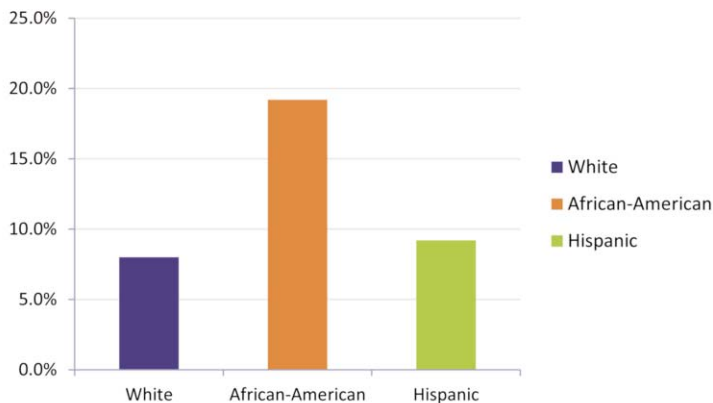


THE STATE OF WORKING NORTH CAROLINA: Labor Force Demographics



September 2012

Unemployment has hit African-Americans harder than other groups because of trends in industry and geographic employment



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data

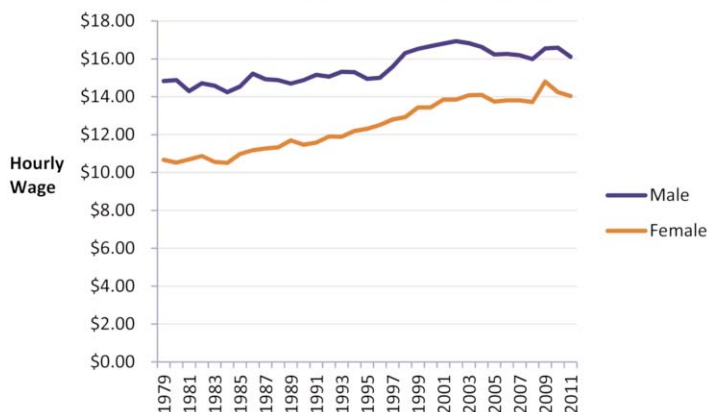
NORTH CAROLINA'S LABOR MARKET is becoming more diverse, more balanced along gender lines, and more educated. These trends have the potential to improve the competitiveness of the state globally as it draws upon the experiences and perspectives of workers.

But it will also be important that North Carolina pay particular attention to the impact of broader economic trends on specific workers.

For example, unemployment has not affected all groups in the state the same. African-Americans have an unemployment rate more than twice that of whites and nearly 1.5 times as high as the level for Latinos. Driving this disproportionate experience of unemployment is the concentration of workers of color in industries impacted by the Great Recession and in public-sector jobs, which have been cut significantly during the recovery. In addition, communities of color are concentrated in geographic areas with low job opportunities and changing regional industries.

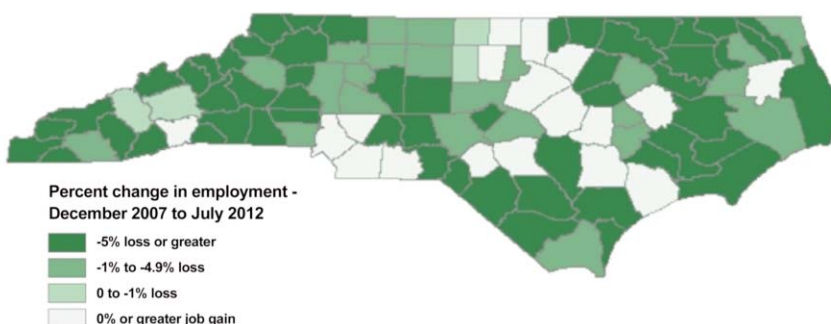
Moreover, trends in the women's wages post-2000 suggest a disturbing trend. Women's median wages actually increased from 1979 to 2000, slightly narrowing the gender wage gap, but women's progress has stalled since the end of the recession. The challenge is to ensure that women's wages grow not at the expense of men's but at a faster pace to close this wage gap. The best way to do that is through policy.

Female workers have not experienced wage growth sufficient to close the gender wage gap



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data, adjusted to 2011 dollars

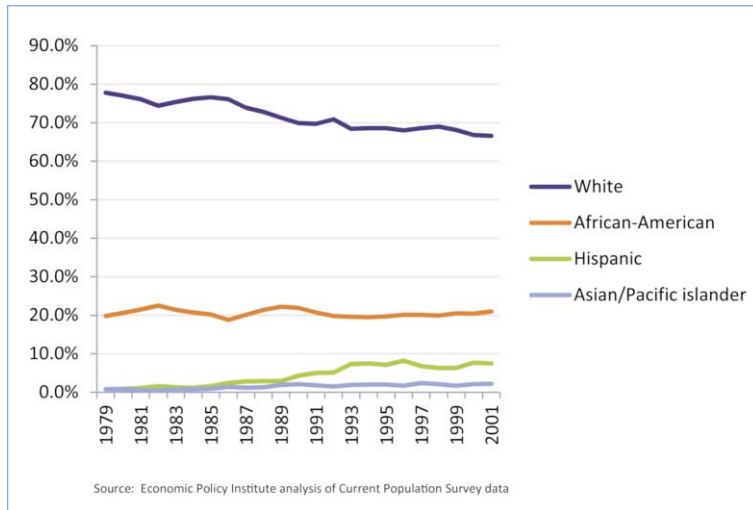
Job loss concentrated in rural counties and eastern and western counties since the start of the Great Recession



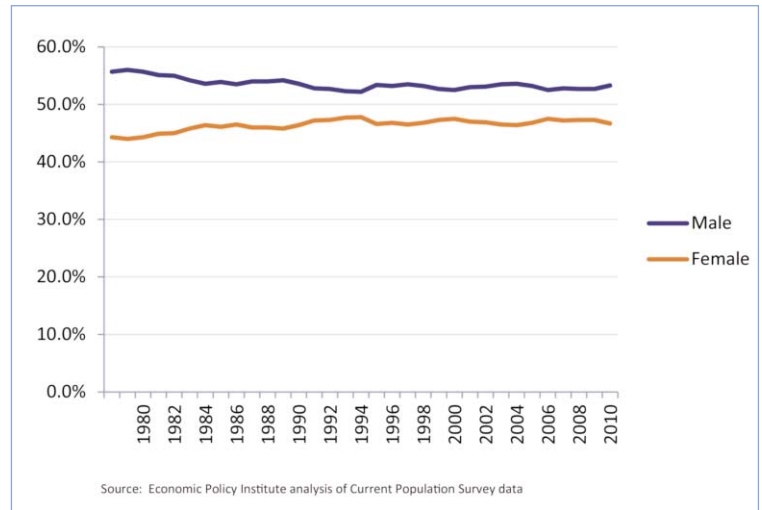
Finally, communities across the state have not been impacted equally by the Great Recession and economic trends. In fact, many communities in eastern and western North Carolina, where many of the state's manufacturing jobs were located before the economic shifts of the last several decades, and many rural communities throughout the state have been hardest hit.

THE CHANGING FACE OF NORTH CAROLINA'S LABOR MARKET

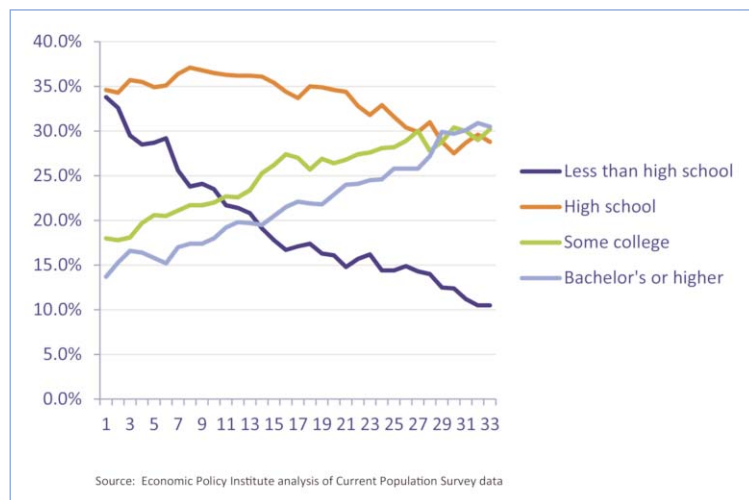
The state's labor force is getting more diverse.



Women's participation in the labor market has increased.



The state's labor force has increased its educational attainment.



The proportion of working families in the state who are low-income has increased.

