

BUSINESS EDUCATION

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RCC kicks off Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Future campaign

BY STAFF REPORT, POSTED 1 YEAR AGO

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Robeson Community College officially kicked off its Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Future campaign in partnership with NC Reconnect and the John M. Belk Endowment during a launch party held on Thursday. Photo provided by: RCC

Robeson Community College officially kicked off its Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Future campaign in partnership with NC Reconnect and the John M. Belk Endowment during a launch party held on Thursday. The theme was reconnecting adult learners and getting them back in the classroom to complete a degree or post-secondary credential.

"All of us came of age at a time, where we think of college, we think of a freshman enrolling straight from high school," stated Mike Krause, the Senior Advisor for the John M. Belk Endowment, in a press release. "I took a different path, with a detour through the US Army... I encountered a system that was built for 18-year-olds, I did not encounter a higher education system that took into account that I had to pay my bills, and it did not take into account that I was fundamentally interested in different things."

Krause told those attending that "NC Reconnect is about transforming our colleges to be tailored to serve adult learners."

The good news, Krause says, is that "At Robeson, that is not much of a transformation because Robeson has been serving adult learners for so long."

The reason this initiative is imperative not only for Robeson Community College and higher education in general and for the future of North Carolina's workforce and economy, is that birthrates have been steadily declining for decades.

"The freshmen class that enters in the fall of 2025 will be the smallest freshmen class since World War II," Krause said, making the case for the need to retool adult learners. "And the next freshmen class after that is ever smaller."

"Higher education post World War II was built on the premise that there would be an endless supply of 18-year-olds, who would continually enroll," Krause stated. "I'm here to tell you that pipeline is gone... so if you are an institution that has built your financial model and all of your services around 18-year-old students, that's going to be a problem."



Krause went on to talk about the success stories that have come out of Reconnect.

"The stats are cool," Krause said. "The ones we were able to get in touch with, 22 percent are in college right now... so we are really excited, this equates to over 3,000 adult learners who have reconnected."

There were expectations from some of one student per college, others had set goals of 5 percent, which Reconnect has far exceeded both.

"If you have one student per college, the effects of an adult learner going back, the effects are absolutely momentous," Krause said, showing the impact of how reconnecting just one student could have positive results across the board.

Robeson Community College hopes to see similar results by encouraging adult learners to reach their full potential, while producing a more qualified workforce that will help attract more employers to the area.

"Our hope is that through this campaign, adult learners will realize their potential and know that education and training results in higher wage jobs and a brighter future that will allow the student to earn a living and provide for their families," said RCC President Melissa Singler in a press release. "We're focusing on the programs and pathways where graduates are in high demand. We hope this 'Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Future' campaign will help us attract the adult learners needed to fill those in-demand positions, and create greater opportunities all across our region."



More than 50 employees were highlighted during the luncheon who "came back home" to work at RCC after graduating from the institution. Photo provided by: RCC

The party featured demonstrations from faculty and students, showcasing the variety of programs available at Robeson Community College – everything from truck driving to radiography to massage therapy and included remarks from Lumberton Police Chief Michael McNeill, RCC Vice President Dr. Johnny Smith, NC Representative Jarrod Lowery, and President and CEO of myFuture NC Cecilia Holden.

More than 50 employees were highlighted during the luncheon who "came back home" to work at RCC after graduating from the institution.

At the conclusion of the event, guests were treated to a

video (watch [here](#)) which featured testimonials of adult learners at Robeson Community College.

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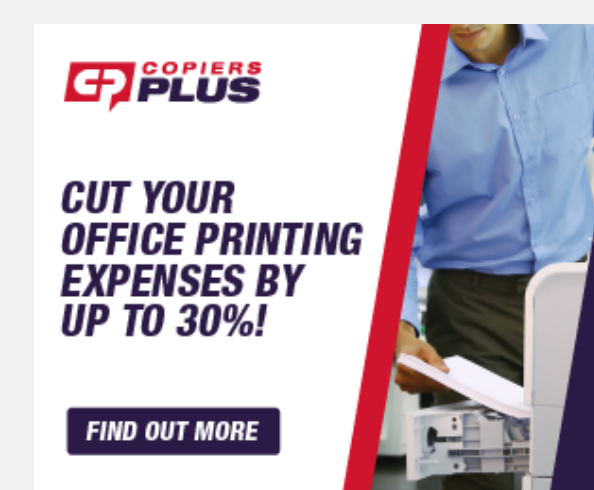
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GFBJ staff joined by Publisher Marty Cayton's wife pictured at the 2025 Q2 Power Breakfast. Left to right: Faith Hatton, Joy Cayton, Marty Cayton, Ellie Rhoades and Stephanie Meador; Well, in case LinkedIn failed to inform you I have now been at the G

Driving health forward: Campbell University's station house nears completion for med school mobile units

(https://bizfayetteville.com/commercial-real-estate/2025/8/7/driving-health-forward-campbell-universitys-station-house-nears-completion-for-med-school-mobile-units/4565)



The 6,000-square-foot station house will provide cover and added security for Campbell's four mobile clinics. Construction is expected to be wrapped in August of 2025. Photos by Campbell University. Campbell's four Mobile Health and Education Cl

Trades transforming futures: Miller-Motte College President champions growth, trades education and community impact

(https://bizfayetteville.com/business-education/2025/8/7/trades-transforming-futures-miller-motte-college-president-champions-growth-trades-education-and-community-impact/4563)



Dr. Geddis Dr. Janell Geddis assumed the role of president for Miller-Motte College's Fayetteville campus in February of 2024. Dr. Geddis joined MMC with 15 years of experience in higher education, with most of her roles serving community