

NC · TECH · PATHS

IMPACT REPORT

2022

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FROM THE BOARD

NC Tech Paths publicly launched in January 2022 with a belief that rural talent can compete for jobs in technology if only given the opportunity, tools and resources.

Our goal is to help our neighbors have more options in terms of career choices that can provide a living wage and support a family. We can do this, in part, because our region has the highest-quality fiber internet in the state of North Carolina. We also have a supportive community that has embraced this initiative and employer partners that recognize and value the quality that our learners bring to their organization.

\$4.1 million in economic impact

Navigating a start-up environment is always challenging. Doing so as a rural nonprofit, without the resources of “big-city philanthropy,” is even harder. Still, in just one year, we’ve proven the concept: we can recruit our rural neighbors, support them in the classroom, and help place them in jobs that will remain in our region and pay a good wage. We’ve succeeded with adults looking to upskill or make a career change, and we’re now focused on bringing the same toolbox to our schoolchildren. The proof is in the learners who are succeeding in their new careers, and in our team that cares so deeply about the success of each and every learner.

To our existing donors and partners: thank you. This is not possible without your support. To our other readers: come join us! We need your help so that more of our neighbors can LIVE. TRAIN. REMAIN.

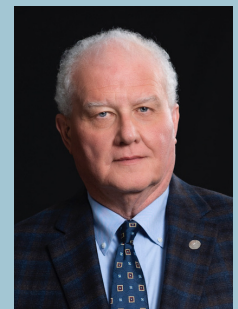
Lee Herring
Board Chair, NC Tech Paths



Lee Herring
Board Chair



Dr. Jeff Cox
Member



William Warden
Member

TAKING ON ECONOMIC MOBILITY IN NW NC

Like many rural areas, Northwest NC faces an economic inflection point. Our legacy agriculture and manufacturing heritage must adapt to the new knowledge economy.



There are a lot of things to love about our corner of North Carolina. The music. The mountains. The affordable cost of living. The fastest internet connection in the state. But there are serious challenges as well. The impact of the opioid epidemic. Young people moving away to seek better opportunities. A sense of being left behind.

But now with the dramatic increase in remote tech work in the post-COVID era, Northwest North Carolina is poised to capture more opportunity through unlocking the untapped potential and talent. We want our neighbors to LIVE. TRAIN. REMAIN.

NC Tech Paths provides our rural neighbors with access to training for high-paying remote tech jobs and purpose-built spaces where small businesses and startups can thrive. After only one year, NC Tech Paths has generated more than \$4 million in total economic impact through salaries earned by our graduates and construction of The Masthead, our co-working space in downtown North Wilkesboro.

\$4.1 MILLION

NC TECH PATHS DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$1.8 MILLION
GRADUATE
SALARIES

\$2.3 MILLION
CONSTRUCTION
INVESTMENT



NC Tech Paths presented at the 2023 NC State Institute for Emerging Issues Forum, Talent First, in February. Pictured (from left to right) LeClair Boone, NC Tech Paths; Hope Shurba, NC Tech Paths graduate; Dahntay Choate, NC Tech Paths graduate; Tonya Ellison, Senior Manager Emerging Talent In Technology, Lowe's Companies
Both Hope and Dahntay now work with Lowe's IT Support Team.

TECH TRAINING

Through our partners Wilkes Community College and Per Scholas, NC Tech Paths offers training in IT Support, Software Engineering, Cybersecurity and Network Management. Learners choose from 3-6 month, 2-year or 4-year programs.



69

NC Learners In Our Programs

18 currently enrolled | 51 graduated
21 from Wilkes County, 9 from Alleghany, 6 from Ashe
Average age: 35 | 53% Male, 47% Female

42

Graduates Placed In Remote Jobs

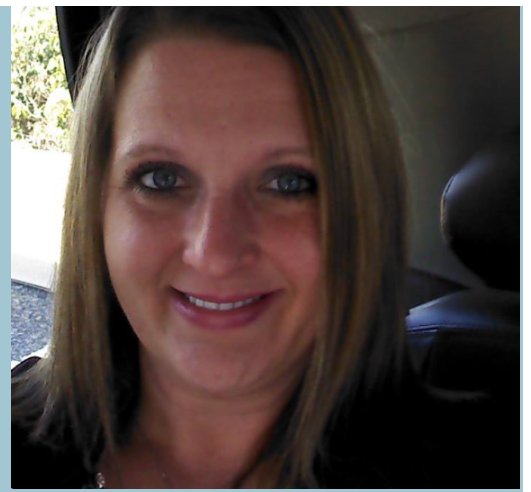
From working at a grocery store to working at a Fortune 50 company. Our graduates now have career paths, not just jobs.

70

Average Percentage Increase in Household Income

Many of our learners cannot afford to attend full-time training without NC Tech Paths providing a living wage stipend. Now, our graduates are experiencing significant salary increases and generous benefits packages, positively impacting their families and our communities.

LEARNER PROFILE



Jenny

Jenny, a Wilkes County native, considered herself "unemployable" when she came to NC Tech Paths. Her mother, father, and three other close relatives all died from overdoses, and she landed in foster care. Eventually, she became addicted to opioids herself, and wound up with drug charges on her record. Determined not to meet the same fate as her parents, Jenny worked hard in recovery, taking classes at Wilkes Community College and building her skills. She graduated from the IT Support Cohort in December 2022, and today is employed at Lowe's Companies.

"This community raised me because my family couldn't," she said. "I was receiving \$800 a month for my entire household, and now I'm making more than I ever thought I could. For the first time in my life, I feel like I'm able to stand on my own two feet. NC Tech Paths helped me every step of the way and I'm just getting started."

**From
\$800/month to
\$50k a year**

OUR PARTNERS

Moving our region's economy requires deep collaboration and expertise. Meet our training, job placement and philanthropic partners leaning in and making a difference.



Wilkes Community College, a member of the North Carolina Community College System, is a public, two-year, open-door institution serving the people of Wilkes, Ashe, and Alleghany counties and beyond. WCC prepares learners for success in a dynamic world.



Per Scholas is a national organization that has been advancing economic mobility for more than 27 years. Through rigorous training, professional development, and robust employer connections, we prepare individuals traditionally underrepresented in technology for high-growth careers in the industry.



A Wilkes County success story, Lowe's started with one hometown hardware store and is now one of the world's leading home improvement retailers, employing more than 300,000 associates and ringing up more than \$96 billion in sales in 2021.



With headquarters in Winston Salem, Inmar partners with brands, retailers and healthcare systems to leverage data and technology, uncovering valuable insights that make it easier for businesses to understand, predict and meet the personalized needs of consumers – so they can live their lives to the fullest.



InfusionPoints is an elite strategy and technology security consulting firm that serves some of the largest organizations in the world. It is comprised of experienced security professionals. It is headquartered in Wilkes County, NC with other locations in the U.S.

THE MASTHEAD



Located on Main Street in North Wilkesboro, this state-of-the-art workspace is designed for our alumni, as well as remote workers, small business owners and startups. After an extensive build out, The Masthead is now welcoming its first members. It's a physical manifestation of the community and economic transformation we seek to spark.



11k

11,000 Sq. Ft of Remote Work and Co-working

We've transformed the former Wilkes Journal-Patriot press room into a regional hub of activity for entrepreneurs, creatives, and remote workers, powered by high speed internet and free coffee.

42

42 Desks, Private Offices and Suites, Meeting Rooms

Purpose-built spaces that suit your needs from video conferencing to podcast production, solo work to team meetings.

400

400 People Working, Touring and Experiencing The Space During Free Co-working February

To introduce the space, The Masthead offered free co-working February, hosted programs and community lunches, and led tours.

THANK YOU

From the beginning, these visionary philanthropic partners recognized the important work and invested in the resources needed to create true impact. Thank you.

**The Herring Family Foundation
(Seed Grant and Construction Loan)**

**Janice and Ed Story
The Story Family**

Larry and Diane Stone

Celebrating New Futures

Lowe's Companies onboards new employees with a Red Vest Ceremony, communicating the company's values and marking employees' entry into the culture.

Here, the December 2022 IT Support Cohort received a warm welcome at the company's state of the art Innovation Center in downtown Charlotte.



NC TECH PATHS TEAM



(pictured left to right)

Kate Vermilyea, Chief of Staff; Caitlin Pitkin Massey, Recruitment Manager; Karen Barnes, Interim Executive Director; Doren Tripp, Masthead Community Manager



LeClair Boone
Talent Development
Manager



Johanna Anderson
Philanthropy Advisor



Founding Executive
Director Zach Barricklow,
now serving as Vice
President of Rural
Innovation at WCC



Craig DeLucia
Founding President,
CFO

There is more work to do than time or money, but we don't let that stop us. Help us continue creating hopeful, positive outcomes for our NWNC neighbors by making a contribution today.

Here are some of the important ways you can help:

- Refer potential learners to our recruiting team.
- Hire our graduates.
- Underwrite training costs and a living wage stipend for a learner: \$2,000 - \$15,000
- Sponsor community programming, operations and spaces at The Masthead: starting at \$5,000
- Support our day to day operations with an unrestricted gift of your choosing.

Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-814-5400. The license is not an endorsement by the State.

CONTACT

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