Image: School of government nclmpact

Dedicated to Improving the Lives of North Carolinians



2022–23 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

OUR TEAM



Chelsea Brock *Program Manager*



Rick Brown Bank of America Leader on Loan



Anita R. Brown-Graham Professor and Director



Jess Dorrance Research Director



Abigail Holdsclaw Research Associate



Jasmine Johnson Deputy Director



Mary Parry Communications Manager



Barbara Steele Program Support



Michael Welker *Community Engagement Director*

Student Support Roles

Aidan Canner Data Archivist

Charlie Chapman Research Assistant

Wenxin Chen Communications Assistant Jillian Everhart Research Assistant

Lu Haung Research Assistant

Dania Khan Research Assistant Caitlin Lancaster Communications Assistant

Maddie Roberts Research Assistant

Our Vision

Serve as the go-to place in North Carolina for trusted tools that bridge policy and practice in response to complex challenges.





EXPERIMENT DEEPLY

By engaging in bold and creative on-the-ground projects 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 WIDELY

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 A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

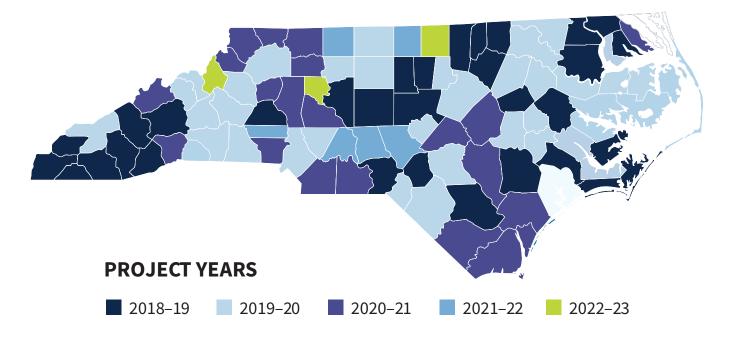
By connecting the learnings from civic solutions delivered across the state, ncIMPACT will support a culture of innovation where leaders experiment, take strategic risks, and collaborate effectively.



LEARNING FROM OUR COMMUNITIES 2018-23

STATEWIDE IMPACT

ncIMPACT is on track to touch tens of thousands of lives across North Carolina, some in every one of the state's 100 counties. Over the past five years, we have made tremendous progress toward this goal. Already, as our map shows, in 98 of the 100 counties, we have engaged with communities through our projects and/or featured innovative, collaborative work their communities are doing through our ncIMPACT TV show on PBS NC. Our fingerprint can be found in the expanded capacities, sustainability, and innovations of civic leaders using evidence-informed strategies and tools to better meet their community needs.





STRATEGY 1

Engage in deep experiments on pressing community challenges using sound data, high-quality research, and rigorous analysis.

[RESEARCH PROJECTS]

myFutureNC LOCAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COLLABORATIVES (LEACs)

CHALLENGE

Each community's talent development potential remains key to its economic competitiveness or disadvantage in today's economy, whether high-tech or service industries dominate their region. Before the pandemic, 58 percent of jobs in North Carolina required some form of postsecondary attainment. The pandemic accelerated this trend while decelerating attainment.

→ RESPONSE

ncIMPACT Initiative and myFutureNC have provided capacity-building support for 15 LEACs across North Carolina to increase their local post-secondary degrees, credentials, and certifications. LEACs are strengthening connections between their educational systems, local governments, employers, and community-based organizations. LEACs are also sharing best practices for transforming their educational pipelines to ensure local workforce development. These innovations align with the state's legislative goal of having 2 million residents with high-quality credentials or post-secondary degrees among adults aged 25-44 years by 2030. Sixty-six percent of NC's adults fall within the targeted age range.

PROCESS

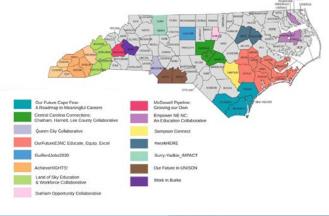
For the full 24 months of the project, the core team in each community identified and engaged the full community team (local collaborative). Each collaborative includes a diverse team of community stakeholders, all committed to active participation in the twoyear program. ncIMPACT assisted communities with stakeholder identification to build the collaborative team.

At the conclusion of the pilot program, ncIMPACT and myFutureNC offered a series of webinars to continue building technical skills and a final forum to celebrate their progress and train teams to sustain their work beyond the end of the official program. ncIMPACT convened the teams virtually twice in the past year to share best practices and troubleshoot sustainability challenges in the months since the final forum.

PROJECT LEAD:	Anita Brown-Graham
PARTNER:	myFutureNC
FUNDERS:	John M. Belk Endowment Dogwood Health Trust UNC Rural

IMPACT

This effort will help achieve the state's legislative goal of two million individuals between the ages of 25 and 44 who possess a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree by 2030. The teams have collectively committed to increasing the educational attainment of almost 100,000 North Carolinians by 2030.



Local Educational Attainment Collaboratives

CAROLINA ACROSS 100



CHALLENGE

As communities work to recover from the far-reaching effects of COVID-19, they seek to partner with the researchbased insights generated at UNC. However, knowing where to turn for support can be difficult with a campus as large and decentralized as Carolina.

RESPONSE

In 2020, Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz charged Carolina Across 100 to serve as a five-year initiative that partners with cohorts of communities across the state as they work on their most challenging issues, many of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROGRAM ONE: OUR STATE, OUR WORK

PROCESS

Thirteen cross-sector community teams engage in an 18-month collaborative learning model.

- Five forums at the UNC School of Government;
- Financial compensation for local program managers to coordinate with their local teams;
- Technical assistance throughout the process;
- Evidence-based resources that support working with Opportunity Youth; and,
- Support for long-term sustainability so collaborative efforts can grow and thrive long-term.

Third-party evaluation by Abacus Evaluation.

PROJECT LEADS:	Jess Dorrance, Abigail Holdsclaw, Anita Brown-Graham
FUNDERS:	Seed funding provided by the UNC-CH Office of the Chancellor, UNC Chapel Hill, and Blue Cross of North Carolina

OUR STATE, OUR WORK TEAM MAP



IMPACT

Build and strengthen cross-sector collaborative teams that can effectively respond to the needs of young people in their communities.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Connect Opportunity Youth to living-wage employment and educational opportunities.

PARTNERS: Abacus Evaluation, Atrium Health, Bank of America, Cabarrus County Department of Human Services, Carolina Center for Healthy Worker Design and Worker Wellbeing, Carolina Hunger Initiative, Carolina Performing Arts, Cortland Gilliam, Dasan Ahanu, Elizabeth Watkins Price, Gillings School of Global Public Health, Google, Greta Oliver, Kevin Austin, Kinston Teens, Made in Durham, Mark Simon, Mecklenburg County Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Task Force, MyFuture NC, NC AHEC, NC Biotechnology Center, NC Chamber of Commerce, NC Community College System, NC Community Health Worker Association, NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Department of Public Safety, NC Restaurant and Lodging Association, NC Works, Reentry to Resilience, SaySo, Southeastern Carpenters Regional Council, UNC Board of Visitors, UNC Department of Anthropology, UNC Department of Public Policy, UNC School of Government (Whitney Afonso, Paul Bonner, Sara DePasquale, Chancelor Fitzgerald, Emily Hinkle, Makayla Hipke, Ben Hitchings, Jim Joyce, Jessica Khan, Nate Kuhn, Adam Lovelady, April McKinley, Ricardo Morse, Tyler Mulligan, Frank Muraca, Kim Nelson, Brian Newport, Sara Odio, Glenn Osterberg, Claire Paulson, Mathew Rampello, Randy Richter, Erika Roney, Cat Schmidt, Jessica Smith, Jamal Stinson, Teshanee Williams, Jacob Womack, Dale Zuckert), UNC School of Social Work, Wake Technical Community College, WEBB Squared

CAROLINA ACROSS 100



PROGRAM TWO: OUR STATE, OUR WELLBEING

PROCESS

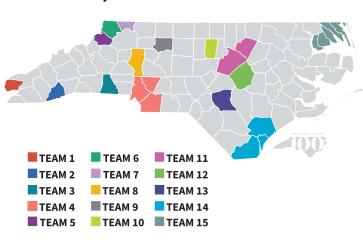
- 1. The ncIMPACT team engaged with UNC's new Suicide Prevention Institute in Spring 2023 to plan the second Carolina Across 100 program, focusing on improving mental and behavioral health support and reducing suicides. The new program will combine SPI's content expertise in suicide prevention with ncIMPACT and Carolina Across 100's experience supporting cross-sector community collaboratives.
- 2. Carolina Across 100 publicly announced Our State, Our Wellbeing in June 2023 and began recruiting community collaborative teams. Collaboratives were selected in August 2023, and programming began in Fall 2023.

PROJECT LEADS:	Michael Welker, Anita Brown-Graham
PARTNER:	UNC Suicide Prevention Institute
FUNDERS:	Seed funding provided by the UNC-CH Office of the Chancellor, UNC Chapel Hill, and Blue Cross of

North Carolina

IMPACT

- 1. Carolina Across 100 will aim to select 15 local teams covering up to 20 counties that have not previously participated in a Carolina Across 100 program.
- 2. Carolina Across 100 and SPI will support collaboratives seeking to identify and implement strategies to improve mental health and reduce the number of suicides in North Carolina. Participating collaboratives will receive:
 - a. Resources that strengthen programs and services, including evidence-informed strategies for suicide prevention.
 - b. Deep expert and peer support during four peerlearning forums where teams will develop goals, make implementation plans, and collaborate across sectors.
 - c. Robust technical assistance throughout the process from experts on suicide prevention, public health, and community collaborations.
 - d. A community toolkit to implement and sustain strategies for coordinating programs, services, and systems to address mental health crises and suicide.



OUR STATE, OUR WELLBEING TEAM MAP

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 1. Have a deep local impact by identifying populations at risk of suicide and mental or behavioral health crises, developing strategies to improve or increase the availability of programs and services, and creating necessary connections among health providers, government agencies, employers, schools, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, and other stakeholders;
- 2. Build capacity across the state by creating collaborative cross-community learning and partnerships and building model programs and systems to inform North Carolina's broader policy landscape; and
- 3. Leverage key resources, including federal, state, and philanthropic funding, as well as data tools and metrics to measure collaborative progress toward achieving their goals.

WHERE ARE THE WORKERS?

CHALLENGE

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the labor market. Early in the pandemic, unemployment skyrocketed. However, the labor market looks very different now, with many employers desperately needing workers. Sustained shortages may deepen existing challenges and have long-lasting impacts on industries and sectors most affected.

RESPONSE

Better understanding of the barriers to work and the opportunities for greater engagement is crucial for informing employers, policymakers, and workforce support providers and ensuring that our workforce and workplaces are ready for the future. In collaboration with NCGrowth at the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise, this project addresses two central questions: (1) What factors are keeping young workers from (re)entering the workforce? and (2) What strategies might work to increase employment?

PROCESS

More than 130 participants took part in 21 focus groups across the state's eight economic regions (prosperity zones). Conversations focused on why some individuals have not returned to the labor market, despite the unprecedented number of programs and resources available to support them, and the resulting impacts on local employers. Participants represented local employers, workforce support providers, and young adults.

PROJECT LEADS:Jessica Dorrance,
Anita Brown-Graham**FUNDER:**NC Collaboratory



IMPACT

Focus groups included diverse voices from across the state sharing their stories, experiences, and insights. Findings are being synthesized into a final report with recommendations aimed at employers, practitioners, and policymakers. Findings are also being shared directly with the local communities who hosted focus group sessions and shared more widely through a series of four webinars that will be conducted through the end of 2023. More than 100 people attended the first webinar, which was held in April.



HISTORIC RESILIENCE PROJECT

CHALLENGE

The NC State Historic Preservation Office (NC SHPO) in the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources received federal funding due to extensive damage to the state from multiple hurricanes. These hurricanes reflect the increased frequency of natural disasters impacting the state and threatening historic sites and assets.

US Department of Interior and National Park Service awarded NC SHPO \$17M in grant funds in January 2020. These funds were designated for states affected by Hurricanes Michael or Florence and Typhoon Yutu and to help historic properties repair and stabilize from sustained damage. Hurricanes Florence and Michael affected historic properties in 61 of North Carolina's 100 counties.

RESPONSE

The Historic Resilience Project was developed to help communities craft a way to protect their vulnerable and historic structures.

The Historic Resilience Project team is working to:

- Develop design standards that integrate resilience for local governments and provide training for local staff on these new design standards. These standards provide guidance for updating and maintaining NC's historic built environment and sites from the threats of climate change, rising sea levels, and severe weather events.
- Develop a Resilience Primer to offer additional information and guidance for North Carolina property owners and local commissions, provide an overview of the intensifying impact of climate change and severe weather events across North Carolina, and detail in-depth information on the technical aspects of resilience adaptations and information on other regulations and agencies engaged in floodplain management.
- Develop a Resilience Scorecard to help stakeholders understand what historic resilience is and how to assess properties.
- Train communities to better link local disaster planning (hazard mitigation) with historic resource resiliency planning.
- Provide disaster preparedness and response training for state agency personnel, local governments, and nonprofit historic sites.
- Develop online training modules.
- Develop a website to provide an overview of the project, information for stakeholders, and a direct link to online materials and training dates.

PROCESS

The ncIMPACT Initiative recruited a team of experts to provide the deliverables requested to address this statewide challenge.

PROJECT LEADS: Abigail Holdsclaw,

Charlie Chapman

- **PARTNERS:** Jo Leimenstoll, Architect; North Carolina Department of Cultural and Natural Resources; NC State Coastal Dynamics Design Lab (Andrew Fox, Madalyn Baldwin); NC State College of Design, Landscape Architecture (Gavin Fox, Christopher Vann); UNC Institute for the Environment and Department of City and Regional Planning (Phil Berke); UNC School of Government (Chancelor Fitzgerald, Emily Hinkle, Makayla Hipke, Adam Lovelady, Ben Hitchings, Erika Roney, Cat Schmidt)
- **FUNDERS:** National Park Service and NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office

IMPACT

The project team developed the Historic Preservation Resilience Advisory Group to engage local government officials, subject matter experts, and other stakeholders to provide input that will ensure the effectiveness of products developed by the Historic Preservation Resilience Project. Multiple regional trainings and an online session will be offered in Fall 2023.

NC DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES







NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT (NCARCOG) PARTNERSHIP

CHALLENGE

NCARCOG and the UNC School of Government are committed to meeting the needs of local governments in North Carolina. Local governments are better served when the two groups work seamlessly to build on complementary strengths.

RESPONSE

The ncIMPACT Initiative serves as a liaison between the UNC School of Government and the NCARCOG and provides:

- 1. Hybrid training programs that utilize School faculty for regional leaders who may gather at respective COG offices.
- 2. A primary point of contact for COG staff seeking connections to School faculty for subject-matter consultations.

PROCESS

The ncIMPACT Initiative meets quarterly with the NCARCOG liaisons to identify training and research topics of interest and then recruits School faculty and staff to provide training content.

PROJECT LEADS:	Anita Brown-Graham, Chelsea Brock
PARTNER:	UNC School of Government (Jim Joyce, Adam Lovelady, Tyler Mulligan, Sara Odio)
FUNDER:	UNC School of Government

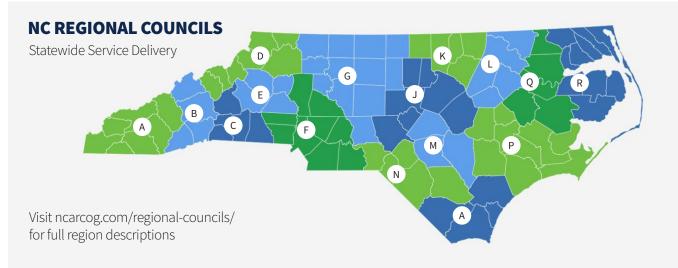
IMPACT

The hybrid training this fiscal year served local governments in all 16 COG regions of the state and enrolled more than 70 public officials.

• Will They Stay or Will They Go? Local Government Recruitment & Retention Patterns and Strategies in NC – *March 22, 2023*







TARHEEL BUS TOUR (THBT)

CHALLENGE



Since 1997, the Tar Heel Bus Tour has connected UNC faculty and administrators to North Carolinians and deepened their knowledge of and connection to the state and their colleagues. This yearly event leads to friendships, partnerships, and cross-state connections that continue even after the tour's conclusion.

RESPONSE

As part of the "Carolina Across 100" project, a call for grant applications went out. The purpose of this grants program is to support the goals of the THBT and encourage participants in the 2019 and 2022 THBTs to build on and maintain their connections across the state by developing projects in partnership with communities to address the needs they have identified.

PROCESS

We were glad to partner with UNC Rural to offer \$100,000 in grant funding to these community projects that will have an amazing impact across the state.

Community-campus teams will provide six- and twelve-month updates to report on the impacts and outcomes of the projects.

PROJECT LEADS:Abigail Holdsclaw,
Anita Brown-Graham**PARTNERS:**Carolina Center for Public Service,
UNC Rural**FUNDERS:**UNC-CH Office of the Chancellor,
UNC Rural

IMPACT

The six grants awarded have the following foci:

- 1. Supporting pregnant mothers in recovery from substance abuse.
- 2. Increasing access to fentanyl test strips.
- 3. Identifying cost-effective, low-carbon, energyefficient, and equitable housing improvements immediately available to North Carolina housing authorities and planners in the Piedmont region.
- 4. Teaching strategies and resources for integrating global content into the K-12 curriculum.
- 5. Developing a play-based curriculum that employs STEM play to teach children with disabilities socialemotional learning and leadership skills.
- 6. Developing, gathering, and analyzing community input to inform strategies for the Granville Vance District Health Department Community Health Assessment.





STRATEGY 2

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.

[MAPPING METRICS]

EXPOSE LEADERS TO NEW FACTS AND EMERGING RESEARCH

PRESENT TO VARIOUS AUDIENCES

We gave more than 80 presentations to nearly 5,000 participants. Audiences included public sector policymakers, state and local government officials, foundation staff and boards, economic and workforce developers, business leaders, community residents, and nonprofit organizations.

BLOG POSTS

We published 36 blogs on topics including teacher recruitment and retention, rural healthcare, offshore wind energy, food access, social capital, workforce shortage, economic mobility and development, resilient agriculture, veterans' skills, effective youth outreach, social media advice for community organizations, and affordable housing.

WEBSITE UTILIZATION

Traffic increased on our websites as we continue to drive our audience to robust resources, including nearly 80,000 views and nearly 40,000 users from all 50 states.

HELP DECISION-MAKERS USE DATA

The ncIMPACT Initiative sponsored seven data-focused webinars.

myFutureNC Local Educational Attainment Collaboratives



- •Tips and Tools for Sustaining Your Collaborative Work September 28, 2022
- Grant Writing Workshop: Preparing LEACs for the Road Ahead November 15, 2023
- Supports for the Future of LEACs June 13, 2023



Carolina Across 100: Our State, Our Work

- Social Media for Social Good February 14, 2023
- Collaborative Data Collection: Using a Shared Measurement System (SMS) *May 11, 2023 Hosted in partnership with Abacus Evaluation*



NC Association of Regional Councils of Governments Partnership

• Will They Stay or Will They Go? Local Government Recruitment & Retention Patterns and Strategies in NC – *March 22, 2023*

Where are the Workers?



• This (American) Work Life – April 25, 2023 Hosted in partnership with NCGrowth

SOCIAL MEDIA

We leverage social media to publicize our work, targeting local, state, and community leaders and strategic partners whose work aligns with the ncIMPACT Initiative.

Along with our content, we share partner content related to community innovations and collaborations. We also utilize social media advertisements to increase followers. We package content for each social media channel, prioritizing high-quality and high-interest images and videos.

f Facebook

in LinkedIn

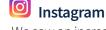
Facebook continues to be an active platform for reaching and engaging with community members across the state. Our followers increased from 1,886 in the first quarter to 2,092 in the fourth quarter. ncIMPACT saw continued success in outreach on LinkedIn, doubling our reach to 2,026 followers by the fourth quarter. We launched a weekly LinkedIn newsletter that grew to 2,000 subscribers during the fourth quarter. X (formerly Twitter) The ncIMPACT Initiative

engaged with 3,043

followers on X in FY

2022-23, reaching

13,948 impressions.

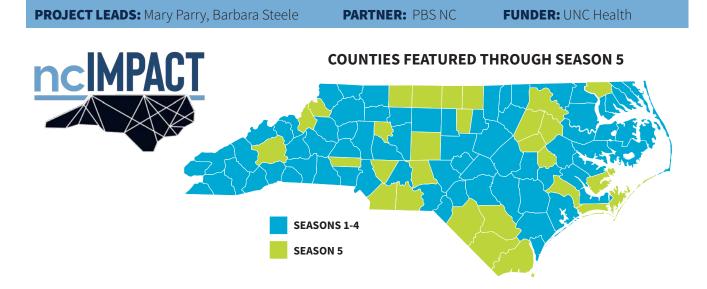


We saw an increase in Instagram followers, reaching 852 by the fourth quarter.

ncIMPACT PROGRAM ON PBS NC

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 often adopted 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.

- 1. In partnership with PBS North Carolina and UNC Health, the fifth season of ncIMPACT yielded 13 new episodes and planning for four town halls with live audiences.
- 2. Over this fiscal year, viewership more than doubled to over 367,000 broadcast and streaming impressions in the fourth quarter.
- 3. Since the Season 5 premiere in February through June 2023, the series has achieved nearly 4 million impressions across PBS NC's broadcast, digital, and marketing channels.



STRATEGY 3

Create a high-impact culture of innovation in NC communities by supporting relevant practices.

[PARTNERSHIP]

SOLUTIONS FOR NORTH CAROLINA

CHALLENGE

The Local Government Federal Credit Union awarded the UNC School of Government funding to increase North Carolina communities' capacity to develop and implement innovative responses to disruptive change.

→ RESPONSE

The ncIMPACT Initiative has led the creation of the Solutions for NC program at the UNC School of Government. Solutions for NC will identify significant trends facing North Carolina, spur collaborative research projects between UNC School of Government faculty, and equip more communities to prepare for the future and respond to potential disruption.

PROCESS

Early in 2023, ncIMPACT convened an internal advisory group composed of UNC School of Government faculty to shape the initial priorities of the Solutions for NC program.

ncIMPACT then engaged with a team of research consultants to prepare a report on disruptive trends in North Carolina. Throughout the spring and summer of 2023, these consultants interviewed content experts and leaders across the state to understand how varied social, environmental, economic, and demographic trends are impacting North Carolina.

In Fall 2023, ncIMPACT will convene an Innovation Committee composed of internal and external stakeholders. The Committee will review preliminary findings from the research team, provide additional input, and guide future directions for the Solutions for NC project.

IMPACT

When finalized in Fall 2023, the disruptive trends report will serve as a resource for UNC School of Government faculty and community leaders in North Carolina to analyze the disruptive potential of trends facing the state and develop strategies to respond.

In future years, Solutions for NC will support School of Government research partnerships and local pilot projects to help North Carolina communities respond to disruptive change.

> LGEFCU® LOCAL GOVERNMENT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



PROJECT LEADS:Michael Welker,
Anita Brown-GrahamPARTNERS:David Rouse, Architect; UNC
School of Government (Ben
Hitchings, Frank Muraca, Kim
Nelson, Jessica Smith,
Teshanee Williams)FUNDER:Local Government Federal
Credit Union



EXPERTS WHO PARTNERED WITH THE ncIMPACT INITIATIVE ON ITS PROJECTS

The ncIMPACT Initiative engaged 326 external experts in its projects and convenings this year. Additionally, the following UNC School of Government faculty and staff participated in funded projects coordinated by the ncIMPACT Initiative:

"BEING PREPARED: WHAT ARE NC'S MANDATORY REPORTING LAWS?" WEBINAR

Sara Depasquale

"SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SOCIAL GOOD" TRAINING WEBINAR

Jessica Khan

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND IT

Paul Bonner, Nate Kuhn, Glenn Osterberg, Mathew Rampello, Randy Richter, Jamal Stinson, Jacob Womack

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

Brian Newport, Dale Zuckert

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

April McKinley, Claire Paulson

EXPANDING EITC IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Whitney Afonso

HISTORIC RESILIENCE PROJECT

Chancelor Fitzgerald, Emily Hinkle, Makayla Hipke, Ben Hitchings, Adam Lovelady, Erika Roney, Cat Schmidt

MYFUTURENC LOCAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COLLABORATIVES

Ricardo Morse

NC ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS PARTNERSHIP

Jim Joyce, Adam Lovelady, Tyler Mulligan, Sara Odio

SOLUTIONS FOR NC

Ben Hitchings, Frank Muraca, Kim Nelson, Jessica Smith, Teshanee Williams

PARTNERSHIPS

ncIMPACT Initiative partners enhance our work in meaningful ways, bringing targeted and diverse expertise to our program offerings and broadening our reach across North Carolina. We're proud to have ongoing relationships with most of our partners, engaging with them in unique ways as new programs launch and more content is produced.



SUPPORT FOR OUR WORK

As an entrepreneurial initiative of the UNC School of Government, ncIMPACT Initiative programs and content are made possible because of the generous support we receive from leaders in the nonprofit, business, financial, and government sectors.





EUNC SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT **ncIMPACT**

ncimpact.org | ncimpact@unc.edu @ncIMPACTsog f