

**High Country
Workforce Development Board Meeting
April 14, 2011, 3:00 PM**



Building an adaptive workforce system to meet the needs of a globally competitive economy



HIGH COUNTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

Tentative Agenda

Thursday, April 14, 2011, 3:00 PM
468 New Market Blvd., Boone, NC 28607

Call to Order

Consideration of Minutes (pp. 2-4)

Special Recognition

Information

▪ **Committee Reports**

- Executive (pp. 5-6: **Members, please review Board Vision Statement, p. 7.)**

- **Workforce Update:** The Director will provide members with a status report on current issues.
 - Program Year 2011 WIA Plan Notice of Availability

- **Program Presentation: Entrepreneurship and Workforce Development:** Julia Rowland, Center for Entrepreneurship, Appalachian State University; Jimmy Hunt, Music on the Mountaintop; Barry Baugess, B & R Service, Inc. will discuss the relevance of entrepreneurship to the whole picture of workforce development in the region.

▪ **Industry Sector Reports**

Members Skip Greene and Clark Hunter will provide overviews of their industry sector to include brief overview of the field, as well as current and projected workforce skill needs.

Chairman and Member Comments

- **Appointment of Nominating Committee:** The Chairman will appoint members who will seek nominations for the offices of Chair and Vice-Chair for the upcoming program year (July 2011-June 2012).

General Announcements

Adjournment

Resources

Analysis: North Carolina's Workforce Investment System and House Resolution 1

News Articles:

"North Carolina Shows Small-Town America is Absorbing Hispanic Surge". Click on the URL below:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2011-03-03/north-carolina-shows-small-town-america-absorbs-hispanic-surge.html>

"Gates to add 58 jobs in Ashe County". *Jefferson Post*, January 25, 2011, V. 86, Iss. 16, p. 9.

"Program helps fund on-the-job training". *The Alleghany News*, February 23, 2011, pp. 1, 5.

"OJT program provides funds that help companies expand, put people back to work". *Wilkes Journal-Patriot*, 3/23/11, p. A11.

Press Release: "Federal Training Grant Total in the High Country Tops \$1 Million".

NC Division of Workforce Development Communications:

Carolina West Wireless Incumbent Worker Grant Award Notification

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Review Schedule

Administrative Adjustment Notifications (3)

DWD Audit Findings for the High Country Workforce Development Consortium

Building an adaptive workforce system to meet the demands of a globally competitive economy

Cover: Wild Dogwood, April 2010.

DRAFT High Country Workforce Development Board Meeting DRAFT

February 10, 2011

MINUTES

Call to Order: by Chairman Peterson at 3:05 PM.

Members Present: Barbara Barlow, Mike Birkmire, Anne Bowlin, Marie Gwyn, Jenny Harpold, Fonda Harris, Dwayne Howell, Clark Hunter, Charley Nash, Bryan Peterson, Jayne Phipps-Boger, Wanda Proffitt, Sam Ray, Julia Rowland, Earl Tipton, Stacy Sears, Don Williams, Sallie Woodring

Staff: Misty Bishop-Price, Rebecca Bloomquist, Carole Coates, Don Sherrill, Adrian Tait, MaryAnn Urka

Guests: John C. Boyd, Sherri Dees, Drew Edwards, John Greene, Theresa Reynolds, Ginger Shaffer, Pam Wilson

Chairman Peterson administered the Oath of Office to Wanda Proffitt.

Consideration of Minutes: The minutes of the December 9, 2010 meeting were approved as submitted.

Information

Youth Council: Marie Gwyn reviewed second quarter service provider reports (pp. 6-13 Board Book), and announced a 2/24/11 visit to Johnson County High School's new aquaculture program (Mountain City, TN).

Adult Services/JobLink: Dwayne Howell reviewed second quarter service provider reports (pp. 14-19 Board Book). Howell also shared the news that the High Country region has received over \$1 million in Incumbent Worker Training Grant funds. over the last seven years, benefitting numerous companies across our seven-county region. JobLink Career Centers are in the process of rechartering. Staff will develop feedback cards and an online survey to assist in measuring JobLink customer satisfaction.

Executive Committee: Chairman Peterson announced Workforce Development Director Carole Coates' retirement, effective June 30, 2011. The Board will participate in the selection for her successor. He also announced the election of Kenny Poteat as the new Chief Elected Official of the Workforce Development Consortium at its January 27th meeting.

Workforce Update: Director Carole Coates explained that staff has developed a draft WDB vision statement, identifying a preferred future, to help guide the Board's next strategic planning process. The draft vision will be presented to the Executive Committee for consideration at its March 10 meeting. Coates also announced that Ken Richardson, Alleghany County Commission Chair, is chairing the NC County Commissioners Association's Building Human Capital Task Force and has requested the involvement of Board staff in this work.

Current Board Initiatives: Board Business Services Coordinator **Adrian Tait** presented an update on the Green Energy Job Training Grant. **Theresa Reynolds**, Senior Consulting Associate, DCA Inc., presented an update on the Future Forward Workforce Alliance's Regional Innovation Grant (RIG). The accompanying "Get NOT Out of Your Life" media campaign **Life** is an outreach tool emphasizing the benefits of education to targeted at-risk populations.

Industry Profiles: Board members **Fonda Harris** and **Bryan Peterson** offered brief **Industry Sector Reports**, introducing Board members to their respective businesses. Both described efforts and initiatives used by their employers to recruit, retain, and advance promising employees.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

The next meeting of the High Country Workforce Development Board will be held Thursday, April 14, 2011, at 3:00 PM in the HCCOG Board Room, 468 New Market Blvd., Boone.

High Country Workforce Development Board
Meeting Attendance - February 10, 2011

%	Name	Feb. 2010 Canceled	Apr. 2010	Jun. 2010	Aug. 2010	Oct. 2010	Dec. 2010	Feb. 2011
67%	Barbara Barlow							
67%	Mike Birkmire							
67%	Anne Bowlin							
67%	David Edwards							
67%	Skip Greene							
83%	Marie Gwyn							
50%	Jim Halsey							
84%	Fonda Harris							
50%	Dwayne Howell							
100%	Clark Hunter (11/10-) Scott Moncrief (6/06-9/10)							
33%	Joallen Lowder							
100%	Charley Nash							
100%	Bryan Peterson							
50%	Jamie Phillips (6/10 -)							
88%	Jayne Phipps-Boger							
50%	Wanda Proffitt (11/10-) Jake Blood (2008-9/10)							
84%	Sam Ray							
50%	Sandra Reese							
67%	Truman Robbins							
67%	Stacy Sears							
100%	Earl Tipton							
75%	Don Williams (6/10-) Jane Moore (7/09-4/10)							
84%	Sallie Woodring							
			76%	62%	78%	58%	83%	69%

Youth Council Members Present:

Jennie Harpold
 Julia Rowland

LEGEND

PRESENT
ABSENT
VACANT

High Country Workforce Development Board

Meeting Evaluation

February 10, 2011

This meeting program offered an update on High Country involvement with the Green Energy Job Training Grant, and “Get NOT Out of Your Life”, the Future Forward Workforce Alliance education promotion ad campaign. In addition, Board members began presenting brief industry sector reports highlighting current and projected workforce skill needs within their organizations/businesses.

Total Responses: 2

How well did the content of today’s meeting:	Very Well	Moderately Well	Fairly Well	Poorly/ Not at all
1. Support development of strategies to supply a qualified workforce?	2			
2. Support opportunities for our emerging workforce to obtain academic and skill competencies required by employers?	2			
3. Support regionalism and alignment of resources for a more seamless workforce system?	2			

Comments: “No dental presentations. Too scary”.

High Country Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Teleconference Notes

February 3, 2011

Present: Marie Gwyn, Fonda Harris, Dwayne Howell, Bryan Peterson, Sandy Reese, Earl Tipton; staff members Carole Coates, MaryAnn Urka

Background: The Executive Committee is composed of officers and committee chairs. It is empowered to act on Board's behalf between board meetings, subject to the Board's guidance.

Current Situation:

- Youth Council and Adult Services/JobLink Committee will hold meetings on Feb. 10th at 1:45 PM, prior to full Board meeting
- Youth Council, Career and Technical Education Directors, and Board staff have arranged a 2/24/11 visit to Johnson County High School in Mountain City TN, to tour new aquaculture program
- Coates provided updates on the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math.) initiative and On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- April Board meeting program will feature entrepreneurship
- At the direction of the Governor, NC Deputy Secretary of Commerce Dale Carroll is heading a team that includes leadership from the NC Division of Workforce Development and the Employment Security Commission to draft a plan that consolidates ESC and Workforce Development. The proposal will be forwarded to the General Assembly as part of the Governor's proposal to reduce the number of state departments.
- A High Country Workforce Development Consortium meeting was held on January 27, at which Avery County Commission Chair Kenny Poteat was elected Chief Elected Official of the Consortium.

Next Steps:

With the announcement of Workforce Development Director Carole Coates' retirement on June 30, 2011, the Board begins the search process for her successor.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on March 10, 2011, at 3:00 PM, in the Board Room of the HCCOG.

High Country Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting Notes

March 10, 2011

Present: Marie Gwyn, Fonda Harris, Dwayne Howell, Charley Nash, Sandy Reese, Earl Tipton.
Staff: Carole Coates

Key Subjects Under Consideration:

- Funding
- Visioning/Strategic Planning
- Succession
- Staff Update

Background: The Executive Committee is composed of officers, committee chairs, and other members designated by the Chair. It is empowered to act on the Board's behalf between board meetings, subject to the Board's guidance.

Current Situation:

- Workforce Investment Act funding is at risk in current federal budgeting process. Congressional budget negotiations are on-going. Funding levels for July 1, 2011, are likely to be reduced and could face elimination, although analysts consider that the latter option is less likely at this point.
- Vision statement, with minor revisions, is the foundation for next strategic plan. A facilitated half-day strategic planning work session for all members is scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2011, beginning with lunch.
- Application process for Board Director position is currently underway with an April 1 deadline for applications.
- Key staff activities for March and April include the following: contractor monitoring reviews; annual Workforce Investment Act plan modification; NC DWD Equal Opportunity monitoring review.

Next Steps:

Vision statement revision (Coates) and review (members); dissemination to members

**The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held by teleconference on
June 2, 2011, at 4:00 PM.**

HIGH COUNTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Workforce Development Visioning
April 2011

OCTOBER 2015: The High Country Workforce Development Board is looked to as *the* key leader in workforce innovation and an activist in economic development regionalism across the High Country region. We are widely recognized throughout NC and the Southeast region for the central role we play in these arenas. We are known as a model for rural Workforce Development Boards. We are regularly called upon to provide technical assistance to other Boards and their staff; we receive frequent requests to provide workshops highlighting our new way of doing things; and our work has been highlighted in national workforce development publications.

Key Facets:

- Our work is centered around emerging industry sectors and broad-based industry initiatives and is not limited to federally-funded workforce programs.
- We advocate a multi-regional economic development response to key trends based on data research and analysis.
- Our board staff have strong and specific expertise in key industry sectors, such as green energy, health care, and entrepreneurialism. To achieve this goal we identified key sectors, encouraging each staff member to create a personal development plan based on Board needs and goals. Each staff member has acted on that plan in a positive way to ensure relevance in a rapidly changing system.
- A redesigned service delivery system increases electronic access to one-stop services, drawing professionals and other nontraditional customers. This system develops JobLink staff expertise in specific Board-defined emerging industry sectors, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
- Our services to youth across the region incorporate a strong entrepreneurial focus, which encourages systems-thinking as a means to create a more valuable and adaptive emerging workforce.
- Our public information strategy incorporates a regional Emerging Workforce Issues series. This serves as a catalyst for regional dialogue and action on workforce and economic development issues. These events are self-supporting.
- Our focus on additional funding resources supports our vision toward a more highly skilled and relevant regional workforce.

Attendance: Dwayne Howell (Chair), Barbara Barlow, Clark Hunter, Fonda Harris, Mike Berk mire, Sam Ray, staff members Adrian Tait, Don Sherrill, Rebecca Bloomquist

Background: The lingering economic recession has continued to impact significant numbers of our local citizens and businesses. Last program year, the local public workforce system had significant additional funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to provide services to adults and dislocated workers impacted by the recession. The workforce system was encouraged by USDOL and the state to significantly increase the number of customers served, as a result of this additional funding. Locally, we achieved 90% of our goal to double the number of participants served. Federal performance measure outcomes for Program Year 2009 indicated that we were doing well in the three areas of performance outcomes (entered employment, employment retention, and post program wages earned by participants) during difficult economic conditions. The provision of training services is a key component to these positive outcomes.

A streamlined, interim JobLink Center chartering process was implemented beginning July 1, 2011. The Wilkes JobLink is currently chartered through their approved three year chartering document until June 30, 2012. The other six centers are working toward achieving their re-chartering certification through the interim chartering process.

Current Situation:

In the new program year that began in July, WIA service providers continued to utilize the remaining ARRA adult and dislocated worker funds along with WIA funding to meet adult and dislocated worker needs. Training customers in targeted high growth, high demand occupations and entry into training related employment continue to be priorities. Local participation by business and jobseeker customers in the state Energy Partnership Grant (SESP) and the ARRA funded On-the-National Emergency Grant (NEG) to fund on-the-job training activities have shown increased activity levels. Through the end of December 2010, 50 individuals had received training and 24 area businesses had received funding to train their incumbent workforce. Areas of training included: green building and home energy upgrades; solar thermal and photovoltaic installation; and woodstove production. Nine dislocated worker customers had begun On-the-Job Training Activities funded through the OJT National Emergency Grant that became available in October.

In September, the committee voted to approve the charter applications for Alleghany, Ashe, Avery and Mitchell JobLink Centers. In early February, the Avery and Mitchell centers had their onsite review by JobLink Staff from the Division of Workforce Development; they are awaiting the results of that review. The Alleghany and Ashe JobLink Centers expect to have their onsite visits in March. Watauga and Yancey JobLink Centers are finalizing their business plans for submission to Workforce Board Staff.

Don and Adrian joined a contingency of workforce professionals from across the state on a site visit to Gulf Coast Workforce Area that includes Houston, Texas. Visits were made to their one-stop centers and business services unit. A meeting with Roger Shackelford is scheduled for March to discuss the findings from the visit Carolina West resubmitted their revised incumbent worker application in the January, 2011 submission period. No other incumbent worker grant applications were received.

Next Steps: Staff will compile a customer satisfaction survey that supports and does not duplicate existing survey instruments and forward to committee members for comment prior to distribution.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2011, at 2:00 PM, in the offices of the COG.

**Program Year 2010 2nd Quarter Report
March 21, 2011**

HIGH COUNTRY

49

Total Exiters	Adults	239			
	Dislocated Workers	181			
	Younger Youth (14-18)	13			
	Older Youth (19-21)	17			
Performance Measure	Program Group	Actual	2010 Goals	Variance	Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	43.21%	75.4%	57.32%	105 243
	Dislocated Workers	52.51%	83.4%	62.94%	136 259
Retention Rate	Adults	53.99%	82.2%	65.65%	88 163
	Dislocated Workers	56.43%	90.0%	62.68%	79 140
Adult/DW Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,359.18	\$10,159.13	131.50%	\$1,175,607.46 88
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,659.02	\$11,320.00	111.83%	\$1,000,062.19 79
Youth (14-21) Common Measures					
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth 14-21	39.22%	62.16%	63.09%	20 51
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	Youth 14-21	32.73%	49.77%	65.76%	18 55
Numeracy/Literacy	Youth 14-21	38.24%	32.88%	116.29%	52 136

NOTE: ** Youth Literacy and Numeracy numerators and denominators MAY NOT BE correct.
Please disregard Youth Literacy and Numeracy performance on this report.

Statutory Measures - For Informational Purposes Only

Entered Employment Rate	Older Youth (19-21)	30.77%	N/A	N/A	8
					26
Retention Rate	Older Youth (19-21)	66.67%	N/A	N/A	8
					12
	Younger Youth (14-18)	38.46%	N/A	N/A	10 26
OY Six Months-Earnings Change	Older Youth (19-21)	\$4,988.14	N/A	N/A	\$59,857.73
					12
Credential and Employment	Adults	31.23%	N/A	N/A	99 317
	Dislocated Workers	35.93%	N/A	N/A	83 231
Credential Rate	Older Youth (19-21)	22.86%	N/A	N/A	8
					35
Diploma or Equivalent Rate	Younger Youth	60.00%	N/A	N/A	3
					5
Skill (Goal) Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	24.29%	N/A	N/A	17
					70



Youth Council Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2011, 1:45 PM

ATTENDANCE: Marie Gwyn, Anne Bowlin, Sallie Woodring, Jennie Harpold, Julia Rowland, Stacy Sears, Jayne Phipps-Boger; staff Misty Bishop-Price; guests Drew Edwards, Sherri Dees, Allen Cook, April Jones

KEY SUBJECTS UNDER CONSIDERATION: Review of September 9, 2010 minutes; youth service provider presentations and reports; tour of Johnson County High School; NC STEM information.

BACKGROUND: Youth Council continues to oversee and review youth services across the region. Youth Service Provider presentations provide the Youth Council on program activities of High Country Council of Governments and Mayland Community College. WDB staff has recently been involved in the NC STEM initiative.

CURRENT SITUATION: Members reviewed the September 9th, 2010 meeting minutes, which were approved as submitted. Members received and reviewed provider reports of current WIA youth enrollments and activities for the past two quarters, with no concerns noted.

High Country Council of Governments staff Sherri Dees and Drew Edwards reported on youth activities for Wilkes, Watauga, Ashe and Alleghany Counties that included best recruitment efforts, scheduled activities and participant success stories. Mayland Community College staff April Jones and Allen Cook reported on youth activities for Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties that included information about their Service Day Garden Project and activities and trainings of current enrollments. No concerns were noted regarding the delivery of youth services throughout the region.

A tour of Johnson County High School's Alternative Agriculture/Aquaculture/CTE programs has been arranged on February 24 for WDB staff, CTE school directors and Youth Council members.

Information was shared regarding the NC STEM initiative that includes a High Country region comprised of Ashe, Watauga and Caldwell Counties. Staff member Misty Bishop-Price has participated in recent activities of this group and will keep the Youth Council informed of its progression.

Staff shared information on STEM scholarships announced by CFNC, and information on My Next Move, an online USDOL tool to help individuals explore careers and find jobs.

NEXT STEPS: The next Youth Council meeting will be held on May 12, 2011, at 2:00 PM in the offices of the HCCOG in Boone.



The Workforce Investment System – A Critical Tool for America’s Economic Recovery

North Carolina

The nation’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs have played a vitally important role in helping America’s workers find new jobs or get the training they need to make career changes in a very tough economy.

Attached is a comparison summary of the North Carolina Department of Labor’s latest workforce performance results for the twelve month periods ending June 30, 2008 and June 30, 2010 (the most recent period for which DOL has provided data). The unemployment rate during this period rose from 6% in June 2008 to 10% in June 2010. The latest data shows a **76% increase in WIA participation rates** over the past two years.

	2008 – workers served	2010 – workers served	Increase (decrease)
WIA programs total	17,189	30,172	76% Increase
WIA – Adults	6,029	10,638	76% Increase
WIA – Dislocated Workers	5,949	14,482	143% Increase
WIA – Youth	5,211	5,052	3% Decrease

	WIA Entered Employment Rate		WIA Retention Rate		Education Attainment	
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
WIA – Adult	76.6%	65.3%	85.8%	84.7%		
WIA – Dislocated Worker	83.8%	74.4%	92.2%	87.8%		
WIA – Youth	64.8%	63.1%			54.2%	59.8%

* WIA entered employment rate for youth includes placement in employment or education

Below is the impact that the House proposed budget cuts in HR1 would have on the Workforce Investment System in North Carolina.

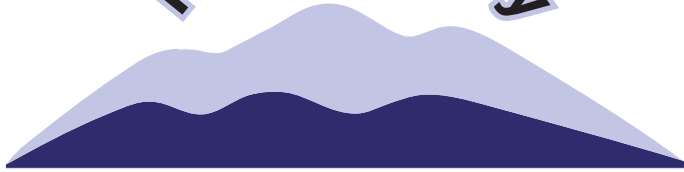
Under current funding levels:

Funding Available in 2010: \$92,779,852
 Participants: 30,172
 One-Stop Centers: 95

Under the House Proposal:

Funding Available: \$0
 Participants: 0
 One-Stop Centers: 0

High Country



Workforce Development Board

Labor Market Information Update

March 2011

Civilian Labor Force Estimates*

		January 2011	December 2010	January 2010
Alleghany	Labor Force	4,482	4,525	4,606
	Employed	3,846	3,986	3,949
	Unemployed	636	539	657
	Rate %	14.2	11.9	14.3
Ashe	Labor Force	11,840	12,086	12,772
	Employed	10,201	10,707	10,851
	Unemployed	1,639	1,379	1,921
	Rate %	13.8	11.4	15.0
Avery	Labor Force	7,736	8,002	9,393
	Employed	6,772	7,161	8,354
	Unemployed	964	841	1,039
	Rate %	12.5	10.5	11.1
Mitchell	Labor Force	6,812	6,944	7,272
	Employed	5,916	6,143	6,228
	Unemployed	896	801	1,044
	Rate %	13.2	11.5	14.4
Watauga	Labor Force	23,657	23,663	23,110
	Employed	21,627	21,821	21,016
	Unemployed	2,030	1,842	2,094
	Rate %	8.6	7.8	9.1
Wilkes	Labor Force	29,056	29,357	30,828
	Employed	25,328	25,831	26,491
	Unemployed	3,728	3,526	4,337
	Rate %	12.8	12.0	14.1
Yancey	Labor Force	7,446	7,488	7,795
	Employed	6,368	6,556	6,716
	Unemployed	1,078	932	1,079
	Rate %	14.5	12.4	13.8
High Country	Labor Force	91,029	92,065	95,776
	Employed	80,058	82,205	83,605
	Unemployed	10,971	9,860	12,171
	Rate %	12.1	10.7	12.7
Statewide	Labor Force	4,435,316	4,428,910	4,521,297
	Employed	3,971,824	4,000,315	3,976,461
	Unemployed	463,492	428,595	544,836
	Rate %	10.5	9.7	12.1

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics. *Not Seasonally Adjusted
January 2011 and December 2010 county data are preliminary, while January 2010 data are revised. January 2011 state data are preliminary, while 2010 data are benchmarked.

Quick Facts:

North Carolina Unemployment Rates January 2011

Seasonally Adjusted: 9.9
Not Seasonally Adjusted: 10.5

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics

NC UI Average Weekly Benefit January 2011: \$278.56

NC Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount: \$506

Source: WRER Unit, LMID

Gender of Initial Claims High Country WDB January 2011

Male: 72%
Female: 28%

Source: WRER Unit, LMID

Age Ranges of Initial Claimants High Country WDB January 2011

16-19	—	2%
20-24	—	8%
25-34	—	21%
35-44	—	22%
45-54	—	26%
55-64	—	18%
65+	—	3%

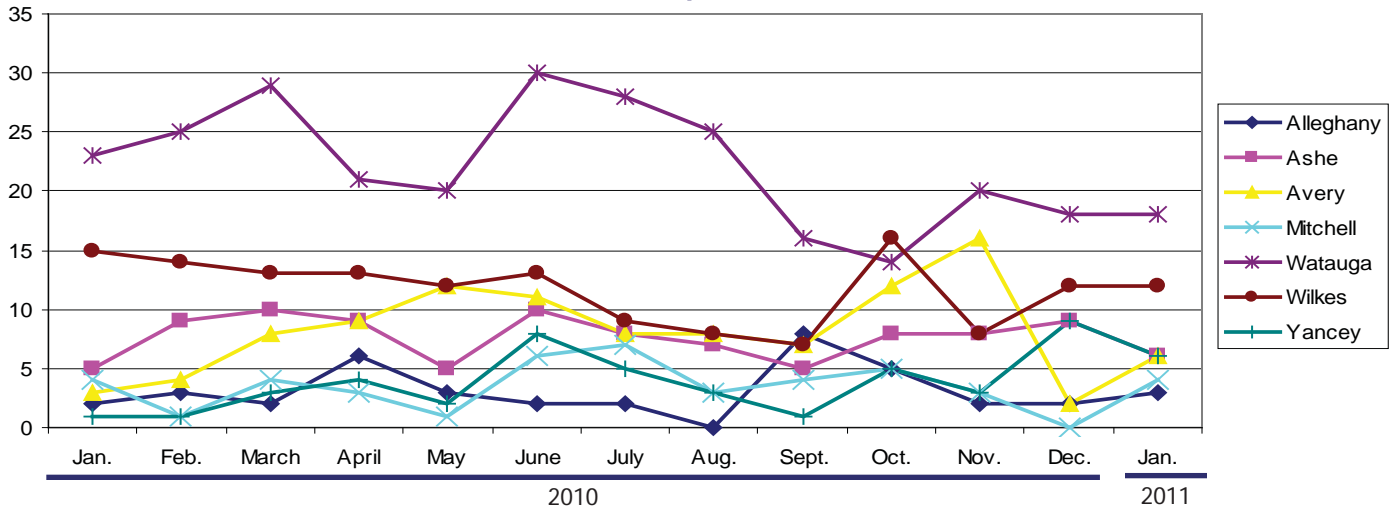
Source: WRER Unit, LMID

Individuals Receiving Benefits

	January 2011	January 2010
Alleghany	363	411
Ashe	797	1,130
Avery	487	552
Mitchell	417	626
Watauga	686	862
Wilkes	1,659	2,313
Yancey	484	689
Statewide	154,687	237,759

Source: WRER Unit, LMID

New Corporations



Source: Department of the NC Secretary of State

Duration of Benefits By County 12-Month Period Ending*

	January 2011	January 2010
Alleghany	15.8	16.6
Ashe	19.0	17.3
Avery	16.0	17.1
Mitchell	17.3	16.9
Watauga	17.8	17.2
Wilkes	16.6	17.0
Yancey	15.3	15.1
Statewide	18.3	17.8

*Duration is the number of weeks compensated for the year divided by the number of first payments.

Unemployment Insurance Claims January 2011

	Initial Claims	Benefits Paid
Alleghany	233	\$241,185
Ashe	605	\$593,498
Avery	273	\$389,587
Mitchell	309	\$327,014
Watauga	439	\$637,260
Wilkes	1,670	\$1,111,676
Yancey	423	\$440,514
Statewide	104,707	\$152,411,119

Source: WRER Unit, LMID

ESC Employment Services Registered Applicants, 7/1/2010-1/31/2011

	Alleghany	Ashe	Avery	Mitchell	Watauga	Wilkes	Yancey
Professional, Technical & Managerial	217	476	281	322	672	966	230
Clerical	135	526	222	305	387	1,005	179
Sales	43	142	67	103	199	297	64
Domestic Services	9	29	12	21	14	25	9
Other Services	180	497	297	336	548	945	261
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishery	34	69	68	59	58	104	38
Processing	26	65	17	58	30	403	34
Machine Trade	85	215	72	187	99	578	111
Benchwork	56	184	40	135	43	443	114
Structural Work	161	454	200	231	419	681	256
Motor Freight & Transportation	40	114	39	60	84	236	48
Packaging & Material Handling	37	113	55	118	54	525	96
Miscellaneous	8	15	10	16	17	26	7

Source: WRER Unit, Labor Market Information Division Note: Active Applicants YTD for period 7/1/2010-6/30/2011.

Labor Market Information Division
Employment Security Commission of North Carolina
P.O. Box 25903 Raleigh, 27611
Phone: (919) 733-2936 Fax: (919) 733-8662
Email: esc.lmi.inquiries@ncesc.gov Web site: www.ncesc.com





January 25, 2011, V.86, Iss.16, p. 9. Reprinted with permission.

Gates to add 58 jobs in Ashe County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Tuesday announced that the Gates Corporation, one of the world's largest manufacturers of automobile belts and hoses, will expand their facility in Ashe County. The company plans to create 58 jobs and invest \$4.6 million during the next three years in Jefferson. The project was made possible in part by a \$100,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"I want to congratulate Gates Corporation on their expansion," Gov. Perdue said. "Their growth is terrific news for the workers in Ashe County and emphasizes that the steps we have taken to build a top rated business climate in North Carolina are paying off in jobs and an increasing share of the automotive parts industry."

Founded in 1911, the Gates Corporation has grown into one of the world's largest manufacturers of industrial and automotive belts and hoses. Today, Gates, a subsidiary of Tomkins LTD, is the only non-tire producing rubber company with sales and manufacturing operations in all the world's major markets, including North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and South America. The Ashe County facility, which currently employs 265, manufactures automotive and industrial belts. This project will expand the current facility by adding two robotic cell production lines for synchronous belts used to drive electric power steering generation mechanisms.

Ashe County officials have worked for the past eight months to try to bring this project to Ashe rather than have it go to Arkansas, which was the original plan. According to Judy Poe, chairwoman of the board of commissioners, "This is an exciting project not only for the job creation in the plant – but it is a future oriented product that diversifies production in the Ashe Gates plant. Gates has always been a good community partner in Ashe County and we are excited for them."

Dr. Pat Mitchell, economic developer for the county, believes that diversifying production within a manufacturing facility – particularly to a green manufacturing product (belt for electric car) – makes that plant more sustainable for the future. "We are excited about the jobs created through this new product, and the new capital investment that will be placed in the plant," Mitchell said. "Our commissioners have always been supportive of our manufacturing sector and work towards keeping it a strong part of our economy. We are all excited about this expansion."

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual wage for the new jobs will be \$24,723 not including benefits. The Ashe County average annual wage is \$27,508.

"Gates is very appreciative to the North Carolina Commerce Department, Ashe County Commission and the Town of Jefferson for their support in this initiative. We look forward to the opportunity to add more jobs to the region," said Tony D'alessandro, Plant Manager for the Ashe County facility. "This would not have been possible without the One NC grant, which was the determining factor in the selection of Ashe County over other Gates sites."

The One NC Fund provides financial assistance, through local governments, to attract business projects that will stimulate economic activity and create new jobs in the state. Companies receive no money up front and must meet job creation and investment performance standards to qualify for grant funds. These grants also require and are contingent upon local matches.

North Carolina continues to have a top-ranked business climate. Through Gov. Perdue's JobsNOW initiative, the state works aggressively to create jobs, train and retrain its workforce, and lay the foundation for a strong and sustainable economic future.

Through use of the One NC Fund, more than 50,000 jobs and \$9 billion in investment have been created since 2001. Other partners that helped with this project include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community Colleges, Ashe County Job Development, Inc., Ashe County and the Town of Jefferson. For more information about the Gates Corporation, including job opportunities, go to www.gates.com.

MARK SMITH, Staff

Program helps fund on-the-job training

It sounds like a grand idea: Reimburse companies with 50 or fewer employees up to 90 percent of the cost for on-the-job training, including salary, for people hired to take on new jobs.

That was announced last November when the High Country Workforce Development Board received an American Recovery Act grant of \$500,000 to aid the counties it serves— Alleghany, Wilkes, Ashe, Watauga, Avery, Mitchell and Yancey.

The area was chosen based on its entrenched poverty and jobless rates as well as the number of men and women who had used up their unemployment benefits.

Here in Alleghany County, the Alleghany JobLink Career Center, based at the Business Development Center at Wilkes Community College, was chosen to administer the Workforce Investment Act, or WIA, program.

But Alan Wyatt, local WIA administrator, pointed out that there are some catches. First, individuals who wish to be considered must be enrolled in the WIA program, and second, there must be a job available.

Even with those two elements in place, said Wyatt, there still remain some concerns. For instance, if an unemployed man or woman who is part of the program already knows how to do a job that becomes available, they wouldn't qualify.

"We have to justify and prove that there's a learning curve," Wyatt said, but he added, "It can save a company thousands of dollars."

Don Sherrill, High Country Workforce Development Board operations director in Boone, agreed. "One premise is that you hire someone capable of being trained for the position that's being advertised," he said.

As an employer who can use some new employees, a JobLink business

representative will meet with you at your place of business to discuss the business' needs, the position for which an employee or employees are needed and walk the employer through the process.

As the on-the-job training brochure notes, "There are no complicated forms."

JobLink points out that "any company or business that has an opening for a skilled worker" may qualify. "Alleghany JobLink Career Center OJT program enables you to be reimbursed 50 percent to 90 percent of the new employee's wages while he/she is in training," JobLink says.

According to Sherrill, the actual percentage is based on the size of the company. Companies with 50 or fewer employees would be reimbursed 90 percent of the training costs; those with from 51 to 250 employees would be granted 75 percent reimbursement; and those with more than 250 employees would be awarded 50 percent of training costs.

But both Wyatt and Sherrill made it clear that the individuals hired are to be granted permanent positions where they work. The program is not for temporary employees.

- The position must employ an individual for no less than 32 hours a week.
- The wage and benefit package must be the same as for other employees in a similar position.
- The employer agrees to submit monthly time cards and evaluation to the JobLink business services representative for payment reimbursement.

"We think it might help generate some activity in this area," said Sherrill, "especially in counties that still have relatively high

unemployment rates."

Employers who were to take advantage of the program for short-term help, said Sherrill, would be penalized.

"We would no longer fund on-the-job training for that employer," he said. Thankfully, he added, "I don't know that we've had a lot of problem with that."

In Wilkes County, he said, a meeting for businessmen was held to acquaint them with the program. The federal government "has put a lot of emphasis on what a worker knows and what it will take to train them. It just takes time to go through that at the front end."

Like Wyatt, Sherrill admitted there are problems with turning up available jobs. There are companies that are booming in the area, but they are the exception rather than the rule, "so that's a problem.

In any event, he said, "An employer might have a job, and we have a person, but we have to properly assess the skills that are needed and see that there's a match there."

Rick Roten, at the Wilkes County JobLink site, is the business services representative for Alleghany, Wilkes and Ashe counties. He said the meeting with businessmen attracted about three dozen employers, but only one from Alleghany County. "We may do a similar regional meeting to bring it to Alleghany and Ashe counties," he said.

Roten said two Wilkes County companies have already entered into contracts that will provide the reimbursement funds for new employees with a third contract in development. Eight other Wilkes County companies have sought more information.

Wilkes Journal Patriot, March 23, 2011, p. A 11.

Article reprinted with permission.

OJT program provides funds that help companies expand, put people back to work

Perry Lyon worked in the textile industry for 28 years, and watched as close to 1,500 fellow textile workers employees got pink slips, before he got one in 2010.

About that time, Dorsett Technologies Inc. in Yadkinville was considering expanding and faced the challenge of providing the highly specific training for new employees involved with creating automatic monitoring systems for NASA, military bases and municipal water and wastewater plants.

“It’s been difficult to find talent for the business we’re in,” says Fred Trivette, Dorsett’s VP of Operations. “If I had to train someone from scratch, it would take up to two years before they started making us money.”

About that time, Ricky Roten of the JobLink Career Center in North Wilkesboro called Trivette and asked if he would be interested in hiring someone who qualified for an On-the-Job Training (OJT) grant funded through the High Country Workforce Development Board.

Roten thought that with training, Lyon could be a good fit for Dorsett. He’d been having no luck with his job search though.

At age 52, the former project manager had been told more than once that he was too old and there were huge numbers of applicants for every job opening.

As the weeks wore on Lyon had become long-term unemployed, which made his search even harder. According to recent testimony before the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, few businesses now consider hiring anyone out of work for a prolonged period.

Trivette interviewed Lyon and found that his electric-cal skills were good for a job as project manager. He said that perhaps even more important was that he possessed a good work ethic and attitude.

“There are a lot of people who want jobs, but not that many who want to work,” said Trivette, who promoted Lyon after just a few months. “He’s done well primarily because of his desire to do well. I wish I had twenty Perrys. We’d get a lot done.”

Lyon’s on-the-job training was funded through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant of \$500,000 to the High Country Workforce Development Board.

The funding must be used to subsidize On-the-Job Training for workers affected by plant closures and mass layoffs; who have been unemployed over 19 weeks and can up-skill and re-skill while earning a regular paycheck. Employers can use the subsidies to fuel growth by creating jobs and training people to fill them now, instead of waiting for the economy to improve.

The grants reimburse employers for as much as 90 percent of the trainee’s paycheck, depending on skill gaps and the employer’s company size. Grants last for up to six months and trainee positions must be intended to lead to a permanent job.

“Yes, there’s still some grant money available,” says Roten. He uses Prove-It software to assess skill bases and looks for OJT candidates who, like Lyon, are serious and open to training.

While many employers haven’t yet heard of the program, “every company we’ve done a contract with has been interested in doing another one. Most of the costs that make them nervous about hiring new people come in the initial months.”

Trivette and Lyon are enthusiastic about the program.



Project manager Perry Lyon (l) was laid off, like 100,000 other North Carolina textile workers during the last decade. An On-the-Job Training grant helped him train for a different industry with Fred Trivette (r) of Dorsett Technologies.

“Training costs a lot and a dollar saved in training is a dollar we can invest in growth. We’re expanding in three states. If this hadn’t come up, I’d have had to broaden the search, and we like local people because we don’t do short-term positions. We want to retain employees and offer them a good career,” said Trivette.

“It’s definitely been a learning curve,” says Lyon, who clearly revels in the challenge of overseeing the customized design and installation of Dorsett’s SCADA systems. “As soon as I master one piece of the puzzle, here comes another to learn.”

Lyon said he’s grateful for the opportunity through OJT. “Seventeen of us went out at the same time. Very few have gone back to work.

OJT grants are available to businesses hiring eligible workers with a significant skill gap. They’re intended to be the impetus for creating job opportunities now, while strengthening business productivity and growth. Through the program, 50-90 percent of wages during a training period may be reimbursed for up to 6 months (1,040 hours), depending on the size of the company and skill gap.

The wage and benefit package must be the same as that of employees in the same position.

Reimbursement is capped at 90 percent of the state average wage, \$18.95 in NC.

Employment must be for at least 32 hours per week and intended to be permanent.

Monthly time cards and evaluations must be submitted for reimbursement. Eligible job seekers are carefully evaluated and given career counseling to ensure a good fit.

On-the-Job training is intended for dislocated workers, self-employed workers unemployed because of natural disasters or general economic conditions in the community, and displaced homemakers. It’s a learn-and-earn program.

More details are available by calling Ricky Roten at 336-651-2540, ext.2550, or by sending an e-mail to **Ricky.Roten@wilkescc.edu**.

Federal Training Grant Total in the High Country Tops \$1 Million

In the past seven years, more than \$1 million has been funneled into High Country businesses to upgrade the skills of their workforces, thanks to the High Country Workforce Development Board and federal workforce development funding. Across the seven-county region, more than 2,200 employees have received training that has led to increased productivity and has made the 54 businesses they work for more competitive.

Beginning in May 2003 with a \$31,850 incumbent worker training grant to capacitor manufacturer United Chemi-Con in Lansing, local businesses, aided by the technical assistance of the High Country Workforce Development Board's systems managers Ruby Greene and Adrian Tait have continued to submit outstanding grant applications that received funding in the highly competitive statewide evaluation and award process.

With the recent award of a \$19,000 grant to B & R Service Inc. of Wilkesboro, NC in January 2011, the training grants distributed to local companies now total \$1,040,158.

Training that has been provided with the grant funds include technical skills for specific industries, leadership and supervisory training, lean manufacturing, customer service skills, strategy improvement, information technology training, building science, solar photovoltaic installation, and home energy auditing.

In addition to United Chemi-Con, some companies that have benefited from these federal training grants include Louisiana-Pacific Roaring River (Wilkes), Wilkes Regional Medical Center (Wilkes), Young & McQueen Construction Company (Yancey), Gates Corporation (Ashe), Hospitality Mints (Watauga), TT Electronics/IRC (Watauga), Carolina Morning Designs (Yancey), Appalachian Regional Healthcare System (Watauga), Canon Memorial Hospital (Avery), Magnolia Mfg.-Parkdale Mills (Alleghany), Bombardier Recreational Products (Mitchell), Building Performance Engineering (Watauga), B & R Service Inc. (Wilkes) and Brushy Mountain Bee Farm (Wilkes).

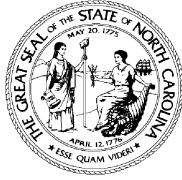
These grants are designed to benefit businesses by enhancing the skills of employees, thereby increasing employee productivity and the potential for company growth. High Country companies provide several case studies demonstrating how effective these grants can be.

Brushy Mountain Bee Farm in Wilkes County and Gates Corporation in Ashe County so successfully implemented their lean manufacturing training that both companies received the \$1 Billion Award for North Carolina from N.C. State University's Industrial Extension Service, recognizing the companies' significant productivity and cost-cutting gains following the training. Brushy Mountain Bee Farm was also named the 2009 Small Business of the Year by *Business North Carolina* magazine.

Steve Forrest, owner of Brushy Mountain, has publicly credited Greene and the High Country Workforce Development Board for helping the business obtain the funding for the lean production training that led to its breakthrough success.

"This program is the only thing I know of trying to help American business, and small business generates jobs" Forrest said. "This is one of the biggest opportunities I've had to positively impact the lives of people here in North Carolina."

Incumbent worker training grants are managed by the High Country Workforce Development Board. The High Country Workforce Development Board is a regional, business-led policy board that oversees workforce development issues. To learn more about incumbent worker training grants, contact Adrian Tait at 828-265-5434, ext. 129 or atait@regiond.org.



**North Carolina
Department of Commerce**

***NC Commission on Workforce Development
Division of Workforce Development***

**Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
J. Keith Crisco, Secretary**

**Christopher C. Rolfe, Chairman
Roger Shackelford, Executive Director**

March 11, 2011

Ms. Carole Coates, Director
High Country Workforce Development Board
468 New Marker Drive
Boone, NC 28607

Dear Ms. Coates:

The Commission on Workforce Development is pleased to announce that the following Incumbent Workforce Development Program proposals submitted by High Country Workforce Development Board have been reviewed and approved under PY 2010 (2031):

Company	Grant Amount	Administrative Fee	Total
Carolina West Wireless	\$25,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$26,250.00
Total Award Amount PY 2010 (2031):	\$26,250.00		

A Notice of Fund Availability will be issued to you. Upon receipt of the NFA, the Local Area should then enter into a contractual agreement with each approved company and submit an administrative adjustment to the Division to incorporate these funds into the current year's Local Area Plan.

Please note that the Incumbent Workforce Development Program Guidelines specify that:

- Training must be completed and funds expended within 12 months
- Upon completion, each company must submit a performance report to the Local Area

313 Chapanoke Rd. Suite 120•4316 Mail Service Center•Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4316

Tel: (919)329-5230•Fax: (919)329-5585

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Ms. Carole Coates, Director
March 11, 2011
Page II

- The Local Area must submit an evaluation to the Division of Workforce Development
- All Incumbent Worker participants must be tracked in **WorkforcePlus**

Refer to the attachments of Local Area Issuance No. 2010-08 for full details.

Please extend our congratulations to the funded companies. If you have any questions or concerns contact Brandon Comeaux at (919) 329-5576 or bcomeaux@nccommerce.com.

Sincerely,



Roger Shackleford

cc: Mr. Earl Tipton, Chair, High Country Workforce Development Board



North Carolina
Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Development

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
J. Keith Crisco, Secretary

Roger Shackelford, Executive Director

March 2, 2011

Mr. Kenny Poteat
Avery County Manager
Avery County Commissioners
P.O. Box 640
Newland, North Carolina 28657

Dear Mr. Poteat:

As arranged with Ms. Carole Coates, Mr. Mose Dorsey will conduct a review of the High Country Workforce Development Consortium on April 19 – 20, 2011. The purpose of the review is to conduct an oversight of the WDB's nondiscrimination and equal opportunity WIA Title I policy and procedures.

The review will begin with an entrance conference at 1:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, and will conclude with an exit conference when the review is completed. Both meetings will be held at the High Country Workforce Development Consortium's office in Boone.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Dorsey at (919) 329-5572.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel L. Giddens".

Daniel L. Giddens
Director of Grants Management

DLG/da

cc: Mr. Rick Herndon
Mr. Bryan Peterson
Ms. Carole Coates



North Carolina
Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Development

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
J. Keith Crisco, Secretary

Roger Shackelford, Executive Director

March 7, 2011

Ms. Carole Coates, Director
High Country Workforce Development Board
468 New Market Boulevard
Boone, NC, 28607

Dear Ms. Coates,

Administrative Adjustment #7 for the High Country Workforce Development Board has been approved. This Administrative Adjustment reflects the following:

- The transfer of \$50,000 from PY 2010 Dislocated Worker funds (2030) to PY 2010 Adult funds (2020).

Administrative Adjustment #8 for the High Country Workforce Development Board has been approved. This Administrative Adjustment reflects the following:

- Update to the High Country's Workforce Development Board membership and notification of a newly elected CEO.

PY 2010 formula funds must be expended by **June 30, 2012**. Funds are available for drawdown. Should you have any questions, please contact your Planner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda S. Savage".

Brenda S. Savage
Chief of Planning and Policy Development

BSS/jam



North Carolina
Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Development

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
J. Keith Crisco, Secretary

Roger Shackelford, Executive Director

March 9, 2011

Ms. Carole Coates, Director
High Country Workforce Development Board
468 New Market Boulevard
Boone, NC, 28607

Dear Ms. Coates,

Administrative Adjustment #9 for the High Country Workforce Development Board has been approved. This Administrative Adjustment reflects the following:

- The incorporation of \$100,000 in PY 2010 (2031) Contingency funds

Contingency funds must be expended by **June 30, 2011**. Funds are available for drawdown. Should you have any questions, please contact your Planner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda S. Savage".

Brenda S. Savage
Chief of Planning and Policy Development

BSS/jam



North Carolina
Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Development

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
J. Keith Crisco, Secretary

Roger Shackelford, Executive Director

March 24, 2011

Mr. Kenny Poteat
Avery County Manager
Avery County Commissioners
P.O. Box 640
Newland, North Carolina 28657

Dear Mr. Poteat:

On March 24, 2011, the Division of Workforce Development finalized the review of High Country Workforce Development Consortium's audit for the year ended June 30, 2010. The audit was reviewed for compliance with OMB Circular A-133. There were no findings associated with grants received from DWD; therefore, we consider the audit closed for funds received through our office. Although the audit is closed, please keep in mind that any program year allocation for which you continue to expend funds is not considered closed until fully audited. According to our records, the following grants are fully expended and audited:

2007-2031 2007-2040 2007-2050

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Linda Johnson-Spence at (919) 329-5274.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel L. Giddens".

Daniel L. Giddens
Director of Grants Management

DLG/da

cc: Mr. Bryan Peterson
Mr. Rick Herndon
Ms. Carole Coates

313 Chapanoke Rd. Suite 120•4316 Mail Service Center•Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4316

Tel: (919)329-5230•Fax: (919)662-4770

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Visit the High Country Workforce Development Board Website

ATTENTION MEMBERS: Board Books are now accessible on the Board website, www.highcountrywdb.com. Select “Publications” from the menu on the right, then click on the new “**Board Books**” category.

Visit www.highcountrywdb.com and select “**About the HC WDB**” to access more information on the High Country Workforce Development Board and Consortium. Be sure to Check the “**Calendar of Events**” for current meeting and events information, and “**Headlines**” for local area workforce development news articles.

For more information on local area JobLink Centers, click on www.highcountrywdb.com and select “**JobLink Career Centers**” from the menu at the left of the web page.

Contact information for **Staff to the Board** can be found on the “**About the HC WDB**” web page at www.highcountrywdb.com.

The High Country WDB now has a **Facebook** page:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/High-Country-Workforce-Development-Board/325705946320?ref=ts>

Services and activities funded by the High Country Workforce Development Board are equal opportunity programs/employers.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

To place a free relay call in North Carolina, dial 711.