RE-2 Employee Post Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses

Date/Time Stamp

RECEIVED
SECRETARY OF THE SEN
PUBLIC RECORDS
2024 AUG 20 PM 12: 12

Post Travel Filing Instructions: Complete this form within **30 days** of returning from travel. Submit all forms to the Office of Public Records in 232 Hart Building.**This form is a public disclosure. The form and all attachments will be made publicly available.**

Certification:*In compliance with the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel, Senate Rule 35, and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, I certify that I accepted the following gift of privately sponsored travel:*

Private Sponsor(s):
Jobs for the Future

Travel Dates:
08/13/2024 to 08/17/2024

Name of accompanying family member (if any):

Relationship to Traveler:

Expenses

Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meals Expenses	Other Expenses (Amount & Description)
$597.00	$242.00	$161.00	$0.00

I also certify that attached to this form are all required documents for post travel disclosure, including:

- **The final Employee Pre-Travel Authorization** (Form RE-1)
- The final **Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form** with all attachments
- The final invitation
- The final approved itinerary

Finally, I certify that all trip information reflected in the attachments above accurately reflects the travel that I accepted. If there were any changes to the trip after I received approval from the Committee, the changes are described in ATTACHMENT 1.

8/20/24
Date

Megan Blanco
Printed Name of Traveler

Megan Blanco
Signature of Traveler

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER

I have made a determination that the expenses set out above in connections with travel described in the Employee Pre-Travel Authorization form, are necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses as defined in Rule 35.

8/20/24
Date

Maggie Hassan
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

ATTACHMENT 1 – CHANGES FROM APPROVED PRE-TRAVEL

Note: Material changes to a trip that occur after the Committee has issued an approval letter may invalidate the Committee's approval. Please contact the Committee with any questions regarding changes to an approved trip.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved travel expenses? (Transportation, Meals, Lodging, Other)?

○ Yes ● No

Expense Change	Revised Amount	Explanation
There were no changes to pre-approved travel expenses.		

Were there any changes to the pre-approved itinerary?

● Yes ○ No

Explanation: The location of our Wednesday 8/14 session, "Western NC's Opportunity Youth Pathway Programming," changed from Schenck Job Corps to the GO PLACES Project (address is 3 Hunt Hull Pl, Asheville NC) because it was much closer to other sessions that day. We chose to change locations to cut down on driving time and spend more time hearing from youth program participants themselves. GO PLACES, like Job Corps, is a publicly-funded youth career education & training pathway program. Due to last-minute scheduling conflicts, we had to change the panelists on our Thursday 8/15 session, "Designing and Delivering Wraparound Support Services for Rural Communities." Two were not listed in pre-approved paperwork: Kirsten Bunch, Vice President for Student Services at Blue Ridge Community College, and Eileen Mouyard, Interim Executive Director of Smart Start of Transylvania County. The JFF team confirmed that both Kirsten and Eileen are not federally registered lobbyists. We added one panelist to the Wednesday 8/14 dinner session, "Public-Private Partnerships to Support Western NC's Brewing Industry": Jeff Irvin, Director of the Craft Beverage Institute for the Southeast at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. JFF confirmed that Jeff is not a federally registered lobbyist.

Were there any additional changes to the pre-approved trip?

○ Yes ● No

Explanation: There were no additional changes to the pre-approved trip.

RE-1 Employee Pre-Travel Authorization

Date/Time Stamp

Pre-Travel Filing Instructions: Complete and submit this form at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date to the **Select Committee on Ethics in SH-220.** Incomplete and late travel submissions will not be considered or approved.

Name of Traveler:
Megan Blanco

Employing Office/Committee:
U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan

Private Sponsor(s):
Jobs for the Future

Destination(s):
Asheville, North Carolina

Travel Dates:
8/13/2024 - 8/15/2024

NOTE: If you plan to extend the trip for any reason you **must** notify the Committee.

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties.

In my capacity as Senator Hassan's Policy Advisor for education and workforce, this site visit will allow me to meet with community college system officials, state apprenticeship agency staff, industry and sector workforce development partners, and training providers to learn of their collaborative efforts to improve the workforce development pipeline. This visit will also include a focus on how to improve the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Do you have an accompanying family member or spouse on this trip? ☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

Name and Relationship to Traveler: N/A

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

8/9/24
Date

Megan Blanco
Signature of Employee

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER
(President of the Senate, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms, Secretary for the Majority, Secretary for the Minority, and Chaplain)

I Senator Maggie Hassan hereby authorize Megan Blanco
(Print Senator's/Officer's Name) (Print Traveler's Name)

an employee under my direct supervision, to accept payment or reimbursement for necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses for travel to the event described above. I have determined that this travel is in connection with his or her duties as a Senate employee or an officeholder, and will not create the appearance that he or she is using public office for private gain.

I have also determined that the attendance of the employee's spouse or child is appropriate to assist in the representation of the Senate.

☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

8/9/24
Date

Maggie Hassan
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

Jobs for the Future: JFF Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western NC

Megan Blanco

Title:
Policy Advisor

Employing Office/Committee:
HASSAN, MAGGIE

Duty Station:
WASHINGTON,DC

Destination(s):
Asheville, North Carolina

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties:

In my capacity as Senator Hassan's Policy Advisor for education and workforce, this site visit will allow me to meet with community college system officials, state apprenticeship agency staff, industry and sector workforce development partners, and service providers to learn of their collaborative efforts to improve the workforce development pipeline. This visit will also include a focus on the challenges and successes of implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. The HELP Committee, which Senator Hassan is a member of, is actively working to reauthorize the law, so this site visit will be especially timely and helpful.

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Not Entered

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
None

Organization Information

Organization Name
Jobs for the Future

Is your organization classified as a §501(c)(3)?
● Yes ○ No

§501(c)(3) Organization Type
Private Foundation

Address
50 Milk Street, 17th Floor

Address 2 (Optional)
None

City, State Zip
Boston, Massachusetts 02109 United States

Phone Number
2145143431

Organization URL
jff.org

History of Congressional Travel

Jobs for the Future (JFF) has sponsored site visits and other educational activities for Congressional staff for over 15 years. Examples of this work include three to four DC-based forums per year, and approximately two site visits per year where senior Congressional staff see high-quality workforce programs first-hand and learn from experts, practitioners, and program participants about the impact of federal policy on the ground. Previous site visits have included travel to: Charlotte, NC; Bridgeport, CT; Cincinnati, OH; Madison, WI; Philadelphia, PA; Detroit, MI; Wichita, KS; Nashville, TN; Seattle, WA; Eastern KY; Fredericksburg, VA; Memphis, TN; Denver, CO; Shenandoah Valley, VA; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Wilmington, DE; and Austin, TX; as well as virtual "visits" to San Diego, CA and Houston, TX. The purpose of these trips, and of the Congressional Staff Network, is to provide in-depth learning opportunities for staff on workforce, education, and economic security issues.

Educational Activities

JFF works with partners around the country to design and drive the adoption of education and career pathways that lead to upward economic mobility, especially for individuals who face systemic barriers to advancement. JFF improves pathways from high school to postsecondary education to family-supporting careers through relevant technical assistance, research, policy development, communications, and by hosting events, including national conferences.

Lobbyist and Foreign Agent Registration Information

Lobbyist Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not a federally registered lobbyist and do not retain or employ a federally registered lobbyist.*

Foreign Agent Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not an agent of a foreign principal and do not retain or employ an agent of a foreign principal.*

Foreign Government Involvement

Foreign Agent Registration Status:

- ☑ I certify that the sponsor is not a foreign government.
- ☑ I certify that the sponsor is not an entity that is owned or operated by a foreign government.
- ☑ I certify that the sponsor does not receive funding from a foreign government.

Comments

None Entered

Signature Page

The signature page is below.

Purpose and Details

Provide a brief description of the trip.

The Congressional Staff Network for Economic Advancement (CSN) convenes a bicameral, bipartisan group of senior Congressional staff to focus on policy issues at the core of economic mobility: K-12 education, postsecondary education, workforce development, and human services. The purpose of this trip is to educate staff about evidence-based approaches to education and workforce development that prepare North Carolinians for the future of work while supporting inclusive economic development. Staff will see program models designed to spur economic growth, align training with labor market demand, and improve job quality in rural communities. They will engage with stakeholders involved in developing and implementing these efforts, including public workforce and education system leaders, community-based organizations, major employers, and training providers.

Explain how the purpose of the trip relates to your organization's mission.

JFF's mission is to drive transformation of the U.S. education and workforce systems to achieve equitable economic advancement for all. Specifically, JFF aims to eliminate barriers to economic mobility by making our education and workforce systems more equitable, better connected, and easier to navigate. JFF's mission connects directly to the purpose of this trip: highlighting innovative, evidence-based programs and policies that drive upward mobility.

Is your organization the only sponsor for this trip?

☑ Yes ○ No

Grantmaking Organizations (Optional)

1. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
2. Lumina Foundation

With or Without Regard for Congressional Participation

The trip is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Involvement in Planning, Organizing, Requesting or Arranging

- ☑ The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal, other than de minimis involvement.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Financing

- ☑ The trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.
- ☑ No funds or in-kind contributions were earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Accompaniment

Complete if all sponsors are §501(c)(3) organizations

- ☑ The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

Complete if any of the sponsors is not a §501(c)(3) organizations.

- ○ The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip

- ○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- ○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

- ○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- ○ The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Certification of No Recreational Activity and No Alcohol

- ✓ Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for recreational activities.
- ✓ Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for alcohol, except as permitted by the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel.

Invitees

ⓘ Members and staff from the House of Representatives **will** receive invitations.

The list of invitees is below.

Travel Details

Trip Start Date/Time:	⇄	Trip End Date/Time:
08/13/2024 @ 08:33 AM		08/17/2024 @ 05:15 PM

Will the traveler be accompanied by a family member for whom the sponsor will pay travel expenses?

○ Yes ✓ No

Itinerary

The itinerary is below.

Transportation (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $597.00 | Accompanying Family Member: $0.00)

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Airfare	Coach	$120.00
Note One way airfare from Reagan National Airport (DCA) to Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) on Tuesday 8/13.		
Airfare	Coach	$300.00
Note One way airfare from Asheville Regional Airport (AVL) to Reagan National Airport (DCA) on Thursday 8/15.		
Ground Transportation	Coach	$177.00
Note On the ground transportation via chartered coach bus in North Carolina.		

Lodging (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $242.00)

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
08/13/2024	08/15/2024	Kimpton Hotel Arras	Asheville	North Carolina	United States	2	$121.00	No

Meals (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $161.00)

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
08/13/2024	$0.00	$16.00	$35.00	$5.00	**$56.00**	Asheville	North Carolina	United States	No
08/14/2024	$12.00	$16.00	$31.00	$5.00	**$64.00**	Asheville	North Carolina	United States	No
08/15/2024	$16.00	$20.00	$0.00	$5.00	**$41.00**	Asheville	North Carolina	United States	No

Reasonable Miscellaneous Expenses (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $0.00)

Expense Type	Amount	Notes
There are no miscellaneous expenses.		

Additional Attachments

Document Name
There are no additional attachments.

PRIVATELY SPONSORED TRAVEL

SPONSOR SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby certify that the information submitted in connection with the trip listed below is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Trip Name: JFF Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western North

Travel Date(s): 8/13/24 - 8/15/24

Travel Destination(s): Charlotte, NC; Dallas, NC; Conover, NC; Asheville, NC; Flat

Sponsor: Jobs for the Future

Maria Flynn — *(printed name of sponsor representative)*

President and CEO — *(title)*

Maria K. Flynn — *(signature of sponsor representative)*

6/24/2024 — *(date)*

Grantmaking Organization Certification Form

Instructions: If a sponsor receives funds from a grantmaking organization, the sponsor must disclose this on the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form*, and the grantmaking organization must complete the *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form.* The completed *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form* must be submitted to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics by the trip sponsor at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date.

Grantmaking Organization: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Private Sponsor: Jobs for the Future

Trip Name: JFF Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Travel Date(s): 8/13/24 - 8/15/24

Destination(s): Charlotte, NC; Dallas, NC; Conover, NC; Asheville, NC; Flat Rock, NC

In compliance with the *Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel*, I certify the following:

- ☑ The grantmaking organization is a § 501(c)(3) organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or foreign agent, nor an entity that retains or employs a lobbyist or foreign agent.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization provides funds under an established grant program, or in a manner that is otherwise consistent with the mission and practices of the organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not involved, directly or indirectly, in organizing and conducting the trip. This includes selecting participants for a trip.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization does not directly pay or reimburse travel expenses for any Senate Member, officer, or employee.

Kathryn Young	Senior Program Officer
(Printed name of grantmaking organization representative)	*(Title)*
Kathryn Young Digitally signed by Kathryn Young Date: 2024.06.25 09:54:44 -04'00'	06/25/24
(Signature of grantmaking organization representative)	*(Date)*

Grantmaking Organization Certification Form

Instructions: If a sponsor receives funds from a grantmaking organization, the sponsor must disclose this on the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form*, and the grantmaking organization must complete the *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form.* The completed *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form* must be submitted to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics by the trip sponsor at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date.

Grantmaking Organization: Lumina Foundation

Private Sponsor: Jobs for the Future

Trip Name: JFF Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Travel Date(s): 8/13/24 - 8/15/24

Destination(s): Charlotte, NC; Dallas, NC; Conover, NC; Asheville, NC; Flat Rock, NC

In compliance with the *Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel*, I certify the following:

- ☑ The grantmaking organization is a § 501(c)(3) organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or foreign agent, nor an entity that retains or employs a lobbyist or foreign agent.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization provides funds under an established grant program, or in a manner that is otherwise consistent with the mission and practices of the organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not involved, directly or indirectly, in organizing and conducting the trip. This includes selecting participants for a trip.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization does not directly pay or reimburse travel expenses for any Senate Member, officer, or employee.

Michelle Asha Cooper
(Printed name of grantmaking organization representative)

Vice President for Public Policy a
(Title)

Michelle Cooper
(Signature of grantmaking organization representative)

7/1/2024
(Date)

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

SENATE STAFF INVITEES

Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western NC

Tuesday August 13 – Thursday August 15, 2024

Megan Blanco
Education and Workforce Policy Advisor
Office of Sen. Maggie Hassan
Megan_Blanco@hassan.senate.gov

Natalia Brama
Legislative Correspondent
Office of Sen. Ted Budd
natalia_brama@budd.senate.gov

Sujith Cherukumilli
Education and Workforce Policy Adviser
Senate HELP Committee
Sujith_Cherukumilli@help.senate.gov

Julianna Collado
Legislative Aide
Senate HELP Committee
julianna_collado@help.senate.gov

Manuel Contreras
Senior Education Policy Advisor, K-12
Senate HELP Committee
manuel_contreras@help.senate.gov

Jake Easter
Education Policy Adviser
Senate HELP Committee
jake_easter@help.senate.gov

Jose Garcia
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Senate HELP Committee
jose_garcia@help.senate.gov

Rebecca Howard
Senior Education and Workforce Policy Advisor
Office of Sen. Tim Kaine
rebecca_howard@kaine.senate.gov

Eleni Neyland
Legislative Assistant
Office of Sen. Ed Markey
Eleni_Neyland@markey.senate.gov

Robin Ramsey
Western Regional Representative
Office of Sen. Thom Tillis
Robin_Ramsey@tillis.senate.gov

Hayley Sanon
Policy Adviser
Senate HELP Committee
hayley_sanon@help.senate.gov

Mike Waske
Senior Policy Adviser
Senate HELP Committee
michael_waske@help.senate.gov

CONGRESSIONAL STAFF NETWORK
FOR ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT

Dear Megan,

I am writing to invite you to participate in an upcoming three-day Congressional Staff Network (CSN) site visit to **Western North Carolina from Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15**.

This trip will focus on best practices for serving rural communities. Sessions will highlight strategies to effectively deliver industry-aligned training and supportive services in sparsely populated areas. Attendees will learn how leaders in Canton, NC (population: 4,401) successfully administered a U.S. DOL Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant after a major employer shuttered operations in the area.

North Carolina offers a unique opportunity to explore the role of community colleges as engines of regional economic development. Staff will learn about the Manufacturing Solutions Center at Catawba Valley Community College, a key player in the revitalization and reshoring of the region's textile manufacturing industry. Local workforce and postsecondary system leaders will also share their experience leveraging the federal Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC IV) grant to expand work-based learning offerings.

Finally, state education agency leaders will join to share how state-level policy and funding decisions enable students to earn college credit and connect to careers while still in high school. This includes highlighting the state's Career and College Promise dual enrollment program and Cooperative Innovative High Schools (early college model) from both the state and local district perspective.

Please confirm your participation by Monday, July 1. Once you confirm your plans to participate, our team will share final information for the trip, including the agenda and the necessary ethics documentation.

Best,

Mary Clagett

Mary G. Clagett
Senior Director, Workforce Policy
Jobs for the Future

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

AGENDA

Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Western NC

Tuesday August 13 – Thursday August 15, 2024

Tuesday August 13, 2024

8:33 – 10:14 AM

Flight: DCA to CLT

American Airlines Flight # AA 1155

NATIONAL AIRPORT

2401 Ronald Reagan
Washington National
Airport Access Rd
Arlington, VA 22202

10:14 – 11:15 AM

Travel to Gaston College

11:15 – 11:35 AM

Introduction to North Carolina

GASTON COLLEGE

Myers Center Auditorium
Room A and B
201 US-321
Dallas, NC 28034

Gaston College President John Hauser and Aaron Mabe from the state community college system office will welcome staffers to North Carolina and provide an overview of the state's unique approach to workforce and economic development, which centers community colleges as engines of economic growth.

- **John Hauser**, President, Gaston College
- **Aaron Mabe**, State Director of Dual Enrollment, Academic Programs and Student Services, North Carolina Community College System Office

11:35 AM – 1:00 PM

Luncheon Session: Apprenticeship 321

GASTON COLLEGE

Myers Center Auditorium
Room A and B
201 US-321
Dallas, NC 28034

Apprenticeship 321 is an apprenticeship program registered through ApprenticeshipNC, the state apprenticeship agency housed in the NC Community College System, and the U.S. Department of Labor. Gaston College provides the program's classroom training and awards academic credentials. This session will focus on the apprenticeship pathways that Gaston College offers in the healthcare industry, including pre-apprenticeships, and their partnerships with regional workforce boards.

- **Lisa Albright-Jurs**, Dean, Career and Technical

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

Education, Gaston College
- **David Hollars**, Executive Director, Centralina Workforce Development Board
- **Angela Karchmer**, Director, Workforce Development Board and Social Services, Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services
- **Lesley Pressley**, Associate Dean, Health and Human Services, Gaston College
- **Greg Smith**, Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development, Gaston College

1:00 – 1:30 PM

Site Visit: Gaston College Healthcare Training Facilities

GASTON COLLEGE

David Belk Cannon Building
201 US-321
Dallas, NC 28034

Staffers will see Gaston College's Health Science Education and Simulation Center where apprentices receive hands-on training, and learn more about how the Apprenticeship 321 promotes student success.

- **Tanya Osbia**, Apprenticeship 321 Success Coach, Gaston College
- **Joy Morrow**, Director of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning, Gaston College
- **Lesley Pressley**, Associate Dean, Health and Human Services, Gaston College

1:30 – 2:30 PM

Travel to Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC)

2:30 – 3:30 PM

Site Visit: MSC Facilities & Service Lines

MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS CENTER

301 Conover Station SE
Conover, NC 28613

Staff will have a chance to learn about the textile manufacturing process, the types of support that entrepreneurs in the industry require, and efforts to transition to a circular textile economy.

- **Jeff Neuville**, Director, Manufacturing Solutions Center
- **Tony Whitener**, Special Projects Director, Manufacturing Solutions Center

3:30 – 4:30 PM

Reshoring and Modernizing North Carolina's Textile Industry

MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS CENTER

301 Conover Station SE
Conover, NC 28613

This panel will dive into the western NC region's successful efforts to revitalize and reshore the U.S. textile manufacturing industry, with a particular focus on job quality. The Manufacturing Solutions Center at Catawba Valley Community College has played a central role in these efforts since 1990, delivering an estimated $30 million in regional economic impact from 2019-2023. MSC supports domestic manufacturing through a range of services, including workforce

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

training, product testing, research, and marketing, in addition to operating a business incubator onsite.

- **Garrett D. Hinshaw**, President, Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC)
- **Nathan Huret**, Economic Development Director, Catawba County Economic Development Corporation
- **Jeff Neuville**, Director, MSC
- **Jordan Schindler**, Founder and CEO, Clothing 2.0 *(invited)*

4:30 – 6:00 PM

North Carolina's Statewide and Regional Efforts to Expand College and Career Pathways

MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS CENTER

301 Conover Station SE
Conover, NC 28613

State education system leaders will discuss statewide efforts to support pathways across secondary, postsecondary, and careers - including the states' Career and College Promise program and Cooperative Innovative High Schools (NC's dual enrollment and early college programs) and efforts to ensure students gain valuable real-world experience. Exemplary regions and school district leaders will join to share how they are enabling students to complete pre-apprenticeships, earn early postsecondary credit, and industry-recognized credentials.

- **Crystal Folger-Hawks**, Executive Director, Surry-Yadkin Works
- **Christy Lefevers**, Associate Dean for Workforce Connectivity and Director, Catawba Apprenticeship Network, CVCC
- **Jonathan Loss**, Dean of Enrollment Management, CVCC
- **John Loyack**, Vice President of Economic Development, NC Community College System Office
- **Aaron Mabe**, State Director of Dual Enrollment, Academic Programs and Student Services, NC Community College System Office
- **Melissa D. Recknor**, Director of Advising and Student Success, Surry Community College
- **Kristie Van Auken**, Special Advisor to the Superintendent for Workforce Engagement, NC Department of Public Instruction

6:00 – 7:30 PM

Travel to Asheville

7:00 – 7:30 PM

Check in to Hotel

KIMPTON HOTEL ARRAS

7 Patton Ave
Asheville, NC 28801

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

7:30 – 9:00 PM

Dinner & Roundtable Discussions

BEAR'S SMOKEHOUSE DOWNTOWN ASHEVILLE

135 Coxe Ave
Asheville, NC

Over dinner, Hill staff will sit down with practitioners to reflect further on the implications of the day's sessions for federal policy. Specifically, conversations will focus on federal policy levers to strengthen community college-economic and workforce development collaboration at the systems level; and to replicate and scale college in high school programs. Staff will be asked to consider the impact of earning college credit in high school on student debt, postsecondary enrollment, and student outcomes.

- **Nathan Ramsey**, Executive Director, Land of Sky (LOS) Regional Council, and Director, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB)

Wednesday August 14, 2024

8:15 AM

Meet in Lobby

KIMPTON HOTEL ARRAS

7 Patton Ave
Asheville, NC 28801

8:15 – 8:30 AM

Travel to Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech)

8:30 – 9:45 AM

Breakfast Session: The Role of Community Colleges in Western NC's Regional Economic Development

A-B TECH

Magnolia Building
Tillman Dining Hall
Room 103
10 Genevieve Cir
Asheville, NC 28801

This session will highlight the role of community colleges in regional economic development partnerships, including co-locating NCWorks Career Centers (one-stops) at community colleges, coordinated community partnerships, and labor market-aligned career pathways. Speakers will discuss joint efforts to expand work-based learning opportunities, funded by a 2022 U.S. DOL Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC IV) grant.

- **Deborah D. Bailey**, Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development and Continuing Education, A-B Tech
- **Debbie Cromwell**, Director, Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships, A-B Tech
- **John D. Gossett**, President, A-B Tech
- **Gene Loflin**, Associate Vice President for Instructional

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

Services, A-B Tech
- **Emily Nicholson**, Executive Director, Land of Sky P20 Council
- **Nathan Ramsey**, Executive Director, LOS Regional Council, and Director, MAWDB

9:45 – 10:15 AM

Travel to NC Arboretum

10:15 – 11:30 AM

Dislocated Worker Grant Implementation in Canton, NC

THE NORTH CAROLINA ARBORETUM

Education Center
100 Frederick Law Olmsted Way
Asheville, NC 28806

When the Pactiv Evergreen paper mill closed in 2023, U.S. DOL awarded the state a $7.5 million Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker (DW) Grant. Panelists who served on the Rapid Response team will outline how they successfully administered DW funds to support the 1,100 impacted workers, successfully lowering unemployment from 3.2% to 1.2% in less than a year.

- **David Francis**, President, Haywood County Chamber of Commerce
- **David Garrett**, Workforce Development Director, Southwestern Commission Council of Governments (COG)
- **Russ Harris**, Executive Director, Southwestern Commission COG
- **Linda Lamp**, Business Services Representative, Southwestern Commission COG
- **Lisa Morris**, Career Center Manager, NCWorks
- **Shelley White**, President, Haywood Community College

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Luncheon Session: Understanding the Workforce System's Role in Economic Development

THE NORTH CAROLINA ARBORETUM

Education Center
100 Frederick Law Olmsted Way
Asheville, NC 28806

Over lunch, staff will learn more about how MAWDB collaborates with the Asheville Chamber of Commerce to augment career exploration and navigation services, strengthen earn-and-learn programming, and align workforce system offerings with regional employer demand. Speakers will highlight how this strong partnership resulted in a major investment from Pratt & Whitney.

- **Diana Blackett**, Director of Workforce Partnerships, Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- **Clark Duncan**, Senior Vice President of Economic Development, Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- **Nathan Ramsey**, Executive Director, LOS Regional Council, and Director, MAWDB

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

- **Heidi Reiber**, Senior Director of Research, Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- **Ashley Swanger**, Director of Industry Services, Asheville Chamber of Commerce

1:00 – 1:15 PM

Travel to Pratt & Whitney

1:15 – 3:00 PM

Site Visit: Pratt & Whitney

PRATTY & WHITNEY

330 Pratt & Whitney Blvd
Asheville, NC 28806

As a complement to the morning sessions, this session will highlight how regional coordination among education and economic development entities yielded the largest-ever investment in manufacturing in western NC. Leaders from Pratt & Whitney, MAWDB, and A-B Tech will share how they co-developed custom recruitment and training programs to fill over 800 advanced manufacturing jobs in just three years.

- **Deborah D. Bailey**, Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development and Continuing Education, A-B Tech
- **Clark Duncan**, Senior Vice President of Economic Development, Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- **Nathan Ramsey**, Executive Director, LOS Regional Council, and Director, MAWDB

3:00 – 3:45 PM

Travel to Schenck Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC)

3:45 – 5:15 PM

Site Visit: Opportunity Youth Pathway Programming

SCHENCK JOB CORPS CCC

98 Schenck Dr
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768

This session will focus on Western NC's Opportunity Youth pathway programs, including the NCWorks NEXTGEN WIOA Youth program and the Schenck Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center. Staff will see youth programming in action, speak directly with program participants about their experience, and learn about the various program structures and services.

- **Lance Crawford**, District Director of Workforce Development, Goodwill Industries of Northwest NC
- **Gene Ettison**, GO PLACES Project Director, LOS Regional Council
- **Michael Holmes**, Career Development Specialist, Schenck Job Corps
- **Vicki Jennings,** Strategic Initiatives Director, LOS Regional Council

5:15 – 6:00 PM

Travel to Hotel

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

6:00 – 6:15 PM	**Break**	**KIMPTON HOTEL ARRAS** 7 Patton Ave Asheville, NC 28801
6:15 PM	**Meet in Lobby**	
6:15 – 6:30 PM	**Travel to Dinner**	
6:30 – 8:00 PM	**Dinner & Session: Public-Private Partnerships to Support Western NC's Brewing Industry** Over dinner, staffers will learn how the workforce system collaborates with Western NC's craft brewing companies – a key sector that contributes over $1 billion to the regional economy – to address the industry's unique talent needs. ➢ **Leah Wong Ashburn**, President and CEO, Highland Brewing ➢ **Clark Duncan**, Senior Vice President of Economic Development, Asheville Chamber of Commerce ➢ **Rebecca Hardin-Nieri**, Environmental Health Safety Specialist, New Belgium Brewing ➢ **Nathan Ramsey**, Executive Director, LOS Regional Council, and Director, MAWDB ➢ **Oscar Wong**, Founder, Highland Brewing	**NEW BELGIUM BREWING** 21 Craven St Asheville, NC 28806

Thursday August 15, 2024

8:15 AM	**Meet in Lobby, Check out**	**KIMPTON HOTEL ARRAS** 7 Patton Ave Asheville, NC 28801
8:15 – 9:00 AM	**Travel to Blue Ridge Community College**	
9:00 – 10:30 AM	**Breakfast Session: Henderson County's Education-to-Work Pathway System** Leaders from Blue Ridge Community College and Henderson County Public Schools will provide an overview of how they partner across systems to offer diverse secondary-to-postsecondary pathways that track to quality jobs regardless of whether they are degree- or workforce-oriented.	**BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE** 180 W Campus Dr Flat Rock, NC 28731

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

- **Shanda Bedoian**, Director of Corporate & Customized Training, Blue Ridge Community College
- **Mark R. Garret**, Superintendent, Henderson County Public Schools
- **Laura B. Leatherwood**, President, Blue Ridge Community College
- **Scott Queen**, Vice President, Economic and Workforce Development, Blue Ridge Community College

10:30 – 11:15 AM

Site Visit: Henderson County JobLink Career Center

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

180 W Campus Dr
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Staffers will have a chance to tour the NCWorks JobLink Career Center (one-stop delivery center) at Blue Ridge, and learn how co-location improves access to services for residents of rural Henderson County.

- **Jason Chappell**, Director, Henderson County JobLink Career Center, Blue Ridge Community College

11:15 AM – 1:15 PM

Luncheon Session: Designing and Delivering Wraparound Support Services for Rural Communities

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

180 W Campus Dr
Flat Rock, NC 2873

Representatives of Blue Ridge and their partner community-based organizations in Western NC will discuss how they coordinate across the workforce and education systems to meet learner and worker needs, with a focus on childcare, housing, transportation, and broadband services.

- **Patsy Davis**, Executive Director, Mountain Projects, Inc.
- **David Francis**, President of Haywood Chamber of Commerce
- **Deidre McMahon**, Interim Executive Director, Southwestern Childhood Development Commission
- **Scott Queen**, Vice President, Economic and Workforce Development, Blue Ridge Community College

1:15 PM

Official Program Ends

Jobs for the Future

Congressional Staff Network (CSN) Site Visit to Western North Carolina

Tuesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

Sunday August 17, 2024

3:43 – 5:15 PM

Flight: AVL to DCA

American Airlines Flight #5216

ASHEVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT

61 Terminal Dr #1
Fletcher, NC 28732