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### Medicaid Expansion in North Carolina...Finally!

**Governor Cooper signs Medicaid expansion into law on March 27.**  
**North Carolina to become 40th state to expand Medicaid, expected to provide health coverage to more than 600,000 North Carolinians.**

On Monday, March 27 Governor Roy Cooper signed House Bill 76, Access to Healthcare Options, into law. The legislation will expand Medicaid, which is expected to provide health coverage to over 600,000 people across North Carolina and bring billions in federal dollars to the state. North Carolina is the 40th state to expand Medicaid. "Medicaid expansion is a once-in-a-generation investment that will strengthen our mental health system, boost our rural hospitals, support working families and so much more," said Governor Cooper. "This is a historic step toward a healthier North Carolina that will bring people the opportunity of better health and a better life." "This is a historic moment that will transform the health and well-being of North Carolina," said Secretary of Health & Human Services, Kody H. Kinsley. "Medicaid expansion is foundational in improving access to health care in rural areas, for better mental health and for veterans, working adults and their families. For 600,000 people, Medicaid expansion is life changing." Expanding Medicaid has been a top priority for Governor Cooper since he took office. Since 2017, he has worked within the confines of state law to begin the expansion of Medicaid, even when Republican legislators sued him in federal court to stop the process. Without Medicaid expansion, North Carolina has missed out on an estimated \$521 million each month that could go to improving mental health and helping rural hospitals remain open. Veterans, early childhood educators, restaurant workers, nursing home workers are all among the groups that often fall into the coverage gap and sometimes have to work two or more jobs to afford health care.

In North Carolina, rural residents are 40% more likely to be uninsured and eligible for Medicaid expansion, and eleven rural hospitals have closed in North Carolina since 2005, with more at risk of closure due to a lack of paying customers. North Carolina, like other states, is currently dealing with an opioid and substance abuse crisis. About 40% of overdose patients in emergency departments are uninsured, making it harder for them to get the follow up mental health care they need.

Governor Cooper's budget, First in Opportunity, proposes using a portion of the almost \$1.8 billion Medicaid expansion signing bonus to create the Improving Health Outcomes for People Everywhere (IHOPE) Fund. The plan focuses on three areas: making mental health services more available when and where people need them; building strong systems to support people in crisis and people with complex behavioral needs; and enabling better health access and outcomes with data and technology. Medicaid expansion will take effect upon the signing into law of the FY 2023-25 appropriations act.

### You Decide: Where's The Job Market Headed?

*By Mike Walden:* Jobs are a crucial part - some would say "the" crucial part - of the economy. People take jobs to earn money. They spend the money on products and services to support their living. Businesses create jobs to make the products and services people buy.

One important feature of the job market is that it never stands still. As the economy changes, and the products and services people buy change, so, too, do jobs. Jobs that exist today may not be around tomorrow. At the same time, jobs that don't exist today could be part of tomorrow's economy. Developments in technology are a key reason why jobs are both created and destroyed. A good example is farming. When tractors replaced mules used for plowing, the number of acres a farmer could cultivate soared. As a result, farm jobs declined, but jobs in manufacturing tractors rose.

In the 21st century, there have been big advances in technology, such as computers, cell phones and data storage. Consequently, there have been ongoing changes in jobs. About a decade ago two British economists predicted almost half of the jobs would be gone by midcentury. This conclusion came after a detailed analysis of how emerging technology would change the nature of jobs, allowing technologies like digital programs and robots to handle more tasks. With the economy changing so rapidly - especially after the pandemic - can we still use predictions made even a few years earlier? Indeed, robots are becoming more capable, and a new technology, artificial intelligence, is just starting to be used.

Fortunately, last year the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released a new analysis of how jobs might change in the future - especially which jobs are expected to significantly decline. Before examining the new forecasts, let me review how much the job market has changed in just the last decade. BLS calculates that between 1999 and 2018, 15% of all occupations experienced job declines of 25% or more.

Looking ahead to the decade of 2019 to 2029, BLS expects several occupations to lose jobs. Included are housekeepers, tax preparers, reporters, cashiers, customer service reps, travel agents and computer programmers. Interestingly, these are occupations with different salary levels. So, what do they have in common? Most are occupations where the tasks now done by humans can likely be accomplished in the future by technology. Much of housekeepers' work can be - and already is in some cases - performed by robots. Tax forms can now be prepared by online computer programs. In supermarkets, cashiers are being replaced by scanners. Customer service reps, travel agents and even reporters, while still including "real" people, are having more of their work provided by online websites.

But - you might ask - why are computer programming jobs projected to decline? Aren't STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) professions expected to be fast-growing? In general, more STEM jobs are projected to be added through the end of the decade. BLS estimates STEM occupations will increase by 8% from 2019 to 2029. Computer-aided software and artificial intelligence technology are forecast to replace many computer programmers.

Overall, total jobs are expected to increase by 4% for the 10 years from 2019 to 2029. Notice that the starting year of 2019 is prior to the pandemic, so some of this increase reflects the rebound in jobs after the COVID-19 recession of 2020.

Which occupations will have the largest increases this decade? At the top of the list are nurses, renewable energy technicians, cooks, statistical and data scientists, and physical therapists. A look at this list reveals two driving forces: our aging population (nurses and physical therapists) and technology (renewable energy technicians and statistical and data scientists). Cooks are among the top categories probably because people are eating out more frequently, and we like good meals. All of these categories are expected to have job growth rates at least five times faster than the increase in total jobs.

Although they are not among the expected fastest-growing occupations, it is important to mention another occupational category: the "skilled trades" like carpenters, electricians, plumbers and bricklayers. Many of the tasks performed by the skilled trades are not suitable for technology. The problem is that retiring workers in the skilled trades are not being completely replaced by younger workers. To meet the 4% growth rate expected in the skilled trades during the current decade, more effort will be needed to attract qualified workers.

In the years ahead, look for substantial "job churning," meaning some jobs will almost disappear while others surge in numbers. Will we be ready to accommodate the shifts? You decide.

Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus at North Carolina State University.

### NCWorks Online Youth Services

The North Carolina NCWorks Youth Services website: [ncworks.gov/vosnet/youth.aspx](http://ncworks.gov/vosnet/youth.aspx) contains links to information of interest to Youth looking for jobs, or are interested in continuing education beyond high school. Information on this page contains a variety of websites that have job postings and helpful information specifically geared to young people.

This page also contains information about career exploration, military service, financial aid for education, and other opportunities.

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WADESBORO

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR

First Baptist Church of Wadesboro, NC is currently seeking a part-time Music Director to oversee a comprehensive music program including all areas of music in Adult Choir, Youth and Children's Choirs and Handbells.

Organ experience is preferred. First Baptist is seeking a Music Director who will embrace a blended style of worship that includes traditional, contemporary and praise music. This includes all worship services, special services, and any church related events where music is needed.

Experience in a church setting is preferred. This position will include assisting the Pastor in planning worship services, plan, organize and promote camps, programs, etc. for the various choirs. Salary & hours are negotiable.

**Please send resume with a cover letter to:**  
**Personnel, First Baptist Church, PO Box 423, Wadesboro NC 28170**  
**Or email: [fbcwadesboronc@gmail.com](mailto:fbcwadesboronc@gmail.com)**

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## The Anson Middle School PTO

Presents The

# BEARCAT PRIDE 5K

In Uptown Wadesboro, NC

**Saturday April 29, 2023, at 9:00 AM**

Course Information: The 5k Run/Walk will begin and end in front of Wadesboro Police Department located on South Rutherford Street.

The Bearcat Pride 5k run/walk will help support the AMS PTO by raising funds to support students & staff. The AMS PTO gives parents and teachers the opportunity to work together to supplement and enrich the educational experience. The PTO builds an effective partnership of home and school. It provides financial assistance where needs are identified within the school, it fosters a community atmosphere, and supports the mission and vision of the school and school district.

**We are offering a special registration price of \$15.00 for students that are ages 5-18.**  
**\*Special pricing will show once you check out.**

Register by April 12 and you will receive a FREE t-shirt.  
 Online Registration Deadline ends Thursday, April 27, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.  
 Race Day Registration will be \$30.

Please register online at the link below:  
<https://runsignup.com/Race/NC/Wadesboro/BearcatPride5kRunWalk>

Course map can be found at the link below:  
<https://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/view/4905431194>

There will be professional timing for race day!

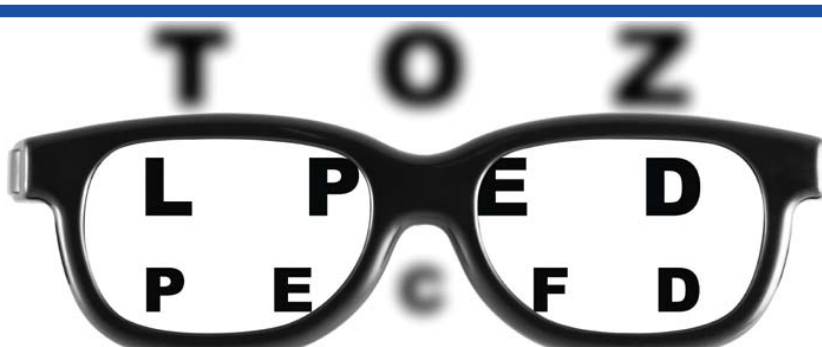
Contact Race Organizer  
**Anne Hyatt for Information**  
**704-694-0593**  
 or [hyatt.anne@anson.k12.nc.us](mailto:hyatt.anne@anson.k12.nc.us)

### SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE - \$50 TO \$1,000

Contact Race Organizer Anne Hyatt for Details  
**704-694-0593 or [hyatt.anne@anson.k12.nc.us](mailto:hyatt.anne@anson.k12.nc.us)**

Your sponsorship of the Bearcat Pride 5K is greatly appreciated. The Anson Middle School (AMS) Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) gives parents and teachers the opportunity to work together to supplement and enrich the educational experience. The PTO builds an effective partnership of home and school. It provides financial assistance where needs are identified within the school, it fosters a community atmosphere, and supports the mission and vision of the school and school district.


The AMS PTO will ensure you get the best return on your advertising dollars for the sponsorship. In addition to putting your marketing tools in our goody bag, we mention the sponsors in thank you publications after the race as well as mention you in as many press releases and promotional materials as we can.




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