

MADE IN DURHAM

(Durham County)

PROGRAM PROFILE

“Made in Durham gives youth a voice to advocate for themselves.” — *Made in Durham Youth Network member*

“In the most successful communities, enlightened leaders of educational institutions create partnerships and connections with the business community in order to stay relevant and adapt.” — *CEO of major employer*



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What is Made in Durham?

Made in Durham (MID) is a community partnership made up of educators, businesses, government units and employees, youth-serving nonprofits, and young people mobilized around a shared vision that all of Durham’s youth will complete high school and a postsecondary credential and begin a rewarding career by the age of 25. In pursuit of this mission, the organization focuses on employer engagement, career pathways, youth engagement, data for decision-making, and opportunity youth, or young people who are disconnected from both school and work.



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Who Are the Partners and What Are Their Roles?

- **Local business leaders:** These individuals make up the majority of Made in Durham’s board of directors. They fund the organization and partner with public agencies to provide work-based learning opportunities.
- **Youth leaders:** Participate in the Youth Network and represent youth on the board of directors and advisory team.
- **City of Durham:** The city provides funding and the city manager serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham County:** The county provides funding and the county manager serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham Public Schools:** The school system provides in-kind support and the superintendent serves on the board of directors.
- **Durham Technical Community College:** The community college provides in-kind support and the president serves on the board of directors.
- **Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber’s president serves on the board of directors.
- **MDC:** MDC launched and incubated Made in Durham until it became an independent organization. The president of MDC serves on the board of directors.
- **North Carolina Central University:** The university provides in-kind support, including an intern for Durham Futures, and the chancellor serves on the board of directors.
- **A collaborative of youth-serving nonprofit organizations:** Serve on the advisory team.



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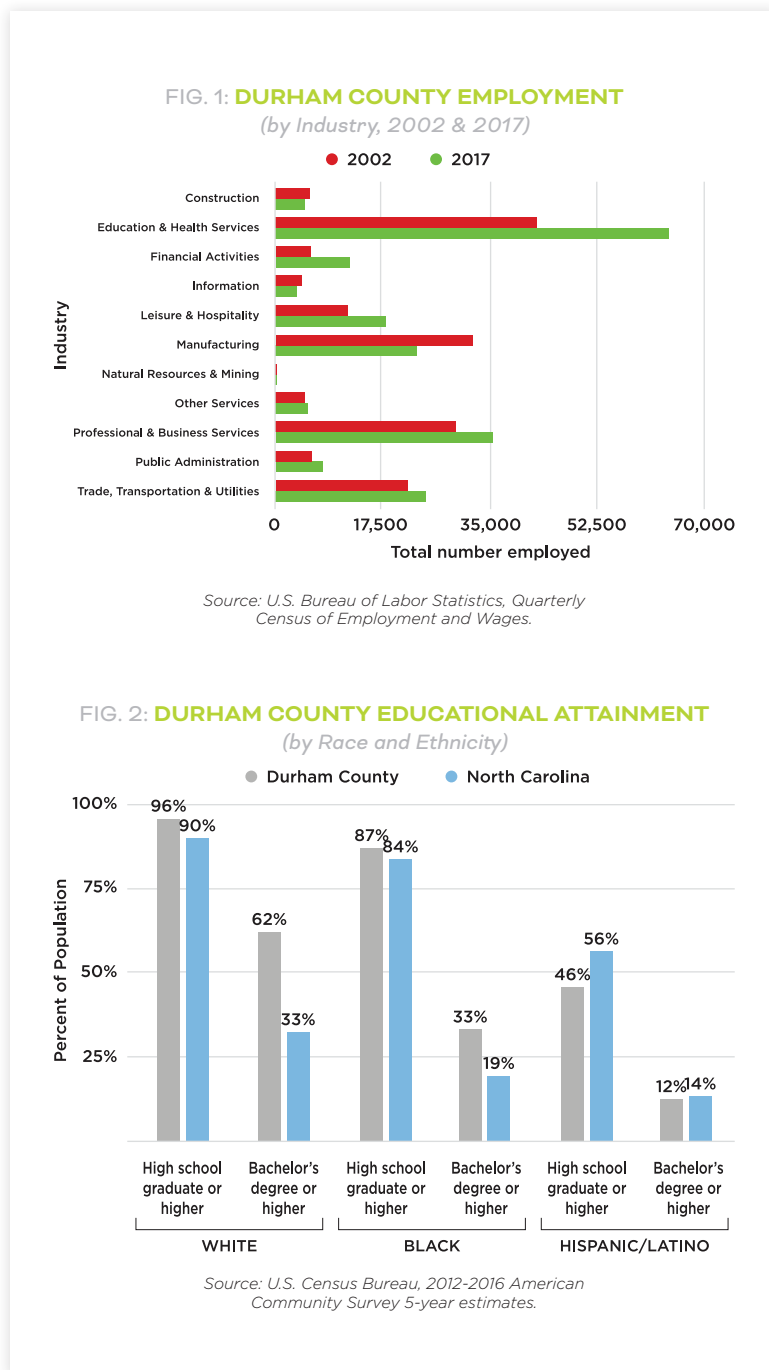
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How Does the Program Work?

MID is not a program, as partners quickly explain when asked to describe the partnership and its strategies for pursuing alignment and systems change in Durham. Rather, this nonprofit organization conducts its work by convening partners and aligning their individual strategic efforts into a collective one through task forces and action teams, which are supported by MID staff.

MID is focused on systems change, and the following two examples demonstrate how the organization works. First, a Business Engagement Team evolved from the organization’s goal to “engage employers in developing an education-to-career system that establishes a robust talent pipeline to meet their labor needs.” This team coordinates education partners in their efforts to collaborate with employers in designing programs to meet their workforce needs, resulting in a more effective and streamlined approach to growing the local talent pool. For example, Duke Energy awarded a grant to Durham Technical Community College to create an electrical line technician program that will prepare students to fill the numerous jobs available in this field, and Durham Public Schools will implement programming to build career awareness about this sector. Durham employers welcome this efficiency made possible by MID as they continue to need evolving skills from employees in their respective industries, as reflected in **Figure 1**.

Second, a Racial Equity Task Force developed in response to findings from the Made in Durham Youth Network, which indicated that inadequate counseling services and racial inequities in schools created barriers to educational attainment. MID established the task force with representation from private and public sector organizations to better understand the barrier of racial inequities and recommend solutions. The Youth Network derived from the organization’s goal to “ensure youth and young adults in Durham inform and fully participate in creating and evaluating our education-to-career system.” Diverse youth involved in the network meet twice each month to participate in trainings designed to enhance their skills for community analysis and leadership, provide their active voice in program and policy initiatives, and develop and implement action projects designed to reduce factors that lead to educational attainment disparities in their public high schools. Data provided in **Figure 2** indicate that the educational disparities based on race are most pronounced for the Hispanic/Latino residents of Durham. Sample action projects include efforts to address the disproportionate representation of students of color in school disciplinary actions to increase the number of students of color who enroll in and complete advanced placement courses.



The work outlined above focuses on students enrolled in the educational system. MID's engagement with the Durham Futures initiative involves aligning partners and strategies that support "opportunity youth" who are currently disconnected from school and work. This work ensures that these 14- to 24-year-olds "earn high school diplomas or equivalent credentials and transition to and persist in a postsecondary degree or credentialing program that qualifies them for life-sustaining work." Partners pilot academic and social supports for students enrolled in five alternative education programs. North Carolina Central University provides an intern from its master's degree in social work program to support Durham Futures and the Youth Network.

What is the Governance Structure?

MID's board of directors includes executives of major employers, government units and employees, educators, philanthropists, and civic leaders, all providing influence and financial contributions. An advisory team reflects a cross-section of partner organizations capable of proposing strategies and ensuring their implementation once approved by the board. Both the advisory team and the Made in Durham Youth Network advise and report to the board. Youth Network representatives serve on the board of directors and advisory team.

Is the Program Data Driven?

MID continues to work toward its goal to "develop and maintain a common set of measures that will guide decision-making and chart progress toward success." Leaders explained that access to meaningful data has proven challenging, but they recently contracted with the Social Science Research Institute at Duke University to identify critical data elements and measure them over time. They are also in the process of negotiating data-sharing agreements that will improve data access and shared measures.

What Are the Indicators of Success?

Evaluation to date centers on organizational outcomes. Results of MID's efforts include more efficient allocation of community resources, such as sharing mental health services, merging two organizations with similar missions, and addressing transportation barriers by successfully advocating for youth to receive free bus passes. Student measures will become available once data-sharing agreements are complete in 2018.

MID and its partners focus on increasing work-based learning opportunities in the county. Career and technical education personnel from the Durham Public Schools served as architects of the local Work-Based Learning Initiative that seeks to ensure that every high school student engages in career awareness, exploration, and experiences (see **Figure 3**).

FIG. 3: WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Source: Durham Public Schools.

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One high school is the pilot site for the full initiative in the 2018-19 academic year that will be rolled out in all Durham high schools over the next three years. MID partners will provide many of the work-based learning opportunities, and the school system will track outcomes such as career readiness and postsecondary enrollment to measure success.

The Durham YouthWork Internship Program represents an integral component of the Work-Based Learning Initiative. Durham Public Schools cover one-third of the costs for summer interns, as well as personnel and facilities for trainings associated with the program. The City of Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development administers the internship program, and other public and private sector partners provide placements and funding. In the summer of 2018, 180 youth completed paid internships in Durham businesses and public agencies (selected from more than 400 applicants who completed requirements and interviewed for positions). The program recruits applicants online and through a career fair. Those selected completed a five-week summer internship and employability skills training. Partners have a goal to provide 1,000 summer internships annually by 2021.

What Is the Promise of the Strategy for Increasing Educational Attainment in North Carolina?

MID understands that in order to increase educational attainment, Durham will have to address racial inequities that exist in its education systems. MID helps the community tackle the issue directly through its Racial Equity Task Force. It also provides opportunities for youth to lead the way.

The second area of promise lies in engagement of business leaders. MID makes it easier for companies to contribute to the early development of talent and returns value to those employers for their contributions.

Finally, Durham and MID have high ambitions for work-based learning. If the county delivers on its plan to engage every high school student in high-quality programming, research suggests that more students will graduate from high school and seek postsecondary credentials.



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