



north carolina

JUSTICE CENTER



Building
a path
to prosperity
for all

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



OUR MISSION:

To end poverty in North Carolina
by ensuring that every household has access
to the resources, services and fair treatment
it needs to achieve economic security.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....4

Letter from the Board of Directors Co-Chairs.....6

Letter from the Executive Director and Deputy Director7

Budget and Tax Center.....8

Consumer Protections and Housing Project12

Workers’ Rights Project16

Education and Law Project.....20

Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project24

Health Access Coalition28

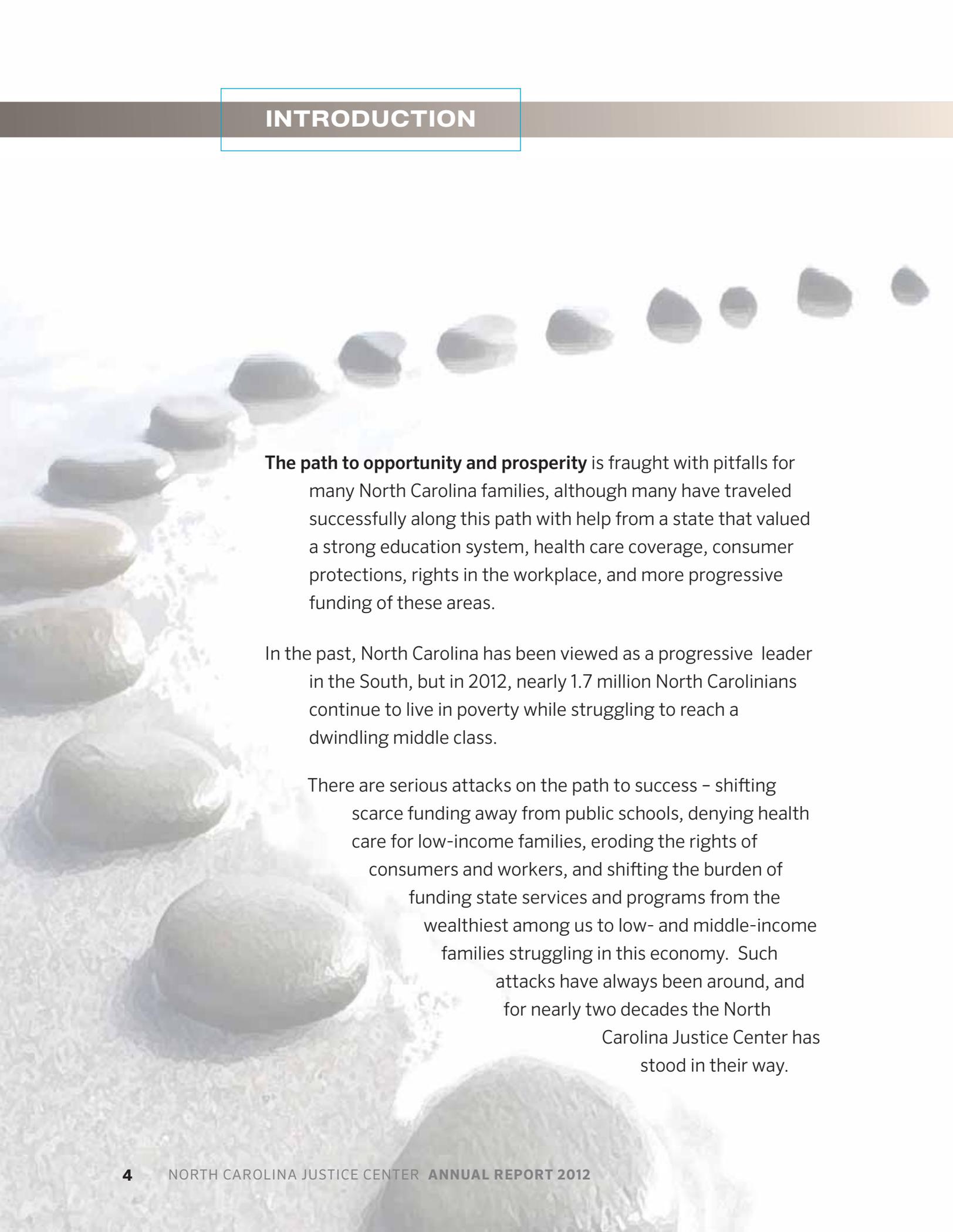
NC Policy Watch.....32

Justice Center Communications.....36

Support for Our Work.....38

2012 Defenders of Justice Awards40

INTRODUCTION



The path to opportunity and prosperity is fraught with pitfalls for many North Carolina families, although many have traveled successfully along this path with help from a state that valued a strong education system, health care coverage, consumer protections, rights in the workplace, and more progressive funding of these areas.

In the past, North Carolina has been viewed as a progressive leader in the South, but in 2012, nearly 1.7 million North Carolinians continue to live in poverty while struggling to reach a dwindling middle class.

There are serious attacks on the path to success – shifting scarce funding away from public schools, denying health care for low-income families, eroding the rights of consumers and workers, and shifting the burden of funding state services and programs from the wealthiest among us to low- and middle-income families struggling in this economy. Such attacks have always been around, and for nearly two decades the North Carolina Justice Center has stood in their way.

We are the protectors of the path to prosperity in North Carolina.

Our researchers use data and analysis to propose public policies that support widespread prosperity.

Our legislative advocates work with state leaders to make sure they build a path that stretches deep into the state's most struggling communities and is accessible to all.

Our litigators are there to help individuals, families and communities navigate the path and to protect them from exploitation, discrimination and abuse.

Our community educators and communications professionals work to make sure everyone knows how the path works and where the pitfalls are, and they engage and mobilize the public when access to the path needs defending.

The North Carolina Justice Center plays a critical role in *developing, supporting, and widening the path* to prosperity in this state. Here is a brief look at our work in 2012 and the challenges we anticipate in the year ahead.



If there was ever a time for the progressive citizens of North Carolina to come together for the future of our state, that time is now.



DHAMIAN BLUE

The actions by our state's leaders to cut important programs and services make economic recovery all the more difficult for struggling families. Reduced investments in our children's education, fewer protections for consumers and workers, and expanding numbers of uninsured all create obstacles for hard-working North Carolinians trying to find their way to the middle class.

A single strategy for creating a strong and just North Carolina simply will not work – we must employ multiple approaches to achieve our goal of creating opportunity and prosperity for all North Carolinians. And the Justice Center is examining and re-aligning its efforts by working to build greater presence and involvement in local communities – often with our allies and their constituents. We have also stepped up our efforts to report on and analyze the impact of the actions taken by government leaders to ensure broad public awareness of the state's policy decisions. Finally, we are assessing the increased role for litigation to achieve social and economic change.



CHRISTOPHER T. GRAEBE

As fellow citizens of North Carolina, we find ourselves asking: "What can one person do to combat the onslaught of attacks on our state's most vulnerable citizens?" For us, the first answer to that question is to support the hard work of the staff at the Justice Center in their powerful advocacy, reliable research, and effective communication. The Justice Center is able to operate through the generous contributions of private foundations and individuals – we receive no public money. And now more than ever, we need your help. So let us come together for the future of North Carolina, to support sound public policy with our voices and with our money, to build a better future for all North Carolinians.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dhamian Blue in blue ink.

Co-Chair, Board of Directors

Handwritten signature of Christopher T. Graebe in blue ink.

Co-Chair, Board of Directors

Dear Friend of the Justice Center,

The Justice Center's advocacy for low- and moderate-income North Carolinians was especially critical in 2012. All too often last year state leaders made policy choices that limited opportunity for the majority and promoted prosperity for the few. Even with these significant challenges, the Justice Center's staff – working with our allies and supporters – achieved many noteworthy accomplishments in the past year. Here are just a few.

- We provided **county-level research on North Carolina's poverty** – in both rural areas and urban centers – and we traveled on the Truth and Hope Poverty Tour across the state hearing first-hand from those struggling from economic hardship.
- We developed **critical analyses of tax reform proposals** and how they would impact government services and programs.
- Our staff **assisted over two thousand young adults with their applications to obtain legal status** under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.
- Our consumer advocates **successfully fought off attempts to allow excessive fees and interest rates for small loans, and maintained consumer protections** for homeowners facing foreclosure.
- The communications team provided **daily commentary on government and policy issues, and investigative reports on charter schools, government corruption, and the state and federal courts.**
- We brought **experts to speak** on issues ranging from gambling, to the gridlock in Washington, to campaign finance reform.
- Our attorneys **continued their fights** against payday lenders, wage theft, and virtual charter schools. They also litigated cases protecting access to educational services for at-risk children and expanded access to the state's court system for those with limited English proficiency.
- Our **health care advocates have been the principal voice for consumers** in North Carolina's implementation of health reform. They have recorded personal stories from North Carolinians who would be affected by provisions of the Affordable Care Act, and went on the road to train advocates in other states on how to use video in their work.



MELINDA LAWRENCE



BILL WILSON

As we travel around the state and talk with North Carolinians about the issues impacting their lives, we hear about their struggles, their hopes and their dreams. We know difficulties and obstacles lie ahead and that 2013 will likely prove to be an even more difficult year for those of us working to build a more progressive state. We are in a battle for the future of North Carolina. The Justice Center is uniquely positioned, given its mission, its expertise, its experience and its capacity to play an essential role in that battle. This is no time for retrenchment. The staff of the Justice Center is committed to give their all to protect the interests of poor and middle-income North Carolinians and the critical policies and structures that have made North Carolina a leader in the region.

We thank you for your commitment, energy and support for our work. Together we will achieve the vision we all want for North Carolina.

With warm regards,


Executive Director


Deputy Director



The maxim that how we spend our money illustrates our values applies not only to individuals but to states as well. The researchers of the Budget and Tax Center (BTC) provide critical information and analysis about how we as North Carolinians collectively spend our public resources – and about how the state chooses to raise those resources. The BTC's analysis of state budget and revenue decisions is aimed at ensuring those decisions reflect the needs and interests of North Carolina's low- and moderate-income families and that state fiscal policies build a solid, accessible path to prosperity for all North Carolinians.

Shining a Light on Poverty

In 2012, BTC deepened its analysis of poverty in North Carolina and fought to preserve effective anti-poverty policies.

- Exposed the prevalence and depth of poverty in North Carolina through briefs and reports providing detailed state and county level data
- Published a comprehensive look at the job market in North Carolina, along with recommendations as to how state leaders can strengthen and expand economic opportunity
- Protected the state's Earned Income Tax Credit, which benefits more than 800,000 working families in North Carolina

Developing Policies that Promote Opportunity

The Justice Center worked proactively to create proposals for programs and services that would open the path to prosperity to more working families throughout North Carolina.

- Developed and promoted public transit plans that provide for affordable housing and job availability in order to create communities of opportunity
- Created proposals that would lay the foundation for employment for displaced workers through training at community colleges and well-targeted business incentives
- Explained how tax breaks enacted two decades ago created the current crisis in the state's unemployment insurance system, and outlined a plan to address it that would preserve much-needed benefits for unemployed workers



ABOVE: BTC Director Alexandra Forter Sirota (far right) at Moms vs. Millionaires press conference.

OPPOSITE, INSET: Tazra Mitchell, Budget & Tax Center Fellow, speaking at the 2012 Poverty Summit in Rocky Mount.

OPPOSITE, BUS: The Justice Center worked closely with allies to organize the Truth & Hope Tour of Poverty, a statewide tour of rural counties and inner city neighborhoods where North Carolinians have struggled to find work, decent housing, transportation, and sufficient food for their families. BTC provided critical data to support the tour.

North Carolina has traditionally been viewed as a leader among Southern states for its commitment to public investments that promote economic opportunity for all. North Carolina's investments in early learning, its university and community college systems, workforce development and training, and its roads and infrastructure has been seen as a national model. These public investments are supported with the tax contributions of North Carolinians, helping create a desirable state to run a business and raise a family.

- The NC Budget & Tax Center's statement on "Tax Freedom Day"

Exposing Efforts to Limit Opportunity

When state legislators tried to justify cuts to the programs that offer a path to prosperity, BTC's team of analysts provided the research and data to explain how their proposals would hurt thousands of low-income and working families who were already struggling due to the weak economy.

- Informed the public through briefs and reports detailing state budget cuts to education, health services, work supports and other programs that help working families reach the middle class
- Supported other non-profits throughout North Carolina with data and news about important policy developments at the General Assembly
- Developed new ways to share data about the budget and policy decisions that will shape North Carolina for years to come (see adjacent page)



ABOVE: Budget and Tax Center staff, from left: Allan Freyer, Policy Analyst; Cedric Johnson, Policy Analyst; Tazra Mitchell, BTC Fellow; Russell Baggett, Campaign Coordinator; and Alexandra Forter Sirota, Director.

OPPOSITE AND BELOW: BTC infographics and reports.

The Big Challenge of 2013 - Revenue Reform

In 2013, the leaders of the North Carolina General Assembly plan to dramatically change the way the state’s public structures and programs—that create the path to prosperity—are funded. The proposals now under consideration would unavoidably lead to higher taxes for low-income families and cuts to public education and programs that serve the most vulnerable people in North Carolina.

BTC staff has already written extensively on the state revenue system—about what works, what doesn’t, and how North Carolina can build a better system that supports shared prosperity. They have met with state leaders and elected officials, and educated hundreds of individuals and organizations throughout North Carolina about what it would mean to their communities if the legislature’s proposals for revenue “reform” were to become reality.

The Justice Center’s Budget and Tax Center is the only project in North Carolina focused on the well-being of low-income people that has the ability to analyze the true impacts of these “reform” proposals on individuals and the state’s economy.

INFOGRAPHICS

This year, BTC dramatically increased its production of infographics in order to inform the public about budget cuts and to get the facts out about an array of policy and spending proposals. These infographics provide important information in a way that’s easy to understand and easy to share. Thousands of people viewed, commented on and shared our infographics through social media in 2012. ■



BTC Reports

MEDIATED INCENTIVES

Helping North Carolina's Economic Development Incentives Program Stay on Track

BY DAVID WILSON

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Economic Development Incentives Program (EDIP) is a key component of North Carolina's economic development strategy. It provides incentives to businesses that invest in the state, create jobs, and expand their operations. The program has been successful in attracting investment and creating jobs, but it is facing challenges in the current economic environment.

CHALLENGES

The program is facing several challenges, including a decline in investment and job creation, and a shift in the types of businesses that are investing in the state. The program is also facing competition from other states that are offering more aggressive incentives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the program's success, the following recommendations are made:

- Review and update the program's rules and regulations.
- Improve the program's marketing and outreach efforts.
- Streamline the application and approval process.
- Monitor the program's performance and make adjustments as needed.

A Barometer of the Economic Recovery in Our State

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the state's economic recovery, including key indicators such as employment, income, and business activity. It highlights the progress made since the recession and identifies areas that still need attention.

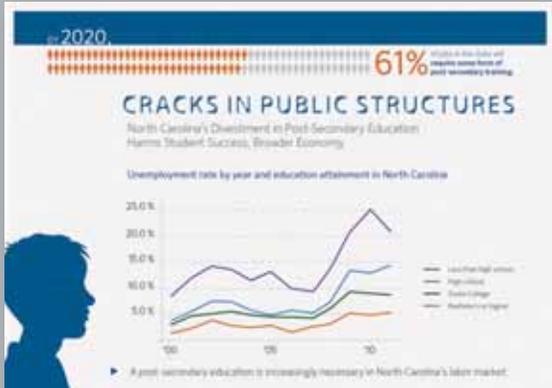
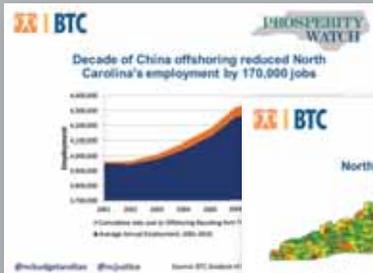
Community CONVERSATIONS

Building a Stronger North Carolina

A Community Conversation Series for the General Assembly

Presented by the Center for Budget and Tax Services

This series of conversations aims to bring together community members and policymakers to discuss ways to build a stronger North Carolina. Topics include education, workforce development, and economic growth.

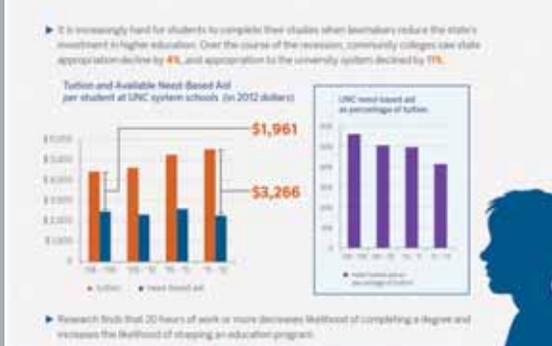


"I need to go to my community college or university to get more than just a high-school diploma."

Annual earnings by education attainment, 2010

Education Attainment	Annual Earnings (2010)
Less than high school	\$24,441
High school GED/GRADE	\$25,243
Some college	\$28,942
Bachelor's degree	\$47,712

"Not only will it help me find a job, it will give me a better chance of earning a family-sustaining wage."



"I have to pay more for my education this year than I did last year. With less need-based aid available, I have to take on a job to make ends meet and pay for school."

North Carolina needs to invest to ensure post-secondary education remains affordable and accessible — so that workers will have the credentials needed for the jobs of the future.

This means investing to increase completion of a post-secondary degree by an estimated additional **400,000 diplomas** by the year 2020.

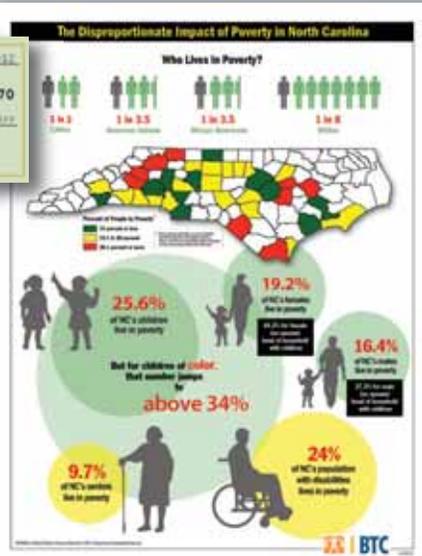
North Carolina JUSTICE CENTER

Withdraw from the account of NORTH CAROLINA'S COMMONS 0000 Date: 8/22/2012

NO TO THE OILER March Carolina's Robert Lee \$ 27,770

Trust services: Corporate administration and advisory services

www.EndTheBathTaxCutsOnIncome.com (252) 600



Half a Dozen Ways to Women's Economic Security

Women are a vital part of North Carolina's workforce, making up 47% of the workforce. Yet women continue to earn less than men at every level and nearly 1 in 5 women in the state live in poverty.

20.9% of N.C. women ages 18-64 lack health insurance!

The median annual income for women in North Carolina is \$7,000 less than for men!

More than 4 in 10 working women in our state lack primary health care.

The economic security of North Carolina's female workforce is vital to the state's future. Policies that support women's economic security, such as paid family leave, affordable child care, and workplace safety, can help create more equitable work and a thriving workforce for North Carolina.

Health care coverage and support

Child care and support

Equal pay for equal work

Equal access to paid leave

Stronger laws and standards for working women

12,000 new students

5,000 teachers

= FAILURE for North Carolina's future

The staff of the Justice Center's Consumer Protections and Housing Project were active at the legislature and in the courts in 2012. Our team of lobbyists and attorneys fight to protect individuals and families from exploitation and profiteering, and to ensure they have a safe, sound, affordable home. The Consumer Protections and Housing Project is dedicated to stopping efforts to rob families of hard-earned assets and to creating protections that support families' hard work to move into the middle class.

Defending North Carolina's Consumer Protection Laws

For more than a decade, the Justice Center has successfully worked to secure strong consumer protections for the people of North Carolina. In 2012, the Justice Center worked to defend those protections against attacks by special interests.

- **Organized North Carolina military leaders and consumer advocates in a successful effort to stop a bill that would increase rates and fees on loans from finance companies,**

which frequently target soldiers, low-income people and those with poor credit

- **Worked with legislators and others to defeat a bill that would have allowed scammers to prey on homeowners struggling to avoid foreclosure**
- **Stopped several bills that would have weakened the rights of tenants**

Helping Working Families Protect Assets

The attorneys of the Consumer Protections and Housing Project provide legal representation to victims of deceptive lending and housing practices.

- **Successfully defended homeowners against foreclosure and recovered damages for homeowners and renters who suffered a range of illegal practices**
- **Filed a class-action lawsuit against one of the nation's largest debt-buying companies, alleging unfair debt collection practices**
- **Continued to litigate cases against two payday lenders, having already received the largest settlement on record from three other lenders that violated North Carolina's usury laws**

Fighting for a More Accessible Path to Prosperity

The advocates of the Consumer Protections and Housing Project worked with legislators and administrative agencies to protect and strengthen consumer protections in North Carolina.

Opposite, top: Following a protest by the NC Justice Center and allies, Regions Bank dropped its harmful payday lending program in North Carolina.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT: Project Director, Al Ripley, on the Policy Watch radio show.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: Senior Attorney, Jack Holtzman leads the Justice Center's fair housing work.





SUBSCRIBE to YouTube

Al Ripley discusses the return of payday loans in NC

Posted on 10/22/2012

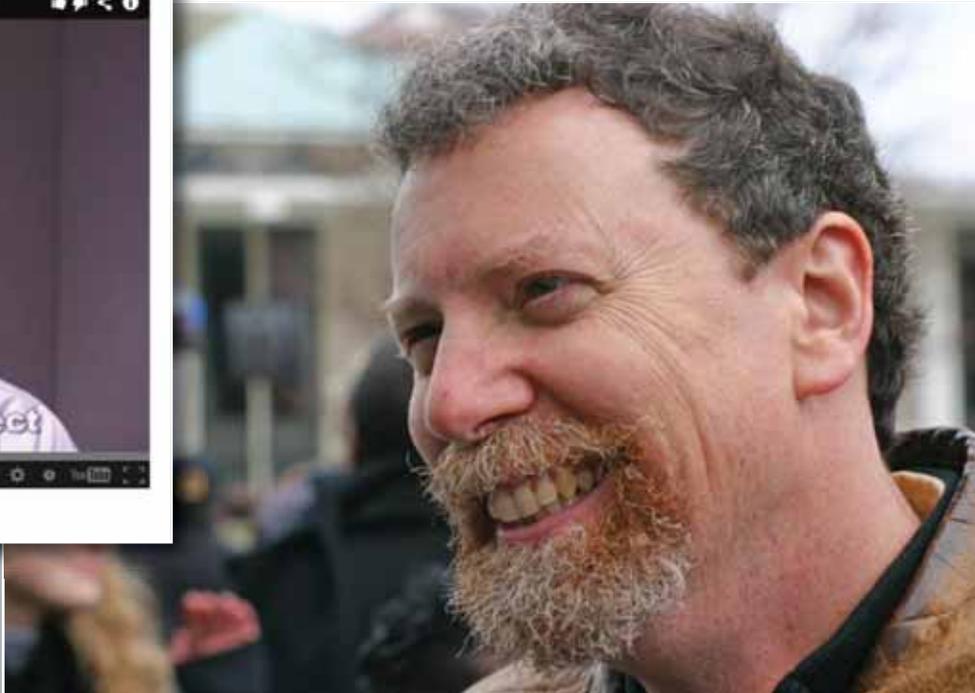
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Al Ripley discusses the return of payday loans in NC



Al Ripley
Consumer & Housing Project
Legislative Center

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cannot afford to pay more for electricity. Last year alone, more than 200,000 residences in North Carolina had power disconnected for non-payment of bills. At a time when so many families are struggling to get by and to avoid slipping into poverty, a rate increase is unconscionable.



The Justice Center's Consumer Protections and Housing Project will work to educate

regulators and lawmakers about the effect rate hikes would have on North Carolina families and to expose the truth about the power companies' already bloated bottom line. Together with our partners, we will seek to ensure that electricity bills don't push people off the path to prosperity. ■

- Worked with agencies and other non-profits to fight for more affordable rates for low-income families during the Duke-Progress Energy merger
- Stopped passage of a bill that would have shifted the liability and responsibility of tenants for the eradication of bedbug infestation
- Organized protests that helped to stop efforts to bring payday lending back to North Carolina

LEFT: Consumer and Housing Project staff, left to right: Al Ripley, Director; Rochelle Sparko, Staff Attorney; and Jack Holtzman, Senior Attorney. Inset: Seonaid Rijo, Paralegal.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Jack Holtzman and his co-counsel from Legal Aid's Fair Housing Project and the UNC Center for Civil Rights following a hearing on fair housing.

OPPOSITE, MIDDLE LEFT: Al Ripley leading a protest of predatory lending.

OPPOSITE, MIDDLE LEFT: Al Ripley on Policy Watch blog.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM : Rochelle Sparko advises a client on how to defend his home against wrongful foreclosure proceedings.

The people of North Carolina recognize how harmful payday lending is, and it shows they don't want payday lending in North Carolina.

- Al Ripley, Director of Consumer Protections and Housing Project, quoted in the *News & Observer*

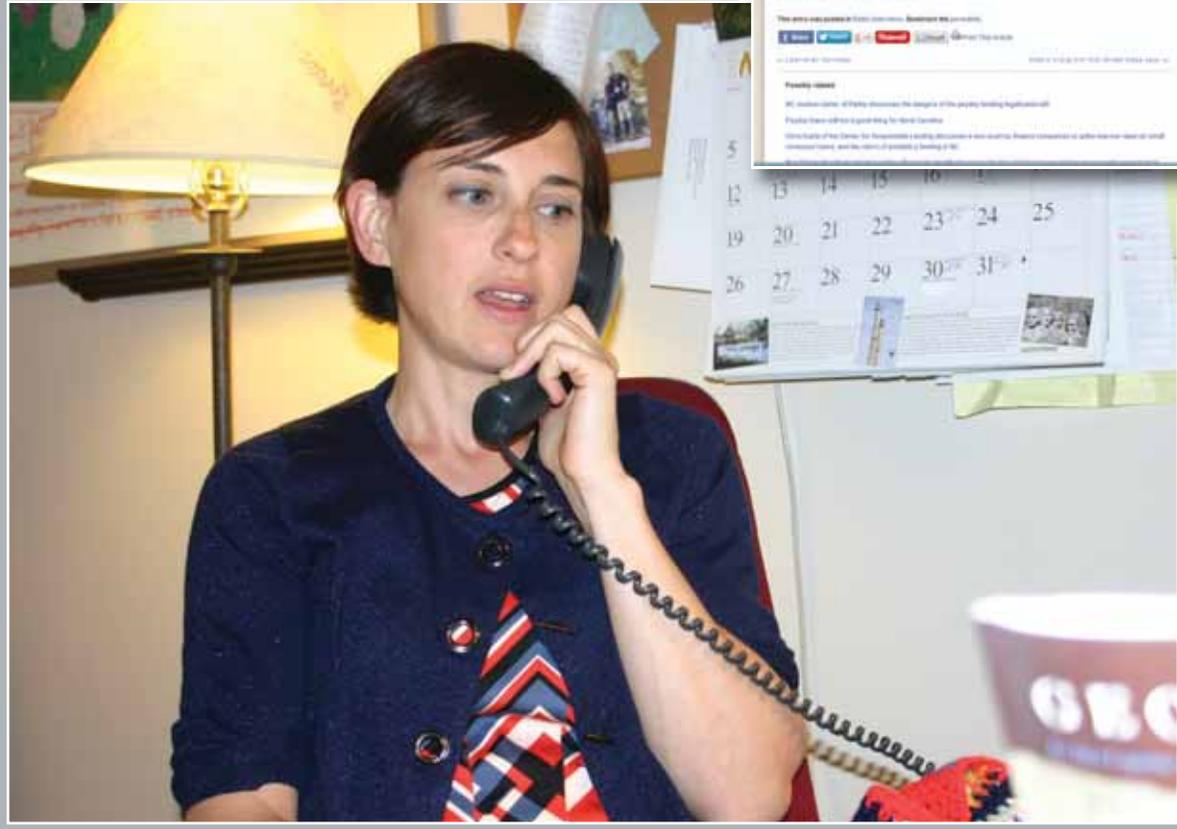
The Big Challenge for 2013 - Affordable Utilities

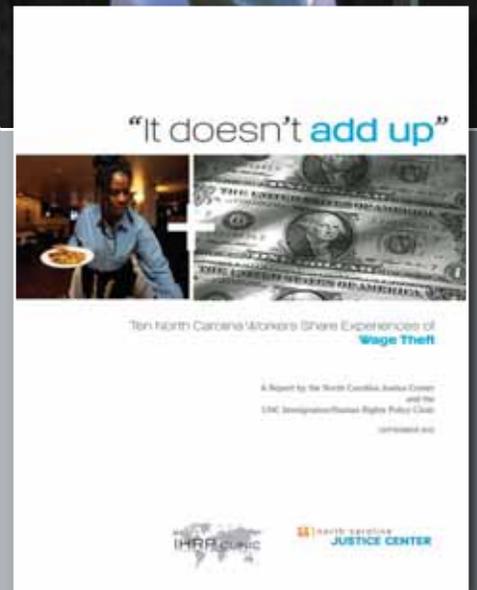
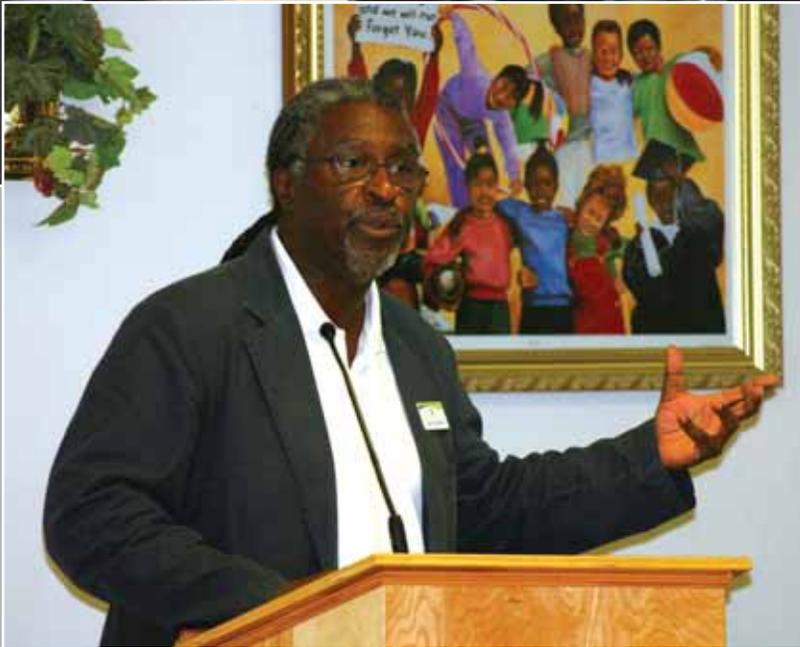
Access to affordable energy is fundamental to the well-being of families and communities. Duke Energy (now called Duke Energy Progress) provides power to much of North Carolina and is seeking to substantially increase what working families pay for electricity.

Poor and middle-class people in North Carolina simply



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Haddix, UNC







The Justice Center's Workers' Rights Project is dedicated to making sure those who work hard for a living are fairly paid, are fairly treated, and have the opportunity to progress along the path to prosperity. That involves working for better state policies, educating workers about their rights and holding employers who violate those rights responsible.

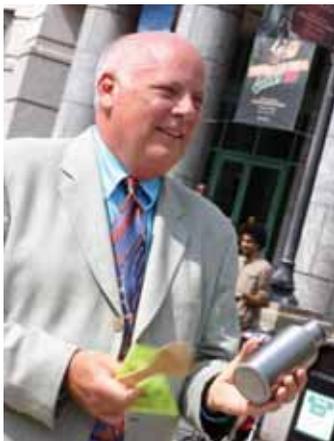
Educating and Empowering Workers

Many workers in North Carolina endure wage theft, unsafe working conditions, and discriminatory policies on the job because they don't know what their rights are or they believe they have no recourse. Providing that important information to workers is a core mission of the Workers' Rights Project.

- **Talked with workers around the state and produced an extensive qualitative research report on wage theft, then organized events and communications efforts around the report's release**
- **Conducted 18 Know Your Rights workshops throughout the state where we explained to workers what their rights are on the job and how they can stand up for those rights, and created a series of factsheets in English, Spanish and Creole to educate workers and Department of Labor officials**
- **Led the NC Families Care Coalition, which works with partners in North Carolina and nationally to secure work-family polices that enable workers to care for their loved ones and themselves and still earn a living**
- **Conducted outreach to dozens of migrant-worker camps and educated hundreds of immigrant workers about their rights**

Working for Opportunities for Ex-offenders

There are 1.6 million people in North Carolina with criminal records. For some, that record prevents them from getting a



The extreme, unnecessary and hurtful "reform" proposal quietly sired by big business will slash important protections for people who are jobless through no fault of their own, working people who are victims of widespread layoffs.

- Harry Payne, Senior Counsel for Policy and Law, in a *Wilmington Star-News* op-ed

job, finding a place to live, and reintegrating into society. In 2011, we were successful in securing changes to state law that enabled some ex-offenders to remove those barriers by having their records expunged or by receiving certificates of relief. In 2012, we worked to make sure people benefited from these new laws and pushed for further improvements.

- **Led the Second Chance Alliance, which grew from 200 members to 700 members in 2012, and engaged people around the state in our efforts**
- **Worked with the NC Department of Public Safety to establish local reentry councils, which are developing comprehensive plans to help people formerly incarcerated to reintegrate into their communities**
- **Trained approximately 200 lawyers, in**

OPPOSITE, TOP: NC Justice Center hosts a press conference as part of Restaurant Opportunities Centers United's annual day of action to raise the tipped minimum wage. Congress hasn't raised the tipped minimum wage in 21 years.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT: Senior Outreach Coordinator, Ajamu Dillahunt, addresses a luncheon for older adults and caregivers on health care issues.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: Workers' Rights Project report examining the impact of wage theft on North Carolina workers.

LEFT: Armed with pots and spoons, Harry Payne and other protesters greeted returning NC lawmakers to protest cuts to education and health care, high unemployment, fracking, and the passage of Amendment 1, banning gay marriage and civil unions.



partnership with Legal Aid of North Carolina, to represent low-income individuals so they can benefit from the new expunction and certificate of relief laws

Fighting for Workers' Rights in Court

The attorneys of the Workers' Rights Project represent workers who have suffered from illegal employment practices. We make sure that workers are paid what they are owed and that employers end unsafe, discriminatory or unscrupulous practices.

- Successfully challenged wage and other violations in the restaurant industry
- Negotiated a substantial settlement for a class of over 800 poultry workers who were laid off following a plant closing without receiving all wages owed them
- Secured a major victory for crab workers recovering significant back pay for the class whose employer was violating minimum wage and other wage and hour laws

The Big Challenge for 2013 - Unemployment Insurance

North Carolina's unemployment rate is higher than the national average, and there are three unemployed workers for every one job opening. Fortunately, thousands of families in North Carolina have avoided homelessness and hunger thanks to unemployment insurance benefits.

In 2012, the Workers' Rights Project stopped efforts to

cut unemployment benefits or make them harder to access. We launched the I Am a Tar Heel Worker campaign and website, engaging hundreds of people and organizations in the effort to protect unemployment benefits and make more opportunities available to jobless workers. We met with newspaper editorial boards, testified before legislative committees, and sent letters to North Carolina's congressional delegation in order to protect and increase unemployment benefits. We've also exposed the hypocrisy of plans to make unemployed workers pay a debt that was created by past tax cuts for business owners.

This fight will kick into high gear in 2013. We will advocate against efforts to cut the amount or duration of benefits, and we will work with state officials as they seek to modify how the unemployment system is run.

Whatever changes are put forward, we will be there to stand up for the well-being of North Carolina's working families. ■



ABOVE, LEFT: Project Director, Carol Brooke, at the 2.13 press conference. Waiters and waitresses make up the largest group of tipped workers, who, in North Carolina, earn more than \$5 less than non-tipped workers. 1 in 4 North Carolina tipped workers live below the poverty line.

ABOVE, TOP: Rows of shoes symbolize workers who lost their lives at a service to commemorate those who died on the job in 2011.

ABOVE: Paralegal Ron Garcia-Fogarty on the 2012 Poverty Tour.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Workers' Rights Project staff, left to right: Sabine Schoenbach, Policy Analyst; Clermont Fraser, Staff Attorney; Daniel Bowses, Staff Attorney, Equal Justice Works Fellow; Bill Rowe, General Counsel and Director of Advocacy; Harry Payne, Senior Counsel for Policy and Law; Carol Brooke, Director; and Ron Garcia-Fogarty, Paralegal.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: The Workers' Rights project created a series of comprehensive factsheets on basic legal rights of employees in North Carolina to provide accessible, reliable information for North Carolina's low-income workers on issues ranging from wrongful termination, unemployment insurance and equal pay to family and medical leave, immigrant workers' rights and wage theft.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Family and Medical Leave

▶ YOUR RIGHT to take time to care for yourself and your family.

You may be entitled to time off from work when a child is born, when a family member is ill, or when you have a serious health condition.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a federal law that guarantees eligible workers the right to unpaid time off. This leave time is job-protected, meaning you cannot be fired when you take this time off.

What does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provide?
The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires certain employers to provide eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year to:

- Care for a newborn or newly-adopted child;
- Care for a seriously ill family member (spouse, parent, or child);
- Recover from a worker's own serious health condition;
- Deal with qualifying issues related to a worker's spouse, son, daughter or parent who is a covered military member on "covered military duty."

You may also be allowed up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a family member who is a service member with a serious injury or illness.

Am I eligible under the FMLA?
You are eligible if you have worked for at least one year and you have worked at least 1,250 hours within the last year at a business with 50 or more employees or at a public agency, including schools.

What counts as a "serious health condition?"
You may be eligible for leave time when you have a newborn or newly-adopted child, or a family member are seriously ill or have a serious health condition.

A serious health condition must involve either significant care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. Situations such as pregnancy, health conditions with periods of incapacity, and long-term conditions for which treatment is ineffective may all be covered.

Did you know?
Many workers cannot afford to take unpaid time off work and, unfortunately, the law only provides access to unpaid leave. North Carolina, unlike some other states, does not have a state family leave insurance program.

North Carolina needs paid leave too! Check out www.ncfamilyleave.org to learn more.

Take Action!
Workers should be paid for all the hours they work. We are working on strengthening North Carolina's law on wage theft.
Your story can help us make the case for stronger worker protections. If you have ever not been paid what you were owed by your employer, please contact us to tell your story.
Contact: ajones@justice4nc.org

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Wage Theft

Did you know?
Before leaving work each day, call your employer and provide your home address, and phone number of your employer as well as for the amount of money you will be owed.
Make sure your receive the correct pay:
• Keep all your paystubs.
• Keep track of the hours you worked.
• Compare your record of the hours you worked with your stub.

What deductions can my employer take from my paycheck?
Your employer will deduct income taxes and Social Security from your paycheck. In general, they cannot deduct any additional deductions if they pay your hourly cash pay below the minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, or for the wage they have promised to pay. Usually, an employer may have you sign something that allows them to deduct anything else. There are exceptions to this.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Health and Safety at Work

Did you know?
Workplaces with 10 or more employees and a workers' compensation experience rating modifier of 1.3 or higher must have safety committees that include employees. If your workplace doesn't have one, you and your co-workers can start one.

Working together is a safety committee or union is the best way to solve workplace problems. If there isn't a safety committee or union in your workplace, you may want to organize one.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Workers' Compensation

Did you know?
If you are injured on the job, you may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. If you are injured on the job, you may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. If you are injured on the job, you may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits.

Workers' compensation is a benefit that provides financial support to workers who are injured on the job. It covers medical expenses, lost wages, and disability benefits. If you are injured on the job, you should report the injury to your employer as soon as possible and file a claim with your state's workers' compensation board.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Equal Pay

Did you know?
The Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires employers to pay men and women the same wage for the same job. If you are a woman and you are being paid less than a man for the same job, you may be able to sue your employer for back pay and damages.

The Equal Pay Act is a federal law that prohibits employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex. It requires employers to pay men and women the same wage for the same job. If you are a woman and you are being paid less than a man for the same job, you may be able to sue your employer for back pay and damages.

EDUCATION & LAW PROJECT

The Education and Law Project works to protect and expand access to quality public education. Increasingly a solid education and top-notch skills are required to open the door to opportunity. We advocate at the General Assembly and with local school systems for education policies and funding that support those students most at risk for falling behind, dropping out, or being let down by the school system. We also work with families to make sure their students' education rights are being respected and fulfilled.

Preserving Funding

North Carolina's public school system must have adequate funding if it is to provide a quality education to every child, no matter his or her background or circumstances. In 2012, we worked to protect education funding, especially for the neediest students.

- **Ensured that the legislature maintained special funding for the education of low-wealth and disadvantaged students**



ABOVE: Education and Law Project staff, left to right: Chris Hill, Director; Christine Bischoff, Staff Attorney; and Matt Ellinwood, Policy Analyst.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Project Director, Chris Hill, speaks out against school vouchers at a press conference in front of the North Carolina Legislature.

OPPOSITE, LOWER LEFT: A protester expresses her opposition to a proposal on education policy.

OPPOSITE, LOWER RIGHT: Every week, the Education & Law project sends a newsletter on the latest education issues, shedding light on how complex policy decisions will affect everyday North Carolina families and their children.





At the Schoolhouse Door

NEWS AND POLICY UPDATES FROM THE EDUCATION & LAW PROJECT

September 13, 2012

NC JUSTICE CENTER

State Board of Ed Approves 25 Charter Schools

The State Board of Education approved 25 new charter schools on September 6. The approval process for charter schools changed in 2011, when [a new state law](#) created a Charter School Advisory Board to review applications and provide preliminary approval before the State Board of Education either approved or rejected the applications.

Eight new charter schools in the state opened this year after the State Board approved them in the "fast-track" process. Nine charters were approved but one did not open because of it lacked a facility. That charter, the Howard and Lillian Lee Scholars Charter School, applied and was approved in this round, but it still does not have a building in which to hold classes.

Matt Ellinwood, Policy Analyst for the Education and Law Project, [wrote a letter to the State Board](#) asking the members to be deliberate and cautious as they considered approving the 25 charter applications. The letter contained a chart with explanations of the strengths and weaknesses of each applicant.

We have several concerns about the 25 charter school applicants.

Transportation – Many of the applicants will not transport students to and from school. Some applicants actually claim carpooling is their transportation plan. This clearly prevents

The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to.

— Marian Wright Edelman

The North Carolina Justice Center's Education and Law Project seeks to improve and reform pre-K-12 education through legislative and administrative advocacy, community outreach and litigation.

Education and Law Staff

Christopher Hill
Director

Matt Ellinwood
Policy Analyst/Attorney

Christine Bischoff
Education Staff Attorney

Follow the Education and Law Project on Twitter
[@ncjc_education](#)

- Through legislative testimony and an aggressive communications strategy, stopped a bill that would have reduced funding for public schools by giving dollar-for-dollar tax credits to corporations that fund private-school scholarships
- Informed community groups, parents, and education advocates about problems with North Carolina's system for school funding, which is unduly complex, opaque and inadequate

Protecting Access to Quality Education

North Carolina's Constitution requires that the state provide all children with a sound, basic education. For children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and are at risk of academic failure, such an education includes pre-kindergarten and personalized education interventions in K-12. It also means putting a stop to discipline policies that unfairly target minority students and rob them of their education. In 2012, we worked in the legislature, in the courts and in local communities to preserve these rights for North Carolina's children.

- Participated as amicus in the case that secured the right of all eligible at-risk four-year-olds to enroll in North Carolina's pre-kindergarten program



ABOVE: Policy Analyst Matt Ellinwood on Policy Watch Radio.

BELOW AND OPPOSITE: Education and Law Project staff are regular contributors to the Justice Center's Policy Watch blog.

- Worked with lawmakers and testified at the legislature to strengthen the state law on Personal Education Plans for students at risk of academic failure
- Successfully challenged Gaston County Public Schools' coercive and discriminatory "gang contract" policy, resulting in the clearing of records of all 185 students subjected to this unlawful policy

Ensuring the Quality of Publicly Funded Education Services

Some state legislators are aggressively working to move as much taxpayer money into the hands of for-



profit companies as possible. This effort includes the explosion of charter schools—because charter schools have fewer regulations and are not run by local school boards, it’s easy for for-profit management organizations to pocket the taxpayer money that is supposed to go to educating North Carolina’s children. We worked to make sure charter schools are held accountable for providing North Carolina students with a quality education.

- Pointed out deficiencies in the approval process for charter schools, forcing the State Board of Education to revise its methods
- Participated in litigation to keep a corporation with questionable practices from opening a "virtual" (online) charter school in North Carolina, and prompted the adoption of rules for approval of such online education enterprises
- Presented before community groups to discuss the privatization of public education, how it could hurt students, and what they can do to stop it

The Big Challenge for 2013 - School Funding and Diversion of Public Funds to Private Providers

The state legislature’s repeated cuts to the education budget have forced superintendents and school administrators to scale back or eliminate some much-

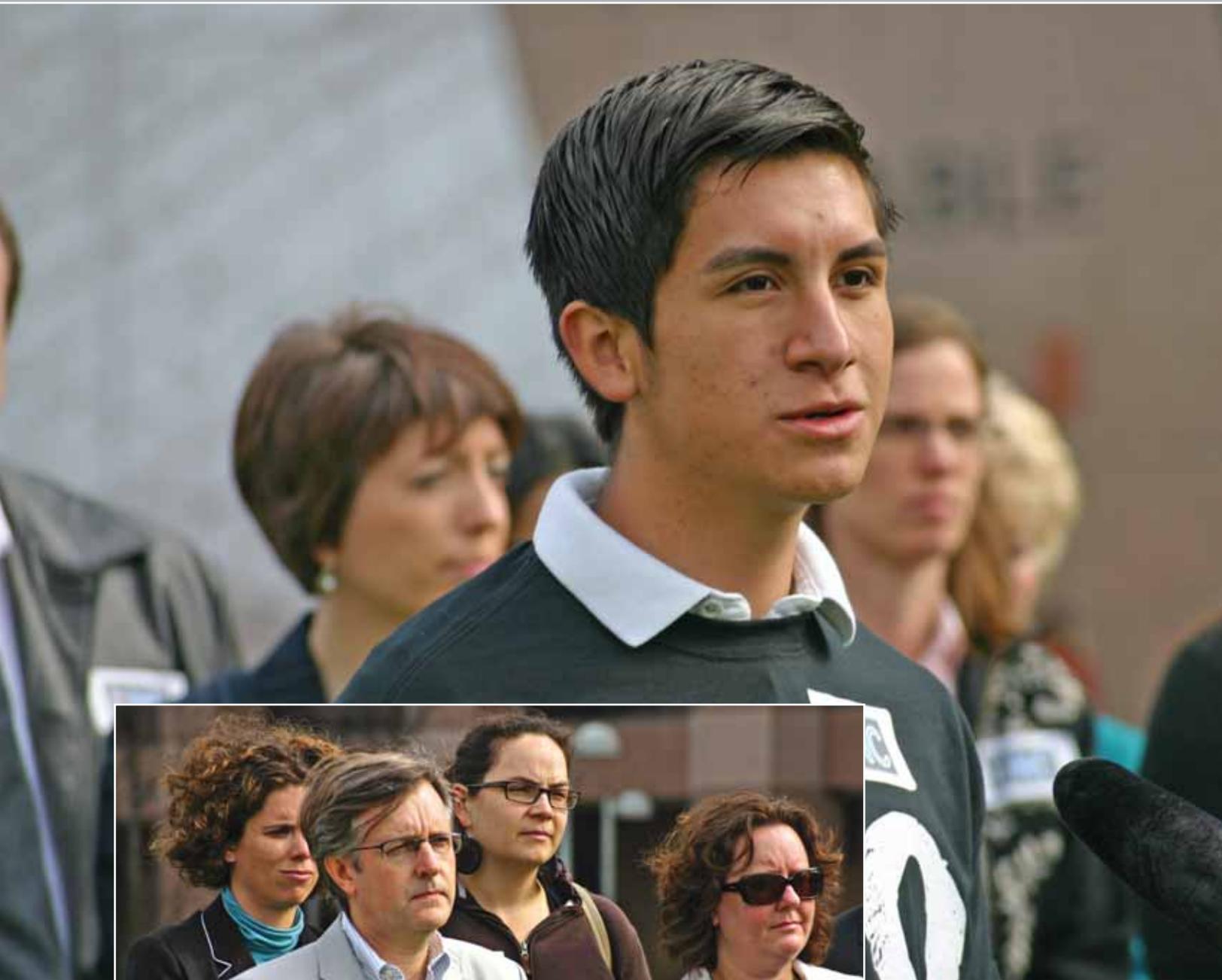
The best course of action is not to privatize public schools but to actually advocate that public schools have the funding and resources necessary to create the college – and career-ready students that North Carolina needs.

- Chris Hill, Director of the Education & Law Project, in a statement defending public schools



needed supports for students. We expect additional attacks on funding for traditional public schools in 2013, including efforts to expand the availability of vouchers for private-school education. Such vouchers never provide enough money for low-income families to send their students to private schools; rather, they subsidize private education for those who are already well-off. Moreover, these schools would have no accountability for their use of public funds.

The Education and Law Project will be at the legislature and in the courts, fighting budget cuts and protecting North Carolina’s valuable public education system from the for-profit corporate cultures that are circling to take whatever money they can. ■



LEFT AND ABOVE : We Are NC, an alliance of organizations and individuals working to shift the debate on immigration in North Carolina, held a press conference on the Halifax Mall to emphasize the positive impacts of immigrants in our state.

RIGHT: Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project and other Justice Center staff held legal clinics for hundreds of young people eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.



The Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project is dedicated to opening the path to prosperity for immigrants in North Carolina by protecting their rights, advocating for fairer policies, and helping them navigate the complex and confusing immigration system. Organizations and individuals throughout North Carolina rely on our attorneys, paralegals, and community educators for their legal and legislative expertise, their extensive connections, and their ability to bring people together.

Fighting for Immigrants' Legal Rights

We provide free legal representation to hundreds of immigrants every year. We also helped thousands of young immigrants hoping to benefit from President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allowed young people who were brought to the United States without documentation as children to apply for a work permit and be granted a two-year deferral of deportation. This was a ground-shifting event for the immigrant community, and the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project was one of the few organizations with the legal capacity and know-how to help these young people.

To truly fix the system, reform should both keep families together and create a functional path to citizenship.

- Immigration project statement on comprehensive immigration reform

- Worked with community partners to assist some 2,000 young immigrants in preparing their DACA applications
- Provided up-to-date information and legal advice about DACA to hundreds more at over 40 community events across North Carolina, and reached many more through our one-hour training videos in English and Spanish and our DACA factsheets in five languages
- Secured legal status or other immigration relief for 150 of our clients; included two asylum victories establishing valuable



ABOVE: Staff Attorney Dan Rearick attends the "Vincent Who?" film and discussion event. In 1982, Vincent Chin was the victim of a hate crime murder in Detroit. Thirty years later, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders continue to face discrimination and bullying.

BELOW: IRRP staff, left to right: Dineira Paulino, Paralegal; Dani Moore, Director; Kate Woomer-Deters, Staff Attorney; Dan Rearick, Staff Attorney; Joanna Gaughan, Staff Attorney; Maria Guerrero, Paralegal.

RIGHT: Winstona Cole, Staff Attorney (top); Jessica Rocha, Paralegal.



precedents for victims of domestic violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation

Protecting Immigrants

Members of North Carolina's immigrant community are often targeted by unscrupulous employers, landlords and business people who seek to take advantage of them, and their needs are often ignored by government officials. Our attorneys stand up for the rights of immigrants in all areas of the law.

- Secured a finding from the US Department of Justice that the NC

Administrative Office of the Courts had violated the law by not providing access to the court system for people who speak little or no English, and worked with federal and state officials to secure a settlement that will result in greatly increased language access in North Carolina courts

- Received more than \$140,000 for victims of a "notario" who claimed to be an attorney and duped hundreds of immigrants with fraudulent immigration legal services
- Secured in-state tuition in the UNC system and NC community colleges for immigrant students who were granted Temporary Protected Status because of natural disasters in their countries of origin



Strengthening North Carolina's Immigrant Community

We provide communications and legislative advocacy support, as well as education and information about legal issues to immigrant organizations and advocates throughout North Carolina.

- As part of the We Are NC coalition, collaborated with immigrant community groups, educated lawmakers and the media, and provided legal guidance to successfully stop anti-immigrant proposals from becoming law
- Gave nine presentations to immigrant groups in six counties covering issues including landlord-tenant and housing rights, employment rights, public benefits for immigrants, and immigration law issues
- Participated in a nationally coordinated communications campaign to expose how American detention and deportation policies devastate families, and helped to secure more than 20,000 signatures calling on North Carolina to reunite a father deported to Mexico with his three American-citizen children, rather than terminate his parental rights and put the children in foster care

The Big Challenge for 2013 - Discriminatory State Policies

During the 2012 legislative session, we successfully fought numerous policy proposals that would have devastated immigrant families in North Carolina. The North Carolina House of Representatives launched a committee that set out to look for ways the state could make immigrants' lives harder or more dangerous, such as shutting off heat and utilities for those who are undocumented. In response, we partnered with other immigrant advocacy organizations to create We Are NC, a coalition that exposed and ultimately stopped the committee's proposals using a comprehensive communications and engagement strategy.

But we believe these proposals will re-emerge in 2013. While on the national stage there is greater acknowledgement of the importance of immigrants in the political debate, many legislators in North Carolina prefer to stick with the discriminatory and



ABOVE: Dani Moore and Dineira Paulino speak to young immigrants.

TOP: The IRRP page on the Justice Center's website provides information to advocates, immigrants and their communities.

hateful rhetoric of the past. We believe they will try to turn that rhetoric into legislation in 2013.

We will be at the legislature, in the courts, and in communities throughout North Carolina fighting to defend and expand the rights of immigrants, and your support is vital to those efforts. ■



**Medicaid Expansion Completes the Picture
in North Carolina**

Nearly **half a million** North Carolina working-age adults and children will get health coverage through the Medicaid expansion in 2014 - *many for the first time.*

<p>2,452,897 - North Carolinians currently eligible for Medicaid</p>	<p>488,867 - North Carolinians will be covered by Medicaid expansion</p>	<p>488,650 - North Carolinians that will get subsidized private health insurance through the Health Insurance Exchange</p>
38% FPL	100% FPL	

Source: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Policy and Statistics. Data as of 12/31/2013. Medicaid expansion effective 1/1/2014. Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) effective 9/1/2014. FPL = Federal Poverty Level.

Federal health reform provides North Carolina an opportunity to ensure quality health care for hundreds of thousands of people previously locked out of the health care system. Now it is up to the state, with the prodding of advocates at the Health Access Coalition, to move forward with making quality, affordable care available to all North Carolinians.

Building Understanding of New Health Benefits and Rights

- As a result of the federal Affordable Care Act, people have new rights, such as preventive care without cost sharing and extended family coverage for young adults. In 2012 the Health Access Coalition helped North Carolinians understand and access these new benefits
- Organized meetings with more than 400 attendees in ten cities and towns, bringing doctors and local service providers together with the public to discuss available services and how health reform is building stronger communities
- Wrote editorials and traveled to forums across the state to explain reform and counter false claims about the law
- Provided commentary and organized press conferences, especially in the run up to the United State Supreme Court decision on health reform

Laying the Foundations for a Better Health System

To make health reform work and to build a path that is open to everyone, the Health Access Coalition advocated for policies at the national and state levels that will make health reform work for all consumers, especially those with limited means and great health care needs.

- Worked at the legislature to block bills that would have hurt consumers and undermined the intent of health reform
- Served on advisory councils through the NC Institute of Medicine and shaped recommendations on how the state should implement health reform
- Commented on regulations and served as a designated consumer representative to the

National Association of Insurance Commissioners to help craft national rules that best serve North Carolinians

Informing the Debate by Telling North Carolinians' Stories

Every path is ultimately about the people who walk it. To build support for health reform and continue highlighting problems in the health system, the Health Access Coalition is committed to giving people a voice. When we see the faces of people who are hurt and helped by state and national policies it reminds all of us that political decisions make a real difference.

- Recorded the stories of people benefiting from health reform or hurt by the complexities of the health care system and distributed them online and through our e-newsletters
- Successfully pitched the stories we compiled to local and national media outlets to put a human face on the health reform debate
- Traveled to California, New Mexico, Florida, Pennsylvania, Utah, New York, Wisconsin, DC and Texas to help other advocates learn to record and edit video stories of everyday people



ABOVE: Adam Linker speaks at a press conference after the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on the Affordable Care Act.

OPPOSITE, TOP: HAC's Nicole Dozier has organized and led dozens of events across the state as part of the Campaign for Better Care, bringing together disparate voices in health care to push for improvements in the coordination and quality of care, especially for older adults and people with disabilities.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Congressman David Price presents HAC Director Adam Searing - named a "Champion of Change" by the White House - with a U.S. flag that flew over the Capitol.

The Big Challenge for 2013 - Expanding Medicaid

The United States Supreme Court determined that each state can decide whether to expand Medicaid to all low-income individuals and families within its boundaries. In North Carolina expanding Medicaid would bring billions of dollars in federal money to the state and provide health insurance coverage to nearly 500,000 people. Medicaid makes up half of the coverage expansion promised by the Affordable Care Act.

Already some state leaders are proposing to walk away from over \$15 billion in federal funding and deny desperately needed health care to needy North Carolinians. The Health Access Coalition will continue organizing partner groups, working with media outlets, holding public forums, and lobbying legislators to protect the state's most vulnerable residents. ■

After all, one of the main reasons North Carolina's Medicaid program has become a national model with the lowest cost growth of any program is the widespread commitment of primary health care providers, hospitals and other health institutions to the system. Indeed, these health organizations have undertaken herculean efforts over the past two decades to work together in an effort to improve care and to lower costs in our Medicaid program. These same providers understand that our safety-net system of health clinics alone simply can't meet the huge health care needs in our state without a dramatic expansion of Medicaid.

- Adam Searing, Health Access Coalition Director, in an op-ed advocating Medicaid expansion

RIGHT: Charlotte Campaign for Better Care event.

RIGHT, BELOW: Volunteer Polly Williams speaks to seniors.

BELOW: Adam Linker in a WRAL-TV interview.





ABOVE: Nicole Dozier receives a Lifetime Achievement Award from the North Carolina Advocates for Justice.



ABOVE: Participants at a Campaign for Better Care event in Greensboro.



LEFT: Health Access Coalition staff, left to right: Adam Linker, Policy Analyst; Adam Searing, Director; and Nicole Dozier, Assistant Project Director.

BELOW, LEFT: Adam Searing speaking at a Medicaid Expansion workshop in Raleigh.

BELOW, RIGHT: Justice Center staff celebrate Adam Searing's White House Champion of Change award.





THIS PAGE: Kim Bobo, founder and director of Interfaith Worker Justice, explains how wage theft is robbing many workers across the U.S. of their rightful earnings and benefits at an NC Policy Watch Crucial Conversation event.

FAR LEFT: Policy Watch Investigates and the Progressive Pulse video feature.

BELOW: A slide from a Policy Watch Crucial Conversation luncheon featuring national predatory gambling expert Les Bernal.



2012 was a year of significant accomplishments for the Justice Center’s special media project, NC Policy Watch. Buoyed by the demand for accurate reporting and thoughtful, alternative voices at a time when legislative leaders were advancing an enormously regressive state policy agenda, the project produced more news, analysis and commentary for a larger statewide audience than ever before.

Shaping the Policy Conversation in North Carolina

Policy Watch’s mission is dedicated to changing the way elected officials debate important issues and, ultimately, to improving the quality of life for all North Carolinians.

To that end, we produced an average of 10,000 words of commentary, reporting and analysis every week of the year, as well as scores of video and audio recordings, numerous photos and “infographics,” and 52 editorial cartoons. Our original content appeared on newspaper and website opinion pages throughout the state every week in 2012.

- Grew the number of unique visitors for the main Policy Watch website by 17 percent, and grew unique visitors for the Progressive Pulse blog by 34.5 percent
- Produced a weekly syndicated radio show and nightly one-minute radio commentaries and appeared regularly in newspapers and on television
- Increased the number of policy experts writing for our weekly Progressive Voices op-ed service and increased the audience for those op-eds

Keeping State Policymakers Honest

As traditional news outlets have cut back on state-level policy reporting, Policy Watch has stepped in to ensure that the public knows about questionable or unethical practices by state leaders.

- Produced several high-profile reports, including an investigation of a controversial trip for state legislators funded by a conservative education lobby group and a series of stories about a virtual charter school that was under investigation in other states



LEFT: Policy Watch staff, left to right: Ricky Leung, New Media Director; Sharon McCloskey, Courts & Law Reporter; Clayton Henkel, Communications Coordinator; Chris Fitzsimon, Director; Sarah Ovaska, Investigative Reporter; Rob Schofield, Policy Director; and Lindsay Wagner, Education Reporter.

BELOW, LEFT: Policy Watch New Media Director Ricky Leung hosts the "Vincent Who?" film and discussion event about the 1982 hate crime murder of Asian American Vincent Chin in Detroit.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Policy Watch products.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT: Predatory gambling expert Les Bernal.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: NC Policy Watch Crucial Conversation featuring Hedrick Smith, Pulitzer Prize-winning former *The New York Times* reporter and editor and Emmy award-winning producer/correspondent.



- Produced follow-up reports to our 2011 series documenting the business practices of a then-powerful state lawmaker who was forced to resign and has been indicted by federal authorities on corruption charges arising out of conduct we uncovered
- Launched a reporting unit looking at North Carolina's courts in order to raise the profile of issues in the state and federal courts

Providing Leadership to the Progressive Non-profit Movement

Because of its connections and statewide public profile, Policy Watch works with dozens of progressive

non-profit organizations to coordinate and provide expertise on lobbying and communications efforts.

- Distributed "The Week Ahead," a tip sheet including several ideas for news stories highlighting our partner organizations, to reporters throughout North Carolina
- As part of the Crucial Conversation luncheon series, hosted an array of compelling speakers on topics including wage theft, campaign finance reform, the dangers of state-sponsored gambling, and the erosion of the American Dream
- Hosted weekly conference calls during the legislative session with non-profit organizations in order to inform the state's progressive advocacy community

The Big Challenge for 2013 – Building Public Understanding of State Policy Decisions

In 2013 state leaders are poised to make major policy decisions — in areas ranging from tax reform to education to consumer rights. These decisions will have significant and lasting impact on all North Carolina families and communities. A well informed public will be especially critical to wise policy choices. In the year ahead, Policy Watch, and the rest of the Justice Center must develop new strategies for monitoring policy debates, distilling key information and disseminating that information in ways that are accessible and that engage the public in the governmental decision making process. ■

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— a resource for public scrutiny of state government — North Carolina's School Funding Crisis

Policy Watch Investigates

Outside the convention spotlight, a city struggles

Posted on 10/4/2012 by Sarah Dravins

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Sharon Miller seeks clothing from Crisis Assistance Ministry in order to volunteer at the DNC at some concession stands.

When North Carolina's largest city takes center stage to host the 2012 Democratic National Convention this week

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— A public mandate after secret meetings to slash worker benefits

Weekly Briefing

A code word for destruction

Posted on 12/4/2012 by Rob Scheffeld

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From the Blog

- A Mother's Plea for Its Children
04/30/2013 - Andrew Hryciuk
Truth: I smile that from Tina Fey, my college [...] [View](#)
- Industry vulnerability, not law jacking
04/30/2013 - Allan Freyer
A new report from the Budget and Tax Center [...] [View](#)
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— Working groups, advisors and the new transition — A code word for destruction

Fitelson File

A public charade after secret meetings to slash worker benefits

Posted on 12/4/2012 by Chris Fitzelson

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If you were looking for a case study about how the General Assembly works and who it really works for, you couldn't find one than the charade that passed for a meeting of the Revenue Laws Study Committee Wednesday.

The committee was considering radical changes to the state unemployment insurance system, including a reduction in the length of benefits for laid off workers, shortening the length of time workers could receive benefits from 26 weeks to as few as 1

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— The Politics —

Carolina Issues Poll

Carolina Issues Poll September 2012

Posted on 9/20/2012 by Rob Scheffeld

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New poll shows strong support for stronger worker protection laws and law enforcement

NC Policy Watch is happy to announce the release of the latest edition of its Carolina Issues Poll. This month's poll quizzed 544 members throughout the state between September 10 and 16 to hear their attitudes on a host of public issues related to the status of

From the Blog

- Bill to restrict the eligibility vote
04/30/2013 - Lindsay Wegner
House Bill 935, NC Pre-Kindergarten Law
Chang [...] [View](#)
- Military "protectors" demonstrate
04/30/2013 - Rob Scheffeld
Planning Resolutions of Governor Ivan M. [...] [View](#)
- A Mother's Plea for Its Children
04/30/2013 - Andrew Hryciuk
Truth: I smile that from Tina Fey, my college [...] [View](#)

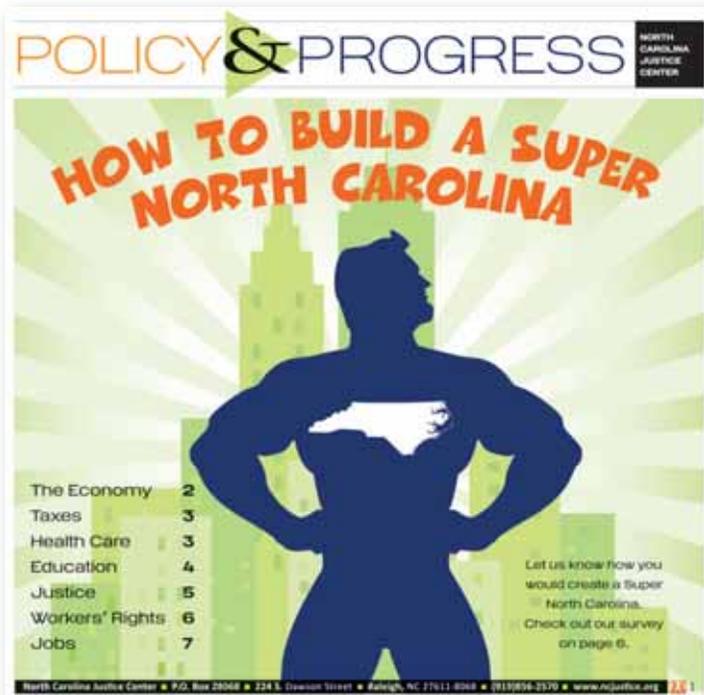
Videos

The impact of the sequester



Throughout 2012, the Justice Center Communications team worked hard to ensure that positive progressive messages reached important audiences in North Carolina, the region and the nation. More than 300 media outlets – including national and international publications – ran stories quoting Justice Center staff, citing our research, and relying on our expert analysis. Our staff made more than 1,700 appearances in North Carolina newspapers, on television stations and on radio stations in 2012, an average of about 4.5 times per day.

We took our online presence to new levels this year, launching a new Justice Center website, which effectively integrates our research with our advocacy and outreach



The N.C. Justice Center is most likely the best known liberal-leaning organization in the state. Its experts were quoted dozens of times in February of 2013 as the legislature began work in earnest. Personalities from the N.C. Policy Watch arm are regular guests on public affairs shows ... columns and research by the Justice Center regularly find their way into newspapers across the state.

- Mark Binker, WRAL, March 8, 2012

efforts. Our social media efforts also expanded – we used multiple Twitter accounts and Facebook pages totaling more than 10,000 followers to spread the word about important issues. Using traditional and new media tools, we supported coalition work across all Justice Center project areas, working closely with more than two dozen allied organizations around the state.

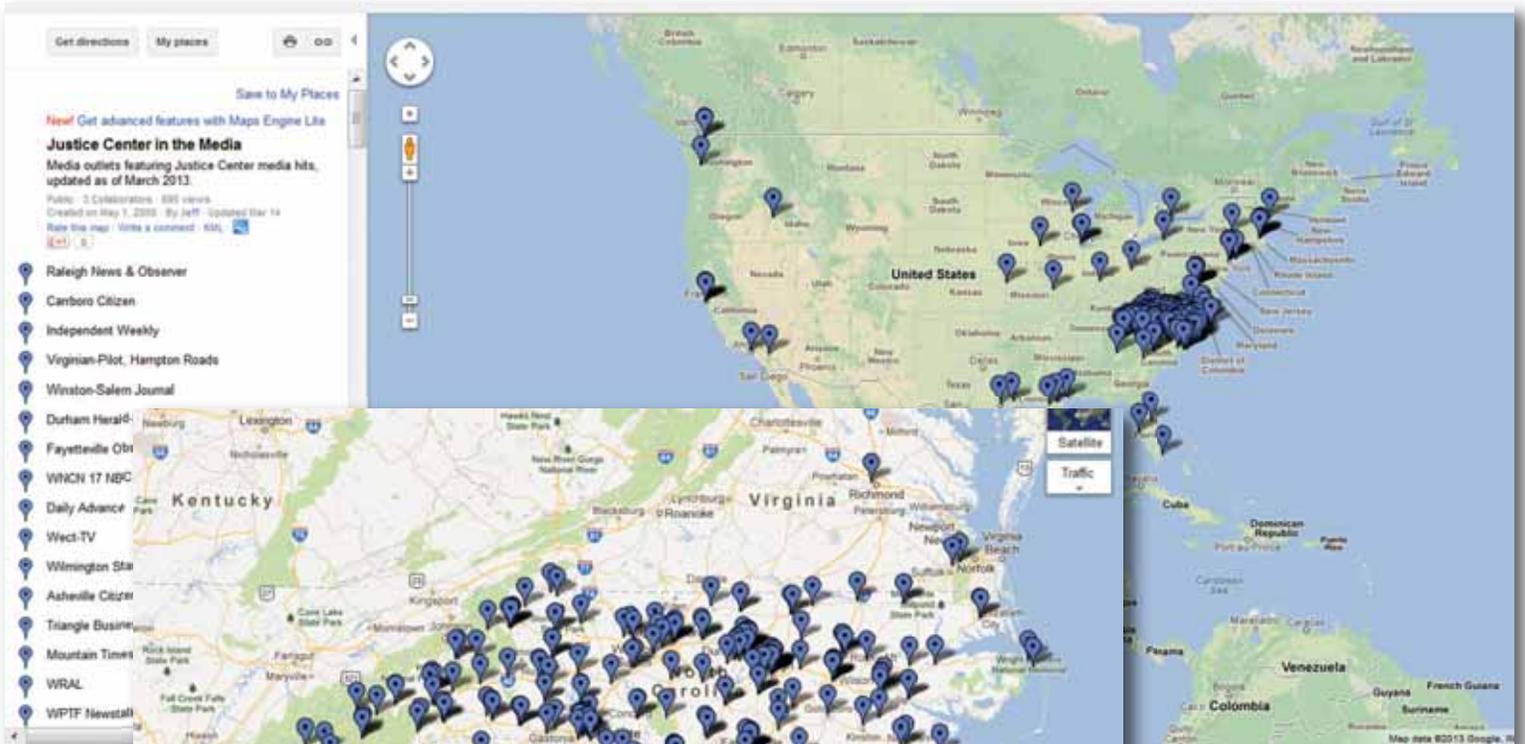
The Justice Center News, a regular compilation of top stories, events and research related to our social and economic justice work, was provided electronically to nearly 5,000 supporters; and *Policy and Progress*, a quarterly news magazine, reached over 50,000 households. ■



TOP: *Policy & Progress* is published quarterly.

ABOVE: Communications Director Jeff Shaw speaks to more than 100 North Carolinians at Together NC's Backwards Budget .5K to protest the NC legislature's "backwards" budget.

BELOW: Communications staff, left to right: Phyllis Nunn, Design Director; Jeff Shaw, Director; and Julia Hawes, Communications Specialist.



TOP: The Communications team works hard to ensure that media are getting the Justice Center's message in North Carolina and beyond. Maps show locations for media hits in 2012.

LEFT AND ABOVE: Each week another issue of NC Justice News, the Justice Center's newsletter, goes out via e-mail and the web. Issue Briefs and Action Alerts are released to address current policy issues.

SUPPORT FOR OUR WORK

The Justice Center wants to express its gratitude to those who have provided financial support for our work. We greatly appreciate the generous and diverse support we receive from state and national foundations and from individual donors. Many of the philanthropic organizations and individuals listed here have been supporting the Justice Center's work for more than a decade. Without these strong partners none of the progress we have made would have been possible. This financial support has allowed us to increase our capacity, deepen our expertise, and extend our outreach throughout the state. Sustained funding has enabled us to strengthen and amplify our voice as advocates for poor and working families and individuals in North Carolina. If we are to continue this work, we must secure additional support in the year ahead. If you want to be a partner with us in the work that we do, please go to www.ncjustice.org and make a gift or become a sustaining supporter of our work.



The accomplishments of the Justice Center's advocates and specialists would not be possible without the support and dedication of the Justice Center's core staff. Their leadership and hard work ensure that the organization remains fiscally strong.



ABOVE: The Justice Center's core staff, left to right: Jan Nichols, Chief Technology Officer; Elise Elliott, Assistant Finance Director; Suijin Li, Administrative Assistant; Bill Wilson, Deputy Director; Melinda Lawrence, Executive Director; Lucy Martinez, Director of Operations & Human Resources; Melissa Wiggins, Senior Administrative Assistant.

LEFT, ABOVE: Carlene McNulty, Director of Litigation.

LEFT: Bill Rowe, General Counsel & Director of Advocacy.

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Family Values at Work

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Georgetown University

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National Women's Law Center

New Venture Fund

Open Society Institute

Park Foundation

Rex Endowment

Warner Foundation

Working Poor Families Project

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

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The Defenders of Justice Awards honor those who have made significant contributions to North Carolina's fight against poverty.

2012 Defenders of Justice Award Honorees



Mary Lee Hall of Legal Aid of North Carolina's Farmworker Unit - for fighting to protect the rights and improve the well-being of the tens of thousands of migrant and seasonal farmworkers who work in North Carolina's fields.



State Representative Deborah Ross of Wake County - for her dedication to increasing access to affordable housing and public transportation, protecting civil rights, and reforming North Carolina's tax system to make it more fair and transparent.



State Representative Larry D. Hall of Durham County - for his commitment to protecting vulnerable families and members of the military from predatory lenders, safeguarding voting rights, and expanding opportunities for low-income individuals and communities throughout the state.



Reuben Blackwell of the Opportunities Industrialization Center in Rocky Mount - for his tenacity in opening doors to opportunity, breaking down barriers, and standing up for the rights and well-being of the people of Rocky Mount and the state.

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