County Facts: Columbus County, NC
Population 56,000

The Local Economy

- Unemployment rate: 5.6% (Columbus County), 4.5% (NC), 4.4% (United States)
- Poverty rate: 25.4% (Columbus County), 28% (NC), 16% (United States)
- Median family income (000s): $33 (Columbus County), $50 (NC), $57 (United States)
- Population growth 2000-2017: 2% (Columbus County), 16% (NC), 15% (United States)
- Manufacturing share of workforce: 16% (Columbus County), 12% (NC), 10% (United States)
- Farming share of workforce: 15% (Columbus County), 17% (NC), 12% (United States)
- Great Recession unemployment spike (pp): 6% (Columbus County), 8.0% (NC), 4.7% (United States)

How Local Kids' Lives Turn Out

- Percent graduating any college: 42% (Columbus County), 46% (NC), 46% (United States)
- Percent reaching upper-middle class: 10% (Columbus County), 16% (NC), 5% (United States)
- Percent achieving American Dream: 6% (Columbus County), 6% (NC), 22% (United States)
- Percent giving birth as a teen: 1.7% (Columbus County), 1.5% (NC), 1.5% (United States)
- Percent landing in jail: $5.2 (Columbus County), $5.4 (NC), $6.4 (United States)
- Local school expenditure per student (000s): $5.3 (Columbus County), $5.4 (NC), $6.4 (United States)
### Local Colleges and Upward Mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Low-income share of students</th>
<th>Low-income student success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U of N. Carolina At Wilmington (public)†</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern CC of Whiteville, NC (public)</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina 4-year-college average</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. 4-year-college average</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*: Data refers to the full college system, not just this campus. †: In nearby county

### Local Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Columbus County</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent over age 65</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent college grad</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime rate (arrests per 10K residents)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy (years)</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opioid deaths (deaths per 10K residents)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Columbus County, NC

Katie Donnelly, Clancy Green, and Danny Yagan

Definitions and Sources

The Local Economy
- Unemployment rate (August 2018, BLS)
- Poverty rate (2012-2016 ACS)
- Median family income (2016 ACS)
- Manufacturing share of workforce (2012-2016 ACS)
- Farming share of workforce (2012-2016 ACS)
- Great Recession unemployment spike (BLS LAUS)

How Local Kids’ Lives Turn Out
- Percent graduating any college (2-yr or 4-yr, Tax Data 2, N/A for some counties)
- Percent reaching upper middle-class (top 20% of the U.S. income distribution, Tax Data 1, N/A for some counties)
- Percent achieving American Dream (share of local low-income kids—i.e. those with 25th-income-percentile parents—who reach the top 20% of the U.S. income distribution as adults, Tax Data 1, N/A for some counties)
- Percent (of local female kids) giving birth as a teen (Tax Data 1, N/A for some counties)
- Percent landing in jail (percent of local kids in jail on 1 April 2010, Tax Data 1 and 2010 Census, N/A for some counties)
- Local school expenditure per student (in public schools, NCES, N/A for some counties)

Local Colleges and Upward Mobility
- Low-income share of students (share of age-18-22 students with bottom-20% parents, Tax Data 2)
- Low-income student success rate (share of low-income age-18-22 students who reach the top 40% of the U.S. income distribution as adults, Tax Data 2)

Local Demographics
- Percent Black (2012-2016 ACS)
- Percent Hispanic (2012-2016 ACS)
- Percent over age 65 (2010 Census)
- Percent college grad (4-yr college, 2012-2016 ACS)
- Crime rate (serious violent and property arrests per 10,000 residents, FBI Uniform Crime Reports, N/A for some counties)
- Life expectancy (at age 40, Tax Data 3, N/A for some counties)
- Opioid deaths (per 10,000 residents in 2017, CDC, N/A for some counties and some counties report population weighted commuting zone average)

Sources Legend
- ACS: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Surveys, 2012-2016
- CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2017 on CDC WONDER Online Database.
- Census: U.S. Census Bureau