PIEDMONT TRIAD, NC
How the Carolina Core continues to evolve as it looks out to the years ahead
LEADERSHIP AND LIFE SKILLS

Preparing Students for the World As It is Going to Be

97% of HPU graduates begin careers or continue their education within six months of graduation – 11 points higher than the national average. It starts on the campus of HPU where every freshman student benefits from their own professional Success Coach. It continues with mentorship from dynamic and learned faculty, committed staff support, innovative classroom technology and a culture that embraces the growth and development of each and every student. Add to it HPU’s focus on instilling Life Skills – the ability to adapt, connect with others, be coachable, and remain motivated – and HPU’s impressive In Residence program, which regularly attracts thought leaders and innovators to HPU’s campus (examples above), and it’s easy to easy to understand why students, parents, and employers are attracted to High Point University.
Q&A WITH HIGHER EDUCATION TRAILBLAZER NIDO QUBEIN

In the middle of the Great Recession, High Point University President Nido Qubein increased enrollment by 259 percent, grew net assets from $56 million to almost a billion dollars, created six new academic schools and attracted $375 million in philanthropic investments.

He came to the United States as a teenager with limited knowledge of English and only $50. He went on to build business partnerships in banking, real estate, publishing and retail. He is executive chairman of the Great Harvest Bread Company and serves on the corporate boards of several Fortune 500 companies including BB&T, La-Z-Boy and nThrive. He was inducted into the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans along with Oprah Winfrey and Colin Powell.

Qubein’s life experiences led to the creation of a unique and highly relevant educational model that equips graduates with life skills. He describes it as “preparing students for the world as it is going to be, not as it is.” Below, Qubein discusses several hallmarks of HPU’s approach to education.

Q: You’ve talked about HPU being a values-based institution. What does that mean and why does it matter to students and parents?

A: Values are everything, especially in a world where technology is advancing the speed and way in which decisions must be made. Your values guide you—you must stand for something or you’ll fall for anything.

Parents spend their lives modeling values for their children to inherit. When they send their student to a university, they want it to uphold and further those values. But values cannot be taught; they must be modeled for students. I remind our faculty and staff that we live, they watch and they learn. At HPU, every faculty and staff member is empowered to positively impact students. Our culture promotes the values of generosity, gratitude, hard work, personal initiative and joy, among others.

Values such as these built our nation, and we ensure students live in an environment that models those same values.

Q: You say that HPU helps graduates stand out by instilling life skills in them. What does that mean?

A: Employers seek new hires with more than technical competence because technology changes daily. The skills that outlast technological advances are what we call life skills—the ability to communicate, build relational capital, develop a growth mindset, embrace failure as a small price to pay for learning, solve complex problems and continuously adapt.

At HPU, our curriculum is grounded in life skills. It starts freshman year with my Life Skills Seminar, where I share my experience in building a life of both success and significance. Our campus is collaborative in nature and students are encouraged to engage with one another, build their companies, operate their agencies and beyond.

In addition, every corner of our campus is designed to foster life skills. Consider the lobby of Wilson School of Commerce, which resembles a Fortune 500 company, or 1924 Prime, our fine-dining learning lab where students learn about etiquette, international cuisine and how to conduct themselves during a job interview over dinner. Building confidence in these settings is celebrated everywhere at HPU.

Q: How has your university raised $375 million without a formal campaign and quadrupled enrollment in such a short amount of time?

A: If you want to know the real secret to HPU’s overall growth, here it is. Students and parents in the college search process are asking themselves a simple question: If I want to transform my life, where is the best environment with the best people to help me succeed? More and more families are discovering that the answer is High Point University.

College degrees are obtainable at thousands of institutions around the globe. What’s not so common is finding an environment where mentorship is intentionally fostered in and out of the classroom.

When families seek a transformative university setting, HPU provides an excellent return on their investment. The proof is in our alumni. Within six months of crossing the commencement stage, 97 percent of our graduates land careers or continue their education. Our supporters, alumni and parents have been eager to invest in HPU’s growth because they believe in our values and our mission.
WELCOME TO THE PIEDMONT TRIAD

ONCE KNOWN FOR TOBACCO AND TEXTILES, WE EXPLORE THE ASSETS AND DEVELOPMENTS HELPING THE CAROLINA CORE TAKE ITS ECONOMY INTO A NEW ERA

Making of a Region

1851

Construction begins in Greensboro on the North Carolina Railroad, providing the stimulus for growth in the city and the region.

1900

Greensboro is established as a center of the Southern textile industry, notable for producing denim, flannel and overalls.

1909

The inaugural Southern Furniture Market is held. Over time, it would become the High Point Market, the largest home furnishings trade show in the world.

1929

The Reynolds Building tops out at 314 feet—at the time, the tallest building south of Baltimore, and the design inspiration for the Empire State Building.

1960

The Greensboro sit-ins are considered a catalyst for a wave of further protests around the U.S. as part of the Civil Rights Movement.

2013

A new anchor for downtown Winston-Salem, Piedmont Triad Research Park is renamed Wake Forest Innovation Quarter.

Need to know

Population: 1.66m

GDP: $76.7bn

Area: 4,960 sq.mi.

Exports: $5.0bn

Fact File

Located between Charlotte and the NC Research Triangle, the Triad encompasses Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem, which come together to form the 35th-largest CSA in the United States.

The inagural Southern Furniture Market is held. Over time, it would become the High Point Market, the largest home furnishings trade show in the world.
Be a part of the next big thing.

Connecting Winston-Salem, Greensboro, High Point and Fayetteville, the Carolina Core offers room to grow, a ready workforce and ideal quality of life – all within an hour’s drive of the corridor.

The Carolina Core is in the heart of North Carolina, centrally located on the eastern seaboard providing convenient access to major markets and labor.

CONTACT THE CAROLINA CORE TEAM: 336.668.4556 • info@ptpnc.com • NCCarolinaCore.com
LEADERS FROM PROMINENT TRIAD INSTITUTIONS SHARE HOW THEY ARE PREPARING FOR THE YEARS AHEAD

THE TRAILBLAZERS

“We’re talking about merging what you learn in the classroom with what you accomplish through experiential learning”

NIDO QUBEIN, PRESIDENT HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

The last decade-plus has been a transformational time in the history of High Point University, which has invested more than $2 billion in new programs and facilities since Nido Qubein became president in 2005, while tripling enrollment to 5,200 students.

Along the way, it has also cemented its position as a premier life skills university with initiatives such as the President’s Seminar on Life Skills, a required course for all freshmen, helping to ensure its graduates develop competencies such as communication, networking and coachability that will serve them well when they enter the world of work.

“This is not a slogan but part and parcel of our DNA,” says Qubein. “We’re talking about merging what you learn in the classroom with what you accomplish through experiential learning with absolute preparation for the demands placed upon you when you graduate in a world that is ever-changing, ever-competitive, and highly demanding of both skill and growth mindset.”

“We are focused on our service products, and I think that’s what truly differentiates us”

GREG GANTT, PRESIDENT AND CEO OLD DOMINION FREIGHT LINE

Founded in 1934, and headquartered in the Triad since 1962, Old Dominion Freight Line is a national leader in the less-than-truckload (LTL) shipping industry, having grown to where it can now boast of more than 22,000 employees and 235 service centers across the continental United States—without losing the family culture it refers to as the ‘OD Family Spirit’.

“We’ve got the best people that understand what they have to do and are focused on meeting the requirements of their jobs and, more importantly, the requirements of our customers,” says president and CEO Greg Gantt. “We are focused on our service products, and I think that’s what truly differentiates us.”

This approach helped it increase revenue by more than 20 percent year-over-year in FY 2018, to approximately $4 billion, making it one of the Triad’s largest publicly traded companies, while it continues to invest in the equipment, real estate and technology that will allow it to expand on its current LTL market share of just over 10 percent.

“In order for us to remain relevant, we have to continue to innovate and continue to push the industry in terms of design”

LEIB OEHMIG, CEO GLEN RAVEN

Glen Raven started life as a cotton mill in 1880 yet continues to exist as a diverse and thriving textiles company close to 140 years later because it has never been afraid to innovate and enter new markets. During World War II, it became a leader in the production of parachute fabrics. Later, it invented pantyhose, its fabrics were used to make the American flags planted on the Moon’s surface, while it has continually backed its high-performance Sunbrella brand with the R&D support needed to expand its applications and take the Glen Raven name across the planet.

“We are a global company, with 40 locations in 17 countries on six continents,” says CEO Leib Oehmig, whose company employs more than 3,000 worldwide. “But as a U.S.-based manufacturer, we recognize that in order for us to remain relevant, we have to continue to innovate and continue to push the industry in terms of design and in terms of bringing new products to market that offer new performance attributes that help support our brand promise of worry-free living.”
FOR MANY DECADES, Winston-Salem was known as a global hub for the tobacco industry, while the east side of its downtown was anchored by the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and its extensive manufacturing campus. So with the industry’s decline in recent years, that left the city with two problems: Where would the jobs of the future come from, and how could it use this land efficiently and effectively so it offered more than just a mere memory of the past?

The solutions to both lie in the emergence of the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter, which has grown from a small research lab in the mid-1990s to become the Triad’s leading technology park and one of the fastest-growing urban-based districts for innovation in the United States.

The 330-acre site is operated by Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, which recognized the value of a collaborative environment for discovery and the commercialization of its innovations, as well as a variety of programs offered by the Wake Forest School of Medicine. For example, the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine located here in 2006, bringing an international leader to the district, whose physicians and scientists were the first in the world to engineer laboratory-grown organs that were successfully implanted into humans.

“When you stay in your own silos, you never see the possibilities,” says Julie Ann Freischlag, CEO of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and dean of the School of Medicine. “I’d like us to be known for healthier populations, continuing innovation to do that, and to grow our schools so even more undergraduate students, medical students and engineering students come here to learn new ways of taking care of patients.”

Similarly, Wake Downtown has seen Wake Forest University take its initial steps in moving some of its undergraduate classes out from its main campus and into this urban environment, beginning with its engineering and biomedical programs. In doing so, it is bringing medical and liberal arts education together under one roof, creating new opportunities for cross-disciplinary partnership and teaching, while integrating students with the local business community. Nearly 350 undergraduates are expected to be enrolled in programs at Wake Downtown by 2021.

“I use the phrase that we are radically traditional and radically innovative,” says Wake Forest president Nathan Hatch. “Education should be deeply grounded in traditions and we need to study classic liberal arts. But at the same time, if that’s one foot, the other clearly needs to be in innovation and technological change, and preparing students for the market.”

The Innovation Quarter is also home to more than 170 companies, from fledgling life science and technology startups to major employers such as Inmar, drawn by these academic institutions and a unique mixed-use environment that has placed an emphasis on placemaking and community programming. Currently comprising 1.9 million square feet of office, laboratory and educational space, the district continues to grow and build upon quality-of-life amenities such as Bailey Park, a 1.6-acre green space that provides tenants and the wider public a place to play and relax.

“People really have responded well to the beauty of these buildings as a place to work and an environment that’s unlike anything else in the Southeast, where you get to be around amazing architecture designed around interaction,” says Graydon Pleasants, the Innovation Quarter’s head of real estate development. “Real estate is readily available in many places, but real estate with an innovation district surrounding it is a very different animal.”

FACT FILE

The Innovation Quarter is presently home to more than 3,700 workers, 1,800 students and over 8,000 workforce trainee participants.
Our promise
starts here.

The Old Dominion Freight Line team is the very best in the business. And we’re proud to call the Piedmont Triad our home. Here, we keep one simple promise: help you deliver yours – on time, damage free, wherever your customers are. Because at the end of the day, it’s all about you and making your job easier. As your partner, we’re committed to deliver the premium service that makes the difference every time.

For more information, visit odfl.com or call 1-800-235-5569.
ALL AROUND THE world, the Honda name has long been associated with technological innovation—and now Greensboro has become part of that conversation as the home of the Honda Aircraft Company, one of the first successful entrants into the light jet market in the past 50 years.

“Our focus is on new technology and innovation, and introducing a competitive new jet in the industry,” says founding president and CEO Michimasa Fujino, who also designed the company’s HondaJet aircraft, which distinguishes itself as the fastest, farthest and highest-flying plane in its class. “Our company is a little different from other companies in terms of being a technology-centered, high-tech company, rather than just a mere aerospace company.”

Honda initially opened a research center at Piedmont Triad International Airport in 2000, later choosing to add its world headquarters and production facility even when it had the opportunity to locate its operations elsewhere. Plus, it continues to grow in its 133-acre campus—most recently with the announcement of a new 82,000-sq.-ft. assembly facility that will take its total investment to more than $245 million.

“Locating our headquarters on the East Coast is a very important component for providing the best service and... for close relationships with our major markets,” says Fujino. “And in looking at the East Coast, I tried to find a place where I saw the potential to grow the company. There was support not just from the state but the community for a new venture, and also an airport that had a lot of space for us to grow the business.”
This is a future of less sick and more well.

For decades, much of health care has been hospital-based with a focus on treatment. This longstanding and increasingly outdated approach is undergoing a bold transformation led by Cone Health and a group of physicians and other caregivers called Triad HealthCare Network in the Piedmont Triad area of North Carolina.

With an emphasis on prevention and wellness, Cone Health and our physician partners work together to provide the right care at the right place and the right time. This new approach has grown to be one of the best in the nation at delivering high quality care cost effectively. What matters even more to us: the positive impact we’re having on thousands of lives.

This is today’s CONE HEALTH.

To find out more, go to conehealth.com/wellness
As a defensive end at Guilford College, CJ Nash III ’18 was a nightmare for opposing quarterbacks — leading the league in sacks his senior season. Today, he plays defense for U.S. Bank in Charlotte as an anti-money laundering analyst and investigator. CJ is well on his way to a dream job with the FBI — banking on his current experience and a master’s degree he is pursuing in forensic accounting. The Carolina Panthers helped make grad school a reality by awarding CJ a $10,000 scholarship, which he earned in a rigorous interview and essay competition.

“Guilford prepares you for everything in life. For me, it was a unique and challenging experience. I started to understand people who don’t look like you and who don’t act like you. My eyes were opened to so many different things.”

— CJ Nash III ’18
UNC GREENSBORO
ONE OF ONLY 50 doctoral institutions recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for both higher research activity and community engagement, UNCG is the largest state university in the Triad, with more than 20,000 students and 3,000-plus faculty and staff members.

It offers more than 125 fields of study, but is perhaps best known for its expertise in professional education—such as at its School of Nursing, consistently ranked one of the nation’s best, and for which a new $105-million building is slated for completion in 2021.

“We have a very strong school of education, we have a very strong business school, we are very strong in the health sciences, and we are very strong in the visual and performing arts, and all of those programs trend nicely toward career paths,” says chancellor Franklin Gilliam, Jr. “The fact that our professional schools are very well developed and widely recognized for their quality means that our students are really prepared to get out into the workforce.”

GUILFORD COLLEGE
PART OF THE GREENSBORO community since 1837, Guilford is one of the oldest co-ed colleges in the Southeast, but it isn’t letting that history hold it back as it prepares to launch a total redesign of its curriculum and academic calendar in Fall 2019.

Named the Guilford Edge, this new approach introduces a three-week, intensive course every semester that will allow its students to develop their skills with a real-world learning experience, many of which could feature a community or off-campus element either in the Triad or around the world.

“The Guilford Edge is about providing an authentic and relevant experience for all of the students at the college,” says president Jane Fernandes, the first deaf woman to lead an American college or university. “The Edge recognizes that the higher education paradigm is changing. In the past, the curriculum was exclusively mandated by the faculty, and now the faculty are mediators of a curriculum that is driven by the students’ passions or interests.”

ELON UNIVERSITY
A MID-SIZED PRIVATE UNIVERSITY with 6,200 students, Elon is also committed to the idea that real-world experiences are essential to helping its graduates transition to life after college—so much so that it requires all students to complete experiential learning requirements during their education through its signature Elon Experiences programs. Encompassing study abroad, internships, service, leadership and undergraduate research, the university even documents this work on transcripts as evidence of what its students achieve.

“We talk about experiential engaged learning as our distinctive proposition to families,” says president Connie Ledoux Book, whose institution was ranked the number-one regional university in the South by U.S. News & World Report in 2019. “Our students are headed to top employers, and when I ask them about the interview process, it is the experiential engaged learning that is featured on this transcript that made for a vibrant communication opportunity with their employer about their Elon experience.”

FACT FILE
UNC Greensboro has a $1-billion annual economic impact in the Piedmont Triad region.

FACT FILE
Launched in April 2019, the Elon LEADS fundraising campaign aims to raise $250m by 2022.

FACT FILE
Guilford has been included in Colleges that Change Lives for more than 20 years.
Located in the center of North Carolina, with Charlotte to its west and the Research Triangle to its east, the Piedmont Triad has long been known as a place that makes things. Throughout its history, it has been recognized particularly as a center for tobacco, textiles and furniture manufacturing, but the economy today is changing, and the region is having to pivot to new technologies and industries to compete in the modern marketplace.

“We like to be known as a region that has learned from our heritage and transformed for the future, so we have a workforce that is working on things that are relevant and aligned with where the world is moving,” says Stan Kelly, president and CEO of the Piedmont Triad Partnership. “We then have the benefit of doing this in between two other major global markets, and in a place where people can get a really nice job, and come here from around the world or around the country and have a quality of life.”

This transformation is perhaps most apparent in downtown Winston-Salem, where the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter has become established as a place for entrepreneurship and discovery. That’s a combination that has not only led to the development of young startups, but has also drawn companies such as Inmar who see the benefits of this innovation-driven environment in staying on the leading edge of technological change.

Through its tech-enabled services, Inmar specializes in helping retailers, pharmacies and other consumer or patient-centric companies engage their audiences and improve their profitability, while improving outcomes for consumers. Founded in 1980, the company now employs more than 4,500 people nationwide and is involved, among other services, in processing more than one billion claims for 40,000 pharmacies across the U.S.

“We have a workforce that is working on things that are relevant and aligned with where the world is moving”

“Everything that you put into your stomach or into your bloodstream, and everybody that you buy that from, you should be able to have all the information and be able to know that you are safely consuming it,” says chairman and CEO David Mounts. “We are in the business of helping retailers, health systems and pharmacies make sure that happens for consumers, and if we do what we are supposed to do, we can...”

"Site Selection has ranked Greensboro-High Point in the top ten every year since 2006 for economic development among metros with a population between 200k and 1m."
enable the way you engage today to be a much easier experience.”

Meanwhile, the Triad continues to explore opportunities in advanced manufacturing and supply chain logistics, while its largest public corporation, LabCorp, is a global life sciences company that provides diagnostic and drug development solutions for more than 120 million patient encounters per year. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2019, the company is widely known for its approach to innovation, whether that’s bringing a new diagnostic test to market, or contributing to new healthcare models that provide broader access and a better experience for patients.

“We will continue to look for ways in which we can serve the U.S. healthcare system and the patients and physicians here, but at the same time widen the opportunity for growth and prosperity for the company,” says chairman and CEO David King. “Every day, we have 60,000 people that come to work with one thing in mind—to improve the health and the lives of other people—and if we could be known for that, I would be very happy.”

Innovation has even become a calling card for the region’s traditional industries, with its leading textile companies choosing to embrace technology as a means of differentiation.

For example, Unifi has been headquartered in Greensboro since 1971, and is now established as a world-leader in recycled performance fibers through its Repreve technology. To date, the company has used state-of-the-art recycling technology to transform more than 16 billion plastic bottles (enough to fill the Empire State Building 11.5 times) into high-quality and verifiable fibers used by some of the world’s most popular consumer brands in everything from clothing and footwear to home furnishings and automotive interiors.

“We believe our future is in sustainable fiber solutions for our customers. That’s where the industry is headed down the road, and we want to be the provider of whatever those sustainable solutions are that they need,” says Richard Gerstein, global chief marketing officer and EVP, Repreve Future Strategy. “The Repreve brand provides a guarantee of quality and transparency, and so I look forward to growing the products that we offer, and growing globally in where we provide our products.”

In addition, the Triad was long known as a center for the denim industry, and has recently had reason to celebrate that heritage, with the spin-off of VF Corporation’s jeanswear business as its own entity. Now named Kontoor Brands, the new company has a global presence through its Wrangler and Lee brands, yet chose to stay close to its roots by establishing its headquarters in Greensboro.

“We have a lot of history here, so coming back and being headquartered again has brought about a lot of sentimentality about how everyone wants us to be successful,” says president and CEO Scott Baxter. “I think a lot of folks here have always

“We have 60,000 people that come to work with one thing in mind—to improve the health and the lives of other people”
thought of Wrangler as their own. They either had a family member, a friend or they themselves worked in our business at one point in time or another over our long history here, and so there’s this real sense of pride in the fact that we’re coming back as a publicly traded company.”

When it comes to the furniture industry, High Point has been a leading global hub since the late 19th century, and while globalization has led to a decline in its standing as a manufacturing center, it remains a retail and trade destination thanks to the High Point Market trade fair and locations such as Furnitureland South—which has grown since it was founded in 1969 to where it now fills 1.3 million square feet with every element you could need to furnish your home.

“There’s nothing like our store on the planet,” says CEO, president and co-owner Jeffrey Harris. “We’re truly a one-stop shop for someone who is looking to do a room, multiple rooms or an entire home. There’s really not a better place to be able to do it efficiently with your time or your money.”

Elsewhere, IFB Solutions was founded in Winston-Salem in 1936 and is now the largest employer of people who are blind in the U.S.—a demographic for whom the unemployment rate nationwide is 70 percent, versus close to 4 percent overall.

Inspired by the transformative impact that sees a person move from dependency to the independence that comes with earning a paycheck, the company leverages a diverse portfolio of manufacturing, distribution and service capabilities to provide employment and training regardless of skill level. It also organizes a variety of programs in the community, such as a student enrichment experience program that helps teach valuable independent living skills and foster personal confidence and friendships.

“Our singular focus and vision continues to be building lifechanging opportunities for people that are blind,” says COO Danny Kelly. “We are going to find ways to continually work on lowering that unemployment statistic for people that are blind. Part of it is cheering people on, both the individuals who are blind and companies, to make sure that people who are blind have the opportunity to succeed whether it’s inside our four walls or outside in work for commercial entities throughout the Triad or beyond.”

HEALTHCARE

The health industry remains a vital part of the Triad economy, with its major health systems ranking among the region’s largest employers while also contributing to the national conversation about healthcare delivery.

Headquartered in Winston-Salem, Novant Health serves more than 5 million patients annually across four states, with a network that includes more than 1,600 physicians, 29,000 employees and 640-plus locations, including 15 medical centers. With a mission to improve the health of communities, one person at a time, the organization supports more than $3.5 billion in annual economic activity in Greensboro-Winston-Salem, and recently made a commitment to the community with plans to invest $181.4 million to upgrade Forsyth Medical Center.

Says president and CEO Carl Armato, “When I think about the future, I think about an organization that is focusing on not only continuing to deliver remarkable experiences as defined through our patients and family members that we serve, but also redesigning care and service delivery to meet new consumer needs, introducing and leveraging technology to enhance the patient experience, and really focusing on improving the health of the entire community.”

With six hospitals and 12,000 employees, Cone Health is also an integral contributor to the wellbeing of people across the region and is making a big investment of its own as it prepares to open the $100-million Women’s and Children’s Center at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro. At the same time, it is dedicated to improving upon healthcare delivery, whether that is in technology that makes it easier for people with diabetes to manage their disease, or leading the way in the industry’s transition from volume to value by finding novel ways to address chronic disease.

“We want to continue to be an organization that pioneers new approaches to caring for our community,” says CEO Terry Akin. “We want to be an organization that serves as an example nationally and even beyond for how it can be done well, and we want to prove out the value-based offering for both its quality and cost-effectiveness. We envision a region where a tradition of health and wellbeing are woven into the fabric of our community.”
Founded in 1753 with a clear vision and mission, Winston-Salem N.C. has a history of cultivating successful entrepreneurs, so it was no surprise when Global financial advisor Jay Raffaldini launched his passion project, Raffaldini Vineyards, in Winston-Salem. With more than $1.9 billion invested in citywide improvements, and recently named one of Forbes.com’s “14 Best Places to Travel in the U.S. in 2019,” Winston-Salem is reinventing what it means to live, work and play.
HIGHER EDUCATION

The transformation of the Triad economy would not be possible were it not for the 30-plus colleges and universities spread throughout the region that not only provide the drive for innovation and R&D, but also a highly skilled talent pool that is adaptable to whatever tomorrow’s needs look like.

These include Winston-Salem State University, a historically black public research university that is perhaps most notable for the educational opportunities it provides for students from rural populations and underserved communities. Ranked seventh on CollegeNET’s 2018 Social Mobility Index (SMI)—and the only East Coast institution to feature in the top 20 for all five years of SMI rankings—it does so by not only promoting access and affordability, but also by ensuring it develops graduates who are equipped with the leadership, creative-thinking and problem-solving skills that businesses are looking for today.

“We are on a great trajectory in terms of how we want to educate students for the future,” says chancellor Elwood Robinson. “I want to make sure we have great programs that create great opportunities for our students, that we’re equity-minded, and that we can create a place where every single student can come and have a high-impact practice that will prepare them for a careers that don’t even exist.”

In Greensboro, North Carolina A&T State University is the largest historically black university in the U.S., as well as a land-grant institution recognized for excellence in areas such as nanoengineering. On a national level, it is known as a leader in the number of engineering degrees awarded to African Americans, while its broad research portfolio includes projects funded by the likes of NASA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Health.

“As most land-grant institutions do, we distinguish ourselves as a big STEM institution,” says chancellor Harold Martin. “There are no universities in America that have the kind of impact that we have in producing large numbers of highly
prepared, high-demand graduates that happen to be African American.”

Plus, to provide some indication of the diversity of the Triad’s higher-ed community, Winston-Salem is also home to the UNC School of the Arts, founded in 1963 as America’s first public arts conservatory, which provides high-quality experience and training to emerging artists in such areas as dance, design and production, drama, filmmaking, and music.

“We know that future success at UNC-SA depends on shifting perceptions of the value and relevance of conservatory training in the 21st century,” says Ralph Hanes Womble, UNCSA’s chair of the board of trustees. “UNCSA is actively preparing its students for a multitude of careers and encouraging them to be innovators in their fields.”

AEROSPACE

Finally, one of the Triad economy’s most compelling stories in recent decades has been the growth of its aerospace sector, particularly around the Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTI), where a central East Coast location, welcoming environment and airspace capacity have helped draw more than $500 million of private investment.

Today, PTI is home to more than 50 companies and 5,700 jobs, featuring such notable names as FedEx, Cessna and the Honda Aircraft Company, as well as the Americas headquarters of HAECO, one of the world’s leading aircraft engineering and maintenance groups.

Entering the market through acquisition in 2013, the company has put the Triad at the center of its global network, manufacturing cabin interior solutions in facilities in High Point and Wallburg, and providing airframe services for both widebody and narrowbody aircraft at the airport, where a new $60-million hangar will elevate its capabilities and provide up to 500 new jobs at full capacity.

“We’d like to be known for the quality of the work that we do,” says Richard Kendall, CEO of HAECO Americas. “Being the top-quality operator and the most reliable provider of engineering services to our customer base is something that we pride ourselves on, not only here in the U.S. but across our network.”

This cluster could be set to grow further still, with 1,000 acres of land on the airport’s north side still open for development, connected via a taxiway bridge and able to be portioned to meet the needs of any potential tenant.

“There are not a lot of airports in the country that have this whole combination of assets and then also have the ability to develop as many as 1,000 acres in any format or pattern,” says PTI’s executive director, Kevin Baker. “It’s been a very focused effort where we identified the aerospace industry as a key market for the region going forward and then we at the airport said, how could we make sure we had space available for whatever user may need it in the future... We’re absolutely ready for the next company that comes in.”
WELCOME TO GREENSBORO-HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA!

We're a community where commerce and creativity join forces to push industry and innovation forward. Businesses boom and individuals flourish with our dedication to cutting-edge educational programs, a transportation infrastructure that can easily take you anywhere in the world and a growing population that plays as hard as it works. You can see that anything is possible in Greensboro-High Point.

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GREENSBORO
A.K.A. Gate City
POPULATION 290,200
THE STORY From Quaker roots, North Carolina’s third-largest city grew to be a transportation center for the state and an international hub for the textile industry. Today, a large higher-ed community and growth in sectors such as aerospace leave it poised for future development.
BUSINESS SUCCESS In August 2018, Publix announced a $400m capital investment in a 1.8m-sq.-ft. Greensboro distribution center, expected to create more than 1,000 jobs.
CAN’T MISS Billed as “The Showplace of the Carolinas” when it opened in 1927, the Carolina Theatre is Greensboro’s original performing arts center, and its restored interiors still host a busy arts program.
WHAT THEY SAY “The first thing that drew me to relocating here is that we are two hours from the mountain and three hours from the beach... Because of that, there are so many resources available to do anything and everything that you would like to.”—Henri Fourrier, president and CEO of the Greensboro CVB.
WHAT OTHERS SAY A 2018 survey by Waze found Greensboro to be the best place to drive in the U.S.
FACT FILE In January 2020, Greensboro will host the U.S. Figure Skating Championships for the third time in 10 years.

HIGH POINT
A.K.A. Home Furnishings Capital of the World
POPULATION 111,500
THE STORY The smallest of the Triad’s main cities still packs a significant punch with the rise to prominence of High Point University, its urban development, and its status as a worldwide home furnishings capital. The industry has also helped give rise to High Point’s branding as North Carolina’s International City, with more than 75 globally HQed companies operating year-round facilities in the community.
BUSINESS SUCCESS Following the addition of 80 High Point positions in 2018, Aetna is set to add upwards of 300 new employees by the end of 2020.
CAN’T MISS John Coltrane grew up in High Point, and now the city commemorates him with the John Coltrane International Jazz and Blues Festival, which runs this year from August 31 to September 1.
WHAT THEY SAY “I really feel like High Point is turning the chapter and writing a different narrative than they have before. We’re recognizing the furniture heritage, but also bringing new opportunities to people that may not have that furniture connection.”—Melody Burnett, interim president of the High Point CVB.
WHAT OTHERS SAY Winston-Salem was named by Forbes as one of the 14 best places to travel in the U.S. in 2019.
FACT FILE The first local arts council in the country opened in Winston-Salem in 1949.

WINSTON-SALEM
A.K.A. Twin City, The Dash, City of Arts and Innovation
POPULATION 244,600
THE STORY Formed when the two cities joined in 1913, Winston-Salem is a historic community that combines small-town vibes with big-city amenities. A buzzing art scene and revitalized downtown complement an evolving economy that’s becoming increasingly known for tech and innovation.
BUSINESS SUCCESS At Whitaker Park, another R. J. Reynolds Tobacco property is being reworked as a mixed-use development focusing on light-industrial tenants, with a potential impact as high as 10,000 jobs and several hundred million dollars.
CAN’T MISS Held this year from July 29, the biennual National Black Theatre Festival attracts more than 65,000 attendees to over 100 productions.
WHAT THEY SAY “I think the one word that describes Winston-Salem the best to me is that we’re authentic... We have a strong history and historical attractions that excite people but we also have this cool, hip new vibe going on in our downtown.”—Richard Geiger, president of Visit Winston-Salem.
WHAT OTHERS SAY Winston-Salem
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GREENSBORO

When it comes to economic development today, the conversation often starts and ends with talent, making it incumbent on any modern community, large or small, to create a place where tomorrow’s workforce will want to locate.

For many, that means an urban environment in which you can live, work and play, which is why you’re seeing the renewal and renaissance of downtowns all across the country—and Greensboro is no exception, where public-private partnerships and ongoing development projects continue to bring new life to North Carolina’s third-largest city.

“The urban revival that’s taken place throughout the globe over the last few years continues to create that vibrant center core,” says Zack Matheny, president and CEO of Downtown Greensboro, Inc. “In Greensboro’s case, with our many colleges and universities, we see it as imperative that we embrace the authenticity of our city, the history of our city, and foster new growth so that we can retain our brain trust that we’re educating and so that our employers can hire those folks.”

For Greensboro, this is a story that’s already been unfolding over the past couple of decades, and picked up some early momentum with Elon University’s decision to establish its school of law downtown in 2006, as well as the opening of First National Bank Field in 2005 as the home of the Greensboro Grasshoppers minor-league baseball team.

More recently, the development of LeBauer City Park is indicative of a commitment to pleasant and accessible public space, as is a $25-million investment on a downtown streetscape project designed to improve the pedestrian experience. Cone Health, UNC Greensboro, N.C. A&T and Guilford Technical Community College have come together at the seven-acre Union Square healthcare and nursing campus, which provides a new anchor on downtown’s south end and brings more young people to the urban core. Meanwhile, the $85-million, 3,023-seat Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts is set to be one of the cultural highlights for the entire region when it opens in 2020.

“They’ve got nearly 12,000 commitments for season tickets, and I think that gives an indication of how excited the people of Greensboro are to see this facility,” says Henri Fourrier, president and CEO of the Greensboro CVB. “It will give our guests in town something else to do when they are here, and we are hoping that it will be a draw for outlying communities for people to come into Greensboro, grab dinner, see a show and possibly spend the night.”

Plus, the community had yet more to celebrate earlier this year when local developer Roy Carroll announced plans for what could be the largest project in downtown Greensboro history. Fresh off another $70-million hotel and apartment development nearby, the $140-million mixed-use complex will include a 150-room Aloft Hotel, 280 luxury apartments and
a 20-story office tower, just across from the Grasshoppers’ ballpark.

“Our downtown right now is light years ahead of where it was even four years ago,” says Brent Christensen, president and CEO of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. “There are all sorts of great opportunities to be outdoors, to be at an art gallery or performance, and then also have a downtown baseball stadium. And then to have the opportunity to live there as well, so your downtown becomes a true live-work-play environment, and that’s what’s happening right now in Greensboro.”

HIGH POINT
Over its history, the furniture industry has been an essential part of the High Point economy, providing employment in manufacturing, retail and tourism, as well as providing an identity and international name recognition that not many communities its size can claim. However, despite these benefits, the presence of large showrooms and market facilities that see little traffic for much of the year have also left the city without what you would consider a traditional downtown.

In recent years, though, there has been a renewed effort to create a destination in the center of the city, not only for visitors to enjoy, but also locals that may previously have had to travel to Greensboro or Winston-Salem. Most important, it was figured, would be a catalyst project that could put downtown back on the map—and that’s what the city has done with an 11.5-acre mixed-use development anchored by a 5,000-seat, multi-use stadium. With funding for construction and development provided by the city of High Point, BB&T Point opened in May 2019 with the home opener for the new High Point Rockers baseball team, and has already helped the city secure $100 million in additional private investment for nearby venues such as a hotel and children’s museum.

Nearby, another exciting development is looking to harness High Point’s legacy of design and innovation, and carry it forward into the 21st century. Housed in a historic hosiery mill, Plant Seven is a 100,000-square-foot entrepreneurial center designed to cultivate creativity and collaboration through such amenities as a co-working space, a makerspace and a materials library.

“We hope and expect this will be one of the premier centers for design, culture and innovation,” says Patrick Chapin, president and CEO of Business High Point - Chamber of Commerce. “No where else in the world could someone create what we’re doing in Plant Seven because nowhere else is the home furnishings capital of the world. We’re able to capture something that is unique, tapping into the ecosystem of designers and innovators we have here.”

Elsewhere, the city also continues to benefit from the explosive growth wit-
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nessed at High Point University, which has quadrupled the size of its campus from 91 to 460 acres since 2005. Today, there is still a total of $200 million in active construction taking place at the university, including the $65-million Wanek School of Natural Sciences and the $120-million Nido and Mariana Qubein Arena, Conference Center and Hotel, which is poised to become a major venue locally for events, concerts and entertainment.

“This is the most exciting time in my whole time of being a High Pointer,” says Loren Hill, president of the High Point Economic Development Corporation. “Things are moving forward, the government and business community are working together to change things in tandem with High Point University, and it’s phenomenal to see.”

WINSTON-SALEM
The City of Arts and Innovation is shifting into a new era, with an economy that’s increasingly becoming known for technology and life sciences, an engaged higher education community, and a walkable and dynamic downtown that the New York Times ranked second among the most livable downtowns in America, in 2017.

“We’re at a point in our history where we are on the rise,” says Mark Owens, president and CEO of the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce. “We have multiple hotels, living units and other things under construction. I feel like Winston-Salem is writing a chapter of its history, and we can shape that story.”

Over the last decade, more than $1.5 billion has been invested in projects across downtown, from the construction of the Winston-Salem Dash’s BB&T Ballpark, to a $20-million overhaul of the city’s Benton Convention Center. Modern apartment buildings are rising out of the ground, and new breweries and restaurants are joining an already vibrant culinary scene, but what may be most remarkable is the widespread commitment that can be seen around the concept of adaptive reuse.

Winston-Salem’s heritage in tobacco and textile manufacturing has endowed it with a slew of red-brick factories, old warehouses and other historic buildings, which are now being transformed into modern residential and commercial spaces as developers embrace their character and solid bones. Notably, these even include the former R. J. Reynolds headquarters, known for being the design inspiration for the Empire State Building, which now features a boutique hotel through its first six floors, topped by apartments on the floors above.

“We’ve done a great job creating a vibrant, dynamic, progressive downtown but respecting our historic roots,” says Richard Geiger, president of Visit Winston-Salem. “Rather than tearing things down, we tend to reinvent them and through innovation create new uses for them. I think that’s all part of what makes this community a great place to live.”

This is a trend that’s especially apparent in the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter, where former tobacco manufacturing facilities have been reimagined as a thriving innovation district. Plus, it’s an area that continues to evolve. Already home to more than 170 companies and 3,700 workers, it continues to see development at the former Bailey Power Plant, where new, glass-fronted construction is providing a new sheen to an emerging office, retail and entertainment complex.

“I would like to see a community that is intentionally and organically inclusive of thought, ideas and everything that goes with that,” adds Owens. “Our vision is to make Winston-Salem the best place to start and grow a business in North Carolina and the country. We have the ingredients, with the cost of living, quality of life and downtown growth, for us to be able to do that.”

9. The $100m Wake Forest Biotech Place building was built to gold LEED standards.
10. Opened in 2010, the $48.7m BB&T Ballpark seats 5,500 spectators.
11. The Innovation Quarter is a live-work-play setting, with 710 condos and apartments within or close by.
12. Downtown Winston-Salem is home to more than 100 locally owned restaurants, breweries and stores.
Located in the heart of North Carolina, at the center of the East Coast, the Piedmont Triad International Airport has already created more than 25,000 jobs, contributes $5.8 billion annually to the local economy and has attracted global brands such as Honda Aircraft Company, HAECO Americas, FedEx Express, and Cessna/Textron. And with 1,000 acres ready for development, we’re just getting started. PTI is building the future of North Carolina Aerospace.

Visit LandatPTI.com to learn why your next big move should be to the Piedmont Triad International Airport, the Center of North Carolina Aerospace.
TRIAD TOUR

IN GREENSBORO, HIGH POINT, WINSTON-SALEM AND BEYOND, THERE’S A WHOLE LOT TO SEE AND DO THROUGHOUT CENTRAL NC

THE SPORTS AND RECREATION TOUR
Whether playing or watching, there’s plenty to keep sports fanatics entertained in the Triad—not least three professional baseball teams, all of which bring vibrancy to each of the three major cities through their downtown ballparks. The Winston-Salem Dash (1) and Greensboro Grasshoppers have both been anchors in their communities for some time, and this year, the High Point Rockers joined the party with fans flocking to BB&T Point for their debut season. Plus, the region is also notable for its golfing heritage—Arnold Palmer attended Wake Forest on a golf scholarship—with its variety of accessible and affordable courses, as well as the PGA Tour’s Wyndham Championship (2). Held annually in the Greensboro area since 1938, this year’s tournament tees off on August 1 at Sedgefield Country Club. Elsewhere, the Greensboro Coliseum Complex (3) was once one of the largest venues in the South, and still hosts the Greensboro Swarm of the NBA’s G League and the Carolina Cobras of the National Arena League, among other draws, while Hanging Rock State Park (4) is a shining example of the area’s outdoor recreation opportunities, with hiking, biking and watersports all on offer across its 7,869 acres.

THE HISTORY TOUR
Long known as a manufacturing and transportation center for the southeastern U.S., the Triad has plenty of sites and attractions that speak to its storied history. For example, the Old Salem Museum and Gardens (5) is a remarkable living history destination that offers an unparalleled picture of 18th and 19th-century Moravian life. Around 70 percent of the district’s buildings are original, while skilled and costumed interpreters take on the role of the townspeople and craftsmen, and bring the experience to life. Adjacent to a Historical Park that features its own historic buildings, the High Point Museum (6) is also dedicated to sharing the city’s history, including its relationship with the furniture industry, while the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park (7) commemorates the Battle of Guilford Court House in 1781, considered a turning point that led to American victory in the Revolutionary War. Meanwhile, one of the most famous sit-ins of the Civil Rights Movement took place in Greensboro in 1960, when four N.C. A&T students refused to leave the lunch counter in the city’s Woolworth store. Exactly 50 years to the day later, the International Civil Rights Center & Museum (8) was opened in the same building, devoted to the global struggles for civil and human rights.

THE ARTS AND CULTURE TOUR
There’s a lively arts scene to be discovered in the Triad, underpinned by its collection of colleges and universities—among them, the UNC School of the Arts—as well as a variety of cultural institutions and attractions, such as the Reynolda House Museum of American Art (9) in Winston-Salem. Once a grand home at the center of the Reynolda Estate, it opened as an art museum in 1967 and now houses one of the nation’s finest collections of American art, featuring works spanning from the colonial period to the present day. This theme continues at UNC Greensboro, where the Weatherspoon Art Museum (10) is largely dedicated to modern and contemporary art, with a near-6,700-strong collection that represents all major movements since the beginning of the 20th century. Beyond these, the Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts will be an exciting addition to the Triad’s cultural environment when it opens in 2020, but even now, the region can boast of such first-rate performance venues as the Centennial Station Arts Center in High Point and the Roger L. Stevens Center (11) in Winston-Salem—home to major UNCSA productions, the Winston-Salem Symphony and the Piedmont Opera.

THE FAMILY FRIENDLY TOUR
If there’s one can’t-miss attraction in your family-inspired trip around the Triad, it could well be the North Carolina Zoo (12), just a short distance south in Asheboro. As the world’s largest natural habitat zoo, it provides plenty of space to roam for more than 1,800 animals across 500 developed acres, and continues to add new exhibits and habitats for its 800,000-plus annual visitors. Another of the region’s foremost attractions, the Greensboro Science Center (13) draws close to 450,000 guests each year with the diverse experiences offered by having an aquarium, museum, zoo, and treetop adventure park all in one location. On the edge of Greensboro, Wet ‘n Wild Emerald Pointe (14) is the largest water park in the Carolinas, with more than 35 rides and attractions, and 5 million gallons of water to be explored. And finally, because a family vacation doesn’t just have to be about the kids, it’s well worth remembering that High Point is known as the Home Furnishings Capital of the World—not only for the biannual High Point Market, but for destinations such as Furnitureland South (15), where more than 1,000 brands are represented at the largest furniture store in the United States.
Tourism is a significant economic driver for the Triad, accounting for 13,950 jobs plus $1.4 billion of visitor spending in Guilford County (Greensboro and High Point), and 7,120 jobs plus $898 million of spending in Forsyth County (Winston-Salem), in 2017.
A big event
The opening of the $120m Nido and Mariana Qubein Arena marks yet another milestone in the growth of High Point University, as well as providing impetus for local economic growth.

Hotel hype
The large Carroll South of the Ballpark development continues to take shape and is already beginning to drive increased foot traffic to the northern end of Downtown Greensboro.

The air show
PTI’s emergence as the center of a modern aerotropolis gets its crowning glory with the announcement of a major aircraft manufacturing facility, set to bring 1000s of jobs to the Triad.

Park life
The 220-acre Whitaker Park is established as one of the region’s busiest mixed-use complexes, with labs, innovative businesses and residential units filling the former Reynolds American site.

Medical wonder
Known for its contributions to regenerative medicine and more, the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter is often cited as one of the finest examples of how innovation districts can fuel economic development.

Looking Ahead
What does the future look like for the Piedmont Triad?

Some 8 million people, or around 80 percent of the population of North Carolina, live in the urban crescent that spans Charlotte, the Triad and the Triangle—three growing areas that cumulatively are expected to add more than 1 million residents over the next 25 years.

As the workforce expands, it follows that the state is going to need to find a way to provide new employment opportunities—something the Piedmont Triad Partnership has tried to quantify with its goal of attracting more than 50,000 jobs to the region over the next two decades.

With more than 8,500 positions announced in 2018 alone, across such varied industries as aerospace, healthcare, manufacturing and distribution, the Triad is off to a strong start. And it’s poised to carry that momentum into the years to come, as businesses recognize the rare opportunity offered by four new megasites distributed along the US-421 corridor between Winston-Salem and Fayetteville.

Co-branded as part of the region’s ‘Carolina Core’ initiative, the sites offer a combined 7,200 acres of certified land for development—a potentially intriguing prospect for companies looking to build a large advanced manufacturing facility in an area that provides access to major markets and with a workforce that has shown throughout history that it knows how to make things.

“We have some transformative assets... that could attract a transformative company,” says Stan Kelly, president and CEO of the Piedmont Triad Partnership. “We’re working on elevating those assets, and portraying them within the other attributes of this region. We think the cumulative impact of all that lends itself to singles, doubles, a triple and maybe a home run over the next five, ten or fifteen years.”

The Triad of tomorrow
2020
2024
2027
2030
2035

FACT FILE
North Carolina topped Forbes’ Best States for Business rankings in both 2017 and 2018.
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