



## FUNDING FOCUS AREAS

### ACCESS

*Transforming postsecondary educational opportunities to meet North Carolina's evolving workforce needs. Improving Access To Postsecondary Education By Supporting Organizations That Remove Barriers And Provide Opportunities For All Students.*

Students have to be ready and motivated for postsecondary success, understand their options, apply to colleges that are a good match, and have orientation and developmental options that help them complete the first year of school. For every 100 high school graduates in North Carolina, approximately 36 do not immediately enroll in postsecondary education, according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics. Nationally, nearly half of low-income students do not immediately enroll in college, compared to 18 percent of high-income students. When students enter college, they often do not have the necessary skills to succeed. Among first-time, degree-seeking community college students in North Carolina, approximately 57 percent of full-time and 41 percent of part-time students persist to the second year, according to Complete College America. Of the 32 percent of community college students who enter developmental education, only 50 percent complete those courses, and about 12 percent begin curriculum courses in two years.

### COMPLETION

*Increasing The Number Of Underrepresented Students Who Complete Postsecondary Education With Credentials Relevant To Market Demands.*

Students must progress through their course of study and complete a postsecondary credential with market value. The definition of a college student is changing, and so must the way we support our students as they work toward completing college. Sixty-five percent of community college students study part time, and about half work while studying. The ethnic and racial groups that are growing most rapidly in North Carolina are currently less likely to succeed in postsecondary education. Fewer than 10 percent of African-American community college students and fewer than 20 percent of all community college students complete an associate's degree within four years. Completion rates are higher at North Carolina's four-year universities, but the four-year institutions that serve the most low-income students still graduate fewer than 50 percent of students within a six-year timeframe.

### WORKFORCE RELEVANCE

*Building Collaboration Between All Stakeholders To Open Pathways That Align With Workforce Needs And Lead Students To Living-Wage Employment.*

Graduates should be able to connect with employers and receive wages that sustain their families. That requires postsecondary institutions and the business community to provide graduates with paid apprenticeships and internship opportunities, while ensuring they are ready for the labor market. Tomorrow's college graduates will be entering a dynamic economy that calls for new sets of technical skills, but also the ability to navigate uncertainty. North Carolina's businesses demand workers for an increasingly technical economy, and the need for middle-skill workers, who have anywhere from on-the-job training to an associate's degree, and higher-skill workers is increasing. By 2020, 59 percent of North Carolina's jobs will require at least some college, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. North Carolina's postsecondary institutions will have to prepare students with the skills needed to meet industry demand and provide students with the networks and connections needed to enter those industries.