



PREPARING NORTH CAROLINA'S WORKFORCE FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

2019 - 2021 strategic plan

“A better trained workforce can help businesses grow and give workers new opportunities. Getting North Carolina job ready means helping people get the skills they need for better-paying jobs and then connecting businesses to those workers. An educated, well-trained workforce will strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure we can adapt to a changing economy.”

- Governor Roy Cooper



CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	1
Executive Summary.....	3
Vision, Mission & Charge.....	4
Goals	5





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The creation of the 2019-2021 NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan included an extraordinary engagement effort from North Carolina's workforce development stakeholders, leaders, and professionals. We extend a special thanks to our elected officials, appointed commission members, workforce development partners, and staff for their dedication and support for transforming North Carolina's workforce development system.

Governor Roy Cooper

Chair, Tom Rabon
Chairman, New Kind

Brock Ashburn
*Vice President of Operations, Highland
Brewing Company*

Christopher Gergen
CEO, Forward Impact

Dr. Hope Williams
*President, N.C. Independent Colleges and
Universities*

Dr. Mandy Cohen
*Secretary, N.C. Department of Health and
Human Services*

Dr. Marti Mathews Martin
*Senior Manager, Quality & Enterprise
Learning, PPD*

Peter Hans
*President, N.C. Community College System
Office*

Himanshu Karvir
CEO, Virtelle Hospitality

Jeff Frederick
*President, N.C. Association of Workforce
Development Boards*

Jim Van Camp
Attorney, Van Camp & Van O'Linda, PLLC

Paul Lawler
*CFO, International Economic Development
Council*

Josh Arant
Founder/COO, Mako Medical Laboratories

Kim Toler
Manager/Training, PotashCorp

Machelle Sanders
*Secretary, N.C. Department of
Administration*

Mark Johnson
*State Superintendent, N.C. Department of
Public Instruction*

MaryBe McMillan
Secretary-Treasurer, N.C. State AFL-CIO

Tony Copeland
Secretary, N.C. Department of Commerce

Melanie Chernoff
*Sr. Government & Community Affairs
Manager, Red Hat, Inc.*

Michael Okun
General Counsel, N.C. AFL-CIO

David Miller
Vice President, Spirit Aero Systems

Olalah Njenga
Chief Executive Officer, Yellow Wood Group

Osceloa "Oats" Elliss
*Military Relocator/Real Estate & Property
Management, Broker/Owner*

Pam Townsend
Sr. Vice President, WSP USA

Ronnie Smith
*Commissioner, Martin County Board of
Commissioners*

Suzanne Johnson
*Director, HR, Grifols, North American
Facilities*

Shawn Brown
*Mayor, City of Claremont; Vice President of
Safety and Recruiting, Cargo Transporters*

Sherry Carpenter
*Vice President/ Workforce Development,
Goodwill Industries of Northwest N.C., Inc.*

Stan Sherrill
*VP, Employee and Labor Relations,
Duke Energy*

Steven Hunt
*Vice President/ Workforce Development
& Continuing Education, Robeson
Community College*

Anita Bachmann
CEO, United Healthcare Community Plan

Walter Siegenthaler
*Executive Vice President, Max Daetwyler
Corporation*

Dr. William Roper
President, UNC System

Special Acknowledgements

Jessica Englert
*Workforce Policy Advisor, Office of Governor
Roy Cooper*

Sherry Carpenter
*Chair, Skills and Education Attainment
Committee*

Partners

N.C. Community College System Office

N.C. Department of Commerce

N.C. Department of Administration

North Carolina Local Education Agencies

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

58 North Carolina Community Colleges

N.C. Department of Public Instruction

The University of North Carolina System

N.C. Independent Colleges and Universities

23 Workforce Development Boards of N.C.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NCWorks Commission oversees the state's workforce development system, develops policy, and advises the Governor, General Assembly, state and local agencies, and businesses on how to strengthen the state's workforce.

The commission is required by state law to create, each biennium, a comprehensive strategic plan for North Carolina's workforce system that includes goals and objectives; an assessment of programs, policies, and delivery of services; and recommendations.

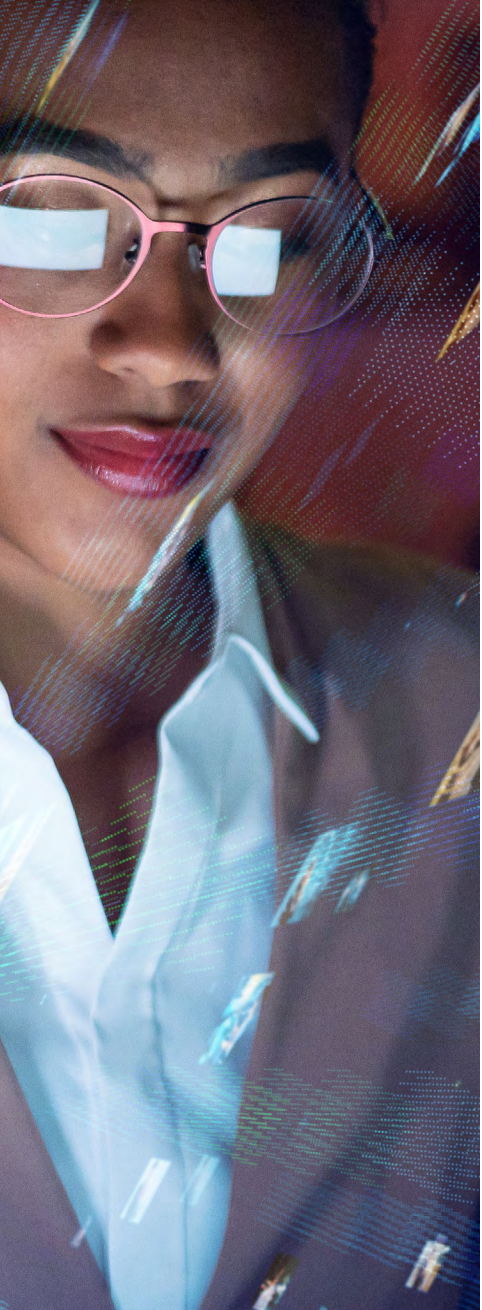
The commission began work in the fall of 2018 to develop a new plan for the 2019-2021 biennium. This plan provides the framework for all workforce agencies to create a more aligned and coordinated system. This improved workforce system will strengthen services to individuals and businesses and produce better outcomes.

After extensive stakeholder work and programmatic reviews, the following systemwide goals and objectives were created for the workforce development system:

- Prepare workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment.
- Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy by fostering employer leadership.
- Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation.
- Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.

The 2019-2021 NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan focuses on key priorities from Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative. NC Job Ready targets three core principles: skills and education attainment, employer leadership and local innovation throughout North Carolina. Collectively, ensuring North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow is our goal.

This plan provides a framework for state and local leaders to use to strengthen the state's workforce development system. The information contained within this plan provides the initial phase in the development of data-driven recommendations for North Carolina's workforce development system.



VISION, MISSION & CHARGE

Vision

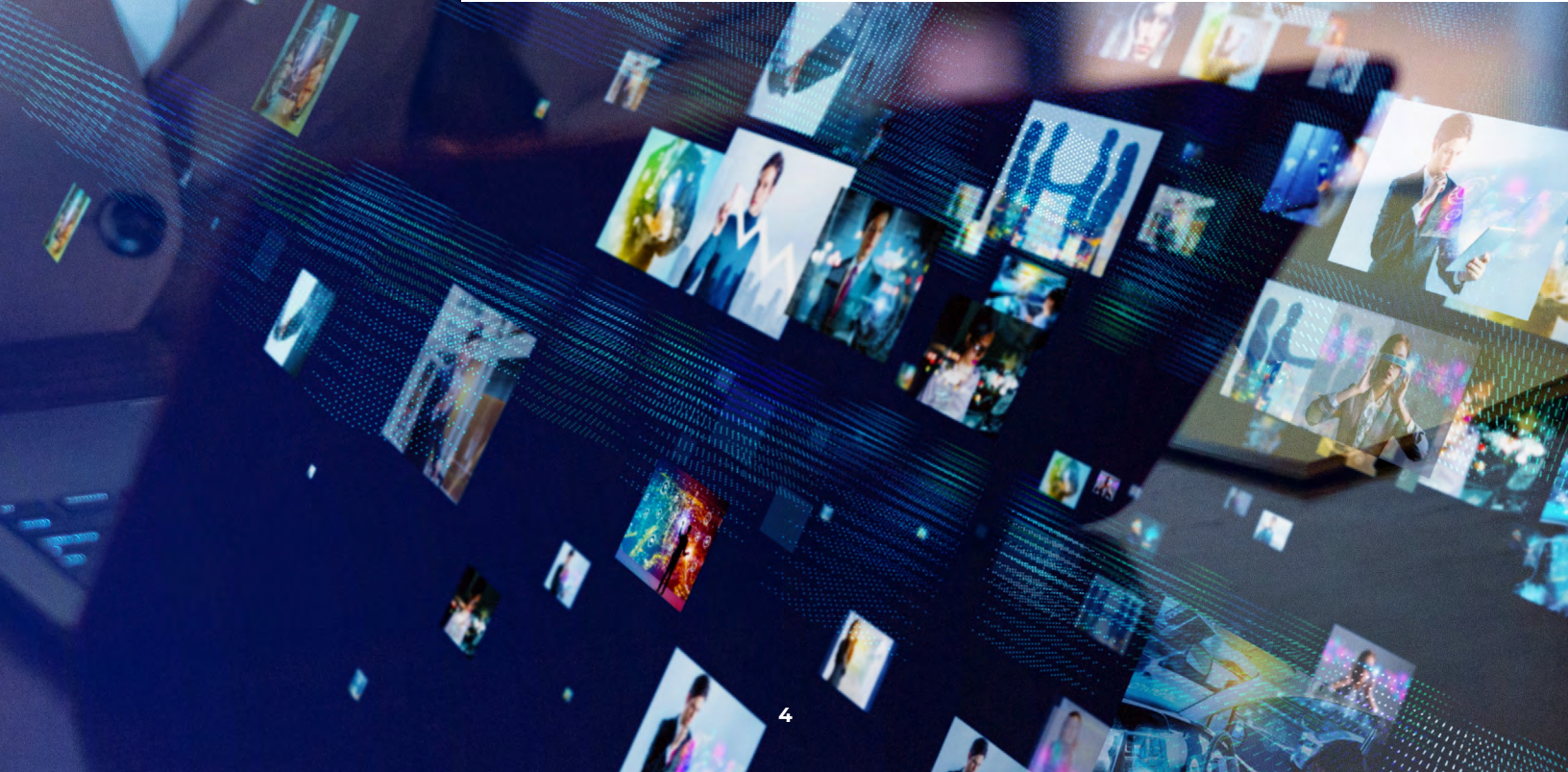
To build a job-ready workforce to strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure our state can adapt to a changing economy.

Mission

To ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity; and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Charge

The NCWorks Commission develops policies and strategies which value diversity and enable the state's workforce to compete in the current and future global economy. The commission leads, builds partnerships, forms alliances, and is accountable for strengthening North Carolina's innovative, inclusive, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system.



GOALS

Goal 1

Prepare workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment.

Education is the foundation to a strong workforce. As the skill requirements of jobs increase and change rapidly, businesses need to find people with the right skills for the jobs they create, and North Carolinians need access to training so they can be ready for those jobs.

- **Increase career awareness.** Every North Carolinian needs access to career information that will lead them to jobs that are growing in their area and which training programs can prepare them for those jobs. Career information includes individual experiences with employers and access to data and career exploration tools.
- **Advocate for increased educational attainment.** Enhance programs to raise the high school graduation rate and improve the technical curriculums offered in an effort to increase the number of North Carolinians with a postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate to address the education attainment gap in North Carolina and make progress toward the goal of MyFutureNC that by 2030, 2 million North Carolinians between the ages of 25 and 44 years old will have a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential.
- **Promote access to job training for high-demand fields.** Too many employers have job openings that remain unfilled because of a lack of workers with the right skills. It should be easier for workers to get training in those fields and keep our employers growing.
- **Increase access to education for those that have barriers.** The cost of school is more than tuition. Supporting North Carolinians, including those with disabilities and other barriers to employment who need help with things like childcare, accessible transportation, and the cost of books and materials while they get trained for a new career, is critical.

Goal 2

Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy by fostering employer leadership.

Employer-led job training programs have the best career outcomes. Employers know best what skills their workers need, and employer involvement is key for workforce development and job readiness. Businesses that invest in developing North Carolina's workforce will benefit from well-trained employees and a more innovative and diverse workplace that better reflects its community.

- **Support efforts to increase work-based learning opportunities.** With increased employer engagement, expose students to career opportunities ▶



through career awareness and career exploration. Work-based learning also includes internships and apprenticeships where students experience real-world professional environments.

- **Enhance programs to enable employers to provide training for new and existing employees.** Successfully upskilling workers will enable employers to promote from within and bring in new employees to fill the vacancies. This will help to develop a job-ready North Carolina.
- **Develop and implement industry-led partnerships.** As market dynamics shift quickly, North Carolina needs to adapt and respond to the evolving needs of businesses. The 23 North Carolina local workforce development boards are in a unique position to lead business engagement strategies in their local communities. Diversity among partner agencies is important, and all agencies, business entities and associations engaged in economic and workforce development will collaborate to fully understand business needs and efficiently deliver the right services to address those needs through sector-strategy models.

Goal 3

Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation.

Communities across North Carolina are developing great local models of workforce development. North Carolina should build on those successes and replicate them in more places to continue building and expanding innovative solutions.

- **Advance leadership development opportunities to workforce professionals.** Local education and workforce partnerships drive successful career-readiness initiatives. Investing in these local leaders will increase the capacity of their programs and help them better their communities.
- **Provide funds to innovate and replicate good ideas.** Local leaders know their communities best, and they deserve support in piloting new ideas designed for their areas. When those innovations are successful, other communities throughout the state should hear about the success and have the tools and funds necessary to replicate proven programs.

Goal 4

Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.

North Carolina's workforce system includes multiple agencies, programs, and funders. Collaboration, policy alignment, systemic communication, integration and modernization will ensure a strong and healthy workforce system that can adapt to a changing economy. ▶



- **Continue to strengthen system integration.** Better coordination and communication among North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina Community College System, University of North Carolina System, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the 23 North Carolina local workforce development boards, North Carolina Department of Commerce, North Carolina Department of Administration, and community-based organizations will promote a more integrated workforce development system.
- **Support better awareness, communication, accessibility, and understanding of the “NCWorks” brand.** Demonstrating and sharing what “NCWorks” can do for individuals and businesses can help create a recognizable identity and brand to all customers that access the career-center system to increase awareness. Making the system user-friendly, accessible and navigable is crucial.
- **Research advanced technology for marketing to adapt to new generations entering the workforce.** As users of the system continue to evolve, so too should the way they interact and use the system. Keeping up with the changing skill demands and needs for customers will ensure that our workforce system remains nimble and adaptive.
- **Measure and report on the effectiveness of the workforce development system, including the usage and quality of services.** Collecting, understanding, and using data effectively is critical in guiding a successful workforce development system. •







301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, N.C. 27601

919.814.4609 | NCWorksCommission@nccommerce.com

nccommerce.com/about-us/boards-commissions/ncworks-commission