



# House Committee Education Forum

March 21, 2022



Melissa Merrell, UCPS  
Board of Education Chairman



Dr. Andrew Houlihan, Union County  
Public Schools Superintendent



Dr. Maria Pharr, South Piedmont  
Community College President



Dr. Rhett Brown, Wingate  
University President

WELCOME

*my*  
FUTURE  
NC

*2 million by 2030.*

**WE NEED TO CLOSE THE  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT GAP  
IN NORTH CAROLINA.**

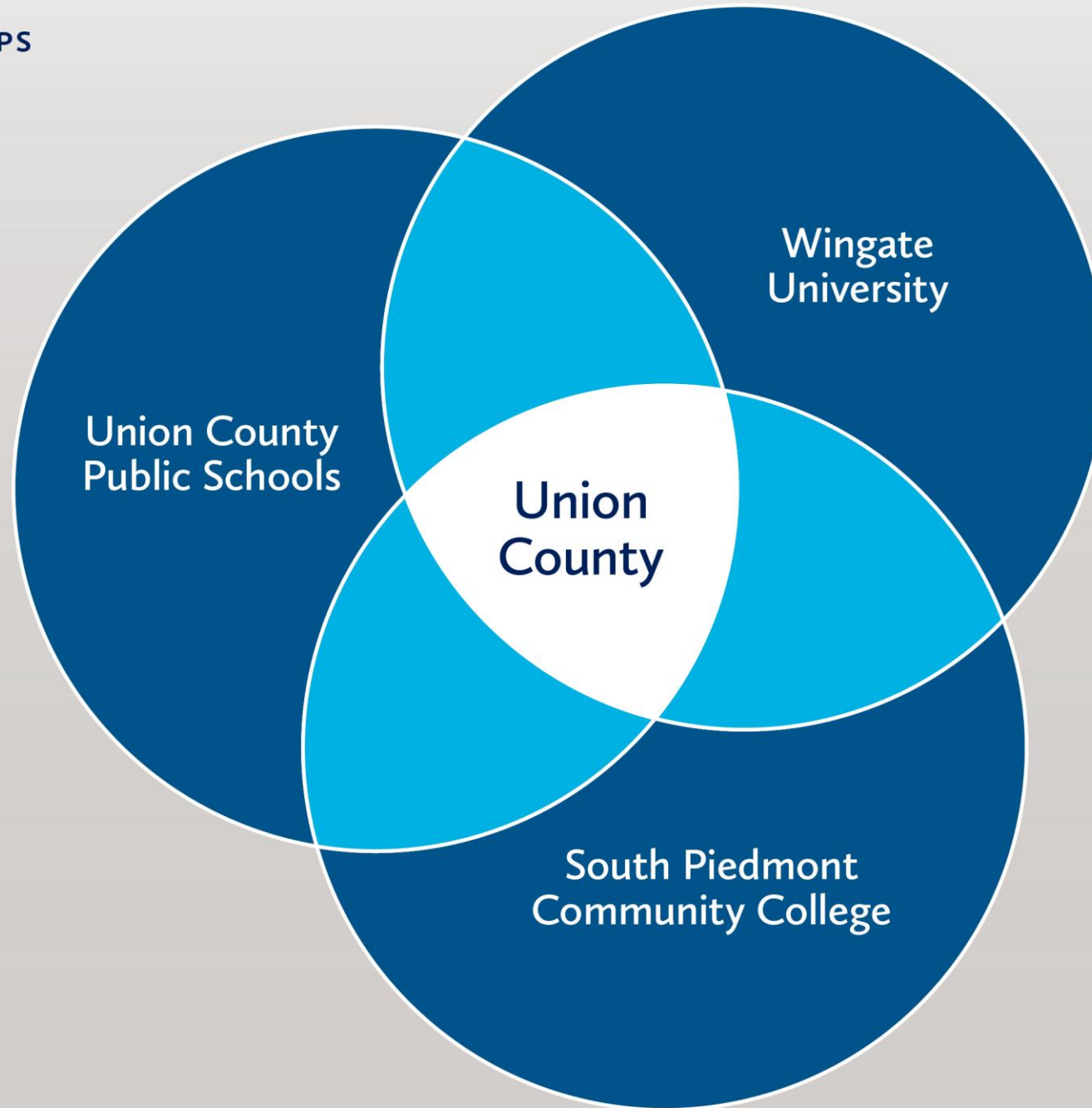


That starts with an ambitious goal: ensuring that by 2030,  
**2 million North Carolinians** have a high-quality credential  
or a postsecondary degree.

Only **31 out of every 100** North Carolina high school graduates finishes a degree or credential within **6 years** of completing high school.

By 2023, nearly 67 percent of jobs in our state will **require a post-secondary degree** or high-quality credential.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS



# UCPS

UNION COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## FAST FACTS

**53**  
schools

**92.7%**  
graduation rate

**40,000**  
students

**3**  
National  
Blue Ribbon  
Schools of  
Excellence

**5,000**  
employees

**20**  
dual  
language  
programs

## ADDITIONAL FACTS

**2**  
Leader in Me  
Lighthouse  
Schools

Each high school offers a  
minimum of 10 AP courses

Career-advancing cohort  
opportunities for staff

**6,819**  
credentials earned in  
20+ Career Readiness  
pathways



# College and Career Readiness

- In 2016, conversations shifted from college or career readiness to college and career readiness at all grade levels.
- Expanded resources and platforms to help students with college planning and course tracking.
- Increased partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.
- Created new learning opportunities in schools.

# College and Career Readiness

- Elementary Level - Exposure
  - ✓ Implemented college visits for fourth-grade students
  - ✓ Participated in annual College Colors Day
  - ✓ Implemented AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) at Walter Bickett, Wingate and Marshville elementary schools
  - ✓ Enhanced college awareness throughout the school buildings through pennants and signage
  - ✓ Participated in Wake up to Ag Day in cooperation with Union County Cooperative Extension

# College and Career Readiness

- Middle - Exploration

- ✓ Introduced Wayfind at Monroe and East Union middle schools
- ✓ Implemented college visits for seventh-grade students
- ✓ Offering students the opportunity to visit colleges virtually (VR headsets)
- ✓ Major Clarity – all middle schools have achieved Power User status (16,489 student usage)
- ✓ Expanded Career and Technical Education (CTE) enrollment and courses offered
- ✓ Added two middle school career development coordinators
- ✓ Participated in Make it in Union, Equipment Rodeo activities
- ✓ Developed Speakers Bureau



# College and Career Readiness

- High – Experience
  - ✓ Increased ACT and SAT prep courses
  - ✓ Increased Advanced Placement and Career and College Promise courses
  - ✓ Expanded International Baccalaureate (Fall of 2022)
  - ✓ College representatives visit schools
  - ✓ SCOIR college guidance management system
  - ✓ Expanded Career and Technical Education (CTE) enrollment and courses offered
  - ✓ Increased enrollment in CTE course pathways
  - ✓ Increased the number of academy options at each high school

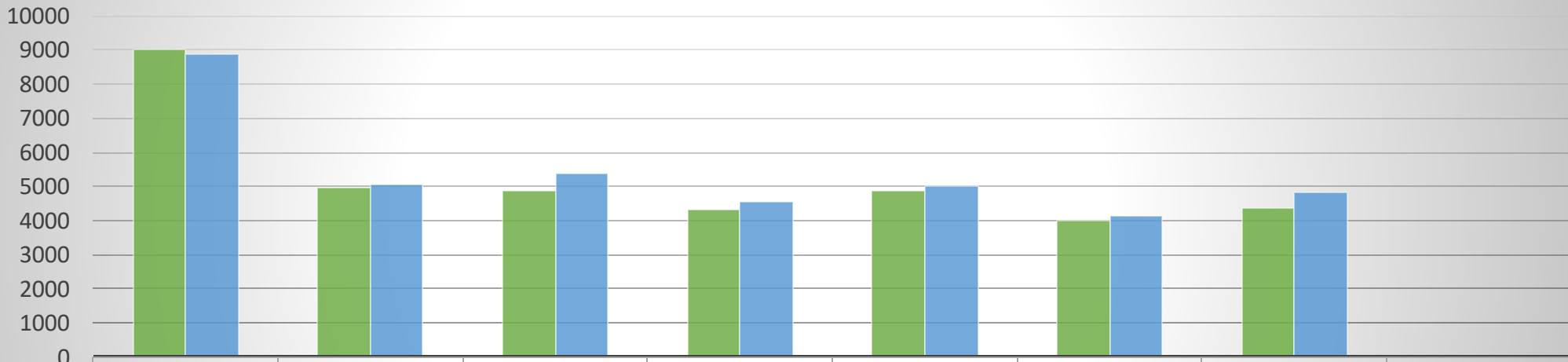
# College and Career Readiness Data

- Since 2020, UCPS has added two new academy options (Agriculture Mechanics and Robotics Engineering)
- For the 2022-2023 school year, 22 academy options will be available.
- Approximately 1,300 students are identified as CTE Concentrators. These students have completed a CTE course pathway in a specific area.



# College and Career Readiness Data

## CTE Enrollment (Grades 6 – 13)

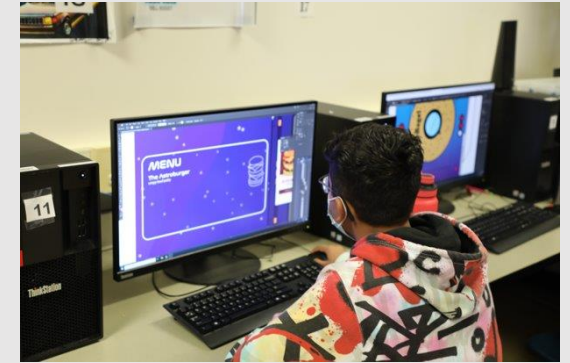


	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	13th Grae (UCEC)
■ 2020-2021	9015	4982	4873	4313	4886	3991	4367	32
■ 2021-2022	8906	5039	5373	4553	4989	4140	4839	56

# College and Career Readiness Data

## 2020-2021 Top Ten PSUs by Number of Credentials Earned

Public School Unit	2020-2021 Number Earned	2019-2020 Number Earned
Union County Schools	★ 9,218	6,121
Caldwell County Schools	★ 6,516	5,195
Gaston County Schools	6,065	14,986
Wake County Schools	5,602	12,895
Randolph County Schools	4,004	5,625
Onslow County Schools	3,624	5,107
Rowan-Salisbury Schools	3,601	7,660
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	3,256	7,016
Burke County Schools	★ 3,249	2,928
Cumberland County Schools	3,105	12,883





- Free college-access program with a foundation in mentorship for Monroe Middle, East Union, Monroe High and Forest Hills High students.
- Scholars are paired with Wingate University students to learn about college planning, financial aid, SAT and ACT prep, college visits, etc.
- There are 70 Wayfind scholars and 20 new scholars representing the class of 2026 were inducted in February.

# Health Sciences Academy

*A college and career pathway for UCPS students*



# Health Sciences Academy

- In 2016, UCPS identified six schools with low engagement and student achievement.
- Schools were identified as D/F schools by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
- Focus areas:
  - ✓ Effective leadership
  - ✓ Effective teachers
  - ✓ Daily, in school, intensive tutoring
  - ✓ Mental and behavioral health support
  - ✓ School Culture
  - ✓ More time in school

# Health Sciences Academy

- The Health Sciences Academy at Monroe Middle began in the fall of 2017.
- The vision:
  - ✓ Increase and expand student and community engagement
  - ✓ Create relevant learning opportunities for students through a partnership with Atrium Health Union
  - ✓ Develop a K-12 health sciences program in the Monroe cluster
  - ✓ Align an innovative college and career pathway with education partners



# Health Sciences Academy

## Health Sciences at the middle school level

- Started in the fall of 2017 at Monroe Middle
- Curriculum includes a variety of related arts courses focusing on health sciences—medical investigators, neuroscience and biotechnology
- Atrium Health provides a healthcare specialist who is a liaison between the school and hospital
- Career-building experiences, watch live surgeries, externships



# Health Sciences Academy

## Health Sciences at the elementary school level

- Started in the fall of 2020 at East and Walter Bickett
- Curriculum includes neuroscience, nutrition and project-based learning
- Atrium Health provides a healthcare specialist who is a liaison between the school and hospital
- Hands-on experiences, career fairs, parent engagement events



# Health Sciences Academy

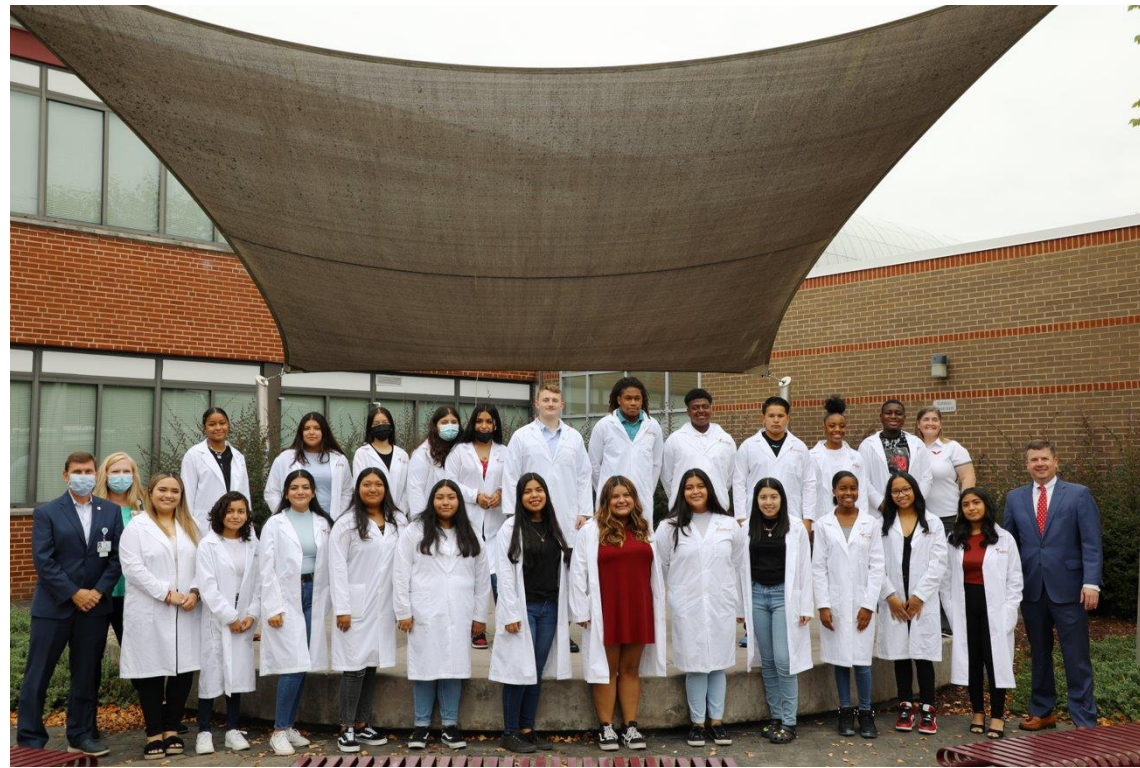
## Health Sciences at the high school level

- Started in the fall of 2020 at Monroe High
- 55 students enrolled in 2020 and 60 students enrolled in 2021
- Atrium Health provides a healthcare specialist who is a liaison between the school and hospital
- Experiences and opportunities include:
  - Project Lead the Way curricula, Career and College Promise, patient care and medical emergency simulations, hospital tours, clinical experiences and surgery and procedure observations
- Staff works closely with CTE Department for course interests, development and pathways

# Health Sciences Academy

## Health Sciences at the high school level

Celebrated first cohort of HSA students with white coat pinning ceremony in October 2021.



# Health Sciences Academy Partners



W I N G A T E



# Union County CCP and Early College: Enrollment, Course Success, and Course Retention

Enrollment in SPCC	Course Success Average	Course Retention Average
4311	89%	96%

*Represents 10 high schools and Union County Early College*

# SPCC ECONOMIC IMPACT



**\$124.3 million**

Total income added to the region

**1.4%**

Of region's GRP

**2,246**

Total jobs supported in the region



**5.2**

Benefit-cost ratio for students

**\$41.3 million**

Total taxpayer benefits

**6.5**

Benefit-cost ratio for society

# Pre-Apprenticeship to Apprenticeship

- Earn while you learn – free tuition and FT progressive wages
- Journey Worker’s Certification, college credits towards diploma or degree





# Road2Wingate

- Guaranteed Admissions
- Seamless Transfer
- Event & Facility Access
- Coordinated Support



# Gateway Scholarship

SPCC Graduates can attend Wingate University and complete their 4-year degree for the **cost of just \$2,500 a year.**

Maximum Investment  
=  
**\$5,000**



## SPCC-WINGATE TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS RATES

	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
SPCC Students Enrolled/Graduated	96%	89%	91%	100%

## SPCC & WINGATE TRANSFER RECORDS

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	3 Year Change
Adult learners transferred from SPCC to Wingate	8	18	20	27	+70%
Total students transferred from SPCC to Wingate	57	62	71	72	+21%

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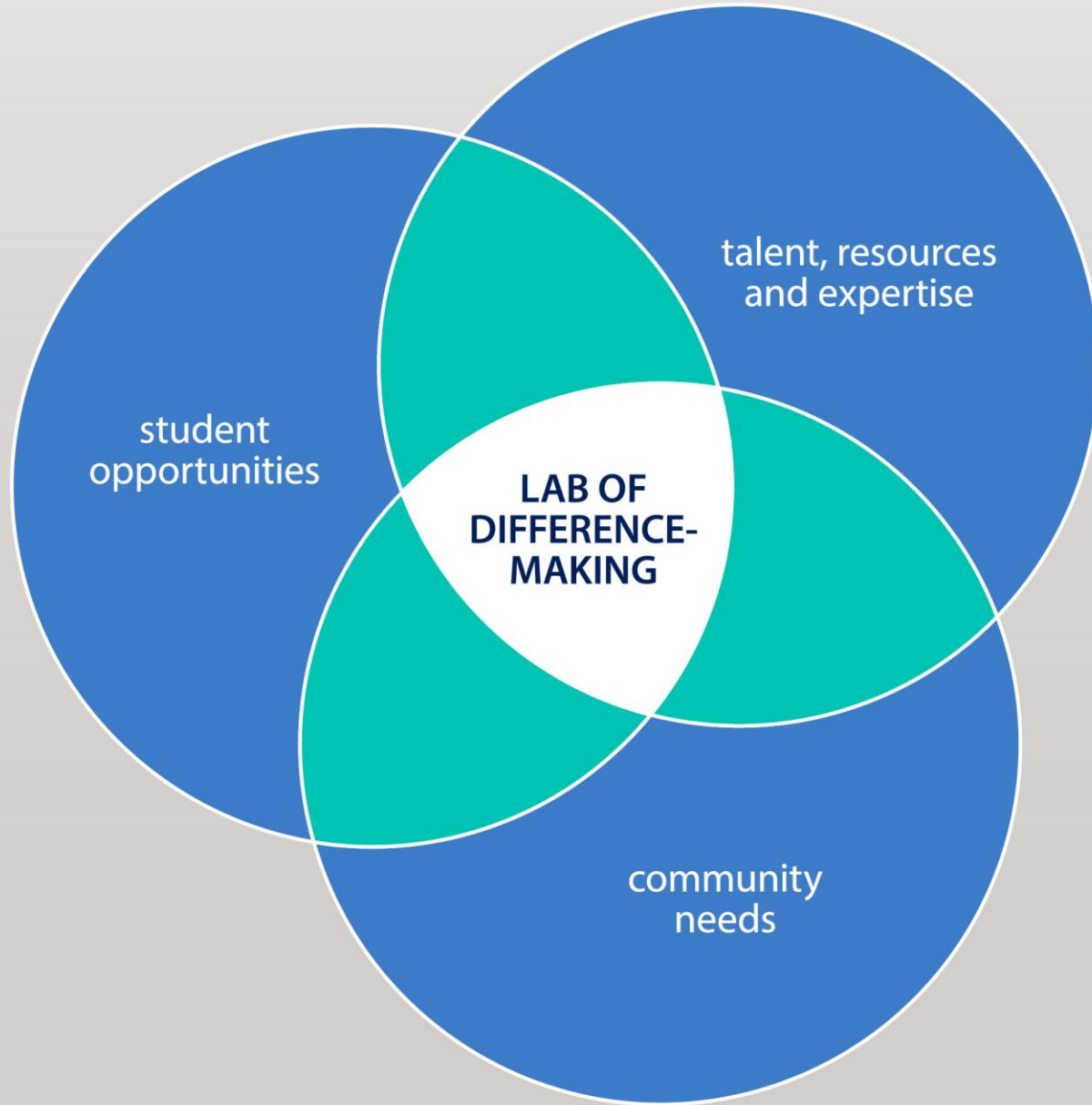
By 2023, nearly 67 percent of jobs in our state will **require a post-secondary degree** or high-quality credential.



## Achievements

- Over fourteen community and core team meetings have been held online, in person, and hybrid to accommodate attendees needs.
- Stakeholders from twenty-five organizations are attending and participating in collaborative meetings.
- The collaborative adopted the following vision statement: *Our Future in UNiSON leverages community resources to increase educational attainment in Anson and Union counties by 16% by 2030. In our work, we will empower individuals to be successful, build a talent pipeline that meets labor-market needs, and expand economic development to reduce generational poverty.*
- The collaborative set the following attainment goals: (1) 651 additional degrees/credentials (16% increase) by 2030 for population 25-44 in Anson County; (2) 4,218 additional degrees/credentials (16% increase) by 2030 for population 25-44 in Union County.
- Working teams were created based on target audiences. Teams defined their goals, outcomes, and criteria for success.

## THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS



## ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Monroe-Union County Economic Development
- Town of Wingate
- Union County

## EDUCATION

- South Piedmont Community College
- Union County Public Schools

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Atrium Health
- Community Health Services of Union County
- Novant Health
- Union County Health Department

## PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

- Aquatic Center
- Community Health Clinic
- Entrepreneurial Center
- Friendship House
- Town of Wingate Development Initiative