2016 Program Highlights

2016 Emerging Issues Forum, FutureWork

Our signature event, the 2016 Emerging Issues Forum, FutureWork, was hailed by many attendees as our most exciting ever. We hosted more than 1,000 participants in-person, and thousands more via livestream on the web and the live broadcast on UNC-TV’s newly launched North Carolina Channel.

FutureWork Disruption Index for North Carolina

IEI released the FutureWork Disruption Index for North Carolina, providing novel statistical measures of relative exposure to the disruptive impacts of technological unemployment and demographic change for North Carolina’s counties and regions.

FutureWork Prosperity Tour

You helped us move quickly on the ground, putting Forum action priorities into motion. We kicked off a summer-long FutureWork Prosperity Tour, traveling by bus across the state to share and to gather insights related to the future of work in our state. We met with schools and business community leaders in each of North Carolina’s eight Prosperity Zones, and we are incorporating regional feedback on this critical issue into several reports that will be shared with local and state officials.
Summer in the Commons

IEI’s youth civic engagement initiatives bring more hope than ever for our state’s future. We completed another successful Summer in the Commons program, hosting more than 1,000 students ages 8 to 14 in our Emerging Issues Commons here at Hunt Library. In tandem with our statewide student outreach during the FutureWork Prosperity Tour, these summer programs helped to raise greater awareness of key workforce issues facing North Carolina’s youth, and highlighted community efforts to strengthen the workforce preparedness pipeline between schools and businesses.

We asked this year’s Summer in the Commons participants to share their thoughts on the future of work! We asked, “What’s important to you in choosing a job?” Here are some of our favorite responses!

“If I can have fun & make money doing it. (Lots of money to be exact.) I also want to work for less than 7 hours, plus so I can get promoted and get respected easily. So I’d choose the NBA. I would also appreciate a playing time of about 42 minutes. My Plan B is an engineer. Plan C is a game maker.”

“The amount of help I can provide, amount of money, and the joy I get out of it.”

“Some factors that are important in choosing a job is if the job will be needed to be filled by a real person that pays a good salary and will enable me to help the public.”

InnovateNC

An outgrowth of the 2015 Emerging Issues Forum, Innovation Reconstructed, InnovateNC is an intensive two-year, cross-city learning collaborative among five NC cities: Asheville, Greensboro, Pembroke, Wilson, and Wilmington and the Carolina Coast. In its second year, InnovateNC worked with participant cities to form local innovation councils with representatives from diverse demographic and sectoral backgrounds; collected data on their innovation ecosystems; produced a first draft of a strategic plan that includes resources for disconnected populations; and participated in three cross-city convenings/site visits. Cities will continue to work on their strategic plans to include clear action items, resource needs and data tracking, and will work with UNC-TV to produce stories highlighting local entrepreneurs.
BB&T Discovery Forum Series

Through our Emerging Leaders Fellows program, and in continued partnership with BB&T, IEI wrapped up the 2016 **Discovery Forum series** this fall in six North Carolina communities: Boone, Greenville, Hickory, the Triad, the Triangle, and Wilmington. Teams of social entrepreneurs (ages 18-30) pitched their social enterprise ideas for community improvement. Top teams will attend an intensive leadership development weekend in March to hone skills, to network, and to compete for a chance at up to $10,000 in funding from BB&T toward their social ventures.

Rural Faith Communities Program

IEI’s **Rural Faith Communities program** has worked to foster thriving rural communities, assisting three-fourths of the Thriving Rural Communities (TRC) Fellows from the Duke Divinity program to engage their communities in meaningful ways around education, food, health, and the environment. Rural churches affiliated with IEI are currently planning mobile dental clinics, community resource centers, ESL classes, and health fairs. *(Image: Rural Faith Communities as Anchor Institution Conference attendee explores rural area healthcare data in the Emerging Issues Commons.)*
Looking Ahead to 2017

Text, Talk, Future

Text, Talk, Future will serve as an electronic texting-based program to encourage peer conversation around college and career readiness to get high school students talking about their future career options after graduation. With support from a group of education partners around the state, we are piloting the program this fall, with a full, statewide launch planned for spring 2017.

Service Year North Carolina

Service Year North Carolina is part of the national bipartisan Service Year Alliance Initiative, in which IEI will host a December convening to brainstorm how North Carolina can elevate and expand service in its communities. Participants will explore the importance of service, share national best practices on expanding service at local levels, and call on attendees to get involved. The convening will kick-start a strategic planning process to expand the number of Service Year opportunities across the state.

kidonomics: The Economics of Early Childhood

IEI is launching a unique, two-year program of work to focus on our newest emerging issue: kidonomics: The Economics of Early Childhood. We kick off the topic with a special Focus Forum on February 7, 2017, which will culminate in the 2018 Emerging Issues Forum, February 5-6. During the course of the next two years, IEI will explore the connections between early childhood investments, North Carolina’s economy, and the development of a well-trained workforce. We look forward to working with many of you on this important issue, and look forward to seeing you at the Forum. For additional information and to register, please visit emergingissues.org/kidoNomiCs.