In the Asheville area, the education and business community work closely together, building the elements necessary to support a vibrant economy.

Business and industry leaders find an education community eager to help assess and meet the ever-changing needs of the region’s workplace by producing a highly-capable workforce.

Students find opportunities to hone the skills needed for a successful future -- from applying knowledge in real-life work situations with area businesses, artists, and research institutions, to the growing emphasis on science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and global readiness themes.

The result is an environment that fosters business and educational goals, provides promising career paths for students, and develops the skills and talent sought by industry.

“"It is crucial for our students to know what business and industry surrounds them in Buncombe County. We are educating our future workforce.”

— Christy Cheek
Director of Career and Technical Education
Buncombe County Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Opens Doors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Earnings by Educational Attainment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asheville, NC Metro Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College or Associate’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012
The Asheville region is home to nationally recognized institutions of higher learning, including three campuses of the University of North Carolina system, four campuses of the North Carolina Community College system and five private colleges.

From liberal arts programs that stress critical thinking and creativity, to programs that emphasize the importance of work and service to community, to innovative collaborations with some of the nation’s leading educational and scientific institutions – all play a role in actively building the local economy and developing the workforce talent.

“Students get to take the stuff they are learning from a book and actually apply it in a work team with professionals on campus. They get to see how those skills really integrate into a real-life job.”

— James F. (Jim) Fox, UNC Asheville Director, NEMAC

UNC ASHEVILLE

A part of the University of North Carolina system, UNC Asheville is one of the top public liberal arts universities in the nation. The school consistently ranks high in academic quality and affordability and is known for a rigorous education that emphasizes critical thinking, adaptability, creativity and workforce skills for the 21st century.

Of Note

- Named seventh best public liberal arts college in the nation by US News & World Report, 2014 Best Colleges Guide, as well as Princeton Review’s one of 20 institutions that have “Great College Towns.”

- More than 30 majors, including Atmospheric Science, Computer Science, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Health and Wellness, and New Media.

- Graduates a higher percentage of math majors than any other school in the UNC system.

Home to:

- National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC), the Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI at UNC Asheville), the UNC Asheville-NC State Mechatronics and 2+2 Engineering degree programs, a satellite campus of UNC-Chapel Hill Eshelman School of Pharmacy doctoral program, and the NC Center for Health & Wellness.

- Innovation through the nationally acclaimed Undergraduate Research Program, where more than 60% of students complete original research in their field of study.

Photo: Caroline Dougherty, Science Information Designer and Student Program Co-Coordinator, NEMAC. Courtesy: UNC Asheville.
The Center works with all departments on campus to create a collaborative environment in which students throughout the university will be inspired to develop a business around their life’s passion, such as art or music. We are looking forward to seeing a larger number of business start-ups over the coming years as a result of the Center’s efforts to create a more collaborative and integrated environment.”

— Joseph P. Lakatos
Director for the Center of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, College of Business, Western Carolina University
A-B TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

With a combined total enrollment of over 25,000, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College has the largest total annual enrollment of any institution of higher learning in Western North Carolina. A part of the North Carolina Community College System, the school provides job skills instruction to students and customized training to support local businesses and industries.

The school has three separate campus locations in Asheville, Enka and Madison County to accommodate working professionals, those engaged in workforce development training, entrepreneurs launching new businesses, as well as traditional students.

Of Note

- Approximately 60 curriculum programs, including Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, Culinary Arts and Hospitality, and Entrepreneurship.
- The college’s Department of Economic and Workforce Development supports new and expanding industry through a variety of customized training programs.
- In 2013, A-B Tech was one of 16 colleges in the nation awarded a $100,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help students stay on track toward completion of educational goals.
- A $129 million construction project is under way to improve and expand facilities campuswide, including a new state-of-the-art home for the Allied Health and Workforce Development programs.

FACTS & STATS

- In 2012-13, there were a total of 1,080 community college graduates in Buncombe County.
  
  Source: NC Community College System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment of Population Age 25+</th>
<th>Asheville Metro</th>
<th>North Carolina</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate's Degree</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

“Through a grant made available from A-B Tech, I completed a 12-week Automated Machining course, and I think it’s a big reason I got hired by Linamar. The education I received in this course and others at the college really prepared me for the work world.”

— Owen Varner
Machine Operator, Linamar

Photo courtesy A-B Tech.
(Appalachian State University)

Located 90 miles northeast of Asheville, ASU is a part of the University of North Carolina system and is regularly cited as a best value in public education. The school combines the attributes of a small liberal arts college with those of a large research university.

Of Note

- Approximately 150 undergraduate and graduate major programs, including Building Sciences, Education, Entrepreneurship, Industrial Design, Nursing, Sustainable Development and Engineering Physics.
- The school’s Office of Student Research promotes learning through mentored research experiences with ASU faculty and other national and international scholars and professionals.
- The Center for Entrepreneurship provides current and former students from all disciplines with the tools, support and network they need to start and grow a business.
- The Appalachian Energy Center conducts energy research and applied program activities in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, forecasting and modeling, economic development and policy analysis.

(LeNoir-Rhyne University Center for Graduate Studies)

Located in Asheville, this is one of three campuses of the private college based in Hickory. The local campus offers master’s level programs in 10 areas including Business Administration, Nursing, Public Health, Sustainability Studies and Writing.

(Mars Hill University)

A private four-year college located in Madison County, with a satellite campus in Asheville. The school offers 30 majors, including Business Administration and Management, Computer Science, International Studies and Social Work, and graduate studies in Elementary Education. Offered in the evening, the school’s Adult Studies program is designed to fit the needs of working adults who wish to earn degrees or licensure.

(Montreat College)

A private Christian four-year college with satellite campuses in Asheville and four other locations across North Carolina. Montreat College offers Undergraduate, Adult Undergraduate, Graduate and Professional programs, with degrees that include Business Administration, Computer Information Systems, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Environmental Studies, and Management & Leadership.

(Warren Wilson College)

A private college emphasizing academics, work for the school and service to the community. The school offers approximately 50 undergraduate majors and areas of concentration, including Environmental Studies, Pre-Environmental Management and Pre-Forestry, and Pre-Medical Studies. The college is also home to a nationally renowned Master of Fine Arts Program for Writers. More than 75 businesses in the region are currently owned or operated by WWC graduates, according to the school’s 2013-14 Alumni Business Directory. They include ventures in outdoor recreation and gear, agriculture, art and design, landscape and construction, retail, hospitality and services.

www.EconomicDevelopmentAsheville.org
Over 200,000 students enrolled in colleges and universities within an easy drive of Asheville.

Source: NCES, 2012

**25 Mile Radius**

**Estimated 20,300 Enrolled Students**

Includes

- Asheville-Buncombe Tech Community College
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Haywood Community College
- Brevard College
- Mars Hill University
- Montreat College*
- South College-Asheville
- University of North Carolina Asheville
- Warren Wilson College

**50 Mile Radius**

**Estimated 82,200 Enrolled Students**

Includes

- Furman University
- Western Carolina University*

**100 Mile Radius**

**Estimated 102,100 Enrolled Students**

Includes

- Appalachian State University
- Clemson University
- Lenoir-Rhyne University*
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Wofford College

*Schools that also have a satellite campus in Asheville.

- **Two Year Programs**
- **Four Year Programs**

- **25 Mile Radius**
- **50 Mile Radius**
- **100 Mile Radius**

Approximations only. Map not to scale.
Advanced Manufacturing Cluster

Made in Asheville, North Carolina, USA

- A-B Tech’s capacity to collaborate with and create customized training for area businesses was a big factor in GE Aviation’s decision to build its new manufacturing operation in Asheville. Scheduled to open in 2014, the facility is the first in the world to mass-produce jet engine components made of advanced ceramic matrix composite materials. A-B Tech, through its Office of Economic and Workforce Development, is creating a 5,000-square-foot training center and specially designed curriculum to teach GE employees the advanced manufacturing skills needed to make the state-of-the-art components.

“They have one of only two Mechatronics programs in the U.S. That’s why I chose UNC Asheville. Beyond engineering and math, Mechatronics at UNC Asheville opens your mind to so much more, like history and philosophy. It’s awesome!”

— Gus Tabaileh
UNC Asheville
Class of 2014
Linamar employee

Engineering a Career Locally

- The UNC Asheville-NC State University Mechatronics program combines a liberal arts education with rigorous studies in engineering disciplines. The four-year mechatronics program is one of only two undergraduate programs in the country accredited by ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology), the recognized accrediting body for college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering and technology. Approximately 90 percent of mechatronics graduates are employed in their field, primarily in the Asheville area at companies such as Linamar, Arvato Digital Systems, Kearfott Guidance and Navigation, Arvin Meritor and Nypro.

- At Western Carolina University, students in the Kimmel School of Construction Management & Technology regularly engage in project-based learning, applying the fundamentals they learn in the classroom to solve problems and improve processes at area manufacturers such as Eaton, Honeywell and Tyco Electronics.

Photo courtesy UNC Asheville.
Science & Tech Cluster

Translating Scientific Data

- Research professionals and students work side by side at UNC Asheville’s National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) to create tools that help policy makers, business leaders and the general public make informed decisions about climate and weather, forest health, land use planning, and environmental quality. Students enhance their classroom learning through applied research projects for partners like the National Climatic Data Center, the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station, the City of Asheville, Buncombe County and the State of North Carolina. Once they graduate, many go on to full-time employment locally.

Healthcare Cluster

Partners in the Region’s Health

- MAHEC and UNC Asheville collaborate to provide undergraduates studying pre-health a valuable internship working in a clinical setting and participating in research. The program is just one example of how MAHEC — the largest of North Carolina’s nine Area Health Education Centers — partners with academic institutions, medical organizations and others to address the region’s healthcare and health workforce needs.

- For nearly 40 years, MAHEC and its UNC Chapel Hill-appointed faculty have been training the next generation of physicians, delivering quality healthcare and education, and creating innovative new models of care. During that time, more than 400 medical and dental residents have graduated from MAHEC, with approximately 60 percent of the family medicine physicians remaining in WNC to practice. MAHEC residents also receive training at Mission Hospital.

- MAHEC’s learning opportunities range from more than 900 continuing education courses that touch approximately 23,000 healthcare professionals annually, to mentoring programs for rural and minority high school students interested in health careers.

FACTS & STATS

- Approximately 900 degrees, associates or higher, were completed in computer and math related programs within a 50-mile radius of Asheville in 2012.
  Source: EMSI

- STEM jobs pay 26 percent more on average than non-STEM jobs.
  Source: US Dept. of Commerce

“Our graduates are very well trained. We are one of the most competitive family medicine programs in the country. We recruit high quality medical students who choose to come to the program, and now those doctors are practicing in places like Madison County, completely transforming the healthcare of that community.”
— Jeff Heck, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer, MAHEC

Photo courtesy MAHEC.
The connection between UNC Asheville and Moog Music stretches back to 1978, when Robert “Bob” Moog, the electronic music pioneer and inventor of the Moog Synthesizer, moved to the area to open a manufacturing facility. Soon after he arrived, Moog began presenting guest lectures and workshops at UNC Asheville and eventually was hired as a visiting research professor for the music department, where he taught until 1993. Today, nearly a quarter of the 50 employees working at Moog Music Inc. are graduates of UNC Asheville’s music technology program, many starting as interns.

The region offers a great number of schools and programs focused on arts education — from studies offered at colleges and universities in studio art, performing arts, writing, new media and music technology, to the internationally renowned Penland School of Crafts, John C. Campbell Folk School and Brevard Music Center.
There are approximately 30,000 enthusiastic, young students in the Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools public school systems.

Asheville-area educators and business leaders are working together to better engage young people in their learning. Teachers and leaders recognize the importance of equipping young students with the skills for success in a globalized era. Students in area middle and high schools build critical thinking and problem solving techniques through hands-on learning and innovative curriculum that emphasize STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) topics. Two new schools – Buncombe County Schools Discovery Academy and the Franklin School of Innovation charter school opening in 2014 – expand opportunities for students to engage in inquiry-based learning.

“At Buncombe County Schools, our mission statement echoes the state’s focus on preparing students to be ‘Career and College Ready,’ and we count on our community partners to help us in that endeavor. The experiences our students have can lead to a job right out of high school, with the impetus to secure further education for career advancement.”

— Dr. Tony Baldwin
Superintendent, Buncombe County Schools

Private Schools

In addition to two large public school systems, the Asheville area is home to several highly regarded private schools, including Asheville School, Carolina Day School and Christ School, where students find rigorous academics and a college preparatory curriculum. A wide variety of public charter schools and independent K-8 and middle schools specialize in experiential learning, arts integration or single-gender education.
More than ever, elementary and secondary schools are connected with a wide variety of technological tools that enhance learning — from the use of iPads to create multimedia presentations in lower grades, to a program that currently provides a laptop to every student at Asheville High School and the School of Inquiry and Life Sciences (SILSA).

To ensure local students are prepared to compete in the global marketplace, many schools offer courses in Mandarin Chinese and cultural exchanges at the high school level, as well as Spanish and French.

Through partnerships with area colleges, universities, and many of the region’s top employers, students can jumpstart job training in programs like Buncombe County Early College, City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA), and Mission Hospital’s Mission Possible. These programs provide exposure to real-life work situations and develop student skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 SAT Scores</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Critical Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>M+CR+W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buncombe County Public Schools</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>1555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asheville City Schools</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>1586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>1479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>1498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Asheville retains a very talented workforce and we hear repeatedly from industry that a skilled workforce is a high priority. The 2014 EDC Homecoming Job Fair attracted several thousand highly skilled job seekers that were career-focused and motivated.”

— Ben Teague
Senior Vice President, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Coalition

Contact us for more information about education and talent in the Asheville metro region.

EconomicDevelopmentAsheville.org

CAYLA student helping job seekers at EDC Homecoming Job Fair.