

October 2007

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

Employment, Income & Poverty, 2006: Mecklenburg County

Labor Force

- Mecklenburg County's labor force, including employed and unemployed workers seeking employment, totaled 447,144 in 2006.
- The county's labor force rose by 13.0% between 2000 and 2006.

Unemployment

- Mecklenburg County's unemployment rate averaged 4.5% in 2006, compared to a statewide figure of 4.8%.
- Mecklenburg County's unemployment rate was higher in 2006, than it was in 2000.
- Some 20,019 people were unemployed and actively seeking work in Mecklenburg County in 2006, up from 11,697 people in 2000.

Income & Poverty

- Median household income in Mecklenburg County equaled \$51,945 in 2006 – an amount equivalent to 121.9% of the statewide figure.
- The county's per capita income of \$30,556 was \$7,611 more than the statewide level.
- The county's poverty rate of 11.3% was less than the statewide level of 14.7 percent.
- All together, 27.2% of the county's residents had incomes less than twice the federal poverty level (\$41,228 for a family of four).

Job Projections

- The Mecklenburg County area is expected to gain jobs 191,260 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 53% 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 \$19.43/hour to cover basic living expenses in Mecklenburg County.

