



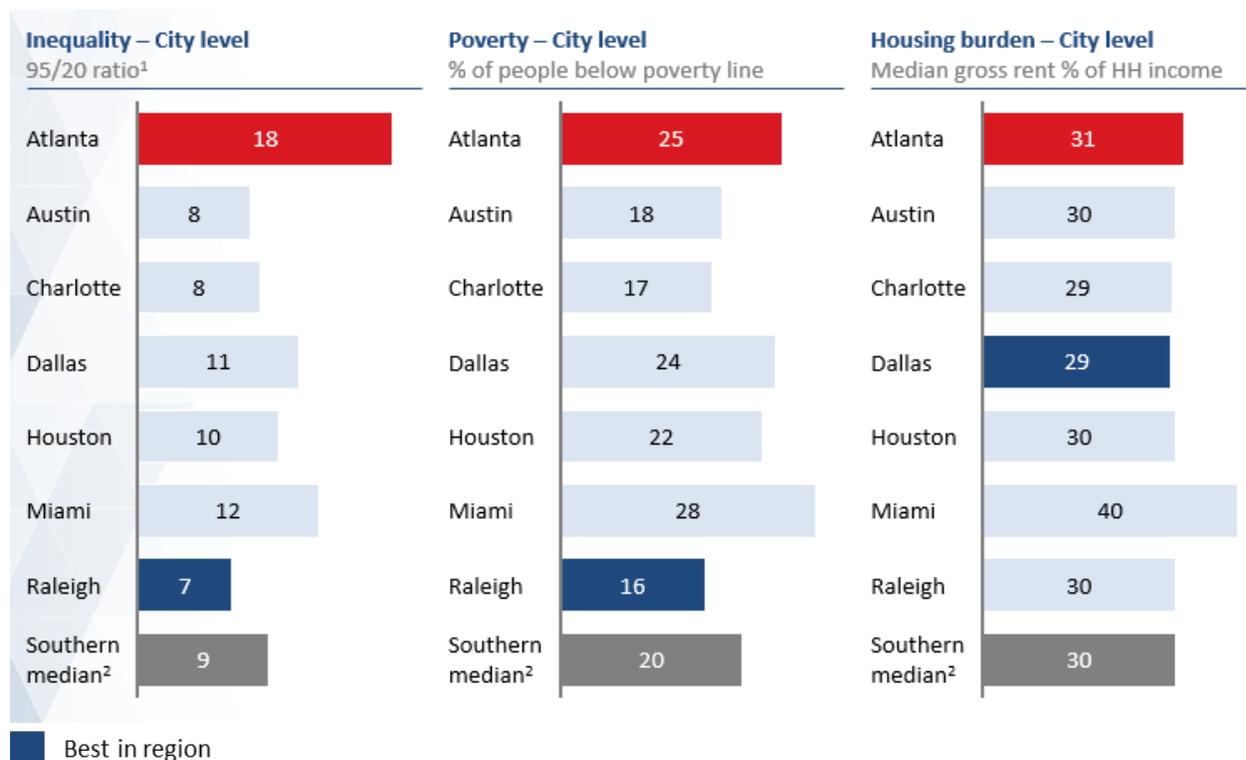
**An Overview of the
Center for Workforce Innovation
at Atlanta Technical College**

Dr. Victoria Seals, President

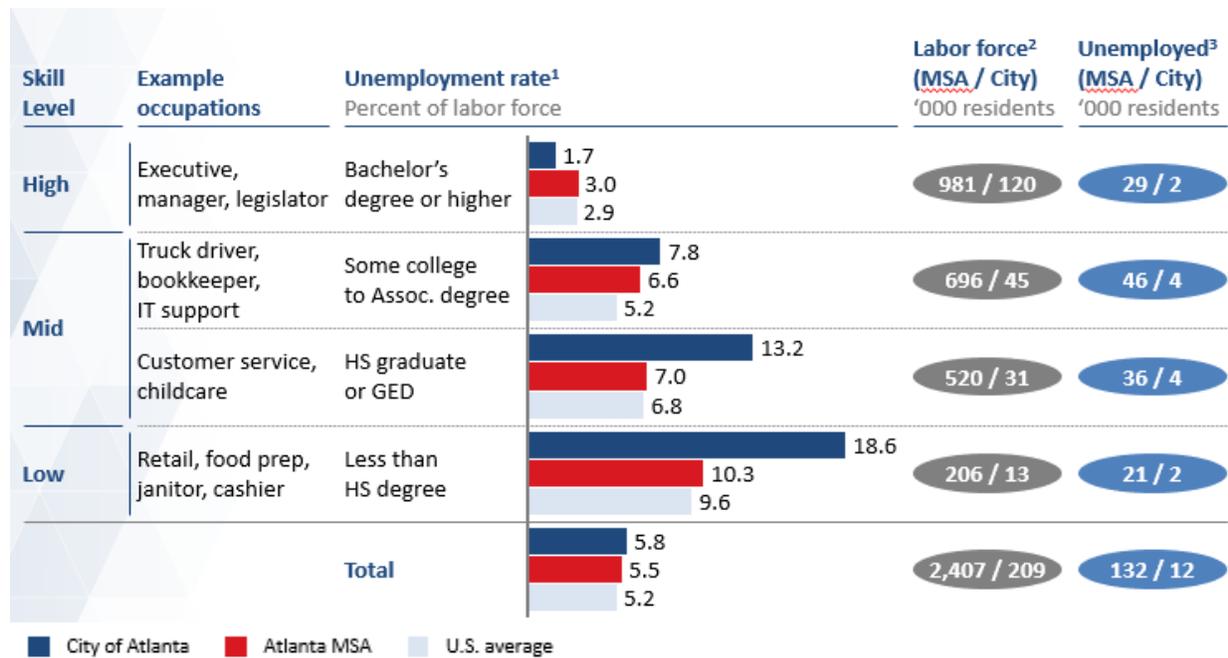
Scaling the CWI: A workforce development solution

The Atlanta Technical College Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI) was born out of a need to effectively address concerns related to disparities in sustainable career and economic mobility opportunities for Atlanta’s most overlooked communities. Data from a regional study in 2018 reveals that individuals born into poverty in certain Atlanta zip codes have only a 4 percent chance of elevating their economic position throughout their entire lifetime. The Mayor and the CEOs of the city’s leading corporations realized that the city and the region cannot thrive while a significant portion of the population continues to struggle.

A benchmarking exercise conducted in 2018 found that Atlanta performs worse than peers on measures of economic inclusion:



Specifically, the study showed that Atlanta’s unemployed population is concentrated at the low- and mid-skill level, where ~100K people are looking for work:



The review of employer needs determined that employers were having a difficult time finding suitable talent in key occupations. This disconnect confirmed the need for better matching of training opportunities with open positions.

Why Atlanta Technical College

Atlanta Technical College (ATC) has a 54-year history of serving the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and Clayton County. ATC provides an exceptional education to a diverse group of students, representing ethnic groups from around the world, younger and older people, high school and college graduates, persons with special needs, and persons with varied backgrounds, academic requirements, and interests. Women are enrolled in nontraditional programs such as automotive technology, carpentry, welding, and line worker; and men pursue careers in early childhood care and education and nursing. Atlanta Technical College has a proven track record in removing barriers to access and success, helping students to succeed. Atlanta Technical College has a 99 percent job placement rate and a documented \$201M economic impact on the region. Conveniently located between downtown Atlanta and the Atlanta Airport, ATC serves as the hub of opportunity for the metro Atlanta region and especially for the communities south of I-20. In reviewing the opportunity divide, it was the obvious choice for the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Committee for Progress to partner with ATC to create a workforce solution to bring together the unemployed/underemployed citizens and the open career positions that were plaguing the industries. The final convincing factor was the college leadership. In December of 2016, Dr. Victoria Seals assumed the helm as president of Atlanta Technical College. Dr. Seals' effective leadership and documented

experience as a change agent provided the confidence that the Mayor's office and the Atlanta Committee for Progress needed to partner with Atlanta Technical College and make the necessary investment to develop and to implement the Center for Workforce Innovation. Ms. Shan Cooper, the Executive Director of the ACP, said, "We chose to work with Atlanta Technical College because of the leadership of Dr. Seals. Dr. Seals has a passion for her students and their success. Atlanta Technical College cares for its students, not just while they're on campus, but also after they have moved beyond the institution. Our goal is to develop a program where students graduate from Atlanta Technical College having had one of the best learning experiences possible, with hands-on learning they can apply to the real world."

The Solution

The Atlanta Technical College Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI) was designed to provide intensive support, aimed at preparing students to thrive in sustainable careers in growing industries. The CWI is the solution to providing economic mobility for individuals and families in the region. The intentional model of the CWI focuses on the following:

- On-campus assessments and individualized coaching
- Work-based internships, apprenticeships, and career placement
- Program support by leading industries
- Short-term training programs in high-demand career areas

The initial pilot of the CWI targeted programs in the **skilled trades** (carpentry, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, welding), **IT/Coding** (IT support, networking, cloud technologies, cybersecurity), and **aviation**, with **film and entertainment, logistics, and supply chain management** being added in year two. Also in year two, ATC has mapped out the plan to scale the CWI model to the entire college. The model centers on three pillars: recruitment, engagement, and placement.

- **Recruitment:** The executive director position is being enhanced to focus on **intentional recruitment** and establishing a **seamless pipeline** into ATC. This will allow all the citizens of the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and Clayton County to have direct access to training and education to prepare them for well-paying careers. There will be enhanced partnerships with the high schools to ensure that a larger percentage of Black and Latinx students are able to take advantage of **dual enrollment** opportunities.
- **Engagement:** The CWI pilot revealed that the enrollment process for CWI students proved more effective than the regular college process. The scaling of the model will implement the best practices of **personalized communication**, You-Science Assessment for career alignment, consistent follow up, and student tracking. The enhanced student engagement will also feature a **mentoring program** that allows industry partners to connect with students and help provide career guidance and motivation to keep them

on track and ensure their success. The mentoring component is a critical asset of the workforce development solution. Incorporating partner feedback, the College will implement an **Essential Skills curriculum** for all students. This curriculum will ensure that graduates have the desired soft skills, as identified by industry partners. The curriculum will also afford opportunities for employer partners to engage and to deliver workshops to students on how the skills are manifested in the workplace.

- **Placement:** The mission of Atlanta Technical College is workforce development. Career placement is the end goal and the true measure of tracking toward success. The best practices from the CWI involve **employer relations** and student tracking. Thus, the College will expand the employer relations model across all programs. The model provides for consistent employer engagement, including excellent customer service and efficient follow up. For students, the College will track **placement and earnings** of graduates for 36 months, instead of the required 18 months. This enhancement will ensure that the College is indeed moving the needle on economic mobility and truly helping graduates progress to a livable wage.

Scaling the CWI and incorporating these best practices will enable ATC to attain these stated performance goals:

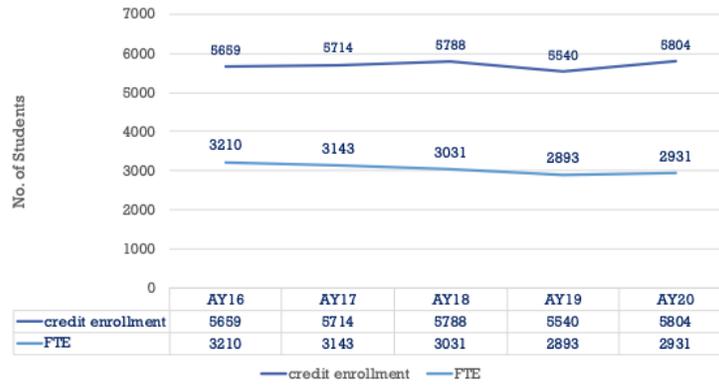
- Serving 10,000 students over the five-year period: 2019 to 2024
- Scaling to 85 percent graduation rate
- Increased median earnings of the City of Atlanta residents

The Impact

Atlanta Technical College has a documented \$205M regional economic impact. The College supports more than 3000 jobs and provides students a 7.5 percent return on their investment. ATC has made marked strides in impact and performance over the last few years. In fiscal year 2020, despite navigating a pandemic, enrollment (5800), retention (67.3 percent), and graduation (70.8 percent) reached the highest they have ever been in the history of the college. These metrics demonstrate the regional impact of the College, as well as the effectiveness of the CWI model.

Enrollment and Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

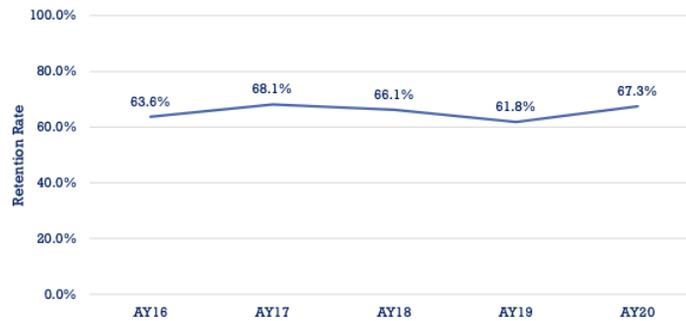
5-Year Trend: Total Enrollment and FTE
AY16-AY20



REAL KNOWLEDGE. REAL SKILLS. REAL SUCCESS.

Retention

5-Year Trend: Retention Rate
AY16-AY20



REAL KNOWLEDGE. REAL SKILLS. REAL SUCCESS.

Graduation

5-Year Trend: Graduation
AY16-AY20



REAL KNOWLEDGE. REAL SKILLS. REAL SUCCESS.

The college boasts a sustained 99 percent job placement rate, institutional and programmatic accreditation, and award-winning faculty, staff, and leadership. The CWI model is effectively leading to student success. The students say it best:

“... It should build confidence in students that come to this school, to know that not only will I get my education – I won’t be left to figure it out [on my own]. I will be surrounded by people who are invested in trying to get me work.” Yasmine Neal, Avionics Graduate

“Going to the workshops CWI provided to me, it gave me a lot of insight into workplace integrity and... on being able to carry myself in a better way, especially when it comes to working on a job site. My life has changed drastically.” Isaiah Prayor, Carpentry Graduate

Next Steps

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic paralyzed the world and shone a light on the intense inequities in the Metro Atlanta Region. Simultaneously, in Atlanta, in Georgia, and across the U.S., instances of racism and social injustice led to social unrest. The communities in the service area of Atlanta Technical College were devastated by this multi-faceted pandemic.

To serve the students and the community, Atlanta Technical College responded to provide computers and hot spot devices to ensure students’ access. Additionally, Dr. Seals

The CWI_Dr. Seals

implemented the “ATC Family Connection” virtual sessions to allow the students, faculty, and staff a platform to engage and discuss challenges, frustrations, and fears, as well as learn of available resources.

The pandemic highlighted the need for and the value of the essential workers educated and trained by Atlanta Technical College. To meet the needs of the unemployed and the underemployed, Atlanta Technical College accelerated the scaling of the CWI. For academic year 2022, the model will be used to serve all students and to engage additional employers. In addition to the inaugural sponsors of the CWI, the College has developed partnerships with additional employers, including AT&T, Bank of America, and Microsoft.

The CWI Model will provide the employer partners with the needed workforce pipeline. Additionally, the partners will have access to a blueprint and usable playbooks to partner with technical and community colleges across the nation and globally to solve the workforce challenges in all of their markets. We are the solution to transforming lives and meeting the workforce needs, through the power of technical education!

