

2025 Impact Report



Invest • Inspire • Innovate

Innovation Through Collaboration



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Our Mission

The **North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE)** works to make the critical connection between North Carolina employers and education systems through work-based learning.

What We Do

Provide work-based learning opportunities for students across the state.

Through our numerous initiatives, we help students gain knowledge and valuable hands-on work experience.

Support NC teachers with high-quality and innovative professional development.

We equip teachers with opportunities to carry out the latest in instructional strategies, research-based techniques, and best practices, resulting in more effective and engaging classrooms.

Help NC businesses engage with students and educators.

Connecting the business community with classrooms of local talent is at the core of NCBCE's work. When businesses and school systems collaborate and take advantage of the opportunities within their own community, its effects lead to a stronger workforce and economy.

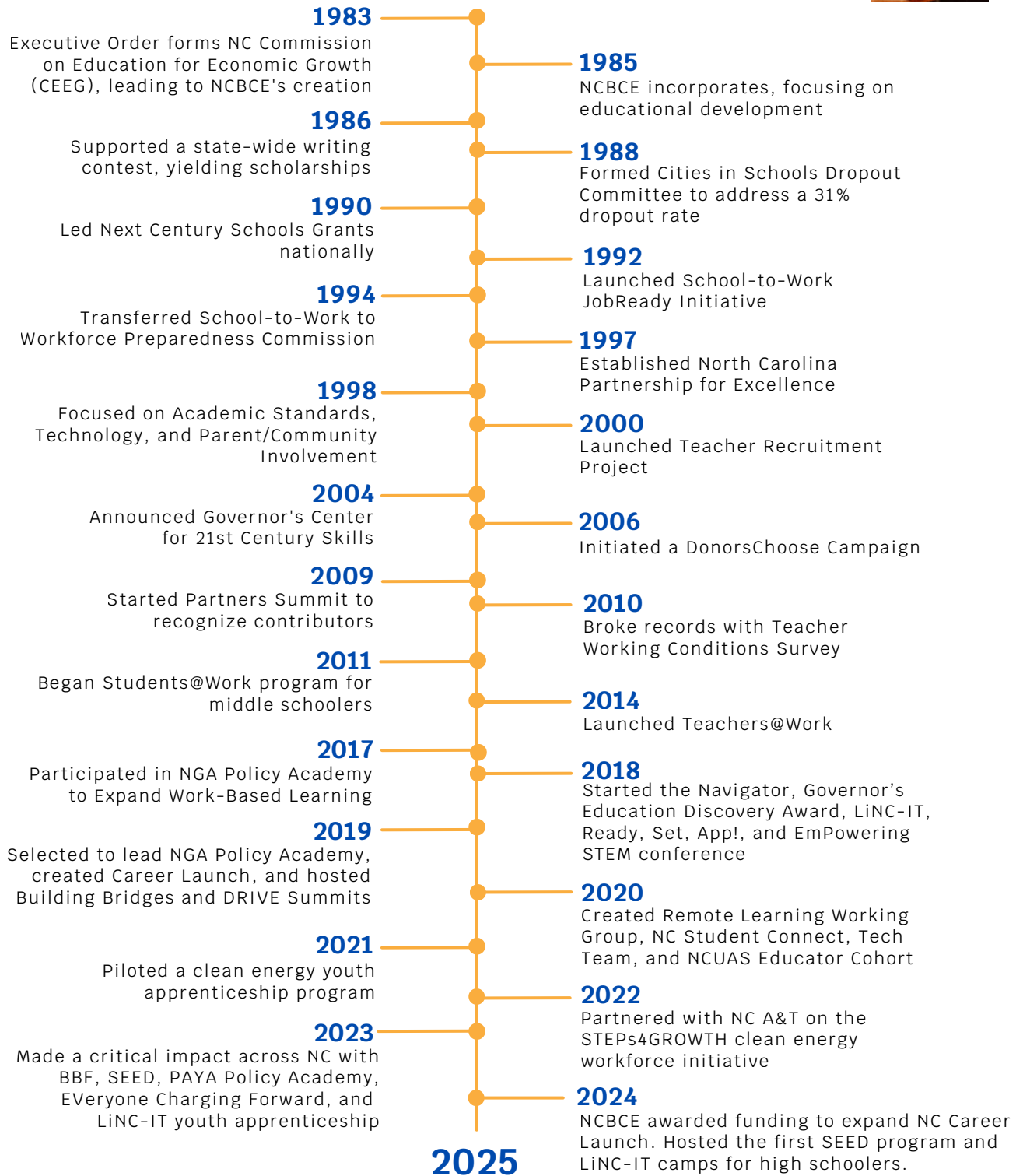
Support NC businesses to build their talent pipeline.

By engaging with local students, organizations can connect with youth who have an interest in their industry, creating a sustainable talent pipeline through programs like registered apprenticeships and internships.

NCBCE's 42-Year History

"Education is the foundation for all we do in life; it shapes who we are and what we aspire to be. Creativity fuels innovation, and it's what all states should strive to instill in the next generations."

- Former Governor Jim Hunt



NCBCE was awarded grants from the Partnership for the Advance of Youth Apprenticeship, BlueCross BlueShield of NC Foundation, Preschool Development Grant B-5, and the National Governors Association to expand apprenticeships and work-based learning experiences across North Carolina. NCBCE also hosted the first cohort of AI Fellows.

NCBCE Leadership

Throughout the Years



Executive Directors

Board Chairs

Governor Jim Hunt 1977-1985	NCBCE Established 1983-1986	
Governor Jim Martin 1985-1993	George Kahdy 1986-1993	Graeme M. Keith <i>BarclaysAmerican</i> , 1986-1987
Governor Jim Hunt 1993-2001	Thomas J. Williams, Jr. 1993-2001	Howard Haworth <i>Haworth Group</i> , 1987-1988
Governor Mike Easley 2001-2009	Joel Harper 2001-2005	Thomas D'Alonzo <i>Glaxo</i> 1988-1993
Governor Bev Perdue 2009-2013	Tricia Willoughby 2005-2013	J. Billie Ray, Jr. <i>BellSouth NC</i> 1993-2001
Governor Pat McCrory 2013-2017	Susan Breckenridge 2013-2017	Krista Tillman <i>NC Public Schools</i> 2001-2005
Governor Roy Cooper 2017- 2025	Caroline Sullivan 2017-Present	Bill McAulay <i>Dominion Energy</i> , 2005-2007
Governor Josh Stein 2025 - Present		Mary Linda Andrews <i>GlaxoSmithKline</i> , 2007-2009
		Albert Eckel <i>Corning, Inc.</i> 2009-2012
		Dale Whitworth <i>Golden Corral</i> , 2011-2012
		André Peek <i>IBM</i> , 2012-2015
		Bo Somers <i>Duke Energy</i> , 2015-2017
		Albert Eckel <i>Eckel & Vaughn</i> , 2017-2019
		Ann Ashley <i>Biltmore</i> , 2019-2020
		Lilyn Hester <i>Google</i> , 2020-2023
		Leslie Walden <i>Fidelity Investments</i> , 2022-2024
		Julia Wright <i>Enbridge Gas</i> , 2024 - Present

NCBCE Today: Supporting Work-Based Learning



NC Apprenticeships in Early Childhood

Bringing together government, education, and industry partners, NCBCE's **Building Bright Futures** is helping to rebuild and grow NC's vital child care workforce through financial support, guidance, and resources for registered early childhood education apprenticeships.

@NCBCEBBF



"The support of Building Bright Futures has allowed us to give our budding educators the attention, access, and motivations they need to go to school and dive deeper into the profession with confidence. We believe programs that focus on removing barriers for apprentices and empowering our teacher-leaders to become mentors is growing our school culture and individual teachers in the best ways!"

- Corrie Price, Evolve Early Learning Center, Asheville

- Pathway Development
- Wages
- Mentor Support
- Enrichment Activities
- Materials & Supplies
- Wraparound Services

384

CURRENT
APPRENTICES IN NC

84

APPRENTICE
COMPLETERS

70

COUNTIES
SERVED



LiNC-IT (Linking North Carolina with Innovative Talent) addresses the high unemployment rate (86%) of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and employers' need for educated, loyal, and detail-oriented workers.

"Our intern brought new skills and approaches that allowed them to contribute meaningfully to numerous policy initiatives, and as a manager, I received excellent training through the UNC TEACCH Autism Program that better prepared me to support our intern."

- Dr. Andrea DeSantis



Organizations
to Date



Experiences
to Date

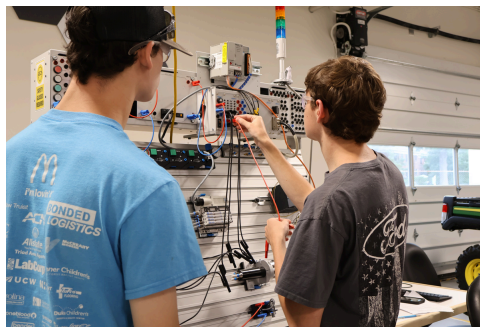


Clients in the
Talent Pipeline to Date

NCBCE Today: Supporting Work-Based Learning



NC Career Launch programs are designed to increase statewide postsecondary credential attainment and connect students to high-demand jobs through youth pre-apprenticeships. NC Career Launch puts students on the path to a career with growth and a living wage. Programs have paid, supervised work blended with aligned classroom instruction, resulting in an industry-recognized credential or college credit.



65 EMPLOYER PARTNERS



277 STUDENTS ENROLLED



208 COMPLETED INTERNSHIPS & APPRENTICESHIPS



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: NCCL partnered with Johnston Community College to offer a BioWork Pre-Apprenticeship program in advanced manufacturing for rising seniors and recent graduates on the autism spectrum. The 140-hour BioWork Certification teaches foundational skills for careers in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and chemical manufacturing. The curriculum was adapted to be more accessible and include employability skills, and the program concluded with a Reverse Job Fair where students showcased their skills and connected with potential employers.



NCBCE Today: Supporting Work-Based Learning



NC Tech Works is a statewide work-based learning initiative that advances digital citizenship while preparing high school students for careers in information technology and related fields. With two innovative programs, Tech Team and Digital Ambassadors, NC Tech Works gives students meaningful paid work experience while addressing critical technology and workforce needs across North Carolina.

Tech Team is a work-based learning program that trains high school students to provide IT support and device repair within their school and school district. Students gain hands-on technical experience, industry certifications, and career exposure while helping keep technology accessible for their peers and teachers.



“You don’t have to be super tech savvy to go into a tech internship – a lot of what we’ve learned, we learned along the way.”

-Washington High School Graduate

*Adopt a
Tech Team
today!*



33

Districts to date



900+

Students to date



Digital Ambassadors empowers high school students to lead digital literacy workshops for underserved and rural communities, focusing on older adults. Ambassadors teach essential skills like internet navigation, email use, and online safety while promoting digital citizenship and confidence. They also gain hands-on IT experience to support future careers.



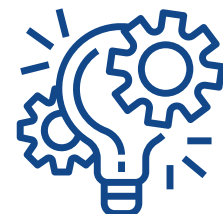
8 Teams



8 Counties



60 Student Participants



NCBCE Today: Supporting Work-Based Learning



ready, set, app!

an NCBCE initiative sponsored by Lenovo

The **Ready, Set, App!** competition is a statewide initiative that challenges NC high school students to create a mobile app to address a problem in their school or community.

426

Students
Participated
in 2025

30

Districts
Represented
in 2025



“It was really eye-opening to connect with other competitors, interns, and Lenovo professionals — everyone’s ideas were so inspiring.”

*Laylah Pegues
2025 Winner*

Ready, Set, App! seeks to expand and diversify the STEM industry by providing opportunities and resources to students across the state, focusing on three primary pillars:

- Mobile app development
- Professional and personal development
- Interpersonal and soft skills development



SOUTHEASTERN EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Southeastern Education and Economic Development (SEED)

is focused on growing the advanced manufacturing and agriculture workforce through work-based learning and apprenticeships. SEED began its focus with pathways in Industrial Systems and Mechatronics, two industries in high demand in southeastern North Carolina, and is expanding to include more career pathways each year.

“I joined SEED for the opportunities — not just to learn, but to tour facilities, meet employers, and see what real careers look like.”

-Wyatt Thompson, SEED Student



73 Students
Participated
in 2025



5 Community
Colleges



NCBCE Today: Supporting Work-Based Learning



Everyone Charging Forward



Everyone Charging Forward works with employers to train students and adults to fill well-paying jobs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean vehicles, and grid & resiliency.

"Through hands-on learning, students gain the knowledge they need and further their education in the field."

- Michael Kincy,
EVSE Student



2025 STATS

 **5 Electric Vehicle (EV) Sectoral Partnership Meetings (Charlotte, Raleigh, Winston-Salem)**

 **50-70 Attendees per Meeting**

 **150+ Employer and Industry Partners**



Students@WorkSM, a career awareness program held by Gubernatorial Proclamation, introduces NC middle school students to businesses and careers. Students are hosted by employers (on-site or virtually) and learn about career pathways in real-world business environments.



11,414
Participating
Students in
2025



72
Participating
Businesses
in 2025

“**Students@Work** experiences have been so beneficial for my middle school students as they are exposed to so many career pathway options. The guest speakers and off-site learning experiences provided by Students@Work programming can give students firsthand learning that can only be described as awesome!

- **Barnanne Creech, Wake County Schools**”

NCBCE Today: Supporting NC Educators

NCBCE AI Fellows, developed in partnership with Google.org, is designed to create a network of exceptional educators to serve as AI leaders and mentors for school communities across the state. This model will expand learning opportunities, spark enhanced interest and engagement with ethical AI practices, and prepare students with critical thinking and AI literacy skills essential for today's careers. Fellows receive regular professional development, a technology mini-grant, and a community of support through mentorship and leadership training.



“Being part of NCBCE AI Fellows has been one of the most transformative experiences of my teaching career. It has opened my eyes to how AI can amplify students’ abilities, promote deeper learning, and spark creativity in ways we never imagined. This fellowship has empowered me to guide others in using AI responsibly to enhance engagement and academic growth. It’s an opportunity that every educator should experience as we prepare our students for a future shaped by innovation.”

*- Lynn Cooper,
Granville County Schools*



23
FELLOWS

21
**NC SCHOOL
DISTRICTS
REPRESENTED**

Professional development is critical to supporting educators. **The Governor’s Educator Discovery Award** recognizes exemplary and innovative teachers and provides them with a monetary stipend of \$1,000 to cover the costs associated with their selected professional development opportunities.



51
**RECIPIENTS
TO DATE**

“GEDA is such a vital resource to North Carolina educators. The art of teaching is one that must adapt to the changes in our world, our society, our communities, and our students. Many teachers are in content areas that are making continual advancements, so it is essential for teachers to grow with those changes to continue to support students.”

— Julie-Kate Hazelrigg, GEDA Winner

NCBCE Today: Supporting NC Educators

“Teachers@Work is an outstanding professional learning experience. Getting a firsthand look inside local businesses helped me understand the scope of opportunities available to students through Career & Technical Education. As a middle grades instructor, this experience strengthens how I guide students toward their future.”

- Isaac Davenport, Wayne County Schools



Teachers@Work, a collaboration between NCBCE and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, offers educators statewide immersive, hands-on experiences in local businesses, non-profits, and state entities.



19

2025 Teacher Externs

4

2025 Hosting Employers



Real-world learning for real-life success

The **Navigator** is an online tool designed to connect classroom learning to career pathways and is provided at no cost to employers and educators.

“Companies want to give back to their communities, but it’s not always easy to know where to start. Navigator bridges that gap.” - Leslie Walden, Fidelity Investments

Whether it is through activities that enable students and job seekers to learn *about work* (e.g., guest speakers), learn *through work* (e.g., career competitions), or learn *for work* (e.g., apprenticeships), this platform makes accessing work-based learning easy, consistent, and scalable.



366

Career Spotlights
posted to date

1,546

Resources
posted to date

385

Businesses
participating to date

Board Members 2025

- **Elena Ashburn** – Office of the Governor
- **Andrew Benton** – Smith Anderson Law
- **Creighton Blackwell** – Coastal Credit Union
- **Hillary Crittendon** – Atrium Health
- **Andrea DeSantis** – NC Department of Commerce
- **Albert Eckel** – Eckel & Vaughan
- **Indira Everett** – Duke Energy
- **Jamey Falkenbury** – Apple
- **Lilyn Hester** – Google
- **Mike Hogan** – Siemens
- **Suzie Koonce** – Wells Fargo
- **Adri Maisonet** – BlueCross BlueShield of NC
- **Chris Maslin** – Biltmore
- **Steve McGlothlin** – Gerber Collision & Glass
- **Milanka Muecke** – Lenovo
- **Rebecca Quinn-Wolf** – PNC Bank
- **Nicole Ramsdell** – Belk
- **Caroline Sullivan** – Office of the Governor
- **Will Sutton** – Truist (Leadership Institute)
- **Cornel van der Watt** – Caterpillar
- **Ann Victor** – Fujifilm
- **Leslie Walden** – Fidelity Investments
- **Mike Walker** – AT&T
- **Clarence Williams** – Dell
- **Julia Wright** – Enbridge Gas
- **Teross Young** – Food Lion/Del Haize America
- **Emily Ziegler** – UNC Health Care

NCBCE Executive Committee



Julia Wright
Enbridge Gas
Chair

Creighton Blackwell
Coastal Credit Union
Vice Chair

Cornel van der Watt
Caterpillar
Treasurer



Albert Eckel
Eckel & Vaughan

Lilyn Hester
Google

Caroline Sullivan
Office of the Governor

Leslie Walden
Fidelity Investments
Immediate Past Chair

Emily Ziegler
UNC Health Care

NCBCE Members 2025

Become
an NCBCE
Member



Albemarle Corporation	Fujifilm	Piedmont Natural Gas
Amazing Studios	Gerber Collision & Glass	PNC Bank
Apple	Google	Public Consulting Group (PCG)
AT&T	Grifols	Red Hat
Atrium Health	GSK	RTI International
Belk	IBM	Siemens
Biltmore	LeadingAge	Smith Anderson Law
Biogen	Lenovo	Smithfield Foods
Blockade Runner Resort	MCNC	Soelect Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield NC	Mertek Solutions	State Employees' Credit Union
Business North Carolina	Microsoft	State Farm
Carolina Biological Supply	Mission Health	STEP (Strategic Twin Counties Education Partnership)
CastleBranch	Morris and Associates	Strategic Educational Alliances
Caterpillar	NAF	Surry-Yadkin Works
Celonis	Naval Fleet Readiness Center East	Truist (Leadership Institute)
Century Link	NC Department Of Commerce	Truliant Credit Union
Coastal Credit Union	NC Electric Cooperative	UNC Health Care
Coca-Cola	NC Petroleum Council	United Health Care Group
Cyber Alliance	Novonosis	Verizon
Cypress Creek Renewables	Office of the Governor	ECU Health
Dell	Participate	Wake Med
Dominion Energy	PBS NC	Wayne Community College
Duke Energy	PepsiCo	Wells Fargo
Eckel & Vaughan	Pfizer	Wilson Education Partnership
Fidelity Investments		
Food Lion/Del Haize America		

NCBCE Staff

Caroline Sullivan - Executive Director

Morgan Crawford - Deputy Director

- **Anish D'Souza** - Executive Assistant
- **Morgan Ford** - Program Director, Building Bright Futures
- **Lindley Hille** - Data Manager, NC Career Launch
- **Christina Hutchinson** - Data Manager, NC Career Launch
- **Bryer Jewell** - Web Support
- **Megan Johnson** - Educator Programs Manager
- **Emily McNeill** - Communications & Marketing Manager
- **Sofia Meyer** - Communications & Marketing Intern
- **Kathy Miles** - Program Manager, LiNC-IT Youth Apprenticeship
- **Alexis Moore** - NC State University Kenan Fellow
- **Kristie Sauls** - Program Director, NC Career Launch
- **Sam Saunders** - Program Manager, NC Tech Works
- **Sullivan Schenck** - Nursing Apprenticeship Healthcare Liaison
- **Joanne Sullivan** - Program Manager, STEPs4GROWTH
- **Ciera Tucker** - Deputy Program Director, NC Career Launch
- **Udai Virk** - Program Manager, Ready, Set, App!

Thank you to our event sponsors!



**North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE)
2025 Impact Report**

Prepared for the NCBCE Annual Meeting
November 6, 2025
Lenovo Center

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