

Our community took giant steps in 2004. Public schools are improving, downtown Greensboro bustles with new activity, and business start-ups are increasing. These milestones indicate progress toward Action Greensboro's goal of fostering an environment that creates more and better-paying jobs.

The McKinsey Report, issued in 2000, found that Greensboro fell short in six areas crucial to a vibrant local economy. Those six areas became Action Greensboro's focus: attracting and retaining young professionals; revitalizing the Center City; fostering small business and entrepreneurship; improving public education; developing and retaining existing businesses, as well as recruiting new businesses; and developing and marketing Greensboro's image.

Hundreds of Action Greensboro volunteers have contributed to our community's progress. Within Greensboro and across the Triad, there's renewed dedication to cooperation and pooling resources.

This report includes only the highlights of Action Greensboro's efforts in 2004. Learn more at www.actiongreensboro.org or by contacting the Action Greensboro staff at 336-379-0821.



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2004 what we did

From construction projects that are reshaping our downtown, to improving public education, to economic development, Greensboro made significant advances in 2004. Here's how Action Greensboro (AG) contributed to the progress.

Entrepreneurship

Most new jobs come from the **Small Business** sector, and high-tech start-ups hold the best potential for growth. • AG encouraged **Entrepreneurship** by supporting Greensboro's job and business incubator, the Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship, with \$75,000 to pay salary and related expenses for an assistant director. The Center is home to 65 companies that employ nearly 300 people; business revenues were up 45 percent in the first half of 2004. • **Technology Transfer** moves new ideas from university research labs into the marketplace. AG provided more than \$162,000 to a program that commercializes research at N.C. A&T State University and UNCG. Two high-tech companies have spun out of UNCG, and A&T expected to generate \$100,000 in 2004 by licensing its technology. • The Triad Entrepreneurial Initiative (TEI) merged with the Piedmont Entrepreneurs Network. The new **Piedmont Triad Entrepreneurs Network** will carry on the annual business plan competition and encourage development of high growth industries. High Point Partners joined AG and Winston-Salem Alliance as a funder. • **Seed money:** AG's \$30,000 (2003-05) to the Inception Micro Angel Fund will go toward making seed investments in new tech companies with high-growth potential.

Retention, Expansion, Recruitment

AG knows that Greensboro must **keep** the jobs we have, **expand** existing businesses and **recruit** new ones. • We supported the work of the Greensboro Economic Development Partnership with a pledge of \$3 million. Another \$250,000 was pledged to the Piedmont Triad Partnership. Appropriate contributions were made to each in 2004. • AG brought Dr. Richard Florida to Greensboro in October 2003 to explore his concepts about the "creative class" and economic development. Volunteer task force discussions led to these **Creative Character** pursuits: an "extreme makeover" for a South Elm Street building façade; a downtown trolley; a Talent Resource Center; and an Innovation Expo. AG supported a speaker series on enhancing local Creative Character to attract a talented workforce.

Young Professionals

Greensboro's future depends on an ever-replenishing pool of **Young Professionals** who will live, work and lead here in the decades to come. AG took steps to reach out to students at the city's six colleges and universities and give them reasons to stay after graduation. • About 10,000 college students turned out for the third **Get Down! Town** party, held in August. Sponsors kicked in \$41,000. • Thanks to synerG, the young professionals' initiative, Center City Park offers **free Wi-Fi computer access**. Funding was secured through the Future Fund of the Community Foundation and sponsorship by Time Warner Cable. • Other efforts included 12 episodes of **Creative Community** on local access cable TV; a **showcase** of downtown merchants and entertainment at the Carolina Theatre; **Making Connections Around the Table**, a series of dinners with local personalities and leaders; and creation of a college internship program.

Making Connections

AG helped Greensboro's citizens **Reconnect** with all our city has to offer. • 2004 was the third year of **Greensboro – a Great Place to Connect**, AG's million-dollar, image-building campaign. • **ConnectTV**, a series produced for local public access cable television, focused on economic development and how everyone has a role in building the economy. Viewers learned that there are many **positive things** taking place in Greensboro, things we all can take pride in.

Public School Support

Broad support for public schools is a cornerstone of AG's programs. • A second \$2-million round of initiatives to promote **public school excellence** began in 2004. These programs celebrate and reward academically improving schools and send high-achieving ninth- and tenth-graders to **summer camp** at local colleges. • There are **scholarships** for NC A&T and UNCG students who commit to teaching at least four years in Guilford County Schools, plus a leadership development program for principals. The payoff: a declining drop-out rate; high teacher retention; college scholarships up nearly 90 percent in four years, to \$52 million. • AG, along with the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro, provided funding to establish the **Guilford Education Alliance**, which will coordinate existing school-related groups and programs and work to further the public schools.

Center City

Greensboro's **Center City** is abuzz with remodeling, new construction and new energy. • Baseball comes downtown to **First Horizon Stadium** in April. Guilford County's Department of Social Services, previously on that site, moved to new quarters on Maple Street. • Design moved forward for **Center City Park**; construction will begin in June. The General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 toward the project. • Greensboro's **Center City Master Plan** is in place; AG sent \$100,000 to Downtown Greensboro Inc. to ensure implementation and convene Center City parties regularly. • AG assisted in bringing the new **Elon University Law School** to downtown Greensboro and helped secure the needed \$10 million. • AG remained a financial supporter of the **International Civil Rights Museum** and leads efforts to create a four-mile **Center City Greenway** plus a Master Trails Plan for the city. • The **Housing Incentives Program** continued, with AG paying construction loan interest costs • A **Concert Hall** feasibility study was completed. • Total **investment** in downtown from all parties will be more than \$44 million.