2019 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The following highlights provide a glimpse of Existing Industry Program activities during 2019.

Existing Industry Visits – New and Annual (Return)

- New Companies
- Annual (Return)

Size of Industry Visited

- 1-24: 23%
- 25-49: 14%
- 50-99: 33%
- 100-249: 18%
- 250-499: 9%
- 500+: 2%

*Information provided as available, not all companies disclosed employment numbers.

OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO INDUSTRY

Grants and Funding for Industry
As a liaison to help connect industry to resources in the community, the Existing Industry Program facilitated introductions to partners who were able to provide access to cost savings via grants and other opportunities for companies in Mecklenburg County:
- Nearly $250,000 in electric savings achieved for eight manufacturers via rebates and electric sales tax exemptions
- $10,000 in funding for training to 19 employees at one industry from Charlotte Works’ UpSkill Charlotte
- Over $71,000 provided to support customized training through Central Piedmont Community College

MANUFACTURERS’ LABOR MARKET SURVEY

In collaboration with the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, the Existing Industry Program worked to develop and release a labor survey of manufacturing. The survey was distributed across 16 counties in the Charlotte region with a total of 106 companies participating. The results were released in January 2020. Highlights include:
- Average wages (Production and Front Office)
- Hiring, Retaining and Training Talent
- Benefits and Working Conditions
- Hiring and Training Challenges

Key takeaway: Labor and access to qualified talent continues to be the leading challenge for industry. 75% of respondents indicated having unfilled positions during the response period. The most common hiring challenge cited was lack of enough qualified candidates followed by lack of hard skills or certifications. Respondents reported Front-Line Supervisory training as their greatest need.

RETENTIONS AND EXPANSIONS

The Existing Industry Program worked with four companies in 2019 to retain their operations in Mecklenburg County and help them grow in the community. Retention and growth at these companies yielded an aggregate of:
- $20.5m in new capital investment
- Creation of 96 new jobs
- Retention of 97 existing jobs

The Existing Industry Program for Mecklenburg County officially launched in the beginning of 2018. The mission of the Existing Industry Program is to establish and maintain close relationships with key employers in the County, to become the “first phone call” when employers are considering growth and expansion, and to provide ongoing support for existing industries in Mecklenburg County. Although the primary target of the Existing Industry Program is manufacturing, the Program also encompasses distribution and HQ.

Retentions and Expansions

District 1: 12 visits
District 2: 51 visits
District 3: 11 visits
District 4: 10 visits
District 5: 0 visits
District 6: 11 visits

The Existing Industry Program focuses on manufacturing; due to this, the geographic variance of visits is related to the location of these industries.
MONTHLY RESOURCE BLASTS

Released near the beginning of each month, these blasts are intended to connect industry to valuable resources in the community which could support their operations. Topics featured in 2019 included:

- Upskill Charlotte and On the Job Training Grants from Charlotte Works
- Youth Business Connector
- Manufactured in North Carolina website
- Foreign Trade Zone
- Second Harvest Food Bank and Corporate Stewardship Opportunities
- Electric Rebates (Duke Energy, ElectriCities and Energy United)
- State Trade Export Promotion and Recycling Business Assistance Center Grant Opportunities
- Active Survival for Active Shooter Training from CMPD

What’s Next 2020?!

During 2020, the Existing Industry Program will be working with industry and community partners to consider launching initiatives which could bring value to the operations of companies located in Mecklenburg County. The opportunities under consideration include the following:

- Seminars
- Benchmarking Tours
- Manufacturers’ Human Resources Group
- National Manufacturing Day Awareness Campaign
- Manufacturing Supply Chain Expo