

Elizabeth City State University Joins Economic Development Collaborative

By Administrator
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Elizabeth City State University has been selected to be one of the myFutureNC Local Educational Attainment Collaborative communities across North Carolina. Launched by ncIMPACT Initiative at the UNC School of Government and myFutureNC, with support from the John M. Belk Endowment, this is a two-year pilot program that supports local education collaboratives across the state that seeks to significantly increase the number of students successfully completing a degree, credential, or certification with a focus on regional economic development.

According to ECSU's Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dr. Gary Brown, ECSU will participate in this two-year program and work with local strategic partners to broaden economic growth in the region through education.

"This is an exciting opportunity to advance ECSU's mission to educate, and strengthen the economic foundation of Northeastern North Carolina," said Dr. Brown.

ECSU's strategic partners are the College of the Albemarle, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools, Northeast Workforce Development Board, the City of Elizabeth City and NENC Pathways. This core team will bring vision and talent for long-term planning and program effectiveness.

The goal of the collaborative is to develop local economic impact by increasing opportunities for education and establishing connections among regional institutes of learning, employers, local governments and other community partners. In addition, the program will work to bring resources to communities such as federal, state, and philanthropic funding.

A digital learning platform will also be made available that will enable resources to be shared between the organizers and community teams.

"These collaboratives offer an organized way to respond to future of work challenges that no single institution or even an entire sector can effectively tackle," said Anita Brown-Graham, UNC-Chapel Hill professor and director of the ncIMPACT Initiative. "We are eager to begin this important work together."

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Each participating community will benefit from five regional forums designed to help them establish goals, identify strategies, set plans for implementation, collaborate across sectors, and learn from experts; technical assistance support throughout the process. In addition, there will be \$15,000 to assist with the costs of hiring a community project manager; \$10,000 in implementation funding for the project; evidence-based resources that respond to immediate learning loss concerns and prepare for longer-term planning; and a Local Attainment Collaborative Toolkit to implement and sustain demand-informed local collaboration with regional employers.

The myFutureNC field-based regional impact managers will serve these collaboratives in partnership with ncIMPACT, as well as other communities across the state so they are positioned to join a future cohort of collaboratives.

“Building a strong talent pipeline will require a new level of cross-sector coordination,” said Cecilia Holden, president of myFutureNC. “Among others, key strategic partners in these collaboratives must include PreK-12, universities, community colleges, workforce development boards, economic developers, chambers of commerce, county commissioners, policymakers, and civic leaders. And most critical to the overall success is ensuring decisions are being made based on data and research, and the voice of communities, businesses, industries, and employers and most importantly our youth, is in the center of these important conversations.”

The communities were selected from 46 applications spanning 82 counties of North Carolina. The selection committee worked to develop participation based upon regional, economic, and demographic diversity. The ncIMPACT Initiative will manage this first group of collaboratives.

The ncIMPACT Initiative is a statewide initiative launched by the UNC School of Government in 2017 to help local communities use data and evidence to improve conditions and inform decision making. Visit ncimpact.org.

myFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit focused on educational attainment that includes some of North Carolina’s most influential education, business, and civic leaders. The organization was formed with the goal to create a stronger, more competitive North Carolina. myFutureNC is working across sectors and in communities throughout the state to close gaps in the education pathway, to promote alignment between educational programming and business/industry

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needs, and to ultimately improve educational opportunities for all North Carolinians. Visit myfuturenc.org .