



# Cleveland County, NC Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Program

2015-2016 CEC® FINAL REPORT

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## The Cleveland County CEC® Leadership Team

The CEC® Leadership Team is comprised of a wide assortment of professionals, leaders, and entrepreneurs who are in some way involved in driving the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the community. All participating members of the Leadership Team are expected to attend the majority of meetings and CEC® related events within their community. Members provide valuable input into the development of entrepreneurial initiatives, lead tasks, and, provide direction for the CEC® initiative. The Chair of the project assists the CEC® Project Team Leader in all event scheduling, action plan support, and project management.

The Cleveland County Leadership team members were:

- Steve Padgett, CEC® Chair, Director of Small Business Center, Cleveland Community College
- Bill Watson, Executive Director, Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce
- Ken Mooney, Vice President of Continuing Education, Cleveland Community College
- Dr. John Lattimore, Dean of Business & Allied Health, Cleveland Community College
- David Pharr, President of Pharr Technologies
- Rick Howell, City Manager for City of Shelby
- Deedi Barry, Retired CPA and Entrepreneur
- Tony Fogleman, Career and Technical Education Director, Cleveland County Schools
- Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, Dean of Godbold's School of Business, Gardner-Webb University
- Jason Falls, Chairman of Cleveland County Commissioners
- Fred Harrill, Owner of RollOver Pets

## The CEC® Program Consulting Team

The CEC® Program is a joint venture between Creative Economic Development Consulting, Innovative Economies, and Entrepreneurial Places. Our three firms collaborated to develop and launch the redesigned CEC® program. Each CEC® community is assigned a Project Team Leader. That leader is responsible for facilitating the action plan development, monitoring the score card, and coaching task team leaders. The Cleveland County Project Team Leader was Emily Breedlove.

- Emily Breedlove, Partner of Innovative Economies, LLC
- Crystal Morphis, Founder of Creative Economic Development Consulting, LLC
- Leslie Scott, Founder of Entrepreneurial Places, LLC



Emily Breedlove



Crystal Morphis



Leslie Scott

## Overview of the CEC® Program

The Certified Entrepreneurial Community (CEC®) program is an economic development strategy that equips communities to become entrepreneur-ready. The designation means every door leads to opportunity. The overall business climate, leadership, policies, and resources to grow are simple to find and access. It also indicates there's an enthusiastic attitude and growth-oriented outlook driving the local business culture.

The CEC® program was created by AdvantageWest, a regional economic development organization in North Carolina, in 2007. Over the course of seven years, AdvantageWest certified ten communities. The program won several national innovation awards for the work it pioneered in entrepreneurship. In 2015 when AdvantageWest was closing, Creative EDC purchased the CEC® program, retooled, and relaunched. We streamlined the program making it more responsive to community needs.

In the first year, the CEC® program includes an Ecosystem Assessment, Action Plan, Score Card, Coaching, and Certification. The Ecosystem Assessment provides a baseline of research on the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Action Plan and Score Card used to measure progress is developed by the local leadership team in a facilitated workshop. Two task teams work on the Action Plan with coaching support by CEC® staff. Certification is awarded after local task teams accomplish their goals on two entrepreneur initiatives. We conclude the process by developing an Action Plan for year two, followed by additional coaching support.

Through our facilitation and beyond, certified communities make a commitment to ongoing action planning and implementation of entrepreneur initiatives. A Certified Entrepreneurial Community® signifies this is a place where entrepreneurs succeed.

The CEC® program is a joint venture between Creative Economic Development Consulting, Innovative Economies, and Entrepreneurial Places.



## Entrepreneurship in Cleveland County: A Snapshot

After several years of preparation, Cleveland County officially launched the pursuit of the Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Program in April of 2015. Cleveland County initiated the program when it was in transition between AdvantageWest and Creative EDC and later came on board under the redesigned program. Thus, some of the tasks of the Cleveland County program, and its timeline, are unique to their project.

Cleveland County launched the program with a two-day community retreat on entrepreneurship. Over the course of 18 months, the CEC® Leadership Team, with the active support of community leaders, entrepreneurs, and various advisory committees, tackled the ambitious journey of creating a more 'entrepreneur friendly' community.

From early on in the CEC® Program, it became increasingly evident that Cleveland County was equipped with a uniquely high amount of community collaboration and inter-agency cooperation. As one of the greatest assets to any region wishing to advance small business opportunity, a culture of teamwork can often be the strongest indication of future success. Leveraging this foundation of positive relationships between government, non-profits, educational institutions, and regional agencies has allowed the CEC® Leadership Team to make significant strides in advancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Cleveland County.

Following monthly meetings for 12 months with the various advisory committees, the Leadership Team aggressively worked to uncover the most crucial gaps within the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, while identifying the current strengths in the region.

### **Cleveland County Strengths:**

- 1) Inter-agency collaboration
- 2) Educational Institutions supporting entrepreneurship & business
  - a. Gardner-Webb University
  - b. Cleveland Community College
  - c. Public School System
- 3) An abundance of private banking establishments
- 4) Culture of volunteerism and community events
- 5) Vibrant Main Street Programs (Uptown Shelby and Kings Mountain)
- 6) Strong tourism and tiered economic opportunity
- 7) Varied industry presence and growth
- 8) Ongoing youth-directed initiatives

**Cleveland County Challenges:**

- 1) Need more business funding options, including micro-loans and high-risk capital
- 2) Improve overall awareness of local government requirements and community regulations for business, specifically:
  - a. Permits & Licenses
  - b. Zoning
  - c. Utilities
  - d. Sign Ordinances
- 3) Improve access to knowledge of local resources, events, and technical assistance for business
- 4) Connect the dots between ancillary educational programs from workforce development to business management
- 5) Grow area industries, such as;
  - a. Agriculture & Local Food Systems
  - b. Technology & Innovation
  - c. Tourism & Hospitality
  - d. Small Manufacturing
  - e. Professional Services
- 6) Address the infrastructure gaps within the smaller communities, such as:
  - a. Internet access
  - b. Commercial property availability
  - c. Professional co-working spaces
  - d. Multi-use small-scale manufacturing facilities
- 7) Involving regional and state-wide organizations such as;
  - a. NC Rural Center
  - b. SBTDC
  - c. US SBA
  - d. NCSU Cooperative Extension
  - e. NC Support Center

## CEC® Community Vision & Goals

### **Vision:**

Cleveland County will become known as a 'haven' for small business and entrepreneurial opportunity.

### **Goals:**

#### **1. Assess**

Discover the insight, feedback and current challenges and opportunities of the community

#### **2. Support**

Create an integrated network of community organizations, individuals, resources and business tools

#### **3. Measure**

Identify the current data, develop metrics, and build a sustainable tracking mechanism for the community

### **Tactics:**

- 1a. Map the entrepreneurial and small business assets available in Cleveland County
- 1b. Conduct needs assessments through entrepreneurial networking, community leadership retreats and the ongoing surveys
- 1c. Establish a baseline to compare with successful community efforts
- 2a. Establish a resource hub for entrepreneurs and small business owners where they can independently find answers, data and support
- 2b. Develop and implement mentoring, technical assistance and capital networks
- 2c. Link organizations and entrepreneurs
- 3a. Identify relevant data through surveys, partnerships and available research
- 3b. Build ongoing tracking mechanisms
- 3c. Establish benchmarks and goals



## CEC® Entrepreneurial Growth & Retention Plan

### **Mission:**

To work with local and regional partners to make Cleveland County a place where entrepreneurs visibly succeed at starting, growing and relocating business ventures.

### **Goals:**

#### **1. Connect**

Networking opportunities and events aimed at building informed relationships between the following parties;  
Entrepreneurs, Service Providers, Capital Providers, Community Leaders

#### **2. Inform**

Improve the quantity and quality of information and training available, aimed at the long-term success of Cleveland County Entrepreneurs and the Business Support System

#### **3. Streamline**

Leveraging partnerships with local and regional partners, simplify the support mechanisms across the county to make the entrepreneurial process more transparent and efficient

## CEC® Resource Matrix and Ecosystem Assessment

### Resource Matrix

As part of the CEC® Program Launch, our team constructed a Resource Matrix outlining the various organizations who offer entrepreneurial tools, services, and support available to residents of Cleveland County. The Matrix served as a foundational element for entire CEC® process as the team conducted additional research and dialogue around necessary next steps to grow the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Resource Matrix was not only a valuable tool, but it also provided the direction needed when identifying the two projects selected by the Leadership Team.

The Matrix depicts the primary non-profit organizations and government agencies who offer resources to support entrepreneurship. The breakdown includes organizations on a federal, regional, state, and local level. The Matrix has been a powerful tool in driving the entire CEC® initiative and is included in the Appendix.

### Ecosystem Assessment

The Cleveland County Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Leadership Team generated an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Assessment through compilation of the quantitative and qualitative information gathered to establish baselines for local and regional entrepreneurship. The entire Assessment can be found in the separate report entitled: Cleveland County, NC Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Ecosystem Assessment attached to this report.

During the 18-month program, the Leadership Team, with the support of their CEC® Project Team Leaders, conducted a series of surveys, community retreats, and roundtable discussions with key players from across the region. Through the various forms of data collection, they were then equipped with the ability to produce a snapshot of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem of Cleveland County, considering the pre-determined focus areas;

- Recent Economic Data
- Local and Regional Resource Providers
- Technical Assistance, Training & Mentoring
- Entrepreneurs & Business Owners
- Youth Programs & Engagement
- Access to Capital
- Infrastructure

## CEC® Scorecard

Goal #1 – Launch Cleveland County Service Provider Network (SPN)				
Activities <i>Steps taken</i>	Outputs <i>What activities produce</i>	Commitments <i>Indicators of support</i>	Outcomes <i>What is changing</i>	Indicators of Systemic Change <i>Long-term changes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Hold meeting #1</li> <li>– Hold meeting #2</li> <li>– Hold meeting #3</li> <li>– Plan meeting #4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– # service providers attending</li> <li>– Types of Es served by service providers attending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Service providers committed to regular SPN meetings</li> <li>– Service providers committed to hosting meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– New partnerships catalyzed</li> <li>– New joint programming</li> <li>– Programming gaps identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increased business starts</li> <li>– Improved business performance <i>(Es connected to the right service at the right time)</i></li> </ul>
Goal #2 – Build a Cleveland County Business Resource Guide (BRG)				
Activities <i>Steps taken</i>	Outputs <i>What activities produce</i>	Commitments <i>Indicators of support</i>	Outcomes <i>What is changing</i>	Indicators of Systemic Change <i>Long-term changes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Create web presence</li> <li>– Create information card</li> <li>– Market BRG</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– # hits</li> <li>– # downloads</li> <li>– time spent on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– CEC team support for website development</li> <li>– CEC team support for information card distribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– # Es using resources (attending classes, meeting with counselors, etc.)</li> <li>– Improved skills or business performance (increased sales, profits, efficiency, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increased sales tax revenues</li> <li>– Increased business investment</li> <li>– Increased jobs</li> </ul>

*Organizing according to the Hierarchy of Community Impacts developed by the Heartland Center for Leadership Development*

## CEC® Action Plan

With the fresh insight and awareness now available to the Leadership Team, they then embarked upon identifying the two most important projects which needed to be tackled in order to systematically grow the resource base for small business. The two projects selected for the CEC® Action Plan and resulting Scorecard were the following:

### Project #1: Establish a Service Provider Network

Offering the opportunity for Service Providers within and around Cleveland County to connect, learn, and advance their ability to support entrepreneurs. Hosting Quarterly Luncheons held at various locations across the County, the SPN Network will give all community providers the opportunity to engage when appropriate.

#### **Goals for SPN Program for Year 1 & Year 2**

- 1) Build the SPN Network into a self-sustaining organization with formal leadership and non-profit status
- 2) Build a strong community of support with enough committed members to work towards long-term success
- 3) Host the luncheons in different locations across the county to encourage varied participation and representation
- 4) Hold quarterly meetings to guarantee ongoing involvement without burnout
- 5) Conduct regular surveying of the SPN members to ensure the program is growing along the same lines as attendee intentions; Make survey results available to SPN members to maintain transparency and accountability

## Project # 2: Build a Business Resource Guide

Helping to streamline the search process to more efficiently connect Service Providers and Entrepreneurs to the relevant support mechanisms available to the area. The Resource Guide will be delivered as both an Online Resource Directory and a Printed Rack Card to be distributed across the entire county.

### **Goals for Year 1:**

- 1) Year 1: Build and launch the CreativeCEC/ClevelandCounty.com directory website with 40 local, regional, and state-wide resources
- 2) Year 1: Design, print, and distribute 1000 rack cards across Cleveland County
- 3) Year 1: Track the visitors and metrics for the CreativeCEC/Cleveland-County.com directory website to better understand the traffic

### **Goals for Year 2:**

- 1) Year 2: Grow the CreativeCEC/Cleveland-County.com directory website to 100 local, regional, and state-wide resources
- 2) Year 2: Print and distribute another 2500 rack cards across Cleveland County
- 3) Year 2: Launch campaigns to strategically grow traffic to the CreativeCEC/Cleveland-County.com directory website, using the metrics and surveys to determine which campaigns are most effective at bringing the entrepreneurial community to the site

## CEC® Program #1: Service Provider Network

Starting in April 2015, the CEC® Leadership Team of Cleveland County began the journey of gathering data, consulting with a wide variety of businesses, subject matter experts and entrepreneurs to better identify the most predominant needs of the surrounding Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

After much deliberation and analysis, the Leadership Team will take their first action item of creating a local Service Provider Network (SPN). An SPN is exactly what its name implies; it is a group of knowledgeable professionals from a wide variety of disciplines that are critical to the success of entrepreneurs, at whatever stage they might be in their business life, from evaluating a potential start-up to planning an opening to expanding an already successful small business.

**And why is an SPN important?** A key element of the CEC® action plan is to create a culture of “no wrong door” in Cleveland County by providing Service Providers the opportunity to connect, share resources and become more knowledgeable of the local business landscape. Various Service Providers across the region offer their own jobs, education and experience which provide valuable information that is critical to the success of entrepreneurs. The SPN will provide these same providers with the opportunity to connect with each other and share their expertise while learning about available resources in the County.

In the beginning of the CEC® process, the Leadership Team heard a pretty compelling story about moving forward toward recognition as a Certified Entrepreneurial Community®. Someone came to a City office looking for appropriate permits to open a restaurant in a building that he had just leased, only to find that the property he had committed to was not properly zoned and didn't meet necessary codes to house a restaurant. This, unfortunately, is not a one-time, unique occurrence. And while there is no easy way to guarantee that similar instances won't happen in the future, we feel confident that there is tremendous value



The First SPN Meeting held in Shelby, NC

and power in making everyone in this Service Provider Network not just aware of other disciplines, but also aware of particular areas of concern and of available services.

The Service Provider Network meetings are intended to be easy to attend with little commitment from members. They are also aimed at offering helpful tips, tools, and resources to those who are able to be present. Scheduled every few months, the SPN luncheons are meant to bring those together who wish to discuss making Cleveland County more “entrepreneur friendly” through strategic collaboration and open communication. The SPN meetings will also give the CEC® Leadership Team the support and advice needed to continually update the Business Resource Guide and various Entrepreneurial Support Tools.

SPN Meetings will be held in different communities across the County to encourage a diverse group of attendees. Following each session, those in attendance will be given a brief survey to give the CEC® Leadership Team the opportunity to gauge the level of interest, topic preference, and resulting impact of the SPN events. Meetings will typically take place during the lunch hour, with details released via email. To be included in the notifications, please contact the Cleveland Community College Small Business Center at (704) 669-4146

### [Initial Survey Results of SPN Program](#)

#### **July 2016 Meeting in Kings Mountain:**

The SPN Attendees listed the following elements as the most important components to prioritize the within Business Development Community and the Business Resource Guide:

1. Creation of a Professional Business Plan
2. Financing
3. County/City Zoning
4. Licenses/Permits
5. Marketing
6. Insurance
7. Other: Grants, Funding, Location, Website, Sales, Qualified Work-Force, and Leadership Development

## May 2016 Meeting in Shelby:

How often to you come in contact with entrepreneurs and/or startup business owners?			
Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely
4	8	7	4
Would you be willing to serve as a mentor to an entrepreneur or business owner?			
YES		NO	
16		4	
What topics would you prefer to be the focus of a future SPN meeting?			
Finance/Capital	Need for Business Plan	Government permits/licenses	
14	14	17	
Where do you most often send entrepreneurs and startups for more info?			
Small Business Center (11)		Those who I do business with	
SBA (2)		MainStreet.org	
Chamber of Commerce (2)		Economic Development Commission	
Cleveland Community College (2)		Depends on the subject	
Shelby City Planning		Planning Offices	
Other Service Providers		Kings Mountain Utilities Department	
Municipal permits/codes		CPAs, attorneys, insurance	
Uptown Shelby Association			
What services do you provide to entrepreneurs and small businesses?			
Retirement planning w/401k		Demographics, Market data	
SEP IRA and simple IRA		Event planning	
Banking, treasury management		Website design	
Tax accounting, planning		Professional coaching	
Branding, print, promotions, Startup graphic packages		Lending, deposit services	
Access to capital [SBA], Loans, wire transfers		QuickBooks setup, training	
Data, workforce, economic dev		Office space, Find available spaces [USA]	



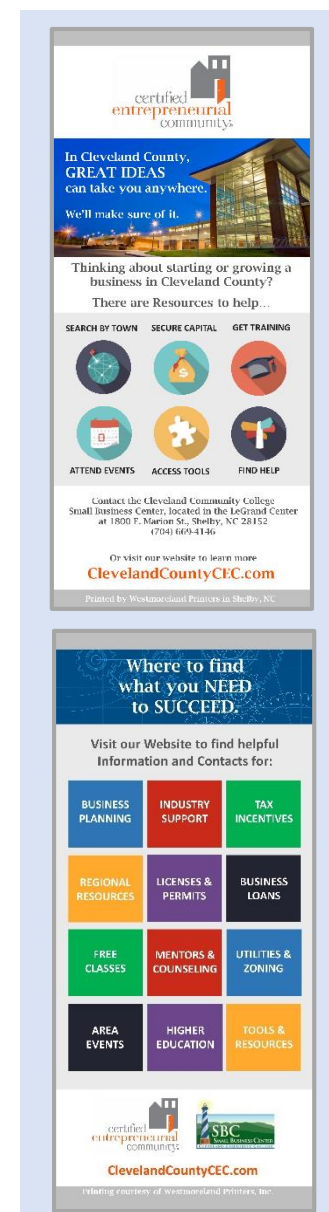
## CEC® Program #2: Business Resource Guide (Online & Printed)

Following the 12+ months of meeting with community members and advisors, the CEC® Leadership Team of Cleveland County was equipped with a comprehensive and realistic appreciation for the current needs of their entrepreneurial ecosystem. By working to address the gaps which existed within the relationships between various service providers across the region (Project #1), the next crucial piece was to build a roadmap and tool to increase the overall efficacy of local providers.

The CEC® Leadership Team identified that the Cleveland County community required a well-maintained business guide and resource directory to support the navigation of small business success, which was offered via online and a printed promotional flier to be distributed across the region. Since confirming the Business Resource Guide as their Project #2, the Leadership Team has been working hard to conduct the research needed to build a robust online platform to empower, equip, and educate the Cleveland County business community. They used the CEC® Resource Matrix and key starting point as they began the process of populating the Business Resource Guide.

The goal of the printed collateral is to inform and direct community members to the CreativeCEC/ClevelandCounty.com website, which contains helpful resources and the directory of services. The printed rack cards will be distributed around the Cleveland County community in high traffic locations such as Banks, Libraries, Government Offices, and Business related organizations.

The website is built in conjunction with the CreativeCEC.com site and allows Cleveland County to share an interactive directory of resource organizations available to residents. The site focuses on several key areas, to help visitors easily locate tools and contact information based upon their specific need.

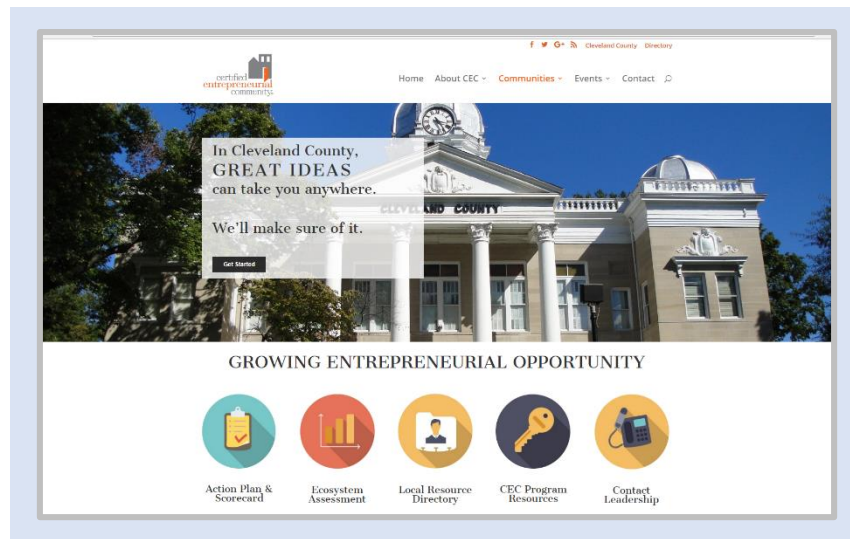


## Tips, Tools, and Direct Contact:

- 1) Business Planning
- 2) Industry Support
- 3) Tax Incentives
- 4) Regional Resources
- 5) Licenses & Permits
- 6) Business Loans
- 7) Free Classes
- 8) Mentors & Counselling
- 9) Utilities & Zoning
- 10) Area Events
- 11) Higher Education
- 12) Tools & Resources



## Screenshot from the online Resource Guide:



## Summary of Progress

As of September 2016, the Cleveland County CEC® Leadership Team has accomplished the following milestones:

<b>Service Provider Network</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Hosted #1 SPN Luncheon in May 2016	Kicked-Off SPN Network in Shelby
Hosted #2 SPN Luncheon in June 2016	Introduced SPN Network to Kings Mountain
Hosted #3 SPN Luncheon in Sept 2016	Included Northern, Rural County in SPN
Scheduled #4 SPN Luncheon in Jan 2017	Will Host a "Business Financing" Panel
Collected Surveys from all hosted SPN Luncheons	Gather data on the current needs and wishes of the Service Providers
<b>Business Resource Guide</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Conducted Research into top Resources	Collected the first 40 Resource Listings
Built and Launched the Online Resource Directory	Launched <a href="http://www.ClevelandCountyCEC.com">www.ClevelandCountyCEC.com</a>
Installed Google Analytics on Directory	Began collecting metrics on traffic
Designed BRG Rack Cards and partnered with local printer	Printed first 1000 Rack Cards
Prepared for Distribution of Rack Cards	County-wide distribution of Rack Cards
<b>Correlating Community Milestones</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Hosted 3 Entrepreneurial Networking Events	Expanded Business Network; Obtained feedback directly from Entrepreneurs
Helped to host the Cleveland County Entrepreneurial Expo	Coordinated a Resource Fair and Business Plan Competition; Engaged Youth
Business Incentive Grant Program in Cleveland County	Cleveland County enacted a Tax Incentive program to encourage business growth

## Testimonials

*The Certified Entrepreneurial Community® team has been a great partner for our county as we have developed our overall plan to attract and retain entrepreneurs. The CEC® team has been a valuable resource in planning, developing, and implementing our local program. They have been professional, flexible, and knowledgeable in their approach.*

**Tony Fogleman**

Career and Technical Education Director  
Cleveland County Schools

*The Certified Entrepreneurial Community has been a process of mapping the resources of the community and creating a comprehensive plan. Before the CEC process many public and private agencies supported the start-up entrepreneur in various ways, but there was not a single place where someone could find the answers to questions about permitting, business plans and legal formation, financial support, insurance, training, etc. This structure allows an interested person to get a realistic view of what it takes to start a business. By providing multiple starting points and a central location, The Small Business Center of Cleveland Community College, the CEC gives a sense of “you’re not in this alone.”*

**Dr. John Lattimore**

Dean of Business and Allied Health  
Cleveland Community College

*Small business support is a key component of the Chamber’s mission, so it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work on getting Cleveland County recognized as a Certified Entrepreneurial Community. I learned a lot about available resources and about the challenges that face entrepreneurs. I feel confident that we are well-positioned to support business owners and that the County will see tremendous benefit from our efforts.*

**Bill Watson**

Executive Director  
Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce

## Conclusion

The work completed in Cleveland County during the CEC® Program has already created significant and long-lasting momentum within the community. The collaborative efforts of the Leadership Team, with the active support of the local governments has been extremely impressive when compared to the initiatives tackled in communities of similar size. Having all 15 municipalities, along with the county government, buying into the Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Program has helped to catalyze the culture and capacity of the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Cleveland County in ways which are only now beginning to be seen.

As the community leaders continue to drive the Service Provider Network and Business Resource Guide, we expect them to successfully foster the crucial connections needed to truly create the “No Wrong Door” culture within Cleveland County. The mechanisms have and continue to be built to measure the overall impact of their work, to clearly track and benchmark the efficacy of this initiative. The Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Program Project Team Leaders are proud of the accomplishments already achieved in Cleveland County and are honored to have them as our newest addition to the CEC® family.

## APPENDIX 1: SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE MATRIX FOR CLEVELAND COUNTY

Organization	Target Audience	Outreach, Intake and Referral	Entrepreneurship Training	Technical Training	Business Plan Devel	Market Devel	Financing	Space	Legal/IP Assistance	Taxes and Government Information
<b>RESOURCES IN OR NEAR CLEVELAND COUNTY</b>										
Small Business Center at Cleveland Community College <i>clevelandcc.edu</i>	startups and micro-enterprises	large local mailing list	many courses and seminars		counseling is key function	counseling is key function	conduit to local and state programs			
Cleveland Community College <i>clevelandcc.edu</i>	Teens and Adults	large local mailing list	Entrepreneurship AAS degree; Entrepreneurship certificate	in every local industry				Legrand Center for conferences		
Small Business and Technology Development Center <i>sbtcd.org</i>	small business owners	George McAllister is regional director at UNC-Charlotte	pre-venture orientation seminars	referral	Review many business plans daily	Marketplace conferences; market research; federal procurement	conduit to all SBA programs and angel fund network; Capital Opportunities report	incubator feasibility studies	referral	federal program requirements

Organization	Target Audience	Outreach, Intake and Referral	Entrepreneurship Training	Technical Training	Business Plan Devel	Market Devel	Financing	Space	Legal/IP Assistance	Taxes and Government Information
Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce <i>ClevelandChamber.org</i>	local business executives	referral to local businesses				networking		developing list of available commercial properties	referral	referral
Uptown Shelby Association <i>uptownShelby.com</i>	businesses and citizens in city center of Shelby					has a detailed market study for uptown	incentive program for uptown businesses that fill gaps in local economy	list of uptown properties		
County and City Governments <i>clevelandcounty.com, cityofshelby.com, cityofKM.com, etc.</i>	businesses and citizens	referral	referral	referral	referral	Cleveland County retail task force	Kings Mountain Main St. program			business licenses, taxes, permits, zoning info
Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership <i>ccedp.com</i>	industry to recruit or expand	external marketing is key function				marketing the county to the world	state incentive programs	database of commercial and industrial sites and buildings		state program requirements

Organization	Target Audience	Outreach, Intake and Referral	Entrepreneurship Training	Technical Training	Business Plan Devel	Market Devel	Financing	Space	Legal/IP Assistance	Taxes and Government Information
Cleveland County Schools <i>clevelandcountyschools.org</i>	K-12 students	Tony Fogleman is director of Career and Tech Ed	Business Management and Administration cluster; Marketing cluster			works with FFA, DECA, 4-H, FBLA clubs				state DPI requirements
Gardner-Webb University <i>gardner-webb.edu</i>	Entrepreneurs, Business Leaders, Learners		B.S. degree with entrepreneurship major; MBA; and Bringing Entrepreneurs and Students Together (BEST)			ENACTUS chapter (national club)				
Cleveland County Business Development Center (704) 482-6833	minority business owners					leads Minority Enterprise Development Week each Oct.				
Region C Workforce Board <i>regioncwdb.org</i>	employers and job candidates	Business Liaison works with all businesses	curriculum development and referral; also youth programs	local partnerships for industrial training			access to federal WIA program funding, as approved by local board			federal and state workforce programs



Organization	Target Audience	Outreach, Intake and Referral	Entrepreneurship Training	Technical Training	Business Plan Devel	Market Devel	Financing	Space	Legal/IP Assistance	Taxes and Government Information
Cleveland County public library system <i>ccml.org</i>	citizens	familiar place				market research/NC LIVE				tax forms, help with research
Industry Expansion Solutions <i>www.ies.ncsu.edu</i>	small and medium manufacturers	Chris McGraw is western regional manager	fee-based seminars, industry certifications	advanced manufacturing			access to federal energy and other programs			federal program requirements
SCORE <i>Charlotte.SCORE.org</i>	business owners & startups	75 mentors in Charlotte chapter	occasional seminars	referral	volunteer mentoring	volunteer mentoring				
Self Help Credit Union, Charlotte and Asheville offices <i>self-help.org</i>	business borrowers	connection to minority communities; Spanish speaking staff			expertise in child care, recycling businesses		Small business loans, SBA-backed and commercial loans; also operates some local RLFs			referral
Mountain BizWorks <i>mountainbizworks.org</i>	western North Carolina business owners who cannot qualify for bank financing	has Spanish speaking staff				coaching from successful business owners	Small business loans			

Organization	Target Audience	Outreach, Intake and Referral	Entrepreneurship Training	Technical Training	Business Plan Devel	Market Devel	Financing	Space	Legal/IP Assistance	Taxes and Government Information
BB&T and Wells Fargo <i>bbt.com;</i> <i>wellsfargo.com/biz</i>	business owners for 2 years	local branches			referral		SBA term loans through 7(a) and 504 programs, also SBA Express and Veterans Advantage			
<b>NORTH CAROLINA AND U.S. RESOURCES THAT SERVE CLEVELAND COUNTY</b>										
Business Link NC <i>blnc.gov</i>	any business inquiry	1-800-228-8443 and blnc.gov			referral		referral			license, permit and regulatory info for all industries
N.C. Rural Center <i>ncruralcenter.org</i> NOTE: Cleveland County is still rural on their new map	rural leaders and small business owners	connection to rural leaders statewide	Rural Economic Development Institute		self-employment coaching for age 18-30 and/or unemployed	rural research, advocacy, Rural Assembly	Micro-enterprise Loan Program; State Small Credit Initiative with local banks statewide			

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Women's Business Center <i>TheInstituteNC.org</i>	business owners, esp. women	esp strong in Triangle and Charlotte	seminars and conferences		counseling	conferences	loan package preparation			federal certifications for women and minority businesses
NC LEAP: Bar Association <i>ncbar.org</i>	low income business owners		videos on legal issues for small businesses						Legal advice to low income	
N.C. Military Business Center <i>ncmbc.us</i>	those who want to do business with the military, esp tech and mfg	regional office at Central Piedmont Community College	procurement seminars and conferences			procurement database: <i>www.matchforce.org</i>				federal procurement rules and opportunities
NC REAL curricula <i>ncreal.org</i>	entry level startups; kinetic learners; instructors	statewide network	train the trainer curricula; teacher certification; entrepreneurship camp training	e-ship related to agriculture, health care, craft						
Council for Entrepreneurial Development <i>cednc.org</i>	innovators, tech businesses, growth companies	in the Triangle	many seminars in Triangle		3 key annual conferences		access to venture capitalists		referral to IP attorney	

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Carolina Small Business Development Fund (formerly the Support Ctr) <i>carolinasmallbiz.org</i>	businesses without bank financing	Large grassroots network					CDFI loan programs			
N.C. Biotechnology Center <i>ncbiotech.org</i>	life sciences firms and startups	Corie Curtis is regional director in Charlotte	seminars and conferences		counseling	counseling	seed grants; access to biotech investors			state and federal requirements and GMPs
Economic Development Partnership of NC <i>edpnc.com</i>	Travel and Tourism; Small Business; Recruitment; Certified Retirement Communities	marketing entire state globally								