Gaston College

North Carolina Center for Applied Textile Technology

W. Duke Kimbell Campus

State-Created Asset Advancing Workforce, Innovation, and Economic Growth

Our Origin: Built for a Moment of Crisis

- In 1941 the NC Vocational Textile School was approved by the state; operations began in 1943
- Established during World War II
- The purpose of the North Carolina Center for Applied Textile Technology is to develop a world-class workforce for the textile industry in North Carolina; support the textile industry by identifying problems confronting the industry and assisting the industry in solving them; garner support from the textile industry for the work of the Center; and serve as a statewide center of excellence that serves all components of the textile industry. (2005-103, s. 3.)

A State-Created Asset That Evolves With Industry

1941–1943: Approved and launched as the NC Vocational Textile School (Belmont)

1972: Legislatively attached to the NC Department of Community Colleges

1991: Designated as the 59th institution in the Community College System

2005: Transferred to Gaston College and renamed NCCATT / Textile Technology Center

Adapting as Manufacturing Changed

- Domestic industry profile shifting due to global trade agreements
- Rise of innovation, advanced materials, and automation
- Industry demand moved from labor → **testing, quality, and R&D support**

Our Mission Is Defined in State Law (§115D-67.1)

- Develop a world-class workforce for the textile industry
- Support industry problem-solving and innovation
- Garner and maintain industry engagement statewide
- Serve as North Carolina's center of excellence for textiles

One-of-a-Kind Industry Resource

- Third-party testing and failure analysis
- Fiber-to-fabric Development and prototyping
- Advanced materials, polymers, and sustainability testing
- Workforce training and associate degree education

Workforce Development & Associate Degrees

- Launch of 2-Year Textile Technology Degree led by the demand of industry
    - **2 Program Graduates, 1 Transfer student to NCSU, 35+ adult learner participants**
- Apprenticeship Program in Textiles
- 2+2 Articulation Agreement with NC State University
- Transfer Pathway with NC A&T State University
- Industry needs aligned with hands-on curriculum
- Customized Industry Training with relevant skills, trainers and credentials with over **2000 trained in 2025**

Workforce Development: Textile Academy

Industry-Driven Training: Short-term, stackable credentials designed with manufacturers to address real-time skill gaps.

Hands-On + Applied Learning: Training embedded directly in lab environments—learn on the same equipment used in modern mills.

Rapid Upskilling & Reskilling: Supports incumbent workers, new hires, and career switchers without requiring long-term time away from work.

Statewide & National Reach: Serves North Carolina manufacturers while supporting companies across all 50 states with availability online

Pipeline to Degrees: Acts as an on-ramp to the AAS Textile Technology degree—training today, credentials tomorrow.

Credentials

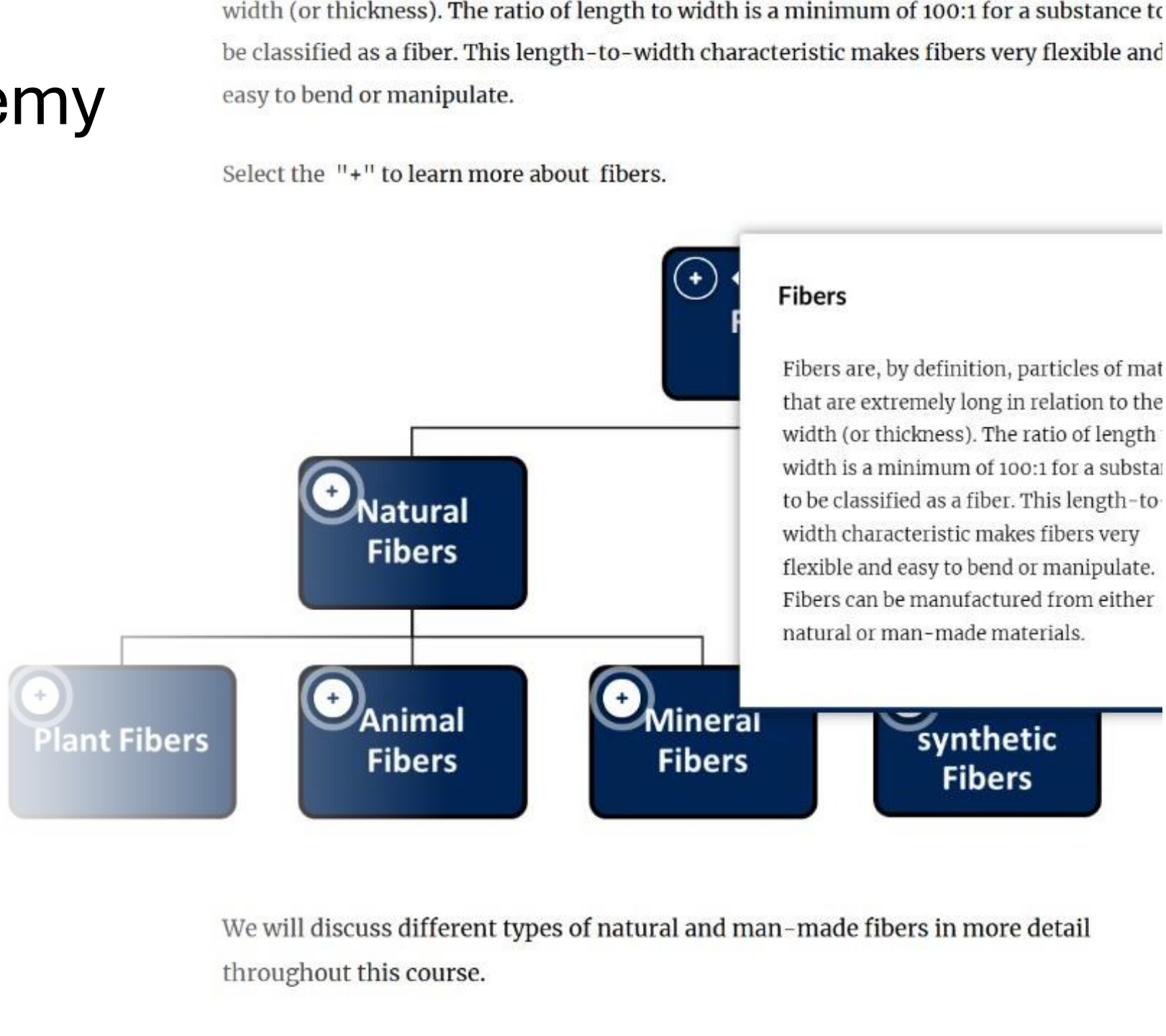
After a 4- Week program participants leave with a certificate of completion from Gaston College, OSHA 10-Hour Certification and Forklift Certification

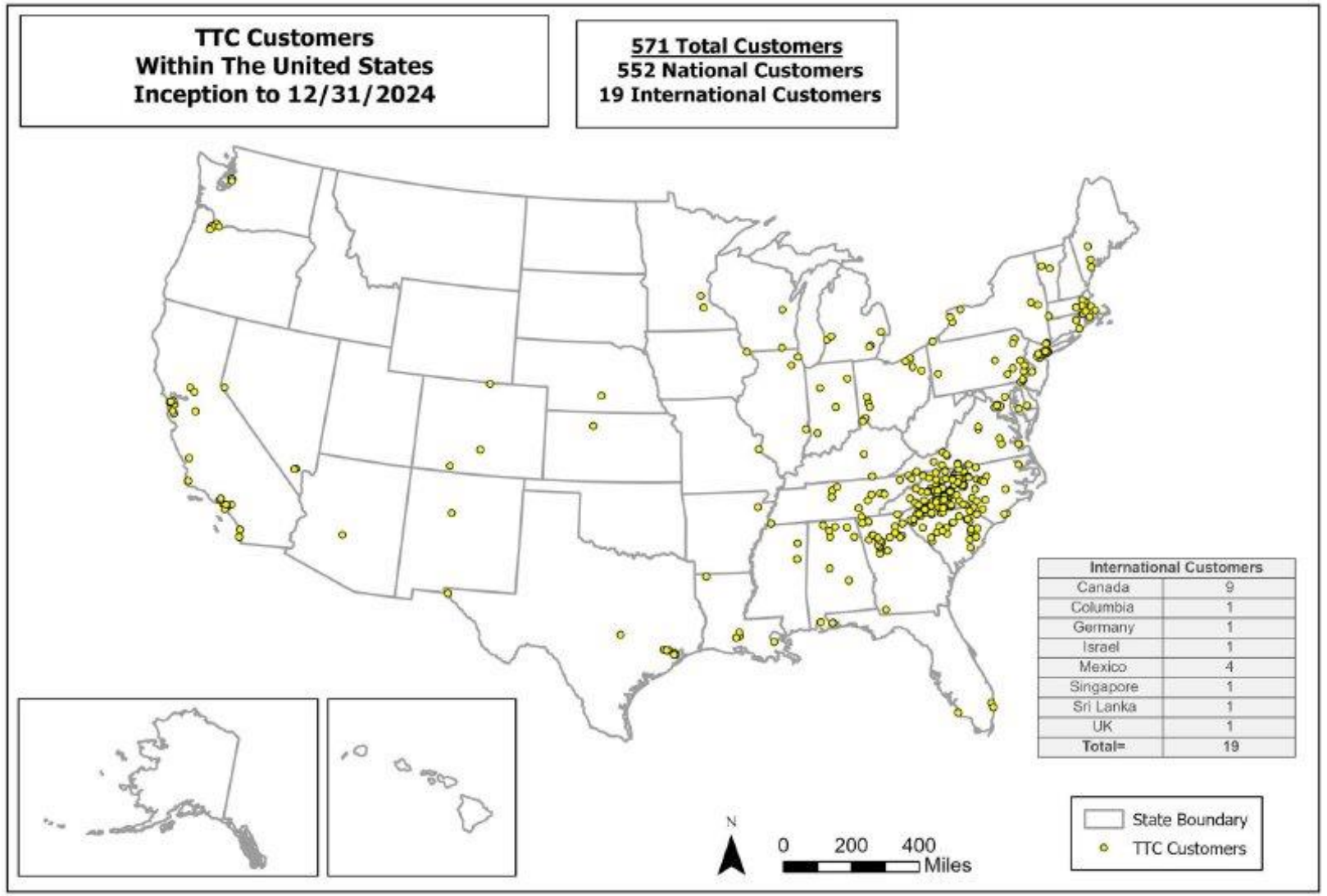
Online Textile Academy

Anywhere, Anytime Learning:
Online modules allow workers to train across shifts, plants, and geographic boundaries.

Standardized, High-Quality Content: 8 Modules available which include textile specific training, soft skills and basic math.

Rapid Deployment for Industry Needs:
New courses can be launched quickly in response to emerging technologies. Online academy participants earn a credential in 3-weeks





Economic Impact: Statewide and National Reach

- 21 North Carolina companies served in FY 2023–24
- 116,000 workers supported; $19B in company income
- $2.7M in direct operational economic impact
- Services provided to companies in 37 states and globally

The Opportunity - Capitalize on Strengths

From the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina

Since 2020, EDPNC has measured $1.2B in Capital Expenses from textile projects selecting and growing in NC. This has resulted in a committed 4,353 net-new jobs.

A skilled workforce is king in site selection right now, and companies will go where resources have been invested resulting in employable workers.

From NC Governor's Office

North Carolina Outstanding Innovative Partnership - Gaston College

From Site Selection Magazine

North Carolina Named **No.1** in Site Selection Magazine's Annual Workforce Development Rankings

The Funding Model Has Not Kept Pace

Current recurring state allocation: $753,986

Annual payroll: $1.8M supporting 22 highly skilled technical staff

Shortfall subsidized by college-wide FTE funds

This diverts resources away from students and academic programs

The Request: A Corrective Investment to Support Economic and Workforce Development

- $4,000,000 in recurring Specific Program Categorical Allocations
- Aligns funding with the Center’s legislatively defined role
- Stabilizes expert technical workforce and statewide services
- Protects student funding while expanding economic impact

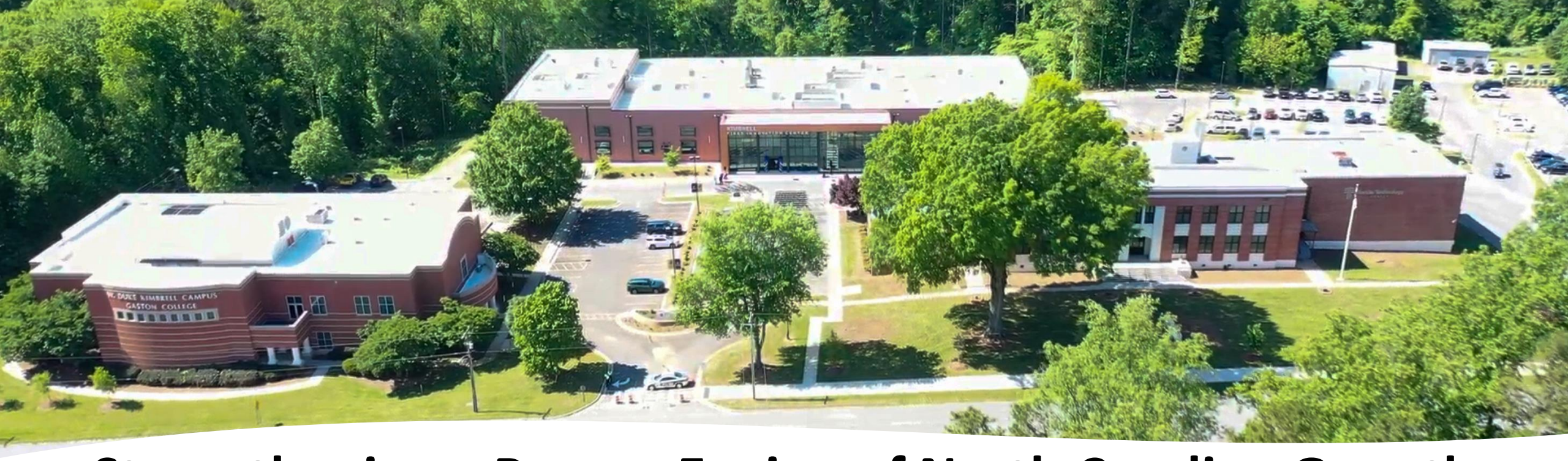
State Investment Unlocks Federal & Department of Defense Funding

Department of Defense relies on NCCATT for proprietary materials and supply-chain access

$4M recurring state funding enables up to $450M in DoD funding over ten years in partnership with NC State University, Georgia Tech, Drexel University, and UMASS Lowell

NSF Sustainable Textiles Innovation Engine: $1.5M awarded, up to $160M potential

Without stable state funding, these federal opportunities are not obtainable



Strengthening a Proven Engine of North Carolina Growth

GASTON COLLEGE

- Preserves North Carolina's textile heritage and evolving technology driven industry
- Advances innovation, workforce development, and economic growth
- Strengthens national defense and supply-chain resilience

Textile Technology CENTER