



Beaufort County Economic Development Report July 2019

Golden LEAF grants invest millions in local workforce development

Article by Matt Debnam WDN July 1, 2019

<https://www.thewashingtondailynews.com/2019/07/01/golden-leaf-grants-invest-millions-in-local-workforce-development/#>

Three grants from the Golden LEAF Foundation, totaling more than \$2.5 million will help bolster Beaufort County’s workforce by targeting high school students, prospective employees and students from East Carolina University. The grants will go to Beaufort County Schools, the Mid-East Commission and East Carolina University. The three projects intersect at the Beaufort County Economic Development Office, which has helped coordinate workforce development in Beaufort County with the three recipients and other partners. “The focus is on the labor force — to improve the skills of our labor force, to increase the size of it and grow it for the industries that are in the county and that we anticipate being in the county,” said Beaufort County Economic Development Director Martyn Johnson.

as well as our agriculture programs, which already exist at all three high schools,” said BCS CTE Director Wendy Petteway. Moving forward, at Northside High School, the grant will allow the school to offer a robust welding program. Southside, will offer opportunities to study automotive service and masonry, and students at Washington High School will be able to take courses in electrical trades and boat building. A drafting teacher at WHS will also be shared with Northside.



From providing industry certifications to teaching practical skills, the programs will be tailor-built to prepare young people for well-paying positions in the local workforce. “We have the manufacturing, but people don’t know how to access those jobs anymore,” Petteway said. At all three schools, the funds will also allow for the expansion of current offerings and the purchase of new, industry-grade equipment. Petteway said school officials hope to implement these new programs over the course of the next few years. “When you have this type of grant opportunity and you can impact children all across the county, that’s a win-win,” BCS Superintendent Matthew Cheeseman said. “We’re really excited about what the academies will look like at Washington, Northside and Southside.”

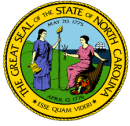
Career and Technical Education

At Beaufort County Schools, a grant of \$1,235,000 will establish new opportunities for high school students in career and technical education. Establishing and expanding new programs at each of the county’s traditional high schools, the Golden LEAF money will help develop programs that prepare local kids for career opportunities right here in Beaufort County.

“What we’re going to concentrate on for the upcoming school year is upgrading our health sciences programs,

Advanced Manufacturing

For the Mid-East Commission, a \$641,400 grant will allow the agency to help advanced manufacturing companies in Beaufort, Bertie, Martin, Hertford, Pitt and Hyde counties address a critical shortage of



available skilled workers, starting with middle and high school students. The plan is to expose teachers, students and parents to the opportunities available in advance manufacturing throughout the region, including teacher externships, regional job fairs and industry tours. In some cases, teachers will have the opportunity to spend time at various companies, bringing knowledge back to their students of the skills needed to get a job. "Our hope is by exposing the students, the parents and teachers earlier, that it will actually allow students to understand what jobs are available locally, and that there are high-tech, high-talent jobs that are available right here in their backyard," said Mid-East Commission Workforce Development Director Jennie Bowen.

RISE29

With a grant of just over \$1 million, RISE29, a new program at East Carolina University, seeks to place interns throughout eastern North Carolina and encourage young entrepreneurs to consider setting up shop in rural communities after graduation. The intention is to promote a new influx of talent into rural areas and establish new microenterprises, and new jobs, throughout the region. "The beautiful thing about the RISE-9 program is that it's open to all of our undergraduate students, regardless of their majors. We understand the opportunities and the needs of businesses vary greatly, so there's a great demand for a variety of skillsets in our community," said James

Carter, with East Carolina University. So far, the program has placed 13 interns in Beaufort, Hyde, Martin and Pitt counties for the summer semester and is recruiting both interns and businesses to participate during the fall semester. Three are in Beaufort County this summer.

Current Employment Statistics

Unadjusted Labor Force Statistics			
USA '000	05/18	05/19	Δ
Labor Force	161,765	162,655	0.55%
Employed	156,009	157,152	0.73%
Unemployed	5,756	5,503	-4.40%
Unemp. Rate	3.60%	3.40%	-5.56%
NC '000	05/18	05/19	Δ
Labor Force	5,004	5,123	2.38%
Employed	4,821	4,917	1.99%
Unemployed	183	206	12.57%
Unemp. Rate	3.70%	4.00%	8.11%
GWCSA	05/18	05/19	Δ
Labor Force	110,708	111,543	0.75%
Employed	106,119	106,485	0.34%
Unemployed	4,589	5,058	10.22%
Unemp. Rate	4.10%	4.50%	9.76%
Beaufort County	05/18	05/19	Δ
Labor Force	19,905	20,019	0.57%
Employed	19,081	19,075	-0.03%
Unemployed	824	944	14.56%
Unemp. Rate	4.10%	4.70%	14.63%

