

2019–20

UNC School of Government ncIMPACT Initiative

Dedicated to Improving the Lives of North Carolinians

The ncIMPACT Team

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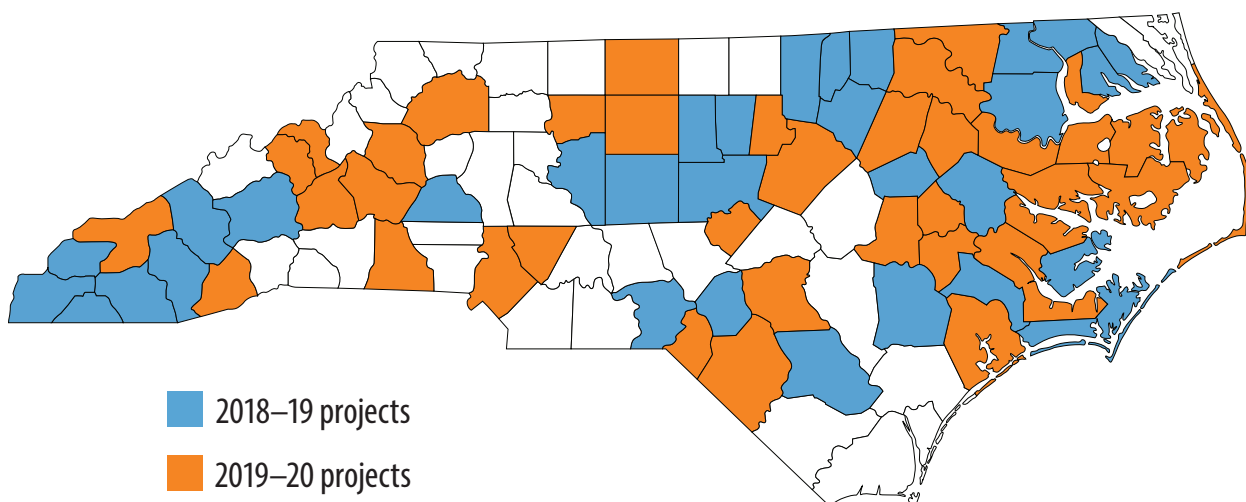
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Vision: Be the go-to place in North Carolina for trusted tools that bridge policy and practice in response to complex challenges

Communities with active projects (2018–2020)



Strategies

1. We engage in deep experiments on pressing community challenges using sound data, high quality research, and rigorous analysis.

EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

► Opioid Response Project

Challenge: When this project began, four North Carolina metro areas ranked in the top twenty nationally for opioid abuse rates and three residents died each day from overdoses on average. This crisis creates enormous local burdens for foster care and social services agencies, law enforcement and emergency management, public health departments, and many other local leaders.

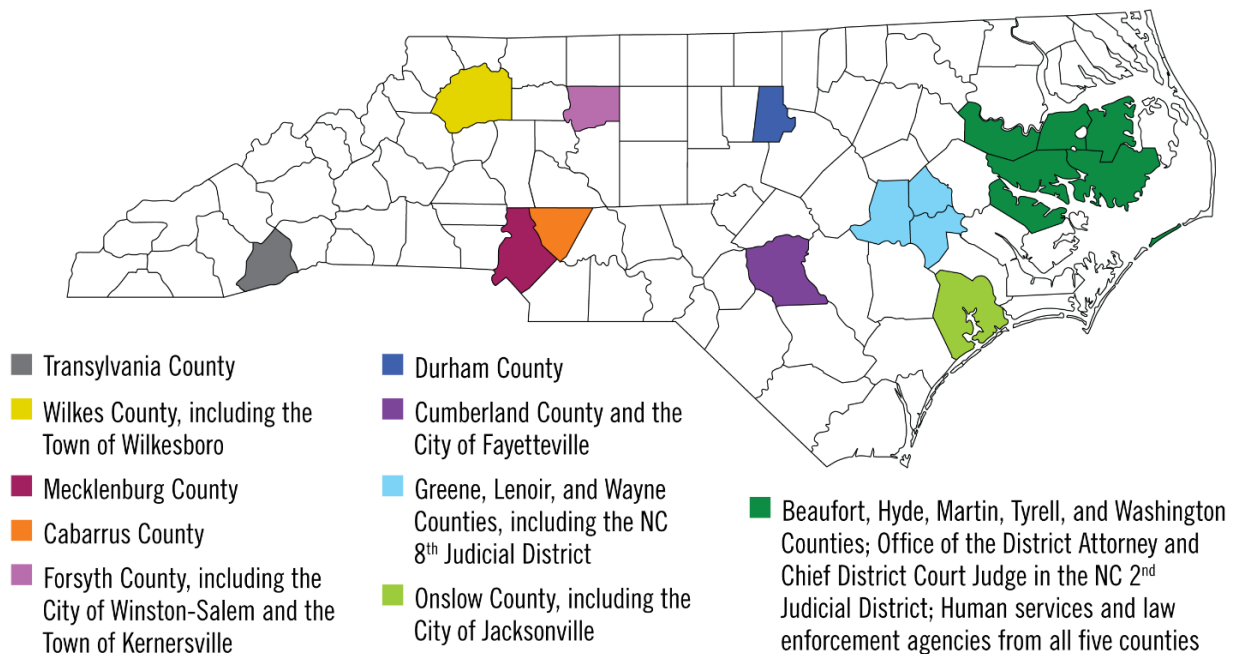
Response: Developed an intensive two-year collaborative learning program that provides direct support to ten North Carolina communities enacting an integrated and innovative policy and practice response to their local opioid crises.

Process: Forums, technical assistance, funds for community project managers, and online resources

Impact: Helped ten community teams devise effective strategies for combating the opioid crisis and develop capacity for implementing them. Shared resources and learnings with more than 1,000 stakeholders across the state in a monthly newsletter and webinars.

Project leads: Kim Nelson and Adam Lovelady, School of Government faculty

Funder: Blue Cross NC



► Social Capital

Challenge: When human service agencies fail to consider the importance of social capital in programs, they may limit the likelihood of increasing employment, reducing poverty and improving child and family wellbeing.

Response: As a subcontractor to RTI International, the ncIMPACT Initiative led the work of identifying and working with national experts.

Process: The research team identified and worked with national experts to clarify the role social capital plays in human service programs and identify model programs based on their characteristics, approaches, and measures of success. The team delivered a webinar co-sponsored with the University of Wisconsin at Madison, four case studies, and four podcasts to share in-depth analysis of how social capital is used and leveraged by human service programs.


Impact: The early tools have been shared by the team and federal government with thousands of local government and nonprofit officials across the nation who seek to use social capital at the local level to strengthen their human services programs.

Project lead: Maureen Berner, School of Government faculty

Funder: [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Networks That Work

Podcast Series



Social Capital : Listen and Learn

Start Summertime Streaming! Listen in with ncIMPACT Initiative's Anita Brown-Graham as she leads conversations with experts on the benefits of social capital.

Episode 1: [Close-Knit Communities for Better Outcomes: Using Peer Groups](#)

Episode 2: [Friend Request Accepted: Using Technology and Social Capital](#)

Episode 3: [Beyond Icebreakers: How to Help Participants Really Connect](#)

► NC Strategic Economic Development Plan

Challenge: To develop the state's 2020 comprehensive strategic economic development plan, the NC Department of Commerce contracted with a team of faculty and staff at UNC-Chapel Hill to provide a data-driven strategic plan and solid recommendations.

Response: ncIMPACT Initiative conducted a series of regional stakeholder engagement sessions and interviews with representatives from economic development, workforce development, local government, relevant state government agencies, business, and education (all levels) to ensure broad input informed the plan. The team conducted regional sessions in each of the eight prosperity zones, in which more than 250 people participated.

Process: The team also administered a post-session survey for each region regarding priorities identified in the session to participants and other leaders in the region for input. The team received more than 280 responses to these post-session surveys and the resulting analysis enabled the

NC STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REGIONAL SESSIONS



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research team to refine its findings for each regional session. To generate interest in these regional sessions, the team offered an online video with an overview of statewide data, the planning process, and what participants could expect from the regional sessions. The team also conducted three to five interviews with key economic and workforce development leaders in each region to tailor the session to regional opportunities, challenges, and concerns. The ncIMPACT Initiative analyzed the results of the interviews and regional sessions and developed key findings.

Impact: The ncIMPACT Initiative collaborated with the UNC Center for Urban & Regional Studies to develop strategic recommendations utilizing the results of research and analysis, key findings of regional sessions and interviews, and discussions with the NC Department of Commerce staff and working group advising the Secretary of Commerce.

Project lead: Jonathan Morgan, School of Government faculty

Funder: [N.C. Department of Commerce](#)

► **Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes in NC**

Challenge: The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust enlisted the ncIMPACT Initiative to conduct a study of possible strategies to improve health outcomes in North Carolina with an emphasis on influencing the drivers of those outcomes.

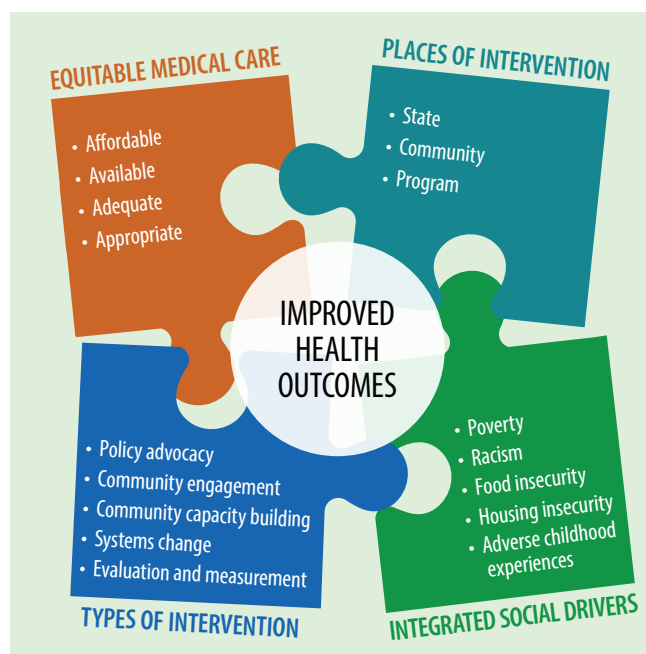
Response: A qualitative research process with a grounded-theory approach.

Process: Conducted 25 key informant interviews with experts, administered and analyzed surveys with the Trust's staff, reviewed successful strategies by peer philanthropies, and completed a review of academic literature and state demographics.

Impact: Delivered seven data-based recommendations that offer areas of opportunity.

Project lead: Anita Brown-Graham, School of Government faculty

Funder: [Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust](#)



► **Experts who partnered with the ncIMPACT Initiative in its projects**

The ncIMPACT Initiative engaged 389 experts in its projects, convenings, and television/online content produced this year. The following School of Government faculty and professional staff participated in funded projects coordinated by the ncIMPACT Initiative:

- **Opioid Response Project:** Kim Nelson, Adam Lovelady, Mark Botts, Jill Moore, Sara DePasquale, Willow Jacobson, Patrice Roesler, Amy Wade, Jacqui Green, Rick Morse, and Jamie Markham.
- **UNC-TV series:** John Rubin
- **Social Capital:** Maureen Berner, Aimee Wall, and Michele Hoyman
- **N.C. Strategic Economic Development Plan:** Jonathan Morgan and Tyler Mulligan

2. Widely-share knowledge on evidence-based insights and creative policy options for responding to the most important questions communities face through a virtual civic solutions lab.

► Presentations to varied audiences

We made over 40 presentations this year. Audiences included public sector policymakers, foundation staff and boards, business leaders, community residents, and nonprofit organizations.

► Help decision makers dig in and use data

The ncIMPACT Initiative sponsored data-rich webinars this year.

- *Opioid Response Project: Community Education and Outreach Strategies*
July 18, 2019
- *Syringe Exchange Programs for the Opioid Response Project*
August 15, 2019
- *Regional Sessions to Inform the NC Strategic Economic Development Plan*
August 20, 2019
- *Measuring How Social Relationships Contribute to the Outcomes of Human Services Program Participants*
April 1, 2020



► Expose leaders to new facts and emerging research—*Facts That Matter* blog

The team published 39 blog pieces this year.

► Website utilization

Traffic increased on our website this year as we continue to drive our audience to this resource, including more than 17,000 views.

► Social Media

We leverage social media to publicize our work, targeting local, state and community leaders, as well as strategic partners whose work aligns with the ncIMPACT Initiative. Aside from our own content, we share content related to community innovations and collaborations. We also utilize social media ads to increase followers, particularly on Facebook. We package content for each social media channel, prioritizing high-quality and high-interest images.

- **Facebook:** Followers increased from 31 in the first quarter to 931 in the fourth quarter.
- **Twitter:** The ncIMPACT Initiative's use of Twitter as a social media vehicle remained strong. We ended the fiscal year with a total of nearly 562,000 impressions, 1,355 followers, and 4,744 engagements (likes, tweets, replies).
- **Instagram:** We saw similar growth with Instagram, from 86 followers in the first quarter to 700 in the fourth quarter.



3. Help create a high-impact culture of innovation in NC communities by supporting relevant practices.

► **ncIMPACT television series**

By leveraging the reach of television and digital media platforms, ncIMPACT introduces promising community collaborations to hundreds of thousands of civic innovators (or potential civic innovators) in North Carolina. We highlight partners working together to respond to challenges that are often mirrored in other NC communities. In each episode, we ask, “Could you do this in your community?” and offer online resources to support viewers who choose to do so.



- During season 2, UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina, with sponsorship by Civic Federal Credit Union, worked with the ncIMPACT Initiative to produce and distribute 12 new episodes and five town hall broadcasts.
- The series broadcasts on Thursdays in primetime at 8 P.M. on UNC-TV with repeat broadcasts on UNC-TV Saturday mornings and Monday evenings, as well as weekly broadcasts on the North Carolina Channel and Explorer Channel.
- The team created 26 short-form pieces for broadcast between programs (interstitials) on Public Media North Carolina’s broadcast services.
- The team also produced six digital content pieces per episode and a total of 80 digital assets for season 2.
- These pieces drive the series’ multi-platform content distribution strategy across broadcast, the web and social media.
- The content is complimented with a dynamic social media and marketing campaign promoting the series. This strategic approach generated more than **13 million impressions** for season 2 (up from 10 million in season 1).

EXPERIMENT

By engaging in on-the-ground projects that are bold, creative, and that tackle the most pressing issues facing communities, with new tools and strategies, *ncIMPACT will produce measurable improvements in each of NC’s 100 counties.*

SHARE

By using multiple platforms to communicate the learnings from projects and disseminate relevant tools, *ncIMPACT will facilitate the creation of a virtual civic solutions lab across NC.*

CREATE

By connecting the learnings from civic solutions delivered across the state, *ncIMPACT will support a culture of innovation where leaders experiment, take strategic risks, and collaborate effectively.*