2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

NORTH CAROLINA INDEPENDENT Colleges & Universities

About Our 36 Institutions

Fall 2021 enrollment - 86,398 61,762 undergrads & 24,636 graduate students



Every county in NC

Every state in the US 77 foreign countries



About Our Students

49% of undergraduates attending NCICU colleges and universities are NC residents

39% of undergraduates are students of color

47% of NC undergraduate students received the federal Pell Grant

Critical State Investment

For the State investment of 2% of North Carolina's higher education budget, NCICU colleges and universities award 1 in 4 bachelor's degrees and 1 in 3 graduate and professional degrees in North Carolina.

Front Cover photo: Guilford College; Inside Front Cover photo: Pfeiffer University

2021-2022 Annual Report OF NORTH CAROLINA INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

NCICU's work in

advocating for independent colleges across the state has never been more critical as we transition from a pandemic environment to an endemic nation still facing significant economic and political challenges that impact our colleges and our students. Despite these challenges, NCICU has moved forward with its mission and has achieved



Dr. Jo Allen, Chair

a year of remarkable accomplishments, despite functioning in a remote environment for most of the year.

We greatly appreciate that the General Assembly increased the Need Based Scholarship by \$2.2 million annually for a total of \$91 million annually in need-based aid for our North Carolina students. The Legislature also awarded \$51 million in one-time American Rescue Plan funding, bringing the total dollars in COVID-19 Relief funding for NCICU campuses of more than \$94 million over the past two years.

In addition, \$3.9 million was contributed to the Independent College Fund for scholarships, grants, projects, and programs. The grant funds are supporting new initiatives in Faculty-Student STEM Mentoring, the Science of Reading, and development of

North Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities (NCICU) supports, represents, and advocates for North Carolina independent higher education in the areas of state and federal public policy and on education issues with the other sectors of education in the state. It also raises funds through the Independent College Fund of North Carolina for student scholarships and enrichment experiences, provides research and information to and about private colleges and universities, conducts staff development opportunities, and coordinates collaborative programs. The presidents of the 36 colleges and universities that we represent make up our Board of Directors.





Margaret Wren de St. Aubin

the NCICU Data Portal. These initiatives join ongoing grant-funded projects including the Digital Learning Initiative, Reverse Transfer, and iBELONG MALE MENTORING PROGRAMSM. All these projects enhance the work of our colleges in student success and faculty engagement. We deeply appreciate the funding for these collaborative initiatives.

North Carolina's 36 independent colleges and universities are vital contributors to our state. We provide jobs, support economic growth, and educate graduates who are ready to meet future challenges with knowledge, creativity, and innovation. We value the opportunity to work together through NCICU to increase awareness of the importance of independent higher education in North Carolina and nationally. For more details about Independent Colleges' contributions to the state, see www.ncicu.org.

> Dr. Jo Allen, Chair, NCICU Board of Directors, President, Meredith College

Margaret Wren de St. Aubin ICFNC Advisory Board Chair, President, Wren Foundation

NCICU Board of Directors

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE 36 INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE STATE COMPRISE THE NCICU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- BARTON COLLEGE, Wilson, Est. 1902, Dr. Douglas Searcy, President
- BELMONT ABBEY COLLEGE, Belmont, Est. 1876, Dr. William Thierfelder, President
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- **PFEIFFER UNIVERSITY**, Misenheimer, Est. 1885, Dr. Scott Bullard, President
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- * NCICU Board Chair

Year in Review

Critical COVID-19 relief support and an increase in the North Carolina need based scholarship, a record number of financial contributions, nine grant projects, 20 administrative group meetings, and a new website were highlights of the past year for NCICU. While our staff returned to the office in person, through much of the year, we conducted business virtually, developing creative and meaningful ways to advance programs and initiatives.

The work that NCICU does on behalf of and with North Carolina's 36 private, nonprofit colleges and universities includes daily collaboration with other education systems and associations, with businesses, individuals, and with federal and state government officials. The past two years have underscored the value and extent of those countless collaborations.

NCICU staff worked closely with Congress and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) to secure federal COVID-19 Relief Funds, and with the Governor and the North Carolina General Assembly to receive state support. Those efforts resulted in the North Carolina General Assembly providing \$51 million in American

Rescue Plan (ARP) funding in the 2021-22 budget that passed in the fall, and \$2.2 million more in recurring funds for the North Carolina Need Based Scholarship for our North Carolina students. In addition, Governor Cooper awarded \$9.3 million in grants from his discretionary GEER II funding.

Generous donors and grant funders contributed \$3.9 million this year for scholarships, programs, and services. In addition, contracting with more than 70 vendors, we increased the number of statewide, cost-saving, collaborative initiatives available to our campuses, most notably in the areas of testing, personal protective equipment (PPE), and other healthrelated services.



Counselors Tour attendees pause for a photo while visiting Chowan University.



Our staff served on more than three dozen boards and committees - many of them cross-sector committees with the UNC and NC Community College systems, and the State Board of Education/North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Special initiatives focused on the teacher education pipeline, the Science of Reading, and the state's myFutureNC education attainment goal.

Signature events such as the Ethics Bowl, and the State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research Symposium were held virtually, as were one-to-two-day meetings for 20 campus administrative and faculty groups across the sector. The annual Counselors Tour, however, was back in person in June visiting our 13 Eastern campuses.

Thirteen colleges participated in NCICU's 11th annual Ethics Bowl exploring the theme of Ethics in Democracy and Citizenship. Due to the virtual format, the event was streamlined from the usual two-day schedule to three rounds of competition on one afternoon. Even so, we were honored that 16 companies, continued led by Presenting Sponsor, Truist, and six individuals chose to support the event financially.

The Annual Meeting of NCICU's Board of Directors and the Independent College Fund Advisory Board was held in March in person for the first time in three years. Celebrating 50 years of the federal Pell Grant and 50 years of the North Carolina Need Based Scholarship, the meeting was highlighted by presentations that provided insights on critical higher education issues on both the state and national levels. Guest speakers included NAICU president, Dr. Barbara Mistick, Secretary Kody Kinsey of the NC Department of Health and Human Services, and a panel of North Carolina legislators which included Representatives Dean Arp, Jon Hardister, Pat Hurley and John Torbett, and Sen. Deanna Ballard who discussed state funding priorities.

New grants awarded by the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation and the Goodnight Educational Foundation will focus efforts on Faculty-Student STEM Mentoring and the Science of Reading. You can read about the \$3,678,669 in grant projects on page 6.

In November, NCICU launched a new website which more fully reflects the extensive programming and services we offer. The site includes new content on programs and meetings that NCICU holds throughout the year, as well as the numerous





grant-funded projects underway. Continuing features include links to each of our 36 campuses, information on scholarships and funding for higher education, and a list of collaborative partners.

Each of these significant initiatives helps broaden and more fully focus NCICU's efforts on our core mission to support and advocate for North Carolina's 36 independent colleges and universities and the 86,399 students they serve.

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING PROVIDED ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FOR OUR CAMPUSES THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

he unprecedented support of over \$94 million by our federal focused on learners whose education has been interrupted due and state governments since the beginning of the pandemic to the pandemic. has allowed our campuses to continue to provide high-quality educational experiences, develop safety protocols, and The second phase of the Governor's GEER II recommendations support student needs. Without this support some colleges is providing \$5.3 million in Summer Accelerator Grants of may never have recovered from the disruption caused by the up to \$5,000 per student for financial aid to help defray the pandemic. NCICU is proud to have had a role in securing costs of summer classes for North Carolina independent funding for our private colleges and universities, working college students. With a focus on educational attainment, with the National Association of Colleges and Universities these funds provide awards to students enrolling in summer (NAICU) on the federal level, and with the NC Legislature and courses to achieve an accelerated degree or credential, and/or Governor Cooper on the state level. students in need of developmental (remedial) courses or other summer supports to get and stay on track in their programs to graduate on time.

We continue to facilitate COVID relief funding and assistance and support our campuses in reporting final expenditures.

New support this year included \$4 million in Governors Emergency Education Relief II funds (GEER) to award grants to eligible independent colleges and universities under the **Longleaf Complete Program**. Governor Cooper directed these funds to eligible independent colleges and universities to provide flexible grants to help students who are near completion earn their credentials. This fund is particularly

In addition to the significant ARPA and GEER funds allotted to our students, and our colleges and universities this year, The General Assembly increased the NC Need Based Scholarship (NCNBS) by \$2.2 million for a total of **\$91.1 million** in recurring funds. The grant, for North Carolina students, will allow the scholarships to be increased for the current academic year. In 2021-2022, 15,764 NCICU students received an average of \$5,280 through the NCNBS.

Photo: NC Wesleyan University



The NCICU Board of Directors and the ICFNC Advisory Board members met in Asheville in March.

The North Carolina budget, which passed in fall 2021, includes \$51 million in one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for NCICU campuses. The funds are being used to mitigate losses in revenue and to respond to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are deeply appreciative to the General Assembly and Governor Cooper for this support.

\$3,678,669 in Grant Projects!

GRANTS ADD DEPTH TO OUR PROGRAMMING

NCICU is a national leader in developing collaborative programs designed to support the success and college completion of students attending our campuses across North Carolina. These initiatives have received recognition for their innovation and outcomes which have been replicated by independent higher education in states across the country.

Development of these diverse projects has been achieved, in large part, through grant funding provided by leading collaborators in North Carolina and throughout the United States. The following list of new, in progress, and recently completed projects, demonstrates NCICU's success in helping our campuses address student needs, implement legislative mandates, and provide groundbreaking support for higher education administration. Ultimately, these projects will lead to a greater number of graduates meeting the growing need for an educated citizenry and workforce.

GRANTS COMPLETED THIS YEAR

Transfer Pathways — NCICU has completed the primary work on the Transfer Pathways project funded by a \$400,000 grant from the Teagle Foundation through the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC). Fourteen NCICU campuses and 14 two-year colleges (13 community colleges and Louisburg College) have participated in the program creating pathways to encourage two-year college students to pursue baccalaureate degrees in liberal arts disciplines at independent colleges. The final meeting was held in March with 50 NCICU and NC Community College campus representatives in attendance. Staff from the Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education were featured presenters. Through the program, articulation agreements between NCICU and the NC Community College System in Sociology and Psychology, were developed, and signed. The agreements included an advising component to help ensure student success and a focus on financial aid policies for transfer students.

Library Collaborative — This project, funded by an \$81,000 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, was one component of a long-term effort by the NCICU libraries to

build an effective framework to support collaboration among our libraries. The grant funding ended this year but the group plans to continue its mission to expand and deepen collaboration among library personnel, institutions, and communities.

ONGOING GRANT PROGRAMS

iBELONG MALE MENTORING PROGRAMSM — This program was established with a \$27,000 grant from CIC, that was matched, in large part, by the VF Foundation for a total of \$55,000. The program completed its first year with eight colleges participating. Many of the participants expressed positive results from their interactions. Programming includes forums to explore career opportunities, pairing students with career mentors, and business etiquette instruction. The program is directed by Marcel Anderson who is dedicated to building self-esteem, character, and promoting a healthy lifestyle for young men. The success of the program has led NCICU to service mark the name and to seek additional funds to expand the program. To date new funds have been contributed to support six additional campuses for 2022-24.



High Point University participants in the iBELONG MALE MENTORING **PROGRAM**sm

Digital Learning Initiative — Beginning in 2018 with an annually renewable grant from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), NCICU has been developing a comprehensive professional development strategy for teachers and for students in educator prep programs for the use of technology and digital resources as teaching tools for K-12 students. A Work

Group meets regularly to collaborate on strategies with digital learning partners, DPI, the Friday Institute, and the University of North Carolina. The group has established digital learning competencies focusing on Leadership, Digital Citizenship, Content & Instruction, and Data Assessment. Denise Adams is director of Special Projects and the Digital Learning Initiative.

Reverse Transfer — This project, funded by a \$30,000 grant from CIC that was matched by the Lumina Foundation and the Community College System will lead to an increase in associate degrees awarded in North Carolina. The grant will be used to make changes to student information systems so NCICU campuses can report course progress to the National Student Clearinghouse. Often, students at a two-year college transfer to a four-year institution before receiving an associate degree. But once they have taken the remaining required courses at the fouryear institution, those courses can be transferred back to the two-year college and the student can be awarded the associate degree by the two-year institution while continuing to pursue the bachelor's degree.

SAS — The NCICU/SAS[®] Software Grant is an annually renewable software program provided by SAS° as an in-kind gift to all North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities to help maximize cost-savings at the institution level. Valued at nearly \$1 million each year, the grant includes software and publications, as well as allotted training hours that replenish once a year. The initiative continues to grow with 32 NCICU institutions participating in the program this year.

NEW GRANT PROGRAMS

Faculty-Student STEM Mentoring - Employer demand for STEM graduates has steadily increased over the past 20 years. While North Carolina has a strong STEM workforce, it has been a challenge nationally to attract a diverse population in this field. This new three-year pilot program, funded by a \$240,000 grant from the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, and \$39,250 from CIC, will develop stronger relationships between faculty and underrepresented students who are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM). The goal will be to improve student retention and graduation rates among first generation college students, women, and students of color in these majors. Twelve NCICU campuses are participating in the program, including NCICU's five historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). NCICU will expand the program to additional campuses as more funding becomes available.

Photo: Chowan University



NCICU participants in the Transfer Pathway final meeting broke into small groups with their community college partners to finalize details of their agreements.

Science of Reading — In April 2021, the General Assembly enacted legislation requiring Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to begin providing coursework in the Science of Reading which focuses on multiple aspects of phonics, spelling, and oral language/comprehension. NCICU has been awarded a two-year, \$1 million grant from the Goodnight Educational Foundation to support the initiative. A Science of Reading Task Force, comprised of ten NCICU Educator Prep Program (EPP) faculty members, are helping guide the implementation efforts at our 31 EPPs. Dr. Monica Campbell, professor of Education and coordinator of the Elementary Education Program at Lenoir-Rhyne University, and Dr. Mary Knight-McKenna, professor of Education and director of Master of Education at Elon University, co-chair the Task Force. Dr. Patsy Pierce, former EPP faculty member at Meredith College, and Denise Adams manage the work of the task force on behalf of NCICU.

SLDS Implementation Grant — This spring, the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) approved \$750,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds for NCICU to develop a portal to connect to the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). NCICU has been a partner in the SLDS since 2009, when the NCICU Board endorsed the system and has participated in a multi-year federal grant to develop the SLDS. The goal of the system is to have better longitudinal education and workforce data available for our campuses and for state policy makers as they make decisions about the needs and funding for education from Pre-K into the workforce. In February, Governor Roy Cooper signed an Executive Order creating a Governance Board for the system, on which NCICU president, Hope Williams, will serve.

Keeping College Accessible

NCICU colleges and universities are committed to providing a high-quality education and enriching campus experiences. While tuition and fees reflect that commitment, federal, state, and institutional aid provide resources that make private colleges accessible for our students and their families. The number of North Carolinians attending our independent colleges and universities continues to grow. In addition to the North Carolina Need Based Scholarship, 47 percent of NC students on our campuses received federal Pell Grants. Every institution provides funds to assist students with financial need. Campuses partner with federal and state government to provide an aid package designed to keep enrollment affordable.

This Year: • 47% of NC undergraduate students are Pell Grant eligible

- \$1,251,361,870 contributed by our campuses in institutional aid
- \$88.9M appropriated by NC General Assembly for NC students at private colleges and universities

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

The Independent College Fund of North Carolina

As advocates for independent higher education, we believe that every student should have access to attend the college or university of their choice and that financial barriers should not keep them from achieving their goals. North Carolina's 36 independent colleges and universities continually seek partners who will help keep tuition affordable for their students. To assist the campuses in securing that support, the Independent College Fund of North Carolina (ICFNC), an arm of NCICU, works closely with the corporate and foundation communities to invest in scholarship and other programs to support students.

Giving Opportunities Include:

• Scholarships • Named Scholarships • In-Kind Gifts • Student Enrichment Programs

ICFNC has raised close to \$91 million since its founding in 1953 in support of independent colleges and universities. During the 2021-2022 annual campaign, the ICFNC raised \$3.8 million in scholarship aid, student enrichment program funds and gifts to support special events.

- \$2,401,493M was raised for programs, sponsorships, and other grants
- \$1,022,669M was raised in In-kind support
- \$508,496 was raised for scholarships. Scholarship funds will be used for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Photo: Catawba College

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NCICU Collaborative Programs

NCICU helps North Carolina's 36 independent colleges and universities connect with businesses through a range of programs that promote best practices, cost savings, the sharing of information and, where appropriate, the coordination of services.

DIRECT CONTRACT **AFFILIATES:**

Negotiated by NCICU to provide discounts to all campuses and recommended by at least one NCICU campus or referral from another private college state association.

- Acadeum
- ADP
- Bartlett James (formerly Diligence, LLC)
- Brightly (formerly SchoolDude
- and Dude Solutions) • CampusLogic
- CBIZ
- CFI (College Foundation, Inc.)
- CDW Government (CDW-G)
- CITI Training
- Coursedog
- Datavalet (formerly SecurEdge)
- DeWeese Grove and Associates
- OcuSource
- Elinvar
- Envirosafe
- First American Equipment Finance
- Forms & Supply (FSI)
- Arthur J. Gallagher & Company, Inc.
- IMA Property Casualty Coverage (through the Coalition for College Cost Savings)
- Inside Higher Ed Careers
- National Utility Review
- NCICU Tuition Exchange
- Net Zero USA

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- OptimalResume[™] • ScholarBuys:
- Adobe CLP Student Licensing Agreement
- Microsoft EES Agreement

- Microsoft Student, Faculty and Staff Select Agreement
- VMWare
- Staples Advantage
- StormWind Studios
- Transact Campus, Inc.
- UnitedHealthcare Student Resources
- Vector Solutions
- (formerly SafeColleges Training)
- Virtual Care Group (new)
- BUSINESS **AFFILIATES:**

Companies/service providers that have a

current, successful working relationship with at

- least one NCICU campus
- Affinity LTC
- Apogee
- Aramark
- BDO
- Brown Edwards
- CapinCrouse
- CAPTRUST
- Cengage
- Cherry Bekaert
- Cintas
- Corporate Risk Management
- CORT
- Coursedog
- CPL
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 - Mindstream
 - National Management Resources
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 - Pharos Resources
 - PNC
 - Rodgers Builders
 - Security Marketing Group
 - TIAA
 - Transact
 - Truist
 - O United Bank
 - USI
- Verkada
- Virtual Care Group
- Womble Bond Dickinson

GROUP

PURCHASING

PROGRAMS:

Organizations/agencies that aggregate purchasing power to provide significant discounts

from a number of statewide and national

companies and service providers

- Coalition for College Cost Savings (CCCS)
- Educational and Institutional Cooperative (E&I)
- State of North Carolina E-Procurement and State of North Carolina Department of Information Technology (DIT)

2021-2022 Honor Roll **OF DONORS & SPONSORS**

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- CIC/UPS Educational Endowment Fund

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• The Universal Leaf Foundation

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NCICU and all 36 independent colleges and universities are taxexempt under section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are fully tax-deductible as provided by law.

ICFNC Advisory Board

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS JOIN 25 PRESIDENTS ON THE ADVISORY BOARD OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGE FUND OF NORTH CAROLINA

- A. Emily Baranello, SAS Advisory Business **Development Manager**
- Erica Forrester, CAPTRUST
- Margaret Wren de St. Aubin, Wren Foundation **ICFNC Board Chair**
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- Jeff Stoddard, Truist

- Mary Thornton, Harvest Table Culinary Group
- Tammy Thurman, Duke Energy/Piedmont Natural Gas
- Thomas Varnadore, Coca-Cola Consolidated ICFNC Vice Chair
- Winnie Wade, Dominion Energy
- The financial operations of North Carolina
- the Independent College Fund of North Carolina
- are audited by certified public accountants.

NCICU STAFF:

- A. Hope Williams, president
- Tom West, vice president for government relations and general counsel
- Denise Adams, director of special projects and the Digital Learning Initiative
- Marcel Anderson, project director, iBELONG MALE MENTORING PROGRAMSM
- Sandy M. Briscar, director of communications
- Steve Brooks, senior advisor
- Tom Clark, coordinator, NCICU Library Collaborative
- Lexie Daniels, assistant director, Independent College Fund of North Carolina
- Gwenn Hobbs, executive assistant to the president and office manager
- Vicki Humphreys, director of information technology
- **Colleen Kinser,** director, Independent College Fund of North Carolina
- **Phil Kirk,** advisor, community relations
- **Rebecca B. Leggett,** director of programs and special assistant to the president
- **Carrie Mata**, director of research
- **Patsy Pierce,** project co-manager, Science of Reading
- Marilyn Sutton-Haywood, project director, Faculty-Student STEM Mentoring Program

Photo: Elon University

President's Message



Reflecting upon the past two and a half years and the COVIDrelated challenges North Carolina's independent colleges and universities have faced, I am inspired by the perseverance and resilience of our faculties, staffs, and students. Their commitment to protecting the safety and health of the

A. Hope Williams

campus communities, combined with the support from our and the secure collection of data. state and national government leaders, made the difference in the ability of students to continue toward the achievement of In addition to expressing appreciation for the partnerships and their undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees during the pandemic. This year we also celebrated the 50th anniversary assistance provided during the pandemic, we thank the North Carolina General Assembly for increasing the funding this year of state financial aid for North Carolina students attending the state's independent colleges and universities as well as the 50th in the North Carolina Need Based Scholarship for our North anniversary of establishment of Pell Grants. The access provided Carolina students. That funding was increased to \$91 million annually. What a profound, transformative impact this state by the North Carolina Need Based Scholarship and federal Pell financial aid program and Pell Grants have had on hundreds of Grants continues to undergird the success of students who thousands of students over the past 50 years! receive these funds.

The partnerships among NCICU, our 36 campuses, the Governor, members of the North Carolina General Assembly,

I wanted to sincerely thank you for supporting the NC Need Based Scholarship for private college students, as well as providing the additional funding both in this year's budget and through the Covid Relief funding. This state financial aid has meant everything to my family and me. I come from a middle class family yet still had a strong desire to attend a private university so that I could receive closer attention from my professors. I was thrilled when I saw how much the NC Need Based Scholarship helped relieve my previous financial problem and fulfill my dream. - UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT, GREENSBORO COLLEGE

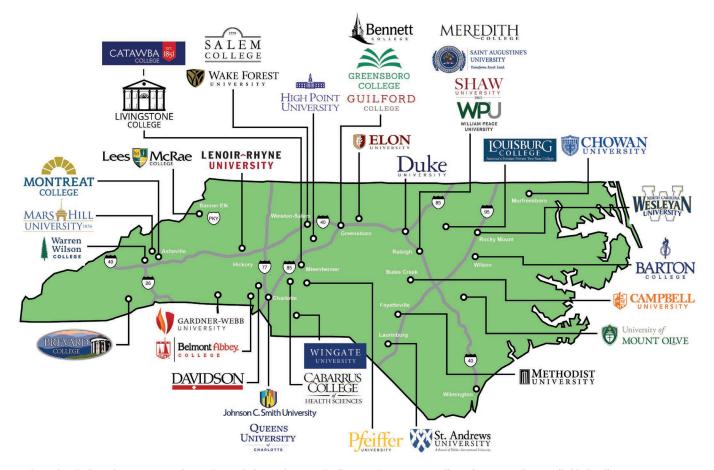
Independent Colleges and Universities and

Congress, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, and our sister state education sectors, was critical to maintaining student progress. In addition to participating in development of the state's guidance for higher education during the various stages of the virus, NCICU campuses received more than \$94 million in Covid Relief Funding from the General Assembly and the Governor. Congress also appropriated COVID relief funding through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds of HEERF I. II and III. Continuous communication and work with state leaders helped assure that NCICU campuses and students received the support they needed.

NCICU held most meetings and events in virtual formats during 2021-2022, incorporating some in-person events by the spring. We added three new important grant programs to the six already in place. These grant programs will have lasting effects on student success efforts, as well as on administrative processes,

> A. Hope Williams, President, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities

NC Independent Colleges and Universities



Independent higher education in North Carolina includes coeducational colleges and universities, colleges for women, historically black colleges and universities, and one two-year college. These include liberal arts, comprehensive and research institutions.

NORTH CAROLINA INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES INDEPENDENT COLLEGE FUND OF NORTH CAROLINA

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