

October 2007

*Timely, accessible,  
and credible  
analysis of  
state and local  
budget and tax  
issues*

## Employment, Income & Poverty, 2006: Buncombe County

### Labor Force

- Buncombe County's labor force, including employed and unemployed workers seeking employment, totaled 118,930 in 2006.
- The county's labor force grew by 10.5% between 2000 and 2006.

### Unemployment

- Buncombe County's unemployment rate averaged 3.8% in 2006, compared to a statewide figure of 4.8%.
- Buncombe County's unemployment rate was higher in 2006 than it was in 2000.
- Some 4,525 people were unemployed and actively seeking work in Buncombe County in 2006, up from 3,390 people in 2000.

### Income & Poverty

- Median household income in Buncombe County equaled \$41,735 in 2006 – an amount equivalent to 97.9% of the statewide figure.
- The county's per capita income of \$24,155 was \$1,210 more than the statewide level.
- The county's poverty rate of 11.9% was lower than the statewide level of 14.7 percent.
- All together, 33.7% of the county's residents had incomes less than twice the federal poverty level (\$41,228 for a family of four).

### Job Projections

- The Buncombe County area is expected to add 58,508 jobs between 2004 and 2014.
- Most of the jobs expected to add the most positions (e.g. cashiers, retail salespersons) offer low wages, few benefits and little upward mobility.
- The jobs expected to grow the most in percentage terms, like those in health fields, typically pay good wages but require workers with some type of postsecondary credential.
- Some 61% of the county's adults possessed no more than a high school degree in 2005.

### Living Income Standard

- A working family with children needs to earn, on average, a total of \$15.99/hour to cover basic living expenses in Buncombe County.

