

Summer 2025

AB Tech Community College

Asheville • Madison • Enka • Woodfin
(828) 398-7900 • abtech.edu

The Impact



10.8%

Unemployment skyrocketed from 2.5% to 10.8% - largest change in the nation.

5%

Buncombe County lost nearly 5% of its workforce by December 2024.

$1.8B

Buncombe County experienced tourism revenue losses of $1.8 billion in fall 2024.

The Opportunity

#1

North Carolina ranks as the #1 state for manufacturing.

860

860+ manufacturers in WNC disaster area alone.

70,000 sq ft

The Futures Factory would bring a 70,000 sq ft advanced manufacturing innovation facility on donated land for shared R&D, pilot production, & workforce training under one roof.



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The Benefits

2,747
total jobs created regionally (3,150 statewide).

$189M
increase in regional labor income

$359M
increase in regional GDP

500
new high-wage positions created (130% of average regional compensation)

$189M
increase in regional labor income

800
workers trained annually by 2035



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The Futures Factory

01

Technology Testbed

- Shared R&D facility with university partners.
- Industry 4.0/5.0 demonstration labs.
- Partnership with national institutes LIFT and MxD.

02

Talent Pipeline

- AB Tech delivers on-site training curricula.
- 800 learners upskilled annually by 2035.
- Stackable credentials through NC Community College System.

03

Industry Engagement

- Direct support for regional manufacturers.
- Federal contracting opportunities (DoD partnerships).
- Supply chain resilience and diversification.

Local Impact, Southeastern Collaboration



Research & Development

- WCU
- App State
- UNC-Asheville
- NC State
- NC A&T
- UNC-Charlotte
- NC Innovation



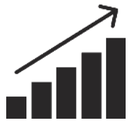
Industry Partners & Business Leadership

- AVL Technologies
- BorgWarner
- New Belgium Brewing
- RTX/PW
- GE Aerospace
- Southeast Container
- System Logistics



Workforce Training

- AB Tech CC
- Blue Ridge CC
- McDowell Tech CC
- Haywood CC
- Mayland CC
- Isothermal CC



State of North Carolina & NC Department of Commerce

- Governor Stein
- Sec. Lilley
- Office of Science, Tech & Innovation



North Carolina Delegation

- Sen. Budd
- Sen. Tillis
- Rep. Edwards



Manufacturing USA Institutes

- MxD
- Lift

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Outcomes for Buncombe County

1. Strengthen the WNC workforce.
2. Establish an innovation to production pipeline.
3. Scale for national impact.

