

ACTION GREENSBORO ANNUAL REPORT 2005

Action Greensboro's mission is to bring more and better paying jobs to the Greensboro community by:

- Creating an economically vibrant community where individuals can find the foundation to build their lives;
- Fostering an environment that attracts business and industry and which stimulates business formation and development;
- Developing a dynamic urban center;
- Engaging citizens, including business, civic and political leaders and citizens at-large.

To accomplish this, beginning in 2001 Action Greensboro brought together a Core Committee of Greensboro's largest employers, key civic and education leaders and foundation executives to lead citizen volunteers to develop recommendations in six related areas:

- Enhancing the environment for small business development and entrepreneurship;
- Retaining, enhancing and recruiting business and industry;
- Attracting and retaining young professionals;
- Promoting Greensboro's brand/image to encourage a "can do" attitude in the community;
- Enhancing the public schools;
- Revitalizing Center City Greensboro.

Accomplishments

I. Retention, Expansion and Recruitment of Business and Industry

In January, 2005 the boards of directors of Action Greensboro and three other local economic development organizations (Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro Economic Development Partnership and the Greensboro Development Corporation) were merged to form The Greensboro Partnership. During 2005, setting community and economic development priorities and strategy and consolidating boards and finances were the organizations' priorities. A coordinated community strategic plan was written between April and November and presented to the Board in December. A Chief Executive Officer, J. Patrick

Danahy, was hired in January 2006. Decisions about the Partnership's management team and reallocation of resources will be made in early 2006.

In 2005, Action Greensboro collaborated with the Greensboro Public Library on Venture GSO, a multi-part educational program for aspiring entrepreneurs consisting of panel discussions, networking opportunities and contests to win internships. The project's first event was a well-attended talk in August by Jerry Neal of RF Micro Devices about his book, *Fire in the Belly*, which describes the founding of RF Micro. Panel discussions were:

- August 29, 2005 Celebrating the Entrepreneurial Spirit!
- September 13 Getting Out of the Starting Blocks: The Secrets of a Successful Small Business Venture
- October 17 Marketing Innovations: Branding and Beyond
- October 24 Intellectual Property: Protecting Your Assets
- November 17 Financing Your Business: From Incentives to Venture Capital

The ripple effect of the October 2003 visit of Dr. Richard Florida to Greensboro, sponsored by Action Greensboro, continued, with a façade improvement project and associated community participation events as a means to further involve the community in the discussion of Greensboro's creative character. Between June 2004 and November 2005 a design charette was held and volunteer committee formed to design and implement a façade renewal for the corner building at 233 South Elm Street. Architects, engineers and construction professionals, as well as community members at large, worked with the building's owners on design and scheduling plans and solicited donated materials and labor. Publicity and community comments were positive, and the project will likely be continued by Preservation Greensboro, Inc.

A third phase of the Creative Character initiative began in October 2005 with formation of a new steering committee which is exploring one tactical and four strategic projects: lighting the exterior of a downtown high-rise building to create shows and special effects; a visioning process for Greensboro; a branding/imaging process for Greensboro; and a leadership development program.

II. Small Business Development and Entrepreneurship-

2005 was the first full year of operation for the Piedmont Triad Entrepreneurial Network, a merger of the Piedmont Entrepreneurs Network and Triad Entrepreneurial Initiative. PTEN's mission is to provide comprehensive

entrepreneurial support to the Triad and nurture the development of high growth industries. It offers resources and services in five areas: education and mentoring, networking, business plan competitions, capital access, and communications. PTEN receives 2/3 of its annual funding (\$450,000) from Action Greensboro, the Winston-Salem Alliance and High Point Partners and 1/3 from sponsors. High Point became a sponsor for the first time in 2005. PTEN's programs are available to the 12-county Piedmont region, and its model now includes large as well as small companies.

- A. Education – The business plan competitions of TEI will now become the Growth Accelerator. After a two-round competition, three companies will, if they meet program goals, receive \$10,000 every six months for two years. They will receive classes taught by entrepreneurs on business plans and pitching to investors. They will receive mentoring, legal and accounting assistance, help in forming an advisory board, and will join a forum in their industry. Two companies in the 2005 business plan competition raised nearly \$2.3 million.
- B. Conferences – Conferences will focus on industry clusters. A logistics and transportation conference, called Nexus, will be held twice a year. A supply chain conference was held in November. Two Capital Connection breakfasts per year match 25 companies (4 of which are eligible to make presentations) with 100 angel investors. In the first quarter of 2006, PTEN will hold a statewide conference in conjunction with the Center for Creative Leadership on Innovation and Leadership. PTEN also holds round tables for start-up CEOs. Its CFO roundtable for middle market companies meets every other month and is growing in popularity.

Action Greensboro provided \$200,000 to PTEN in 2005 and a total of \$837,000 to date.

Action Greensboro completed its three-year commitment to the salary of the Assistant Director of the Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship and supporting activities. The purpose of this position is to (1) bring more support to the development of minority businesses, (2) help businesses maximize use of technology and (3) expand the mentoring program. The 2005 contribution was \$75,000, and the total contribution was \$225,000.

The Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship has doubled its revenue in the last five years and increased its space by 85% during that period. Since its start in 1987, the Center has added 1,700 jobs to Greensboro's economy at a cost of \$1,000 per job (total capital cost \$1.7 million). The Center's strategic plan, formulated in 2005,

calls for more emphasis on nurturing job and revenue growth of high-growth entrepreneurial companies.

Technology Outreach at Nussbaum (TON), a collaboration of Action Greensboro, the Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship, NC A&T and UNCG, offers technology commercialization counseling, patent searches and market research for any form of technology, free of charge, to anyone in the area. TON provides the client with factual information regarding intellectual property (trademark and copyright) and market research about his or her innovation. Action Greensboro funded TON in the amount of \$165,000 in 2005. As of September 2005, over 60% of new clients had been referred to Technology Outreach at Nussbaum (TON) by Greensboro area economic development groups, with an average of more than two inquiries a week. Approximately 75% of new clients were from greater Greensboro. Historically, the racial profile of clients is 47% Caucasian, 43% African American and 10% not identified. TON clients are actively pursuing patents and seeking start-up funding from local sources.

III. Center City Revitalization

Action Greensboro's Center City initiatives are designed to serve as a catalyst for additional investment. As a means of learning about new techniques to finance development and encouraging financial participation by Greensboro's public sector in downtown revitalization efforts, Action Greensboro took 89 citizens to visit Greenville, SC in September to see how Greenville revitalized its downtown and learn from city staff and volunteers how the projects were funded. The group was brought back together for a follow-up meeting to make written recommendations on policies, projects and funding mechanisms for revitalizing downtown Greensboro; to identify implementers; and to begin building advocacy for the recommended policies and initiatives. Implementing these recommendations is underway.

Center City Park is a key element in the Greensboro Center City Master Plan, completed in the fall of 2001, which identified a park and greenway system as an important component for the revitalization of the Center City. A public campaign was launched in March 2005 to raise \$2 million to complete funding of Center City Park, the centerpiece of downtown's green space. Construction on the park began in late summer. Artwork has been chosen and contracts secured for the work, most of which will be made by local area artists. The Center City Park Campaign is nearly complete as of February of 2006.

Planning continued for a 4.2- mile greenway to encircle the Center City, with several public forums held to present renderings to the public and receive feedback. The greenway, which will be part of Greensboro's Master Trails system, will combine with the open space in Center City Park to radically alter the livability and the perception of downtown. Overtures continue to Norfolk Southern Railway about purchasing or obtaining the use of the railroad property just north of the Southside neighborhood for development as a Railyard Park and an unused rail line for about a mile of the Greenway. A volunteer committee of representatives from the Community Foundation, City of Greensboro, Greensboro College, downtown and nearby neighborhood property owners, Downtown Greensboro, Inc., the Guilford County School Board, and Action Greensboro are diligently pursuing this project.

Additionally, Action Greensboro is funding and overseeing the development by the City of a Master Trails Plan. The City has added funding and scope to include a bicycle and pedestrian plan as well. The total cost of the Greenway and Master Trails Plan is \$500,000 and is funded through Action Greensboro by the Moses Cone Wesley Long Community Health Foundation.

Since its inception, Action Greensboro's Housing Incentives program (to pay interest on construction loans when the residential unit is complete but not sold/rented) covered 108 units by five construction companies at a cost of \$372,000. In 2005, construction was begun on a number of residential developments in the downtown area, such as 220 West Market Street, Smothers Place Lofts, 411 West Washington Street, Magnolia Place and Vick Commons. The plans for Phase One of Bellemeade Village were made public and marketing of condominium units began. A number of new residential projects are pending:

- Bellemeade Village Building #1 will have 60 units
- 600 Bellemeade will have 28 condominium units
- Arbor House Condominiums will have 51 units
- Icehouse Lofts on East Market Street will have 24 units

Action Greensboro contributions to the Housing Incentives program to date are over \$360,000.

Since 1999, downtown Greensboro has seen more than \$135 million in new construction and new investment; this new investment could exceed \$200 million in the next five years. Downtown development has resulted in \$1.2 million in annual tax revenue. When completed, Bellemeade Village will be the largest neighborhood development project in Greensboro, perhaps in North Carolina, with 330 apartments and condominiums, retail and office space, a hotel and underground parking, an investment of \$70-85 million.

IV. Attracting and Retaining Young Professionals. Action Greensboro has worked to enhance the viability of Greensboro for young professionals. synerG, Action Greensboro's Young Professionals initiative, held the fourth annual GET DOWN!TOWN welcome back event for local college and university students on August 27 in "Hamburger Square" park, with sponsorship by Crown Pontiac, Turner South Broadcasting, and the City of Greensboro. GET DOWN!TOWN is a platform to honor and begin building a relationship with this often under-recognized population. Participants enjoy stage entertainment, give-aways, and specials that keep them downtown after dark. The City of Greensboro provides free shuttle transportation during the event to and from all the colleges until 3:00am.

Making Connections Around the Table, monthly dinners featuring a local leader, completed its first full year in 2005. Each program is held the second Tuesday of the month and is designed to expose young professionals and the entire community to the inner-workings of Greensboro through special guest speakers. The opportunity for informal networking is an important auxiliary benefit of the evenings. Jenny Stokes and synerG volunteer Zack Matheny coordinate and facilitate each event. The total number of guests at each *Making Connections* dinner is normally kept to a maximum of forty. Featured guests in 2005 were:

- John D. Swofford, Commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference
- James C. Renick, Chancellor of NC A&T State University
- E. S. Melvin, President of Joseph M. Bryan Foundation
- Mackey J. McDonald, Chairman, President & CEO of VF Corporation
- Sandra Hughes, Anchor-person, WFMY News 2
- Jack Murphy and Josie, "Murphy in the Morning Show", WKZL Radio
- Nido Qubein, President of High Point University
- Terry B. Grier, Superintendent of Guilford County Public Schools
- Rebecca Clark, Director of Piedmont Triad Film Commission
- Keith A. Holliday, Mayor of Greensboro

synerG is coordinating a regional effort of colleges, businesses, and chambers of commerce to establish the Triad InternNet as a way to match students with area businesses for internships, with the expectation that an internship helps plant the student in the community and helps local companies capture the best young talent. Research indicates that 70% of young professionals rate their community more important than their job and that 75% of professionals under age 35 pick a city first and then find a job. synerG has applied for a variety of grants to start this program.

IV. Promoting Greensboro's Brand/Image to Reenergize Community Spirit.

The brand/image campaign, Greensboro: A Great Place to Connect, ended when funding ceased at the end of 2004. There is still community sentiment that Greensboro needs an ongoing branding effort and that the work on Greensboro Connects provides a good foundation for further efforts. The Greensboro Partnership's strategic plan addresses community image and contains a strategy to make marketing and public relations an integral component of the Partnership's work plan by:

- Evaluating the status and results of the "Greensboro, a Great Place to Connect" campaign and initiating a reinvigorated brand/image effort that focuses on our unique community strengths and the economic development initiative outlined in the strategic plan. The campaign should expand outside the community.
- Coordinating the broader brand/image effort with the one planned for our public schools.
- Coordinating details of the campaign with similar regional efforts.

V. Enhancing the Public Schools.

Commitment to Excellence is in the fifth year of a six-year commitment of \$4 million by more than 30 local companies. It has four primary elements:

The Celebration of Excellence recognizes and rewards the 15 most academically-improved Guilford County schools as well as the 30 top performing students and teachers from these schools. Winning schools receive \$8,000 and the principal determines how these funds are used to enhance instruction. The two outstanding students at each school identify the teacher who has had the most positive influence on them. The teachers receive \$1,000 to spend any way they wish, and the students receive a \$50 Savings Bond. Over the five years of the program, \$775,000 has been awarded to 75 schools.

The fifth annual Celebration of Excellence took place on September 28 at War Memorial Auditorium. For the first time, representatives of the Commitment to Excellence corporate contributors escorted winning principals across the stage to receive their awards; 21 corporate partners participated. In addition, there was an address by the US Department of Education's Regional Representative, Dr. Anne Hancock. Media coverage of the celebration was more extensive than previously, with WFMY television including features on former winning schools on three evening newscasts, a 2005 winning school featured on the live "Good Morning Show", and program ID's (at the end of commercial breaks) featuring the schools airing during the week of the event.

The Academic All-Star Camp – A three-week summer camp for outstanding rising ninth and tenth-graders to receive instruction in math, science and social studies. There are three camp sites, at Greensboro College, High Point University and NC A&T State University. The goals of the program include having more graduates receive scholarships to college and having more National Merit Winners. College scholarships increased throughout the system from \$28 million to \$50 million in 2005. Since 2001, 903 students have participated.

Recruiting and Nurturing Future Teachers - A three-year, full-tuition scholarship program at NC A&T State University and UNCG for students who commit to teach for a minimum of four years in Guilford County Schools. The program had required that students attend a local state university, but the requirement was amended in 2005 to allow the program to fund up to \$4,500 of college expenses anywhere. In addition, 25% of scholarships will now be targeted to nonwhite students. In the first year of the program, 11 students at Dudley, Andrews and Southwest High Schools are currently participating.

UNCG Cohort Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership for School Administrators - A leadership development program for principals designed by the School System, the Center for Creative Leadership and UNCG. Principals receive their doctorate over three years. The cost of the program is funded 2/3 by the Commitment to Excellence Fund and 1/3 by the principal. To date, fourteen principal/administrators have participated.

Approximately \$70,000,000 has been contributed to Greensboro through Action Greensboro since the organization was formed in 2001.