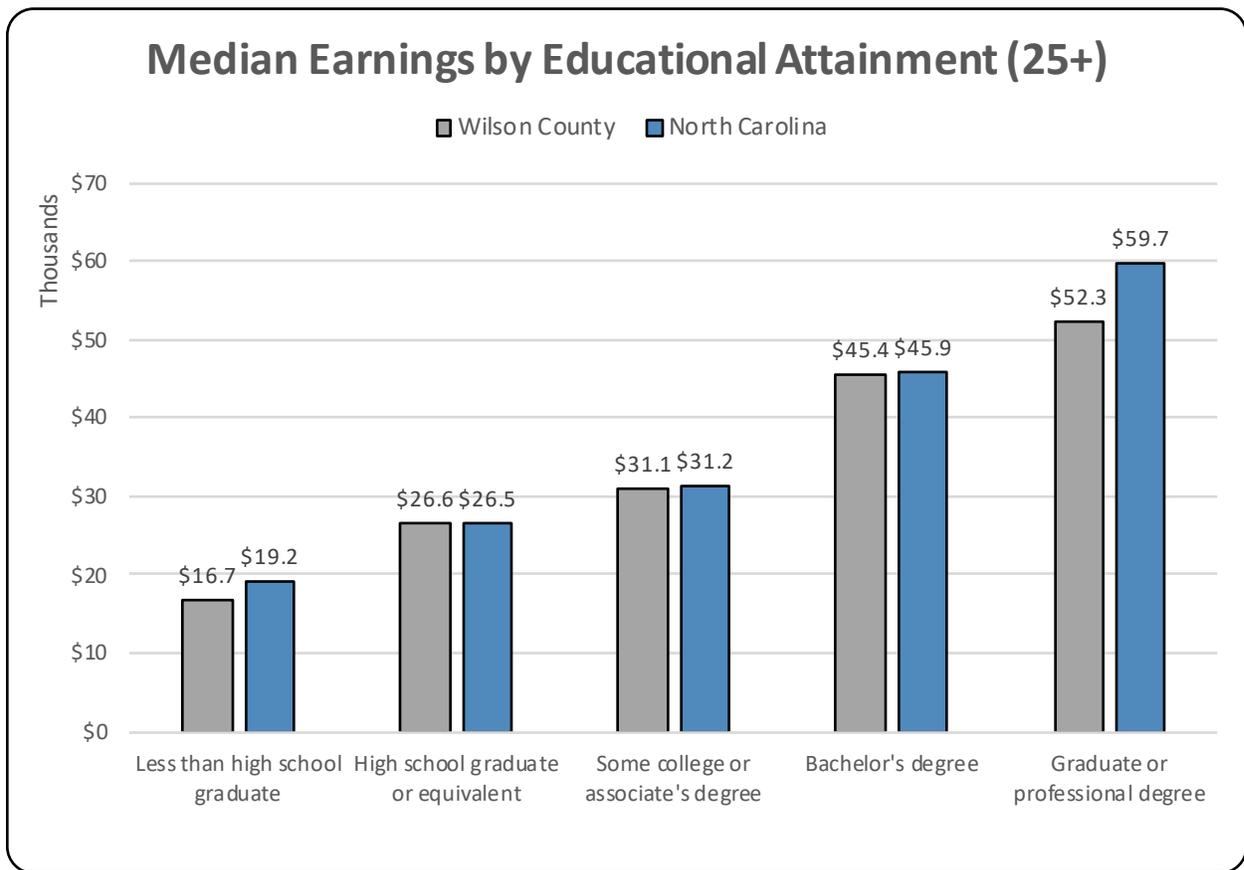
	Wilson %	N.C. %
3. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity		
White—High school graduate or higher	88%	90%
White—Bachelor's degree or higher	26%	33%
Black—High school graduate or higher	76%	84%
Black—Bachelor's degree or higher	10%	19%
Hispanic/Latino—High school graduate or higher	42%	56%
Hispanic/Latino—Bachelor's degree or higher	3%	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



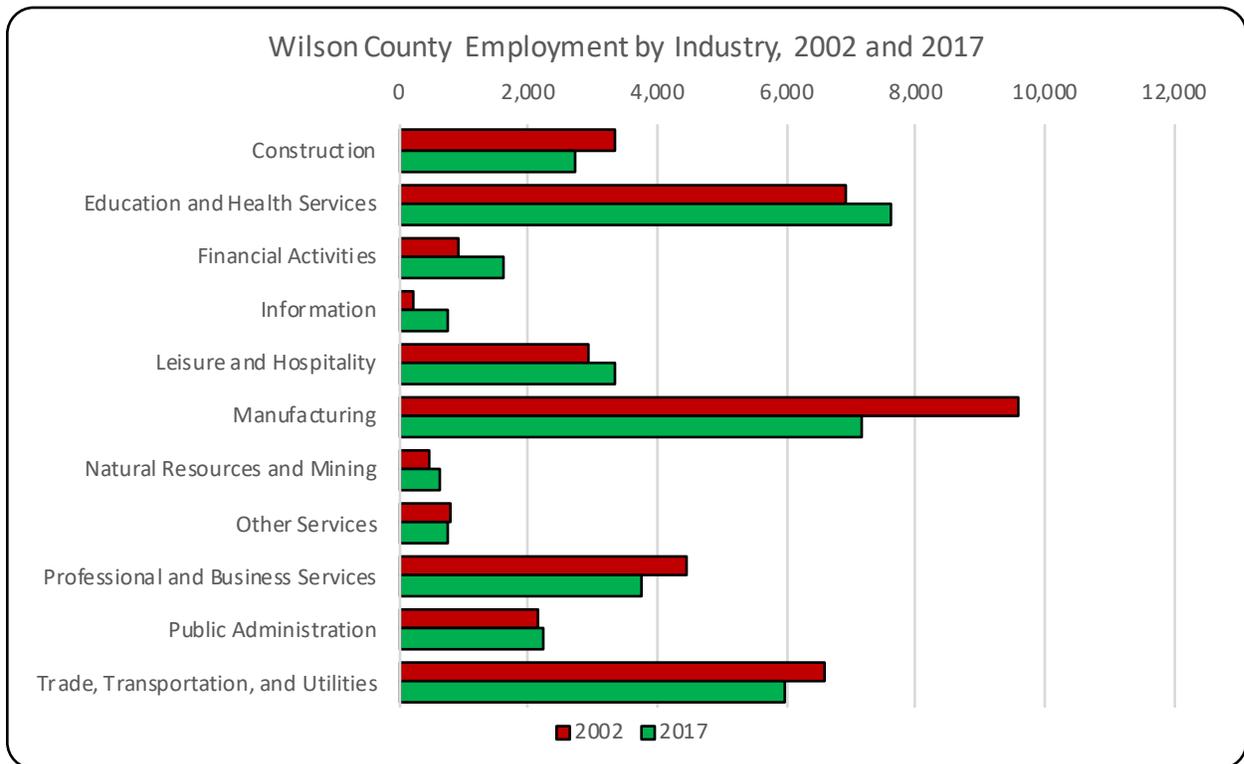
	Wilson \$	N.C. \$
4. Median Earnings by Educational Attainment		
Less than high school graduate	\$16,687	\$19,187
High school graduate or equivalent	\$26,569	\$26,460
Some college or associate's degree	\$31,053	\$31,242
Bachelor's degree	\$45,380	\$45,922
Graduate or professional degree	\$52,319	\$59,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.



5. Industry Growth	Average Employment (Wilson)		Average Employment (N.C.)	
	2002	2017	2002	2017
Industry Sector				
Construction	3,323	2,746	218,602	208,698
Education and Health Services	6,933	7,620	758,789	987,952
Financial Activities	915	1,621	184,151	227,142
Information	236	745	80,184	79,971
Leisure and Hospitality	2,931	3,349	339,023	499,070
Manufacturing	9,570	7,149	643,983	467,442
Natural Resources and Mining	459	647	35,606	30,908
Other Services	790	738	99,293	108,859
Professional and Business Services	4,456	3,755	422,058	621,856
Public Administration	2,143	2,249	214,495	242,848
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	6,603	5,968	754,012	855,269

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (via N.C. Department of Commerce).



Appendix C. Bright Spots Interview Participants

Career Accelerator Program (CAP)

Caleb Barbee

CAP Apprentice Sandvik

Ben Barr

CAP Apprentice

Robin Bowers

CTE Director, Alamance-Burlington School System

Trevor Coffey

CAP Apprentice Sandvik

Jenny Faulkner

Public Information Officer, Alamance-Burlington School System

Andrea Fleming

Director of Existing Industry Services, Alamance Chamber

Barbara Gorman

Learning and Development Manager, GKN Driveline

Tab Joyce

Business Controller Sandvik

Justin Padmos

CAP Apprentice

Roland Roberts

*Interim Departmental Head, Mechatronics
Engineering Technologies; Mechatronics
Instructor, Alamance Community College*

Chris Rojas

Plant Manager, Fairystone Fabrics

Penny Rudd

Technical Precision Plastics

Justin Snyder

Dean of Industrial Technologies, Alamance Community College

Jailyn Warren

CAP Apprentice

Cristian

CAP Apprentice

Jace

CAP Apprentice

K-64

Sherry Butler

Catawba County Commissioner, K-64 Board Member

Donald Duncan

City Manager, Conover, NC

Cindi Fulbright

*Workforce Development, Catawba Valley
Community College (CVCC)*

Kimberly George

Vice Chair, K-64 Vice President, Alex Lee Inc.

Garrett Hinshaw

President, CVCC

Lori Price

Business and Industry Services, CVCC

Jordan Schindler

CEO/Founder, Texdel

Felicia Setzer

Regional Operations Director, NCWorks Northwest

Marty Sharpe

Chief Technology Officer, Catawba County

Daniel St. Louis

Director, Manufacturing Solutions Center

Mark Story

Chief Executive Officer, K-64

Matt Stover

Superintendent, Catawba County Schools

Ty Wright

Director, CVCC Simulated Hospital

Made in Durham

Ondrea Austin

Lead Workforce Coordinator

James Dickens

*Employment Program Coordinator, Durham
Economic & Workforce Development*

Indira Everett

District Manager, Duke Energy

Patrick Fine

Chief Executive Officer, FHI360

Tom Jaynes

Senior Vice President, Durham Technology Community College

Made in Durham (continued)

Aminah Jenkins*Youth Network Advisor, Racial Equity Task Force Member***Adria Scott***Business Services Manager, City of Durham***Casey Steinbacher***Executive Director, Made in Durham***Jessica Sperling***Lead, Evaluation and Engagement, Duke University SSRI***Antoinique White***Youth Work Intern, Student, Winston-Salem State University***Elizabeth Wood***Summer Youth Work Intern*

Profound Gentlemen

Gerard Littlejohn*Executive Director, Steve Smith Family Foundation***Mario-Jovan Shaw***Co-Founder of Profound Gentlemen***Jason Terrell***Co-Founder of Profound Gentlemen, Former Teacher***Eddison Wilkinson***English Teacher, East Way Middle School*

Project Gold Rush

Jonathan (Jon) Clark*Student, Grant Recipient***Tina McEntire***Associate Provost, Enrollment Management, UNC Charlotte***Heather Oaks***Student, Grant Recipient***Katie Ramstack***Project Manager, Enrollment Management, UNC Charlotte***Jay Skipworth***Associate Director, University Career Center, UNC Charlotte***Manuel Zapata***Gold Rush Grant Donor; Zapata Engineering*

Project SEARCH

Tim Blekicki*Instructor, Project SEARCH, the Arc of North Carolina***Tommasanne Davis***Director of Talent Acquisition and Career Exploration, Mission Health***Jeffrey Gallagher***Business Engagement Specialist, North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation***Page McCormick***Transitional Pathways and Partnerships, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College***Zoey Silvey***Graduate; Environmental Services Employee***Scott Smiles***Supervisor, Vocational Rehabilitation*

Project SECURE

Lewis Borman*Communications and Marketing, Wake County***Taylor Bundy***Enrolled in Project SECURE, Wake Technical Community College***Anthony Caison***VP, Workforce and Continuing Education, Wake Technical Community College***Sandellyo Kauba***IT Instructor, Wake Technical Community College***Joshua Lee McKinney***Digital Communications Specialist, Wake Technical Community College***Jarvis Peacock***Technologies Manager, Coastal Federal Credit Union*

STEM East

Chris Bailey*CTE Director, Onslow County Schools***Julie Carey***Vice President of Program Initiatives, Boys and Girls Club—Coastal Plain***John Chaffee***Chief Executive Officer, NC East Alliance***Sam Houston***President, N.C. Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center***Ethan Lenker***Superintendent, Pitt County Schools***Brent Lubbock***Director of Operations and Development, Sylvan Heights Bird Park***Bruce Middleton***Executive Director***Patrick Miller***Superintendent, Greene County Schools***Sylvia Nesbitt***Chief Finance Officer, NC East Alliance***Wayne Washington***HR Manager, Hyster-Yale*

STEP

Valerie Bridges*Superintendent, Edgecombe Public Schools***Bill Carver***President, Nash Community College***Shawn Dawes***Early College Liaison, Edgecombe Community College***Scott Fleming***Keihin Carolina System Technology***Pam Gould***Executive Director, STEP***Frank Grano***Keihin Carolina System Technology***Patricia Hollingsworth***Chief Communications Officer, Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools***Shelton Jefferies***Superintendent, Nash-Rocky Mount Schools***John Judd***Plant Manager, Cummins Rocky Mount***Joel Lee***Edwards, Inc.***Pamela Lewis***CTE-Director, Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools***Greg McLeod***President, Edgecombe Community College (ECC)***Bruce Panneton***Dean, Health Sciences and Public Safety, ECC***Tahirah Smith***Cummins RMEP***Wil van der Meulen***Career and Pathways Transition Coordinator,
Nash Community College***Justin Whitley***Cummins RMEP***Wilson 2020**

Paula Benson*Executive Director, Wilson Forward***Eric Davis***Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource
Services, Wilson County Schools***Gary Daynes***Provost, Barton College***Teresa Ellen***Health Director, Wilson County Health Department***Grant Goings***City Manager, City of Wilson***Jennifer Lantz***Executive Director, Wilson Economic Development Council***Denise O'Hara***Executive Director, Healthcare Foundation of Wilson***Doug Searcy***President, Barton College***Tim Wright***President, Wilson Community College*