2016 State of the Union: Workforce Matters

On January 12th, 2016, President Barack Obama delivered his final State of the Union Address. The information in this article was provided by the National Governor’s Association’s Deputy Director of Policy. To learn more about the memorandum entitled “Policy Excerpts from the State of the Union and Their Implication for States,” visit: www.nga.org. To view the complete transcript of the State of the Union address, visit: https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office.

Community Colleges
President Obama: “Now, we’ve actually got to cut the cost of college. Providing two years of community college at no cost for every responsible student is one of the best ways to do that, and I’m going to keep fighting to get that started this year.”

Policy Implications: Last year, the President introduced a plan to provide two years of community college free to every low- and middle-income student. The plan would have provided nine million students an average of $3,800 per year. Under the plan, the federal government would have covered three-fourths of the cost of the program and states would cover the remainder.

Student Financial Aid
President Obama: “And we have to make college affordable for every American. Because no hardworking student should be stuck in the red. We’ve already reduced student loan payments to ten percent of a borrower’s income.”

Policy Implications: In 2010 and 2013, the President and Congress worked together to reform the student loan re-payment system. Congress is expected to propose additional reforms to the federal student loan system during reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which is anticipated to begin in 2016.

Workforce Training and Labor Changes
President Obama: “Americans understand that at some point in their careers, they may have to retool and retrain. […] Say a hardworking American loses his job—we shouldn’t just make sure he can get unemployment insurance; we should make sure that program encourages him to retrain for a business that’s ready to hire him.”

Policy Implications: In 2014, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA gives governors additional flexibility to ensure workforce training is meeting the needs of workers and employers in each state.

Worker Protections and Benefits
President Obama: “Equal pay for equal work, paid leave, raising the minimum wage. All these things still matter to hardworking families; they are still the right thing to do; and I will not let up until they get done.”

Policy Implications – Paid Leave: Last year, the President announced a $2 billion proposal to incentivize states to develop paid family and medical leave programs.

Policy Implications – Equal Pay and Benefits: The President has continued to call on Congress to build on the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and provide more equal pay protections for women.

Policy Implications – Minimum Wage: According to the Economic Policy Institute, 21 states increased their minimum wage in 2015 and 29 states will have a minimum wage higher than the federal government’s statutory requirement.
After being laid off in early 2014, Antwan Murphy enrolled into the WIA Dislocated Worker program at the NCWorks Career Center of Clinton in hopes of becoming a Barber. With the help of his case manager, Mary Warren, Antwan entered into the Barbering program at James Sprunt Community College with plans to complete his training in May of 2016.

During the Fall Semester of 2015, Antwan fell on hard times and became homeless, but that did not deter him from completing his goals. He attended class every day and never gave his instructors any indication that he was living out of his SUV. He arrived early and stayed late in order to complete his training as soon as possible. Even after his Barbering Kit was stolen, Antwan continued to have a positive attitude and borrowed the tools he needed from his classmates to complete his training. His hard work, determination, and perseverance paid off in December 2015 when he successfully completed his Barber Training a semester early, and scored a 91 on his final exam.

“I never once heard him complain about anything,” Mary stated. “When he came into the Career Center he was always neat, clean, and upbeat with a big smile on his face. He did not look at his plight and say ‘woe is me’, rather he continued to persevere and keep the faith that his life would change once he obtained his training goals.”

Since graduating, Antwan goes to a local Barber Shop every day and volunteers his services while he prepares to take his State Board exam. He even has a job opportunity lined up for himself after he obtains his license. Mary worked in conjunction with his Chief Instructor, Patsy McCoy, to help him find the resources needed to improve his quality of life. Antwan now has a place to live and has been approved for SNAP benefits. Mary was even able to refer him to different agencies that assisted him with obtaining clothing for his job interview, met his immediate need for food, and provided necessary items for his living quarters by using the Community Resource Services Guide in NCWorks.

“I am so very proud of Antwan because he never gave up! His tenacity truly exemplifies his determination and will power to prevent any obstacles from stopping him from becoming a Barber,” Mary stated. “Some people often measure the heart of a champion by his success. I believe that a true Champion is measured by how he overcomes adversity, and Antwan Murphy is a true champion!”

Food Industry Job Fair in Sanford

By: Adena Mitchell

TSWDB Business Services Coordinator Mike Peluso collaborated with the NCWorks Career Center of Sanford to develop a job fair aimed at meeting the needs of the growing food service industry in the Sanford Area. The three local employers that attended the Job Fair were Dunkin’ Donuts, Alpaca Chicken, and Zaxby’s. In addition, representatives from Central Carolina Community College’s Culinary Arts Program were on hand to educate job seekers on the types of credentials available for the food service industry. Leon Jackson, the Veterans Service Representative for the NCWorks Career Center, promoted the event and organized the interviewing schedule for those seeking employment.

Dunkin Donuts is scheduled to open their Sanford location in February of 2016 on Horner Blvd near the new Vitamin Shoppe. They are owned and operated by Pinehurst Donuts LLC, who also owns Dunkin’ Donuts locations in Fayetteville, Pinehurst, and Lillington.

Alpaca Chicken is a Peruvian rotisserie chicken restaurant that is planning on opening their location on South Horner Blvd in early 2016. They currently have restaurant locations in Raleigh, Durham, and Cary and offer traditional South American sides to accompany their chicken.

Zaxby’s of Harnett County recently opened a restaurant in Cameron off of Highway 87. TSWDB member Nancy Jackson is the proprietor, and also owns and operates Zaxby’s locations in Erwin, Lillington, and Dunn.

Overall, the event was successful and resulted in 11 job placements thus far, with more qualified applicants on deck to be hired in the near future.
Governor Pat McCrory’s efforts to make North Carolina the most military and veteran-friendly state in the nation are paying dividends. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) hired 370 veterans during 2015 as part of the N.C. Military Pipeline Project, a public-private partnership launched by the governor in May to help veterans find employment in North Carolina.

“Veterans combine 21st century skills and training with a dedication to duty that originates with our nation’s founding,” Governor McCrory said. “Given their experience and training, I expect these men and women will not only rise to leadership positions within DPS, but become leaders in their communities as well.”

DPS became active in the N.C. Military Pipeline Project after recognizing that veterans’ skills, values and commitment align well with the Department’s mission of ensuring public safety and protecting North Carolina’s quality of life.

“I am pleased that so many veterans have chosen to join our team at DPS and to remain in North Carolina to work and raise their families,” said Public Safety Secretary Frank L. Perry. “We value the training, experience, and dedication to public service they bring to the table.”

Military service members interested in working at DPS after they separate from their branch of service should consult with their Transition Readiness Office or N.C. DPS Human Resources Office. For more information about the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, veterans can go to ncdps.gov or contact N.C. DPS Human Resources at (919) 716-3800.

DPS is not the only law enforcement agency to seek out veterans for civilian law enforcement. Numerous local law enforcement agencies supported the legislation Governor McCrory signed into law that streamlines the career path for former military police officers. The new law allows honorably discharged former military police officers to forego certain training when applying to become civilian law enforcement officers in North Carolina.

Tri-County Veterans Resource Fair

By: Adena Mitchell

Of the jobs advertised in the TSWDB area, the occupation with the most job postings is a Registered Nurse. The estimated median annual wage for Nurses in this area is $57,514. (photo courtesy of CCCC)

Of the jobs advertised in the TSWDB area, the top tools and technological skills include understanding how to operate: a cash register, Twitter, a fork lift, PowerPoint, freezers, and Microsoft Word. (photo courtesy of TSWDB)

Of the jobs advertised in the TSWDB area, 47% of employers require 1 to 2 years of experience, 14% of employers require 2 to 5 years of experience, and 17% of employers require no experience at all. (photo courtesy of CCCC)

Left: Governor McCrory is pictured with area Veterans signing the new local law at the Department of Public Safety in Raleigh, NC.

This article was originally published on 12/28/2015 and was featured on the following North Carolina Site: http://governor.nc.gov/press-release/governor-mccrory%E2%80%99s-veteran-recruitment-efforts-net-nearly-400-hires-dps

The 2016 Veterans Resource Fair and Stand Down Committee organized by Veterans Upward Bound, Triangle South Workforce Development Board, NCWorks Career Center of Sanford, Volunteers of America of the Carolinas, and St. Joseph of the Pines will host a Veterans Resource Fair and Stand Down for Lee and surrounding counties on March 30, 2016 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center located at 1801 Nash Street Sanford, NC 27330 from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm.

The Veterans Resource Fair and Stand Down will be a one-day event designed to provide residents of Lee and surrounding counties access to agencies and services that can make a difference in their lives. This year we are forecasting to serve around 200 veterans.

To accomplish this community event the Planning Committee is inviting community leaders to join us by providing support through either monetary or non-monetary donations. Checks can be made payable to: Volunteers of America, Carolinas.

The following is a list of items that are needed for the day of the event. These items will be distributed to those in need.

Food
- Blankets
- Umbrellas
- Chapstick
- Water
- Sleeping Bags
- Scarves
- Wet Wipes
- Vaseline
- Gloves
- Ponchos
- Backpacks

Bug Repellant
- Toilet Paper
- Hand Sanitizer
- Toothpaste
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Socks
- Toothbrushes
- Hygiene Items
- First-Aid Kits
- Deodorant
- Washcloths
- Lotion

For more information on becoming a sponsor for the Resource Fair, or how to donate money or items, visit: http://www.cccc.edu/studentservices/upwardbound/veterans/veteransResourceFair/
Black History Month

Recognizing the African American Achievements of NC

1832 John Chavis, a Revolutionary War veteran and prominent Presbyterian minister in Orange County and the surrounding areas, was forced to cease his public sermons when the General Assembly forbade African American preaching after Nat Turner's 1831 slave insurrection. Steven B. Weeks celebrates Chavis's accomplishments in a 1914 profile published in The Southern Workman.

1883 Gaston County Commissioners suggested a vote on a proposition that would tax black and white citizens at different rates for each race's segregated schools. The court later ruled this proposition, and all race-based taxation for public schools, unconstitutional, and Superintendent of Public Instruction Charles Harden reprinted the court's opinions in his biennial report for 1898-1900.

1890 The General Assembly approved plans to create North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes (now North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University) in Greensboro. In the early 1900s, the college held farmers' institutes, through which the university sought to aid North Carolina's agricultural development by educating African American farmers on more efficient practices and other pertinent issues. For more on the college's status in the early 20th century, see its 1903 and 1904 annual reports.

1898 John Merrick founded the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association in Durham. The company grew to become the United States' largest and most successful black-owned business, with over $1.6 million in revenues upon Merrick's death in 1919. Robert McCants Andrews chronicles Merrick's life and the rise of North Carolina Mutual in John Merrick: A Biographical Sketch (1920), and W.E.B. DuBois briefly profiles the company in his 1912 article “The Upbuilding of Black Durham: The Success of the Negroes and their Value to a Tolerant and Helpful Southern City.”

This information was compiled from “Documenting the American South” a UNC publication that can be found at http://docsouth.unc.edu/highlights/roundup.html

(Photo Credit for both images: www.blackpast.org)