Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County

Update for Buncombe County Board of Commissioners 2022
About Us

The EDC is a 28-year, public-private partnership of Buncombe County, the City of Asheville and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce advancing opportunity, quality of life and economic sustainability in Buncombe County through workforce investment, high-wage job creation & economic diversification.
**Business Retention, Expansion, Recruitment**
- Community Marketing, Recruitment and Site Selection Services
- Sharing Environmental, Sustainability, Social Governance & Employment Best Practices

**Strategic Workforce Partnerships**
- Employer, Educator & Youth Engagement
- Expanding Economic Access Through Next AVL, Inclusive Hiring Partners, Apprenticeships

**Venture Asheville**
- Team Mentorship, Connection, Recognition and Capacity Building
- Supporting the Financing & Funding Needs of Founders and Start-Ups

**Riverbird Research**
- Analytics and Tools for Better Business Decision Making
- Monthly Economic Indicators, Demographic & Economic Impact Studies
Activities & Accomplishments: Industry Retention, Expansion & Recruitment

**INDUSTRY NINE**
Industry: Outdoor & Bike Manufacturing  
New Jobs: 50  
Capital Investment: $6 Million

"Industry Nine is proud to continue building on the foundation that started in 1969 with Tumacics here in Asheville. The area’s ethos, in combination with manufacturing and a love for the outdoors, continues to be a reason for our success."

— CLINT SPIEGEL  
President, Industry Nine

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**EAST FORK**
Industry: Clay Product Manufacturing  
New Jobs: 50  
Capital Investment: $2.4 Million

"Since East Fork’s founding in 2010, we have been able to grow significantly thanks to our amazing team and the support of our community. We are very pleased to call Asheville our home as we continue evolving."

— ALEX MATISSE  
Founder, East Fork Pottery

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**LEGALLY ADDICTIVE**
Industry: Food Manufacturing  
New Jobs: 15  
Capital Investment: $1.5 Million

"Relocating to Asheville will give us an incredible geographic advantage... We are truly inspired by both the business and creative communities in Asheville and are grateful to everyone who has already been so kind and welcoming to us."

— LAURA SHAFFERMAN  
Founder, Legally Addictive Foods

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BUNCOMBE COUNTY
Activities & Accomplishments: Entrepreneurial Development

Over 100 Start-ups Served in ELEVATE Program Lifetime

- 46% Female Founders
- 73% Co-Founded Start-Ups
- 367 Total Jobs
- $78K Avg Wage
- 1/3 Hired in Past Year
- $68M Total Annual Revenues

Industries:
- Food
- Beverage
- Healthcare
- Tech
- Outdoor Gear
- Makers
Activities & Accomplishments: Representative Projects of Riverbird Research

https://riverbirdresearch.com/

BUNCOMBE COUNTY
Activities & Accomplishments: Workforce Partnerships & Economic Mobility

Agency Relations Coordinator at MANNA Foodbank, Asheville, NC

Strategic Operations Coordinator at Shining Rock Ventures, Asheville, NC

Technical Sales Leadership Program at EATON, Asheville, NC

9 Month Mentorship
3 Pilot Years
5 Colleges & Universities
63 Students Served
40 FY23 Enrollment
Activities & Accomplishments: Workforce Partnerships & Economic Mobility

Better Careers
- Support services
- Work-based learning
- Greater access to opportunity

Better Workplaces
- Guaranteed interviews
- Case manager contact during onboarding
- DEI training
  From LRU

BUNCOMBE COUNTY
Activities & Accomplishments: Workforce Partnerships & Economic Mobility
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Employer Partners
Activities & Accomplishments: Workforce Partnerships & Economic Mobility

- 145 Job Seekers Screened
- 56 Job Seekers Currently in Placement Process
- 20 Placements
- $18.62 Average Hourly Wage
- Enrollment Rate Jumped 19% - 45% in 2022
- 56% BIPOC Representation

OUTCOMES

INCLUSIVE HIRING PARTNERS

BUNCOMBE COUNTY
Financial Update
FY2023 Operating Budget $1,379,649