



**monroe
union county**
economic development

In this issue:

- 2015 Year in Review page 1
- Diversification of the Industrial Base page 1-2
- Workforce Survey & Labor Shed Study page 2-3
- Metrics page 4

Important News:

Tyson Foods announces a new project at their Monroe facility. The \$5 million expansion will generate greater capacity and create 50 new jobs.

Harris Teeter completes its 2014 expansion project totaling 50,000 square feet of new refrigerated space.

Goulston Technologies receives ISO 14001:2004 certification, recognizing its commitment to environmentally friendly business practices

Fisher Textiles selected as 2015 Product of the Year Winner at the Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA) Expo.

2015: Year in Review

Union County, NC has experienced an incredible run of capital investments and job creation from both existing businesses and industries, along with significant new companies locating in the community.

Since June of 2014 through the end of 2015 the county has seen investment exceed \$306 million. This investment will generate approximately \$2.3 million in additional annual tax revenue, equivalent to 1,300 new homes.

The community also saw over 700 new manufacturing related job opportunities. These jobs pay extremely well with an average salary exceeding \$54,000. This will result in nearly \$40 million in new annual dollars in our community.

As new jobs are created, they support and produce additional new opportunities throughout the county. From service contractors and retail jobs, to professional services and hospitality; the manufacturing sector supports on average three additional jobs to their one. In other words, 2015's job creation will result in approximately 2,800 career opportunities.

Union County has been blessed with many assets and a strong business-friendly government allowing companies to grow and be successful here while competing in a global marketplace.

Today nearly one in four jobs are manufacturing related in the county representing one of the strongest industrial economies in the Carolinas.

Diversification of the Industrial Base

Within the last few years, as the national economy has rebounded, Union County has been fortunate to make great strides in continuing to diversify its industrial base. Steeped with a strong core of manufacturers specializing in aerospace, medical and plastics, the profile of the County now includes pharmaceuticals, digital printing and additive manufacturing.

In 2014, Glenmark Generics selected Monroe and Union County as the site of its first and only North American manufacturing facility of generic pills for the

pharmaceutical industry. The nearby proximity of the renowned Wingate University pharmacy program and the technical training provided by South Piedmont Community College afforded the ideal conditions for such a unique workforce needed by Glenmark.

Similarly, in the first half of 2015, O'Neil Digital Solutions identified Union County as the best fit for an East Coast facility for their highly

complex digital printing processes that support a vast array of business sectors, including healthcare and financial.

During the summer of 2015, ATI Specialty Materials
(continued on page two)



Union County's Wage Survey and Labor Shed Study

Diversity

(continued from page one)

announced the location of a new facility that specializes in the highly innovative and technically advanced field of additive manufacturing.

The diversification of Union County's industries not only helps protect the county's employment from the downfall of any one particular industrial cluster, but also fosters a more broadly cross trained workforce. This workforce, which is continually exposed to different skill sets and training, is more easily adaptable to other industry sectors and supporting the needs of manufacturers considering Union County.

Office Activities

Events:

- Groundhog Day Economic Summit (Feb 2, 2016)
- Queen's Cup Steeplechase (April 30, 2016)
- Supervisory Training Seminar Series (Mar, Apr & May)
- "Hook & Slice" Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament and Awards Banquet (Sep 8, 2016)

Mission Trips:

- National Farm Show
- Hannover-Messe Industrial Technology Trade Fair
- SpeedNews Commerical Aviation Supplier Conference
- SEDC Meet the Consultants
- Farnborough Air Show

In 2014, our office initiated a wage survey and labor shed study of our existing industrial companies. This had been a request of the companies since emerging from the economic recession. The results were quite revealing with respect to the changes of the average pay and the number of employees that reside within Union County. In the past, our staff had gathered this information and the change was dramatic.

Looking at wages, in the early 2000's our companies were paying on average between \$9-\$11 per hour for general manufacturing hourly jobs. Today, the hourly pay has increased to \$18.48 per hour. This increase is primarily due to the development of the aerospace cluster. The aerospace firms' demand for higher skilled people has forced the other sectors to increase wages to remain competitive within our labor shed. Companies also increased their investment in technology, requiring our workforce to develop more skills associated with this advancement in manufacturing processes. It is a simple formula: the higher the required skill, the higher the wages.

In other words, the requirement for physical might has become less important than the need for more intellectual capabilities; therefore, the companies increased wages to be commensurate with the new required skills. It is important not to leave a portion of the population behind, so while this demand for higher skills has increased, the pathway to obtain these skillsets are relatively easy given our ever-improving resources at South Piedmont Community College and special

programs within the Union County Public Schools.

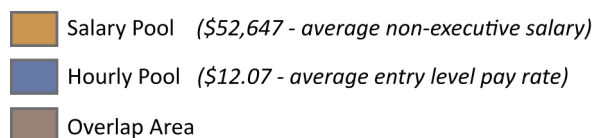
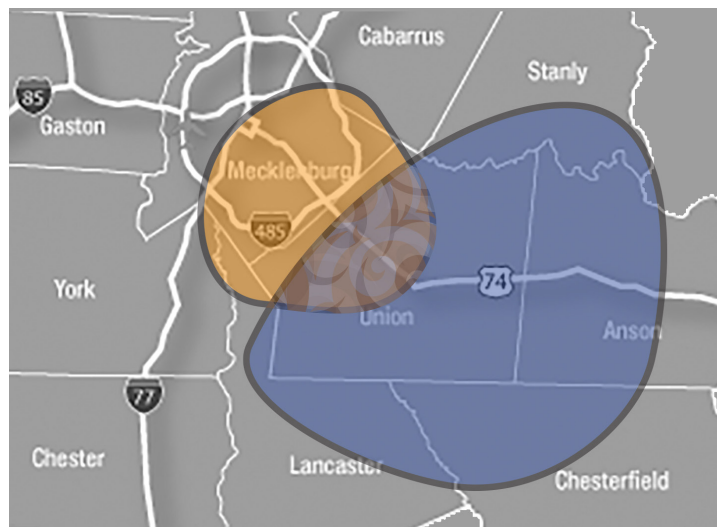
Looking at job numbers, just after 9-11 our labor force was approximately 70,000 people with unemployment just under 6%. Today, the labor force exceeds 112,000 people – a 60% increase – while the current unemployment rate is holding at 4.5% - nearly a 25% reduction from 2002. There is no coincidence this is also the same time as the beginning of our aerospace initiative. Our office has focused on luring and sustaining high-quality manufacturing jobs to Union County and it has worked.

Our 4.5% unemployment rate is the lowest in the Charlotte Region, a measure that we have maintained for nearly 17 consecutive years. These jobs are local as well. 61% of all the employees at Union County manufacturers live within the borders of Union County. This is high for any county, but considering the labor shed extends well into neighboring counties in North and South Carolina, it is a testament to the quality of life and the quality of job opportunities that we possess in our community.

Union County has achieved incredible strides in the transformation of our local economy, especially with keeping its focus on commercial / manufacturing. We have achieved this while withstanding one of the highest growth rates of any county in the Southeast.

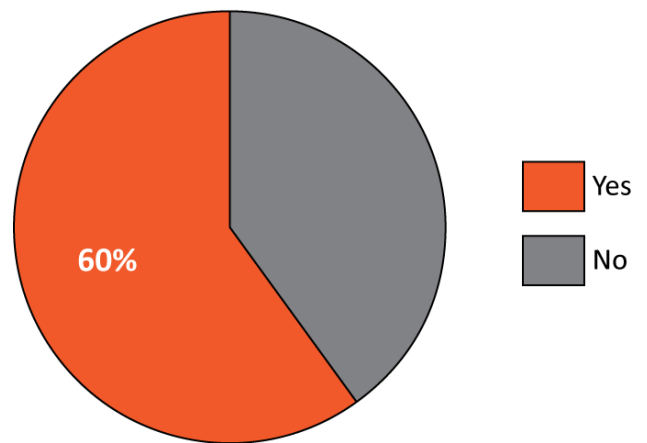
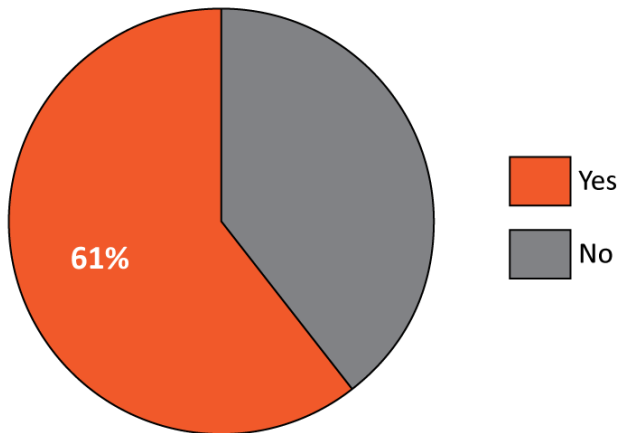
Union County is an incredible case study as we strengthen our labor force's capabilities and increased wages by 105%, while at the same time we continue to digest an inflow of people growing the labor force by 60% and maintain the lowest unemployment in the Charlotte Region for nearly two decades. It is a true testament to the need for further growth of our industrial, manufacturing and commercial companies throughout the County. Our office will seek to generate more buildings and industrially zoned land in the next several years so that we can continually enhance our economy.

(see additional data on page three)

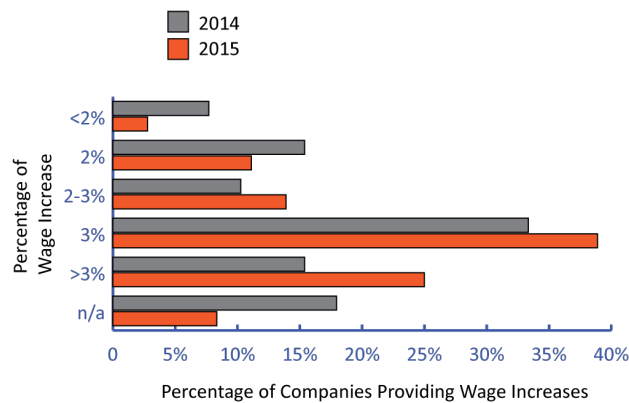


Manufacturing Workforce Residing within Union County

Companies Offering Bonus / Profit Sharing



Wage Increases (%)



Average Hourly Workforce Wage Rates





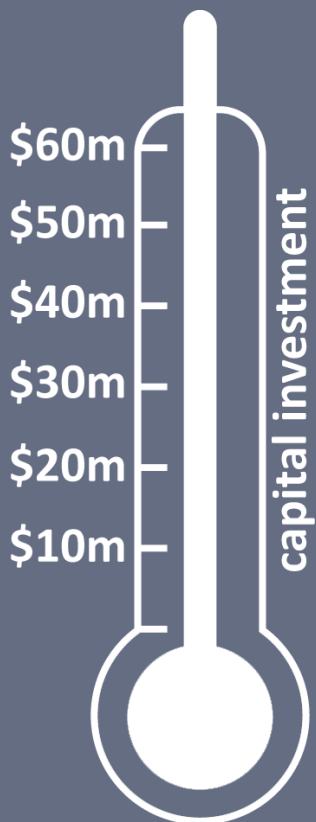
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**monroe
union county**
economic development

Tel: (704) 282-5780
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metrics fy2014-2015



\$306.53m

job creation



717 jobs

300 jobs
GOAL

4.5%

*Union County
has the lowest
unemployment
rate in the
Charlotte Region*

**UNION COUNTY
LABORFORCE**

111,915

the prospector
winter
2016