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[Goodwill® Partners with Leading Charlotte Organizations to Open New Trade Training Center](#)

**Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center**



In one of the nation’s fastest-growing cities, there is a massive unmet need – construction companies can’t find enough skilled trade professionals to fill the demand. And yet, Charlotte also struggles with economic mobility, ranking last among the 50 largest cities in the nation, according to a Harvard/UC Berkley study.

A 2016 survey by the North Carolina Department of Commerce found more than half of construction companies in the state had hiring difficulties – more than any other industry. The number one cause reported for their hiring trouble was a lack of candidates with technical skills. Meanwhile, demand continues to grow for these positions with an expected 20 percent increase in available construction positions in North Carolina by 2024 – that’s

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construction employees ageing out of the workforce.

That's why four educational organizations in Charlotte have joined together to establish the **Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center**. Inside the facility on May 30, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), and The ROC (Rebuilding Opportunities in Construction), announced they will soon work together under one roof to train and certify high school students and adults for in-demand trade skills employers are desperately seeking, free of charge.

"We recognize the skilled trades are an essential part of helping to build our growing city, and having these skills can lead to in-demand high potential careers. We also understand the path for individuals in our community to attain these skills is sometimes met with obstacles. We've come together with CPCC, CMS and The ROC to make the path to these careers possible for people in our region," said Chris Jackson, president and CEO of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. "The programs offered at the Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center are provided at no cost to participants and lead to industry-recognized certifications that create access to opportunities for family-sustaining employment."

The Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center is scheduled to open its doors in January 2019 in a facility that formerly served as a warehouse for Goodwill's retail operations. The existing 15,000 square foot building located directly across from Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology at 1335 Allegheny Street will require \$2.5 million for renovation, upfit and equipment. On Wednesday, the project received an initial \$500,000 investment from Christ Episcopal Church to begin the project. By December 2018, it will become a state-of-the-art training facility with laboratory bays filled with industry-specific equipment, allowing for hands-on training. There will also be "smart" classroom space for additional instruction.

"Christ Church wanted to take a pioneer role in our community toward workforce development by providing a \$500,000 lead gift. We are grateful for the opportunity to help provide a new vocational pathway that has not been available for Charlotte's high school students in over 30 years. We value the emphasis on building direct relationships with employer mentors, and

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economic mobility,” said The Reverend Chip Edens, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church.

Students will complete foundational training before selecting a specialized program of study, which may include: construction, field supervision, concrete/masonry, apartment maintenance, advanced carpentry, computer aided drafting & design, HVAC and electrical.

High school students will complete career and technical education coursework through The ROC during the daytime hours, with adult training through Goodwill taking place in the evening. CPCC will provide all teacher instruction services via the Career & College Promise program utilizing industry-leading curriculums. Once their training programs are complete, both youth and adult students can choose to enter the workforce, apply for an apprenticeship, or transfer between 41 and 53 credit hours toward an associate’s degree at CPCC depending upon their area of concentration. By 2020, the Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center will serve approximately 120 youth and 400 adults each year.

“We are very excited about this partnership and the opportunities it will offer to our students,” said Dr. Clayton Wilcox, superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. “The Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center is a natural extension of the construction-related Career and Technical Education pathway offered in CMS. The new training center will allow students to gain certifications that will prepare them for good jobs.”

CMS students will have the opportunity to participate in exploration and career readiness, as well as complete paid internships in the summer before selecting a concentration. Ongoing basic needs fulfillment, career planning, resume development and job search support are embedded in the adult programs through Goodwill.

“As Mecklenburg County’s community college, it’s part of CPCC’s mission to help increase economic mobility by ensuring students are equipped with the skills needed to enter the workforce and forge successful careers,” said Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, president of CPCC. “Through partnerships and programs such as this, we can build talent pipelines that help employers remain competitive in the marketplace, contributing to the strength of the local economy.”

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survey by the Association of General Contractors reported 60 percent of firms in the U.S. increased their base pay rates to attract and retain workers, a trend that is expected to continue.



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