



City of Kingsport Higher Education Initiative

Metrics evidencing the city's renaissance which was recognized in September 2009, where Kingsport garnered the prestigious **Harvard Innovations in American Government Award** revolved around three major indicators:

- **Significant increase in the taxable appraisal values** in the downtown area,
- **An increase in the educational attainment rates**, and
- **The creation of new jobs.**

Significant increase in the taxable appraisal values in the downtown area

Since the opening of RCAT in 2002, the **Downtown Kingsport area**, site of the city's **higher education investments**, has experienced a **\$38 million increase in taxable property values**. This growth represents taxable property only and does not include other significant downtown improvements such as **hospital/ health care investments of \$140M, the \$21M higher education facilities investment or church facility investments. At \$7.7M**

An increase in the educational attainment rates

Since the higher education initiative began, **educational attainment** of the Kingsport population 25 years and over **has jumped dramatically**.

These indicators* include:

- A **20.5 percent decrease** in those with **less than a 9th grade education**;
- A **22.4 percent increase** in the **High School graduation (including GED)**;
- A **58.2 percent increase** in those with an **Associate Degree**; and
- A **12.5 percent increase** in those with a **Bachelor's Degree**

**Source: 2000 Census and 2006-2008 American Community Survey*

During this time period, **Northeast State Community College (NeSCC)** realized a **248 percent increase** in the number of students who **graduate from a Sullivan County High School in the spring and enrolled the following fall semester at the college**.

NeSCC experienced a **52 percent increase in fall enrollment** during the higher education initiative years.

The **downtown academic village** has seen **enrollment** grow to nearly **1,600 students each semester**.



To foster the educational attainment rates for all citizens, the **Kingsport Board of Mayor of Aldermen approved funding** in October 2009 for a **GED testing scholarship program** paying the \$65 testing fee.

The creation of new jobs.

Since the late 1990s, the Kingsport Metropolitan Statistical Area experienced a **loss of 15,800 manufacturing jobs, yet a 9,200 overall increase in employment.** (Source: http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.tn_kingsport_msa.htm.)

This includes

- 9,100 new education and health services jobs,
- 5,200 leisure/ hospitality jobs,
- 3,100 natural resources/mining/construction jobs,
- 1,100 financial jobs,
- 500 other services job

In 2000, there were **17,638 city residents employed. In 2008, 20,035 city residents were employed.**

Since 1999 median family income in the city rose from **\$30,279 to \$50,076.**

Educate and Grow

Since the **Fall of 2001**, Northeast State Community College has **received 2,104 Educate and Grow applications for assistance from Sullivan County graduates.**

Of these, **864 were awarded funding** to provide the last dollar amount needed for tuition.

Yet **40 percent of those applying for funds have Remedial/ Development requirements needing to be met** before funds are awarded.

Since its inception, a total of **\$1,336,849 has been awarded through the Educate and Grow scholarship program** for Sullivan County students.

Since, Kingsport's initial investment into Educate and Grow, the program has **expanded into all five counties** served by Northeast State Community College.

Stephen Goldsmith, former Director of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University program, remarked, ***"Instead of traditional tax incentives, Kingsport has revitalized its economy by making its workforce more competitive. They recognized that today's high school diploma does not adequately prepare students for the challenges of the global economy. Cities across the country can learn from Kingsport's work in revamping curricula, building new infrastructure, and developing creative partnerships."***