

NCWorks Certified Work Ready Community

Meeting Tomorrow's Workforce Needs...

As part of the state's comprehensive workforce development effort, NCWorks, North Carolina is launching a statewide initiative to certify communities and counties as NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities. This initiative is a collaborative effort between workforce development partners including the Office of the Governor, the North Carolina Chamber Foundation, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Commerce, aimed at leveraging data and analysis tools to continue economic growth in North Carolina.

In 2005, the North Carolina Community College System, in partnership with the Department of Commerce, began a pilot program to assist individuals in achieving the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). The awareness and popularity of this work laid a foundation for the NCEast Alliance (formerly the North Carolina Eastern Region), in partnership with the North Carolina Rural Center, to pilot a process to certify counties as Work Ready Communities beginning in 2011. The announcement of NCWorks as the state's framework for workforce development initiatives in 2013 allows the previous pilot work to be scaled throughout the state to all counties that wish to earn the NCWorks Certified Work Ready Community designation.

Begins Today.

In order to be certified as an NCWorks Certified Work Ready Community, a county must meet each of the following criteria:

- A **letter of commitment** to workforce excellence from county leaders
- Progress in the **high school graduation rate** toward the goal of 94%.
- Achieve **the number of National Career Readiness Certificates** indicated in the Common Criteria
- Gain **commitment from employers** to recognize the NCRC.

The National Career Readiness Certificate demonstrates the foundational skills of job seekers in a community and serves as the basis for the Common Criteria. For more information on the NCRC you may visit <http://www.act.org/products/workforce-act-national-career-readiness-certificate>. Individual county goals can be found at <http://workreadycommunities.org/NC>.

Community Benefits

By participating in NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities initiative, counties, regions and states are helping:

- Business and industry know exactly what foundational skills they need for a productive workforce – and to easily communicate their needs,
- Individuals understand which skills are required by employers – and how to prepare themselves for success,
- Policy makers consistently measure the skills gap in a timely manner at the national, state and local levels,
- Educators close the skills gap, via tools integrated into career pathways with stackable industry-recognized credentials, and
- Economic developers use an on-demand reporting tool to market the quality of their workforce.