

# CATAWBA COUNTY, NC

## Charlotte's Great Northwest

*A manufacturer's guide to hiring & training resources in Catawba County, North Carolina*



# Where will the company's workforce come from?

## Management/Engineers

### LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

4-year liberal arts university  
Hickory, NC  
Enrollment: 2,686  
[www.lr.edu](http://www.lr.edu)

Accounting      Business Administration  
Computer Science      Information Technology  
International Business      Management  
Marketing      MBA

 [lr.joinhandshake.com](http://lr.joinhandshake.com)

LRU's free online jobs board for recruiters to connect with LRU talent (students and alumni)

### APPSTATE

4-year public university  
Hickory, NC  
Enrollment: 363  
[www.appstate.edu/hickory](http://www.appstate.edu/hickory)

The 225,800 s.f. Appalachian State University Hickory campus opened in fall 2023 with more than 100 undergraduate majors available. The facility is larger than any building on App State's main campus and sits on 15.7 acres of land including large open spaces. It is a short drive from the NC School of Science & Mathematics western campus in Morganton, NC.

### NCCET

NC Center for Engineering Technologies  
Hickory, NC  
[www.nccet.appstate.edu](http://www.nccet.appstate.edu)

The North Carolina Center for Engineering Technologies provides facilities for applied research in engineering related fields and serves as a conduit to baccalaureate education delivered by the University of North Carolina system schools. Degree programs include Building Sciences (from Appalachian State University) and Engineering Technology (from Western Carolina University).

## Mid-skill Positions

### CATAWBA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Technical/Community College  
Hickory, NC  
Industrial/Manufacturing Programs  
Continuing Education Enrollment: 543  
Curriculum Enrollment: 532  
[www.cvcc.edu](http://www.cvcc.edu)

Engineering      Supply Chain Mgmt.  
Computer Engineering      Information Tech.  
Electrical Systems      Business Admin.  
Industrial Systems      Accounting  
Mechanical Engineering      Marketing  
Mechatronics Engineering  
Computer Integrated Machining

### CATAWBA Apprenticeship Network

German-style apprenticeship  
Hickory, NC  
Apprenticeship program that begins in high school with dual enrollment in CVCC courses  
[https://www.cvcc.edu/CCE/Workforce\\_Development/Advanced-MFG/catawba-apprenticeship-network.cfm](https://www.cvcc.edu/CCE/Workforce_Development/Advanced-MFG/catawba-apprenticeship-network.cfm)

Mechanical Maintenance  
Electrical Maintenance  
Tool & Die  
Mechatronics  
CNC Machinist

### Learning that works for North Carolina CTE

Local high schools Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs throughout Catawba County  
Students received 4,790 industry-recognized credentials in 2021-2022

Welding Technology  
Automotive Technology  
Electrical Technology Systems  
Engineering  
Drafting & Engineering Technology  
Computer Integrated Machining  
Drone Technology  
Biomedical Technology

## Machine Operator/Production Positions

### NC works A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter® network

One Stop Workforce System  
Conover, NC  
[www.ncworks.gov](http://www.ncworks.gov)

Employers can post open jobs, access business insights through labor market data and collaborate with NCWorks staff to develop talent pipelines.

NCWorks offers the assistance to North Carolina employers – all at no cost.

This valuable resource connects residents with potential employers and businesses in the state with the candidates they're looking for, so all of North Carolina can prosper.

### CATAWBA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Technical/Community College  
Hickory, NC  
Total Enrollment: 12,798  
(Curriculum & Continuing Education)  
[www.cvcc.edu](http://www.cvcc.edu)

CVCC focuses on intensive skills development, taking those with little to no skills & giving them skills for employment in manufacturing operator training. More individuals are trained in pure manufacturing than any other community college in NC. CVCC can also provide customized training and curricula tailored to address specific business needs.

### CATAWBA MAINTENANCE VALLEY TECH BOOTCAMP COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Technical/Community College Academy  
Hickory, NC

The CVCC Maintenance Tech Bootcamp will provide instruction, lab experience, & training in Maintenance Tech Fundamentals: Mechanical Systems, Fluid Power, and Electrical Systems.

The CVCC Maintenance Tech Bootcamp is connected with the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), an industry-approved third-party credential. Upon successful completion of each module and/or the entire course, students will be awarded a certificate.



# How will the company recruit its workforce?

## Short Term: 0-3 months



A proud partner of the  
AmericanJobCenter®  
network

NC Works is a one-stop workforce system supporting employment recruitment & retention at no cost.

NC Works provides assistance in developing job descriptions and provides assistance posting job openings on state site, [www.ncworks.gov](http://www.ncworks.gov) (this system also spiders other job boards to present a full portfolio of open jobs).

[www.ncworks.gov](http://www.ncworks.gov) also offers virtual recruitment options, as well as state and local labor market intelligence.

NC Works provides resume and application assistance to ensure quality pre-employment screenings and provides work-based learning opportunities, educational training scholarships, and incumbent worker grants for employee training

NC Works assists in conducting recruiting events:

- Arranges recruitment events at the company location or weekly at the NCWorks facility
- Develops recruitment flyers for mass distribution via [www.western Piedmont Works.org](http://www.western Piedmont Works.org) and social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Staffs the recruitment events & coordinates interviews during the recruitment events



CATAWBA  
VALLEY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**MAINTENANCE  
TECH BOOTCAMP**

The CVCC Maintenance Tech Bootcamp will provide instruction, lab experience, & training in Maintenance Tech Fundamentals: Mechanical Systems, Fluid Power, & Electrical Systems. Students will enroll in the entire course and choose to attend all three modules or only those needed. All students attending one or more modules can receive module credit by passing the placement test (credit for prior work experience/knowledge).

The CVCC Maintenance Tech Bootcamp is connected with the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), an industry-approved third-party credential. Upon successful completion of each module and/or the entire course, students will be awarded a certificate.

Employers are encouraged to permit or assist their student(s) in applying the class/lab material in real-world, employer specific applications through on-site shadowing, interning, or other work experience.



CATAWBA  
VALLEY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## **BUSINESS & INDUSTRY SERVICES**

Offers in-depth customizable pre-employment screening assessment

& training including:

- Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) mapping, assessment and matching
- Behavioral assessments
- Skills assessment (including classroom instruction)



Company may access students for recruitment in on-going classes:

- Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Industrial Systems Technology
- Mechatronics Engineering Technology
- Electronics Engineering Technology
- Computer Engineering Technology
- Computer Integrated Machining Technology
- Welding

Provides customized training directed by the company including:

- Safety, OSHA training, Lean, ISO, Six Sigma
- Training at the company on company equipment
- Training at the college on the following equipment:
  - **Mechatronics- Advanced Manufacturing Lab**
    - Fanuc Material Handling & Welding Robot
    - ABB IRB 120 robot
    - Festo MPS Mechatronics Assembly System
    - Arburg Injection Molding Machine
    - Various mechanical, motor controls, hydraulic, pneumatic, process control trainers
  - **PLC Lab**
    - Siemens PLC
    - Allen Bradley PLC
  - **Mechatronics (Curriculum Lab)**
  - **Metallurgy Lab**
    - Scanning Electron Microscope
    - Inverted Optical Microscope
    - Instron Tensile Tester
    - Zeiss O-Inspect 543 Coordinate & Optical Measuring Machine
    - Hardness Testers
  - **Computer Integrated Machining**
    - Mazak 3-Axis and 5-Axis CNC Mills
    - Haas 3-Axis CNC Turning Stations and Mills

# How will the company recruit its workforce?

## Medium Term: 4-12 months



[www.HKY4Vets.com](http://www.HKY4Vets.com)

Created locally in 2016, HKY4Vets undertakes significant efforts to increase awareness of the Catawba County community among transitioning military families stationed within the Southeast. A major focus of the organization is to work directly in partnership with local companies, meeting their talent requirements by leveraging highly-talented veteran and military spouse talent. These partnerships manifest in a series of virtual hiring events, internship/fellowship opportunities for transitioning service members and 1-on-1 transition coaching to discover and connect these talented individuals to the diverse career opportunities available in Catawba County.



### MAINTENANCE TECH BOOTCAMP

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### CUSTOMIZED INDUSTRY TRAINING

North Carolina provides the nation's most-recognized free, customized job training programs for new and expanding businesses. The North Carolina Community College System offers comprehensive training support ranging from its extensive catalogue of established programs to customized curricula tailored to address specific business needs.

Funds are disbursed by the state, and training and screening are delivered by Catawba Valley Community College. Training funds may be used for instructional design, instructor training, assessments, and training delivery costs for employees involved in the direct production of goods and services, production support employees, and technology support employees.

Businesses eligible for free customized training through North Carolina Community College System include, but are not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution centers.

## Long Term: 1-4 years



[https://www.cvcc.edu/CCE/Workforce\\_Development/Advanced-MFG/apprenticeship-catawba.cfm](https://www.cvcc.edu/CCE/Workforce_Development/Advanced-MFG/apprenticeship-catawba.cfm)

1 to 4 year program combining formal education at CVCC and on-the-job training with sponsor employers

Apprenticeship in skilled trades like:

- Mechanical maintenance
- Electrical maintenance
- Tool & die
- Mechatronics
- CNC machinist
- Machine Operator



High school students are dual enrolled at CVCC in advanced manufacturing courses.

If a student is employed by a company prior to graduation, the cost for remaining courses may be funded by NC.

Catawba County Schools:

[www.catawbaschools.net/academics/cte](http://www.catawbaschools.net/academics/cte)

Hickory Public Schools:

[www.hickoryschools.net/departments/curriculum\\_and\\_instruction/career\\_technical\\_education](http://www.hickoryschools.net/departments/curriculum_and_instruction/career_technical_education)

Newton-Conover Schools:

[nhs.newton-conover.org/o/nhs/page/cte](http://nhs.newton-conover.org/o/nhs/page/cte)



[www.k-64learning.com](http://www.k-64learning.com)

K-64 is a unique community-wide partnership between public K-12 schools, colleges, workforce development and business to provide a skilled workforce pipeline for our businesses by aligning courses of study and training with workforce needs.

K-64 will identify, facilitate and streamline programs and initiatives that are in-place and have been proven to be best practices in improving education as it relates workforce development. If a specific educational or employer training need is not being met, K-64 will develop new programs and partnerships to insure a future-ready workforce.

# Who can the company turn to for support?

## Manufacturing Solutions Center



[www.manufacturingsolutionscenter.org/](http://www.manufacturingsolutionscenter.org/)

The mission of the Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC) is to help US manufacturers increase sales, improve quality and improve efficiency to create and retain jobs.

The MSC accomplishes this by:

- Enhancing and improving products through research and development;
- Working with our commercial clients to create prototypes for new, innovative offerings;
- Testing products for reliability, quality, and content in our third-party testing lab;
- Training personnel to operate equipment and in manufacturing processes;
- Creating 3-D rapid prototypes in a variety of materials;
- Providing incubator space for manufacturing startups as they develop and commercialize their products;
- Connecting entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and suppliers to build domestic supply chains;
- Providing marketing support and assistance with selling to the military and government;
- Industry advocacy.

Contact the MSC for testing services, product development projects, marketing, engineering, and assistance for inventors & entrepreneurs.

## NCWorks



A proud partner of the  
AmericanJobCenter®  
network

[www.ncworks.gov](http://www.ncworks.gov)

NCWorks is dedicated to enhancing economic prosperity by strengthening and supporting area businesses' growth strategies. Prospective businesses can rely on NCWorks to: deliver relevant labor market information, assist with workforce recruitments, and provide work-based learning opportunities to develop the skillset of current workforce.

### Business Information and Support Services

- Local Workforce Characteristics
- Career Pathways & Career Ladders
- Industry & Occupation Trends
- Wage Analysis

### Workforce Recruitment Assistance

- Targeted Hiring Events
- Available Space for Business Uses
- Job Orders Services
- Diverse Talent Pool

### Work-Based Learning

- Upskill Western Piedmont Training Grant
- Skill Training Scholarships
- Paid Internships for Youth

## CVCC Workforce Solutions Complex

A culmination of many years of planning and collaboration with the three public school systems, the \$25 million project is funded by Catawba County Commissioners. It creates state-of-the-art classrooms and laboratory spaces to teach advanced manufacturing skills and other technical skills in demand by a growing local and state economy. The Workforce Solutions Complex was completed Fall 2018.

The 80,400-square-foot facility currently houses technology and engineering programs, including Computer Engineering Technology, Electrical Engineering Technology, Computer Integrated Machining, Electronics Engineering Technology, Automotive Systems Technology, Welding, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Mechatronics and Robotics, and Heating/Ventilation and Air Conditioning.



Manufacturers that survived the recession are now heavily tech-based and rely on a skilled workforce to operate that technology. Companies rely on computer numerical control (CNC) machine tools, computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) programs, robotics, and are all heavily computer-based. CVCC's new Workforce Solutions Complex will ensure a future pipeline of talent for high-tech jobs, making our area even more attractive to new and expanding industry.

The building includes state-of-the-art classrooms, offices, HVAC lab/shop areas, welding lab/shop areas, automotive lab/shop areas, machining and CNC lab/shop area, and an engineering department, which includes: mechatronics/PLC lab, CET-EET lab, electrical wiring lab, robotics lab, 3D printing lab, computer labs, break alcoves, a lounge/media center, meeting rooms, and an open main lobby area for students to gather.



# Catawba County specializes in manufacturing.

## Manufacturing Specialization

**31.5%** of Catawba County's workforce employed in manufacturing; NC average is 11.7% and US average is 9.9%

**425** manufacturers in Catawba County alone

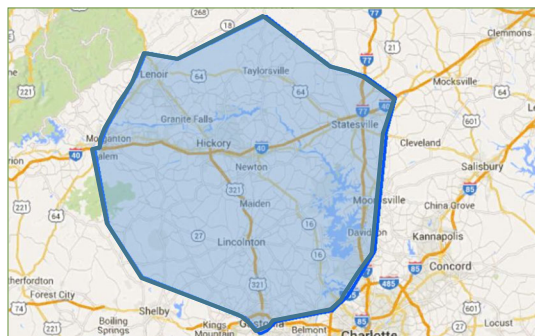
**24,978** employees in Catawba County alone

**3** times as specialized in manufacturing as the US average

**1<sup>st</sup>** in NC and SC for highest concentration of manufacturing

**5<sup>th</sup>** metro area in the US for highest concentration of manufacturing

### 45-minute drive time



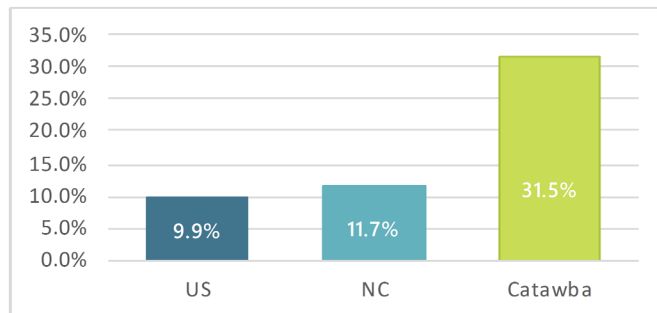
**812,942**

Population

**405,727**

Labor Force

### Workforce employed in Manufacturing (%)



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

## 10 Largest Manufacturing Employers (Q4, 2022)

1. Corning Optical Comm.	1000+	Fiber Optic Cable	6. Sherrill Furniture	500-999	Furniture
2. CommScope	1000+	Fiber Optic Cable	7. McCreary Modern	500-999	Furniture
3. Century Furniture	500-999	Furniture	8. Sutter Street Mfg.	500-999	Furniture
4. GKN e-Powertrain	500-999	Auto Supplies	9. Shurtape Technologies	500-999	Adhesive Tapes
5. Pierre Foods (Tyson)	500-999	Frozen Foods	10. Bassett Furniture	500-999	Furniture

## International Employers (25 or more employees)

Company	Country	Local Empl	Industry Sector
Heico Fasteners	Germany	25	Furniture Industry Fasteners
Klingspor Abrasives	Germany	200	Coated and Bonded Abrasives
Poppelmann Plastics	Germany	150	Plastic Containers/Auto Parts
Sarstedt	Germany	225	Plastic Medical Devices
Technibilt Wanzl	Germany	300	Shopping Carts
ZF	Germany	160	Automotive Chassis Components
Canteen Vending	UK	55	Onsite Dining & Vending
GKN ePowerTrain	UK	1,200	Automotive Parts
GKN Sinter Metals	UK	92	Automotive Parts
Ideaitalia	Italy	100	Furniture
Lincotek Surface Solutions	Italy	100	Coatings for Turbine Blades
Pasta Piccinini	Italy	27	Fresh & Dried Pasta
Prysmian	Italy	550	Fiber Optic Cable
American Fuji Seal	Japan	101	Shrink Wrapped Sleeves
Cataler NA	Japan	151	Automotive Catalysts
US Conec	Japan	150	Optical fiber ferrules & connectors
Axjo America	Sweden	50	Plastic Cable Spools
Camfill Far Inc.	Sweden	60	Industrial Machinery & Equipment
Essity (formerly BSN)	Sweden	50	Wound & Orthopedic Devices
RMC Advanced Tech.	Canada	45	Heavy-duty Truck Components
Special Metals Welding	Canada	80	Welding Equipment
CertainTeed	France	125	Plastic/Vinyl Siding
LeGrand	France	80	Cable Connectors & Assemblies
Taiji Group USA	China	40	Paper Tubes for Textile Industry
Universal Furniture	China	110	Upholstered Furniture



**4000+** Catawba county workers are employed by our international manufacturers



**17%** of Catawba County manufacturing workers employed by International manufacturers

