

# UNC Asheville

## Our Role in Regional Economic Development

### Producing the Graduates that Employers Need

- ☀ UNC Asheville significantly outperformed the national average in key academic benchmarks identified in the just-released 2012 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). UNC Asheville scored significantly higher than the national average in the “deep approaches to learning” scale measuring activities that, according to the study authors, “result in effective and enduring learning.”
- ☀ Our students ranked in the 98th percentile of all 1,200 institutions in the national Collegiate Learning Assessment, which measures improvement in critical thinking, reasoning and analysis.

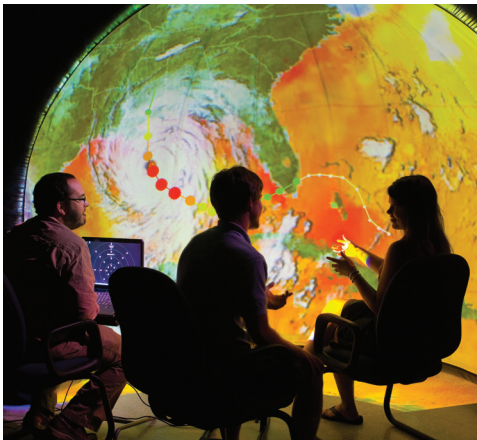
### Developing the New Generation of Entrepreneurs

- ☀ Blue Ridge BioFuels, founded by 2003 graduate Brian Winslet, is the largest manufacturer and distributor of biodiesel in Western North Carolina. The employee-owned firm, which turns used vegetable oil from area restaurants into fuel for vehicles and home furnaces, won first place in the Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council Break-Through Business Challenge, sponsored by Advantage West.

- ☀ Charlotte Street Computers, founded and owned by 2004 graduate Jennifer Mayer, sets the gold standard for computer repair in the greater Buncombe County area. The firm has been voted “Best Computer Repair” by the readers of the Mountain Xpress for nine years running and is a six-time recipient of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce “Sky High Growth Award.”

### Serving Our Business Community

- ☀ The UNC Asheville Family Business Forum provides resources, networking opportunities and professional development programs to dozens of family-owned businesses and strategic partners in Western North Carolina.
- ☀ UNC Asheville's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) conducts applied environmental research to create tools that address the challenges and opportunities of human interaction with the environment. Examples include the Western North Carolina Vitality Index, created in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station; and the Global Climate Dashboard application, created in collaboration with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for use on the NOAA Climate Services portal site.



## Involving Students in Our Community

- More than 60 percent of our graduates have participated in undergraduate research projects, most of them with organizations right here in our community. Projects include helping Highland Brewery comply with OSHA noise standards; building a smartphone application to help small restaurants with inventory management; and using a social business model to help make farmers markets a viable option for low-income shoppers.
- Through UNC Asheville's Key Center for Community Citizenship and Service Learning, students engage in service learning projects with many community organizations. The university now has an academic honor—the Community Engaged Scholar designation—to recognize the achievements of students who combine learning and public service.

## Investing in Educational Outreach

- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)—Founded 25 years ago as the N.C. Center for Creative Retirement, the newly-renamed OLLI at UNC Asheville is nationally known for its innovative programming for older adults. Begun with funding by the State of North Carolina, OLLI at UNC Asheville has earned significant non-governmental support, including a \$2 million endowment from the Bernard Osher Foundation and a \$1 million endowment from the Janirve Foundation.
- Asheville Graduate Center—Our top-quality graduate and continuing education programs are addressing the changing needs of our region and expanding access for non-traditional students, lifelong learners as well as traditional students. The programs we offer in partnership with other UNC system schools train and credential new pharmacists and librarians, and provide advanced courses for teachers, engineers and scientists.

## Hosting Our Community

- The \$41 million Wilma M. Sherrill Center and Kimmel Arena hosted more than 100,000 visitors to the campus in its first year of operation, significantly enhancing the economic development of the Greater Asheville region. Kimmel Arena is used not only for university events and sports, but by the NBA's Charlotte Bobcats for their training camp, and by Asheville-area businesses and organizations for concerts and meetings. Ninety-four percent of the sports-related economic impact created by the Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission is attributable to UNC Asheville's community outreach and partnerships.
- UNC Asheville has developed strong partnerships with dozens of local businesses and non-profits including the City of Asheville, Mission Hospital, RiverLink, Asheville-Buncombe Regional Sports Commission, and many others.

## Liberal Arts: Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century

- Employers in all industries are eager for graduates who can communicate well, adapt to new situations and technologies, address society's most pressing problems, work effectively with a diverse group of people, and understand the complexity of the world we inhabit. This is the very definition of a liberal arts graduate, and North Carolina has invested in UNC Asheville, the UNC system's designated liberal arts university, in order to meet that need.
- UNC Asheville's practice of the liberal arts emphasizes the centrality of learning and discovery through exemplary teaching, innovative scholarship, creative expression, co-curricular activities, undergraduate research, engaged service, and practical experience. We offer this challenging educational experience to all promising students who are committed to rigorous academics, interdisciplinary learning and personal growth.