

North Carolina Piedmont Triad Region



The Piedmont Triad Region consists of twelve economically interdependent counties surrounding the cities of Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and High Point, North Carolina. The Piedmont Triad has been more adversely impacted by globalization than almost any other U.S. metropolitan region. The Piedmont Triad Region's key manufacturing industries – textiles, apparel, tobacco and furniture – have been devastated by globalization and the availability of inexpensive offshore labor. Additional regional challenges include low labor force participation, poor test scores and antiquated "factory employment" culture. Historically, factory jobs with sustainable incomes in the textile, apparel and furniture industries were available in the region to workers lacking a high school diploma. Now, the Piedmont Triad must completely rebuild its economy to be globally competitive.

Much of the work required in order to quickly implement a transformational workforce and economic development strategy has already been completed. A large group of Piedmont Triad leaders recently adopted a five-year economic development strategic vision plan for the region. The vision plan represents a road map to transform the Piedmont Triad into a globally competitive "hot spot."

The region's leadership is committed to a comprehensive regional strategy that will integrate workforce and economic development, education, and entrepreneurship and restore economic prosperity to the Piedmont Triad. The Piedmont Triad leadership consists of representatives from the region's public and private universities, community colleges, public school, large and small businesses, philanthropic organizations, entrepreneurial organizations, arts and tourism agencies, and local governments.

The Piedmont Triad has already undertaken the preliminary steps required to implement a transformational economic strategy that integrates workforce, economic development, education, and entrepreneurship. All that is lacking is the funding and technical resources provided through the WIRED initiative. A WIRED demonstration project in the Piedmont triad will result in the development of a regional model that will represent the US DOL mission of creating a new paradigm for advancing America's economic competitiveness through replicable regional transformation. The Piedmont Triad will transform not just education and workforce development, but the entire regional economy and service delivery system through an innovative strategy that integrates workforce development, education, cluster-focused economic development, and entrepreneurship.

