

# 2012

# Regional

# Report Card



United Way  
of Danville -  
Pittsylvania County



Future of the Piedmont Foundation

A Joint Publication of the Danville Regional Foundation, United Way of Danville – Pittsylvania County, and the Future of the Piedmont Foundation, originally compiled by Tyler Laughinghouse and Carlethia Smith, annually updated by DRF interns.

*The following report presents detailed information on the Dan River Region’s cultural and economic trajectory in five key dimensions of community status. Each dimension is presented separately with descriptions of statistical indicators, source of information, importance of assessment criterion, yearly progress statements, and general recommendations. Where available, the data provides findings for Danville City, Pittsylvania County, Virginia and Caswell County, North Carolina. This report is a supplement to the actual Regional Report Card.*

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## **Background and Purpose**

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Future of the Piedmont Foundation, United Way of Danville – Pittsylvania County, and Danville Regional Foundation share a commitment to improving the region in ways that will benefit all. In order to identify areas needing change, these organizations created an annual Regional Report Card to portray the region's data over a period of time in comparison to state, and occasionally national, data.

The Regional Report Card uses data collected by federal, state, and local governments. It includes the most recent data available as of June 14, 2013 and, when possible, comparable data from five years earlier. This report contains 20 variables at Danville, Pittsylvania County, and Virginia and Caswell County and North Carolina levels. It also shows whether each variable is changing at a positive, negative or inconclusive rate.

The purpose of this report is to provide individuals and institutions throughout the region with information to better understand the changes occurring, target opportunities for additional investments of time and energy, and center conversations on how the quality of life in the region can be improved.

The data is intended to introduce the collaborative, research-based community report card for the Dan River Region to our community. This report card targets both broad and specific audiences for the following purposes:

1. Provide a tool for keeping critical community issues at the forefront.
2. Provide a catalyst for community leaders and organizations to set action plans in motion around improving quality of life for our region.
3. Provide baseline data that will facilitate strategic planning, program design, and assessment of progress toward long-term community goals.

The data embodies the following values:

1. Meaningful data that can lead to action strategies
2. Face Value – Not judgmental or editorial
3. Credibility and accuracy
4. Ability to track long-term trends (sustainable data)

## *Regional Report Card*

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### **Executive Summary**

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The Regional Report Card provides easily accessible and current statistical information for the Dan River Region regarding the regional and statewide trends in educational quality, financial stability, economic vitality, health status, and civic capacity. It is a tool for the widespread dissemination of information, allowing the region's citizens access to clear and direct analysis concerning regional trends for community development.

**The data indicates that the Dan River Region is not only below the VA and NC state averages in multiple focus areas, but it also has not made significant progress in certain assessment areas. Although achieving the state averages is a long-term goal, yearly progress in each domain remains paramount to community-wide transformation. The report exposes several differences between Danville, Pittsylvania County, and Caswell County trends. As a result, the region's leadership should increase cooperation and communication to promote regional progress of the city and counties toward achieving the state averages within the same time frame.**

The region's educational and civic capacities show incremental progress towards achieving states' averages. However, the region's positive progress must increase at a greater rate in order to reach state averages as the state averages are also improving annually. Such movement forward fosters regional competitiveness.

**Although educational quality and civic capacity have positively increased, this report cannot conclusively determine the influential scope of these sectors. Specifically, methods used in this report fail to review non-traditional aspects of educational quality. For example, the report card does not measure the educational system's ability to foster innovation or meet the occupational demands of the region. Thus, the report may unintentionally present an overly positive depiction of the region's educational system.**

With regard to civic capacity, the quality of non-profits is measured in terms of number of organizations and their respective revenues. Although these numbers are adequate assessment criteria, the impact of non-profits on the region cannot be conclusively determined from these static figures. The report card does not capture volunteer hours or faith-based activities in the region. As a result, the quality of non-profit organizations may actually be higher than presented in the report. Because of these factors, subsequent reviews of the region should employ more holistic forms of assessment.

**Community-wide health status shows similar trends as regional transformation. Obesity rates remain higher than the state average, infant mortality percentages of both Danville and Pittsylvania County have decreased, and incidence of heart attacks have significantly**

decreased. Teen pregnancy rates in Danville remain above the state average, while Pittsylvania County is below the state rate. Because health regionally is inconclusive and negative in these specific areas, the region's leaders should direct interventions at improving residents' health. Industries evaluate a community's health status in choosing an area in which to relocate, thus health status remains instrumental in the cultivation of a competitive advantage.

Additionally, the economic vitality of the region remains a point of concern. The region's weekly wages, unemployment rates, and non-dependent population distribution place the region at odds with state averages, lowering the possibility of creating a self-sustaining community. Furthermore, the economic vitality of the region inevitably affects the financial stability of the area. While the increasing regional stability deserves attention, this report recommends interventional strategies that target improving regional economic conditions.

### ***Mission***

To provide the community with the current statistical information regarding the region's economic and cultural trajectory.

### ***Goal***

Design a report card that provides easily discernible and highly accurate information in five key dimensions of community status. The information included in the report card should be accessible to the general public and should originate from continuously updated sources.

### ***Recommendations***

This report advocates four recommendations for future community development.

1. **The leaders of the Dan River Region should focus intervention efforts on increasing both the health status and economic vitality of the region, because these two areas dramatically impact community development.** Though judged separately on this report card, these two sectors are often interdependent. Thus, intervention strategies should simultaneously incorporate both regional aspects.
2. **Cross-regional communication should be established and maintained, so the region can progress at equal intervals across all assessments.** Given the discrepancies between Danville and Pittsylvania County on a number of researched criteria, the region currently displays less than advantageous communicative relationships.
3. **Designers of subsequent report cards should investigate alternative means to assess the region's educational quality and civic capacity.** While the investigated aspects provide empirically valid and imperative information, the inherently transformative nature of these sectors cannot be conclusively determined. Thus, it is the opinion of the writers of this report that the region's education system may show less influence when assessed by non-traditional measures of success. Furthermore, the civic capacity may be more influential than presented in this report.

4. **Future community reports should compare the region’s trend with similar geographic areas.** While comparing to the state average is informative, the most applicable assessments may be ascertained from comparing the Dan River Region to localities with similar economic situations. Because an already existing community-wide report card is lacking, this report compared the region to the state average as a means to establish an initial assessment database. Future report cards should build upon this framework and incorporate other regions of interest.

### ***Impact***

Potential impacts from the Regional Report Card remain diverse. Specifically, the report card can serve as a point of collective information dissemination by which community leaders, organizers, and citizens can remain informed concerning regional trends in community development. Furthermore, annual progress reports can relay information regarding the efficacy of various interventions, allowing community organizers to reorient strategies to appropriately meet the region’s demands. Finally, the production of a yearly report card can impart imperative information to citizens, allowing citizens to become involved in the progress of their community.

## ***Regional Indicators***

In the following sections, detailed information is provided for five key dimensions of community status. Each dimension is presented separately with descriptions of statistical indicators, source information, importance of assessment criterion, yearly progress statements, and general recommendations. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership provides an easily accessible profile of the Virginia region.<sup>1</sup>

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### **Educational Quality**

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In this section, the report card provides statistical information regarding the educational quality for the City of Danville, Virginia, and the surrounding Pittsylvania County. The comprehensive community educational quality is assessed over a five-year period from trends in PALS scores, higher educational attainment levels, third-grade reading proficiency, high school dropout rates, eighth-grade math scores, and rates of on-time high school graduation.

***Findings*** — Educational quality in the Dan River Region has made incremental progress toward achieving state-wide competitiveness. In the assessed period, the community’s level of educational attainment has risen; and eighth grade math abilities have declined due to the introduction of a new standardized test. While educational quality has improved, the region remains below the average state levels of achievement. Danville has improved its early childhood scholastic readiness. Unfortunately the region is inconsistent in its performance on third-grade reading proficiency and high-school graduation rates.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://viriniascan.yesvirginia.org/communityprofiles/MapSearch.aspx?type=default>

**Recommendations** — The region’s leadership should continue interventional strategies in pursuit of achieving the state average. In particular, Danville should focus interventional strategies on increasing early childhood scholastic preparedness. Beyond these new strategies, subsequent regional assessments should employ more holistic measures of success to fully judge the scope of the educational system. Possible dimensions should include the ability of the educational system to adequately prepare students for higher education along with its ability to meet and foster occupational demands.

In the following section, a detailed description of the analysis is provided. Any U.S. Census data maintains “estimation” classification.

## ***PALS-K Assessment***

### **Description of Indicator**

The following figures were obtained from the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten (PALS-K) children. The PALS-K assessment measures literacy skills before matriculation into kindergarten. The following rates identify the percentage of students who were identified as needing assistance upon matriculation, because these students were not adequately prepared to enter the public school system. The PALS-K assessment is given annually to each school district in Virginia. Data from 2003 to 2008 was obtained from the Kids Count Data Center.<sup>2</sup> Data from 2008 to 2012 was obtained from the DPS and PCS school staff.

### **Why is the PALS-K important?**

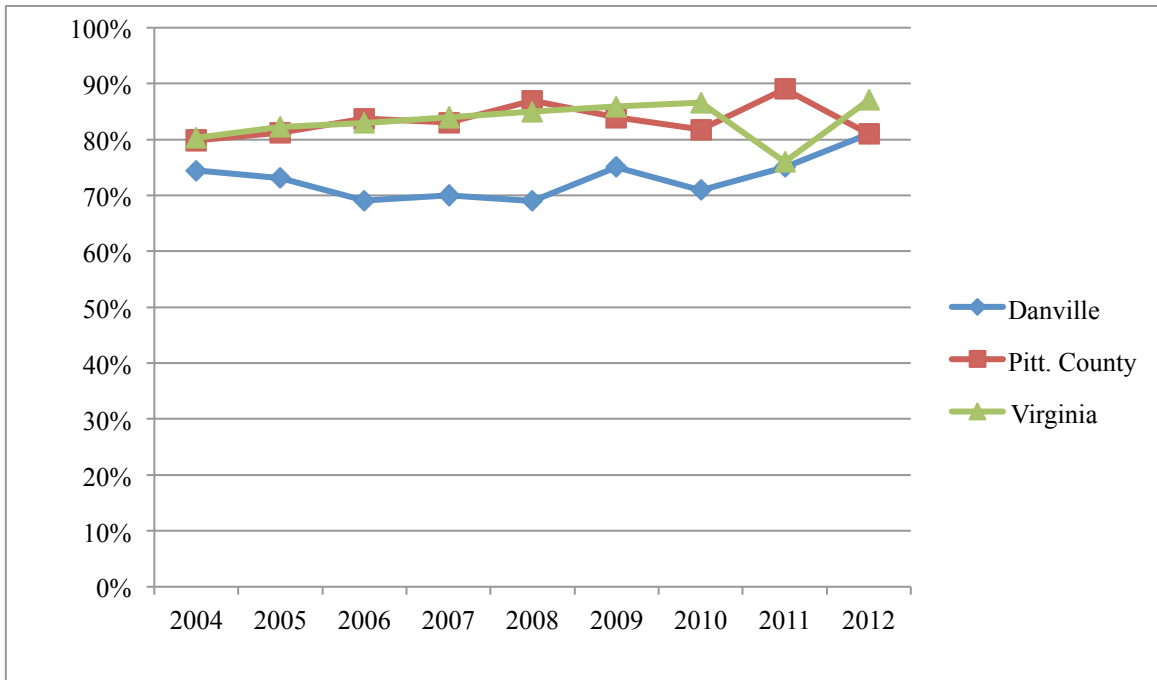
These measurements inform the school system’s leaders of potential challenges, identify at-risk children, and provide community feedback on early childhood intervention strategies. Early childhood educational offerings impact future academic success and engagement in the education system. In fact, 80 percent of students who enter school significantly behind their peers experience negative educational outcomes – the including dropping out, antisocial behavior, and increased contact with the juvenile justice department.<sup>3</sup> Ensuring the readiness of the region’s children will inevitably improve the overall school system’s performance on subsequent SOLs and raise educational attainment levels.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Default.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.vakids.org/pubs/Archives/ECE/pals\\_k\\_final.pdf](http://www.vakids.org/pubs/Archives/ECE/pals_k_final.pdf)

### *PALS-K Passage Rate*



#### **How is the region performing presently?**

In the assessed period, the PALS-K results displayed an increase in prepared children in the Danville Public Schools district, increasing from 70.5 percent to 81.0 percent from the previous assessment. Over the same period, students in the Pittsylvania County school district also successfully prepared children reaching 81.0 percent. Concurrently, the state's unprepared levels dropped from 16.5 percent to 12.9 percent.

### *Third-Grade Reading Proficiency*

#### **Description of Indicator**

Third-grade reading proficiency is determined by the percentage of passing scores on the Standard of Learning (SOL) examination in Reading for both the Danville Public School and Pittsylvania County School district. The SOLs are administered annually to third grade students in every public school district. The SOLs remain an applicable measurement of reading proficiency, because these tests meet federal reporting standards delineated in the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Danville and Virginia data was obtained from the Danville Public Schools annual report cards.<sup>4</sup> Pittsylvania County data was obtained from the Parent Portal for Pittsylvania

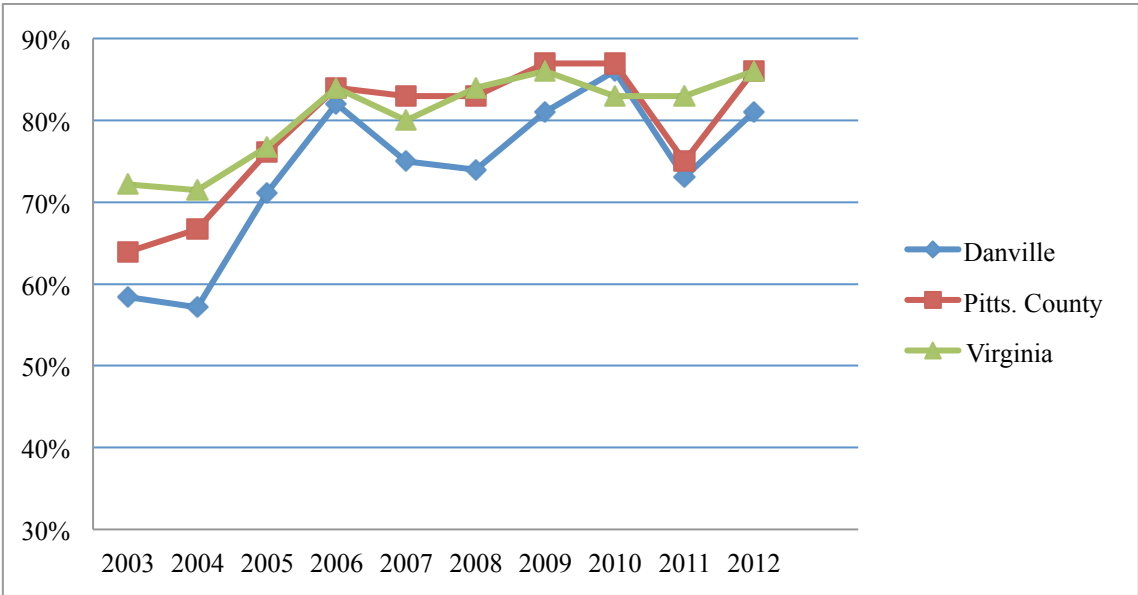
<sup>4</sup> [http://web.dps.k12.va.us/Schools/doe\\_report\\_cards.html](http://web.dps.k12.va.us/Schools/doe_report_cards.html)

County Schools.<sup>5</sup> North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina School Report Cards.<sup>6</sup>

**Why is third-grade reading proficiency important?**

Third-grade reading levels predict future academic success. Specifically, third-grade reading levels correlate with on-time graduation rates and higher educational attainment. Furthermore, third-grade reading levels predict propensity for incarceration and/or contact with the criminal justice system. As a result, numerous school districts across the county are working toward increased reading performance by third grade students.

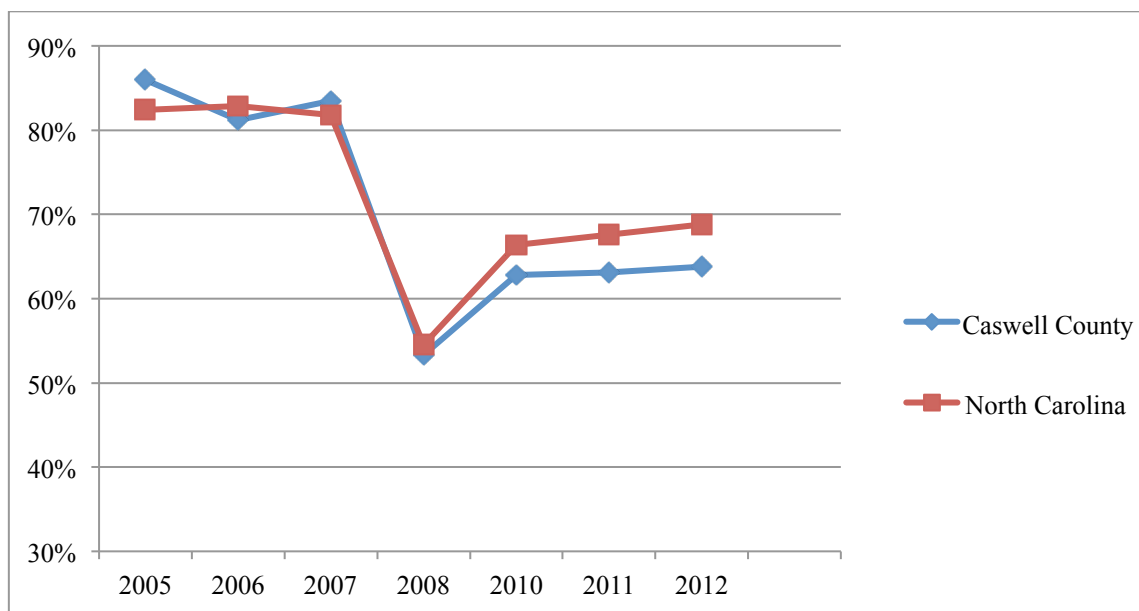
*Third-Grade Reading Proficiency*



<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pcs.k12.va.us/parents/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ncreportcard.org/src/search.jsp?pYear=2009-2010&pList=1&pListVal=170%3ACaswell+County+Schools++++++&GO2=GO>





### How are we doing?

Over the three-year period, third-grade reading proficiency for Danville Public Schools has decreased from 83 percent to 81 percent. Concurrently, the average reading proficiency for Pittsylvania County Schools decreased from 87 percent to 86 percent. Over the same period, the state average passage percent has increased from 83 percent to 86 percent. As a result, Danville and Pittsylvania County have decreased at greater intervals than the state's average. Proficiency for Caswell County and North Carolina has increased from 53.3 percent to 63.8 percent and 54.5 percent to 68.8 percent, respectively. However, in the past two years, there has been an upward trend in scores.

## *Eighth Grade Math Ability*

### Description of Indicator

Eighth grade math ability was determined from passage rates of the Virginia SOL tests. These tests maintain validity because they meet the standards delineated in the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Danville and Virginia data was obtained from the Danville Public Schools annual report cards.<sup>7</sup> Pittsylvania County data was obtained from the Parent Portal for Pittsylvania County Schools.<sup>8</sup> North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina School Report Cards<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> [http://web.dps.k12.va.us/Schools/doe\\_report\\_cards.html](http://web.dps.k12.va.us/Schools/doe_report_cards.html)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.pcs.k12.va.us/parents/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ncreportcard.org/src/search.jsp?pYear=2009-2010&pList=1&pListVal=170%3ACaswell+County+Schools+++++++&GO2=GO>

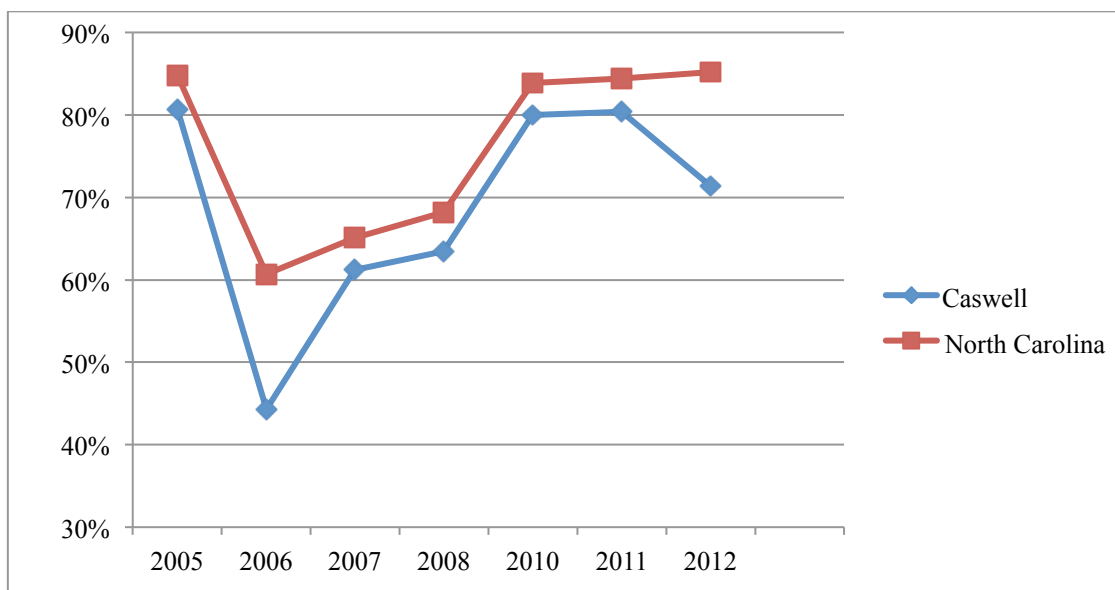
### Why is math ability important?

Math ability maintains predictive value for future economic earnings as well as occupational sector employment. Specifically, increased math abilities in high school are correlated with higher economic earnings. Furthermore, increased math abilities in high school predict propensity for higher educational attainment. Among college students, high school math abilities are also predictive in graduate educational attainment with higher math proficiency correlated with increased propensity to pursue a post-bachelor's degree. Furthermore, math abilities, as measured in high school, are predictive of employment type, with increased math proficiency correlated with higher paying jobs and job security.<sup>10</sup> As a result, eighth-grade math abilities remain imperative to the future cultivation of a productive and economically sustainable workforce in the Dan River Region.

### *Eighth-Grade Math Ability*



<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/rb/RB\\_701JBRB.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/rb/RB_701JBRB.pdf)



### How are we doing?

Over the assessment period, the math scores for the DPS declined from 90 percent to 52 percent passage rates. Concurrently, PCS decreased its passage rate from 92 percent to 51 percent. Over the same period, the state's average decreased from 87 percent to 60 percent. All these changes occurred because the standardized test used for measurement was changed statewide. The math scores increased for Caswell County and North Carolina from 63.5 percent to 71.4 percent and 68.2 percent to 85.2 percent respectively. Caswell County remains below North Carolina, but both the county and state are currently on an upward trend.

## *H.S. On-Time Graduation Rates*

### Description of Indicator

Employing a cohort design, the following data provides the percentage of students who complete the graduation requirements set forth by Virginia's Department of Education in the traditional four-year framework. The following results provide the first-time assessment of cohort data from the class entering high school in the fall of 2004. Subsequent assessment will be available annually from the Virginia Department of Education. North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina public schools database.<sup>11</sup>

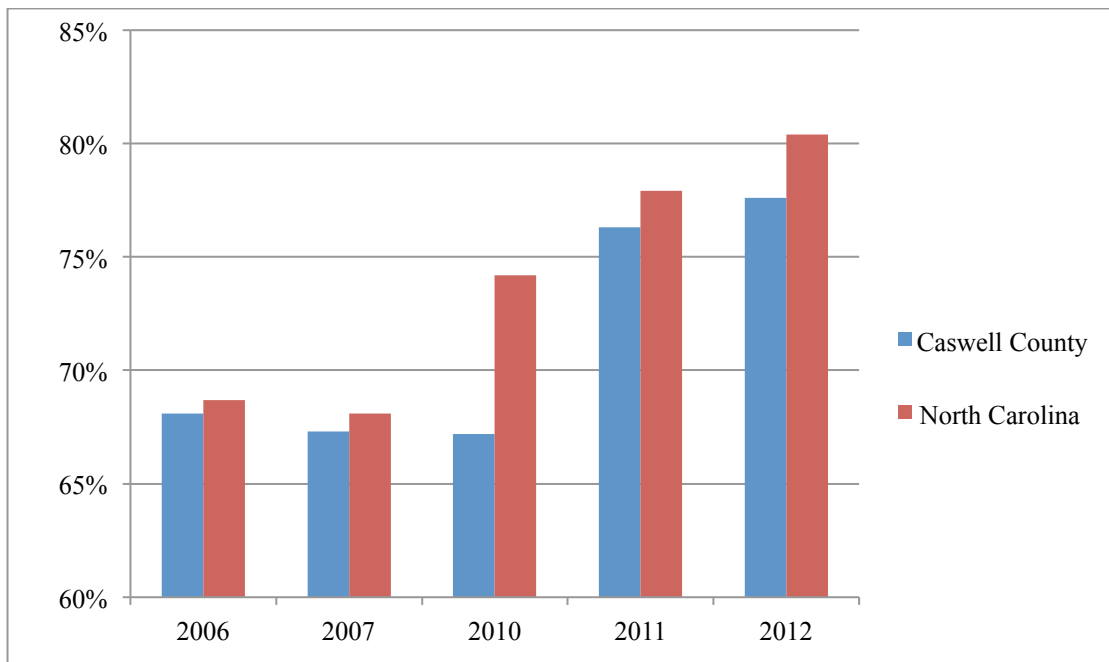
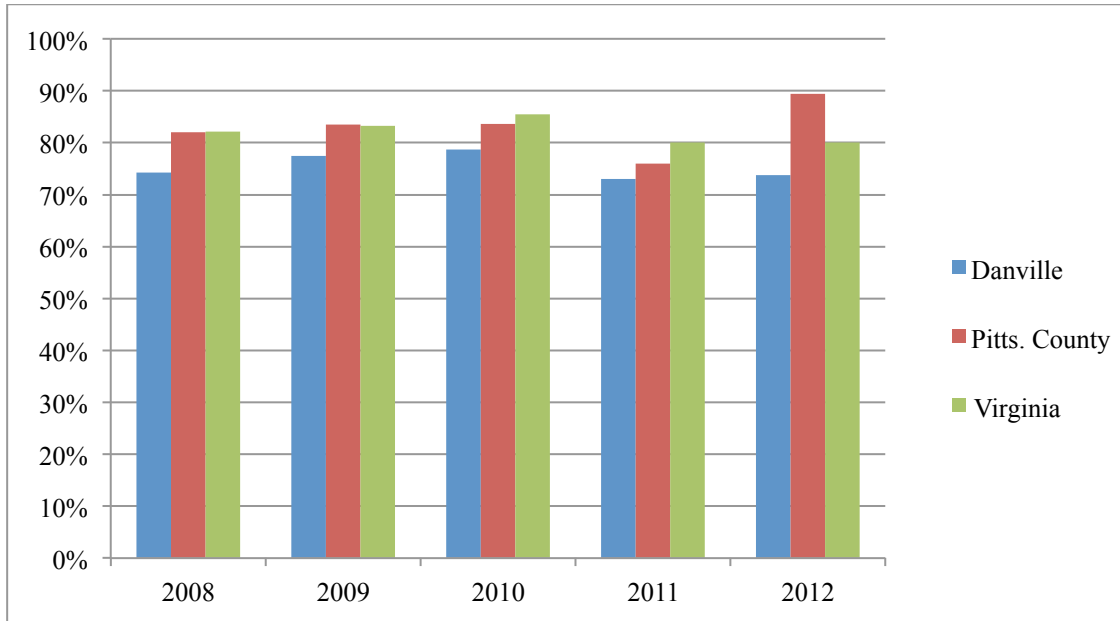
### Why is on-time graduation important?

According to the Virginia Department of Education, assessing the on-time graduation rates provides a more accurate picture of educational quality in Virginia. By capturing a cohort's experience in high school, school districts can pinpoint specific problematic times in which

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/data/reports/>

“dropping out” often occurs.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, increasing on-time graduation affects subsequent educational pursuits, including college enrollment and graduation.

### *H.S. On-time Graduation Rates*



<sup>12</sup> [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics\\_reports/graduation\\_completion/dropout\\_statistics/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/graduation_completion/dropout_statistics/index.shtml)

### How are we doing?

In the assessment, Danville averages remain below the state. However, Pittsylvania County remains higher than Danville and the state. Caswell has seen improvement in this area from 67.3 percent to 77.6 percent. Subsequent assessment should provide trajectory data for the region.

## *Higher Education Attainment*

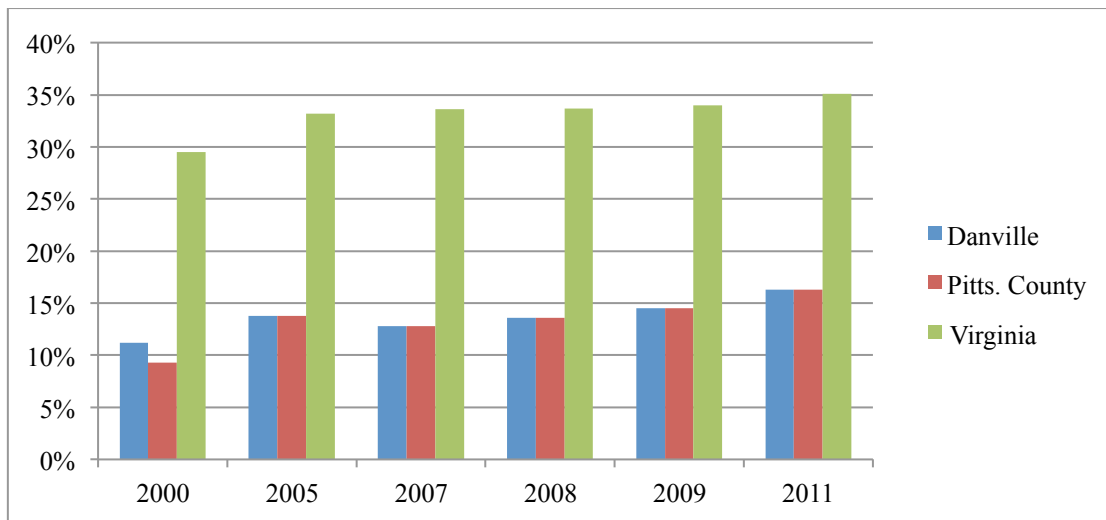
### Description of Indicator

Higher educational attainment is defined as achieving at least a bachelor's degree for those over 25 years of age. All figures were obtained from the US Census database.<sup>13</sup> The data for Danville and Pittsylvania County is the MSA data.

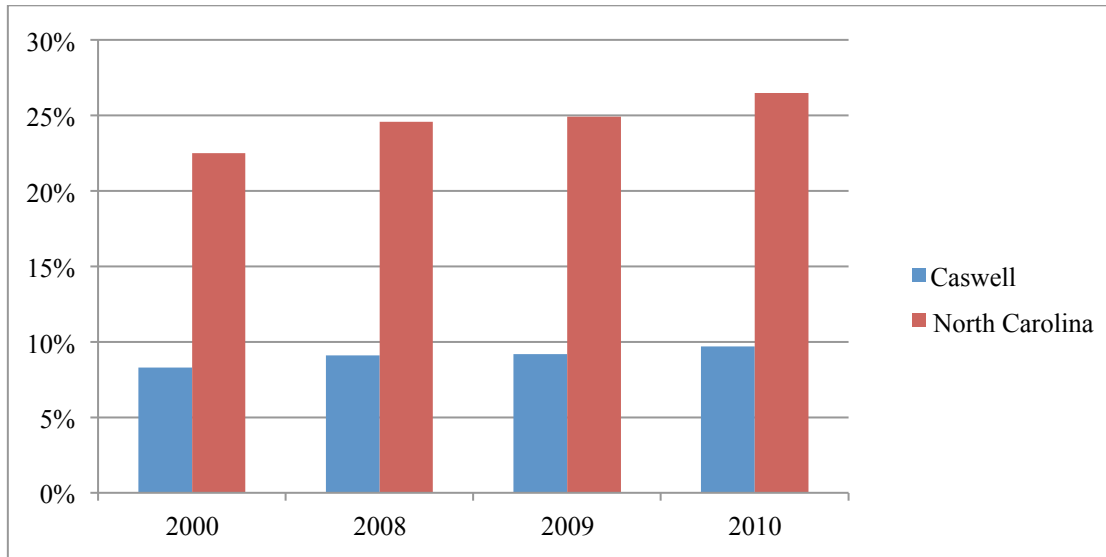
### Why is higher educational attainment important?

Higher educational attainment remains impactful for both individuals and communities. For individuals, higher education increases the breadth of employment options while increasing the propensity for higher economic earnings. For communities, an increased average of educational attainment raises the potential tax revenues. Furthermore, higher educational attainment levels may attract more diverse businesses. Additionally, higher educational achievements impact the cultural conceptions of the region.

### *Higher Educational Attainment – Bachelor's Degree (% of total populations)*



<sup>13</sup> <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



### How are we doing?

Over the assessed period, community-wide educational attainment levels rose for the entire region. Concurrently, the Virginia average increased from 32.7 percent to 35.1 percent. Despite increases, the region remains significantly below the state average. Caswell County increased its level 1.4 percent in the past decade. North Carolina increased its levels by 4.0 percent, and is significantly higher than Caswell County.

## *High School Drop-out Rates*

### Description of Indicator

Virginia high school dropout rates were obtained from the Virginia Department of Education statistical database. These rates are total annual dropout percentages; however, these rates are not from cohort data. For specific details regarding what constitutes “dropping out” please see [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics\\_reports/graduation\\_completion/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/graduation_completion/index.shtml). North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina public schools database.<sup>14</sup>

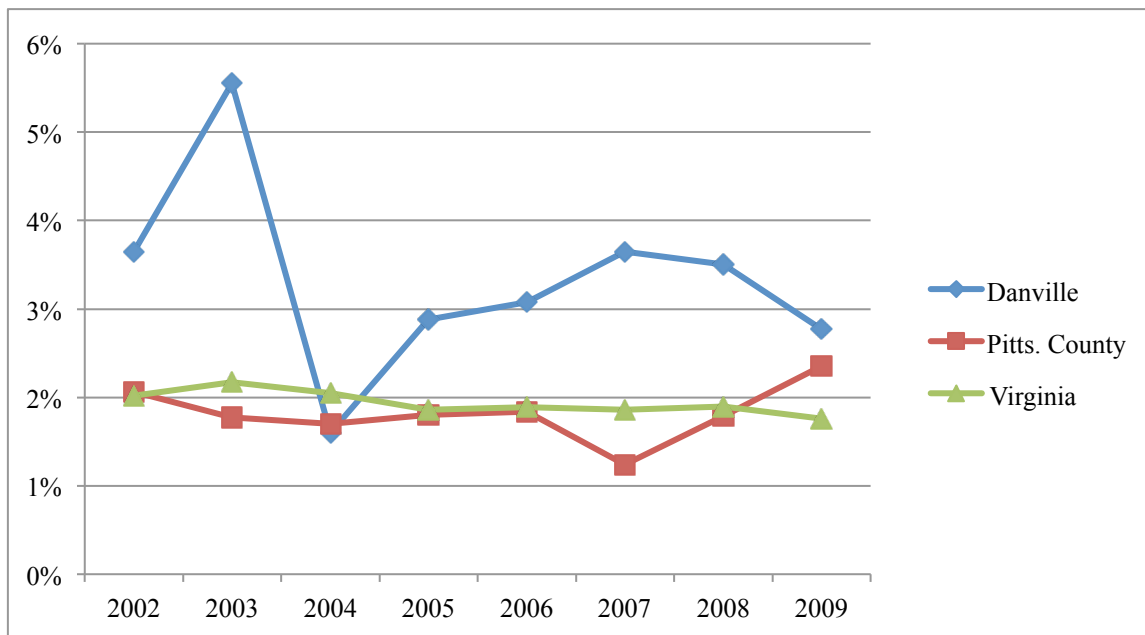
### Why are high school dropout rates important?

High school dropout rates inevitably affect the workforce capacity of the region. Research indicates a statistically significant effect upon future economic earnings of both individuals and the entire community for residents lacking a high school diploma. Individuals routinely earn \$300,000 less in their lifetime incomes, have an 8 percent increased propensity for contact with the criminal justice system, and are twice as likely to experience poverty. Additionally, annual tax revenue from dropouts remains significantly lower in communities with lower educational

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/data/reports/>

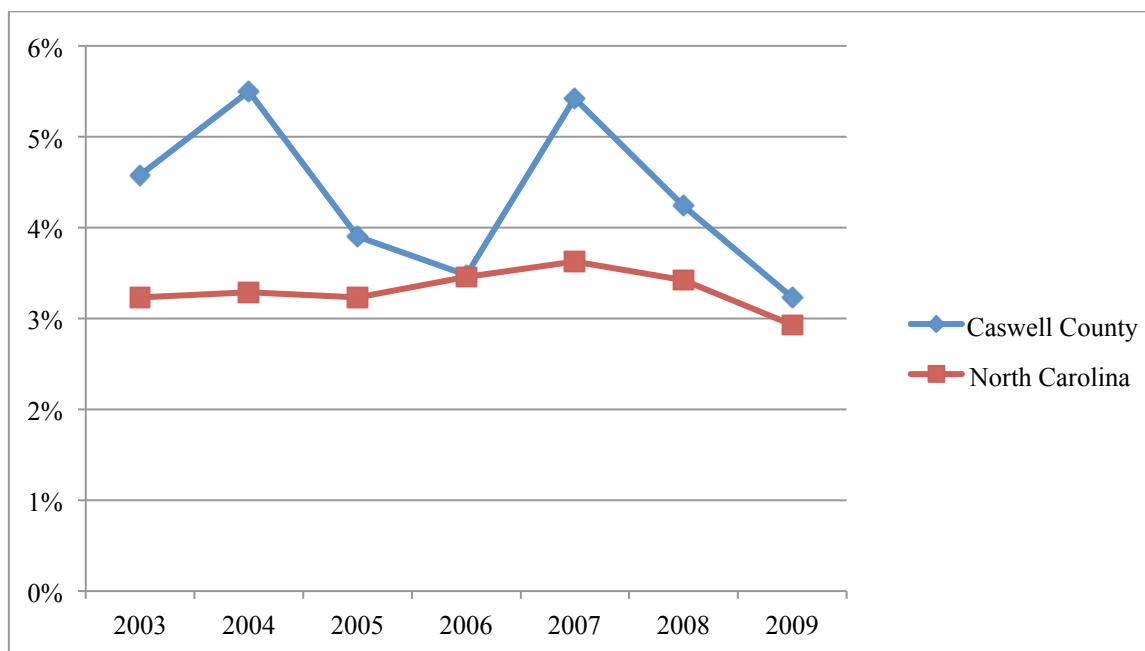
attainment levels.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, dropout rates reflect the condition of the educational system in a specific community. Specifically, research explains dropout rates as personal beliefs of impracticality associated with the educational offerings in a specific area. The school system's leaders must address students' perceptions of educational curricula relative to the students' present and future life pursuits. They must provide practical applications to students who need to be actively involved educationally instead of passively attentive. Beyond the need for practical applications aimed at luring students into active educational attainment, attention must be focused on the climbing dropout rates, as a warning of failure of the community's educational system to address an area's workforce needs.<sup>16</sup>

### *High School Dropout Rates*



<sup>15</sup> <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455013168452477.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.civicenterprises.net/MediaLibrary/Docs/ED%20-%20building%20a%20grad%20nation.pdf>



### How are we doing?

Over the assessed period, high school dropout rates for the Danville Public Schools (DPS) remained unpredictable. However, from 2002 to 2009, the rate fell from 3.65 percent to 2.77 percent or from 128 to 79 students. Over the same period, the Pittsylvania County Schools (PCS) reported steady dropout rates until a recent increase from 2007 to 2009. This increase from 1.24 percent to 2.35 percent resulted in 99 dropouts in 2009. Concurrently, Virginia experienced a decrease in dropout rate, falling from 2.17 percent to 1.76 percent. Despite district fluctuations, DPS maintained higher dropout rates as compared to the state average, while PCS rose above the state average in 2009. Caswell County Schools (CCS) also remained unpredictable over the assessed period, but in recent years has shown a significant decrease in high school dropouts. North Carolina rates remained fairly constant over the assessed period but also have recently begun to decrease significantly. From 2003 to 2009, the CCS rate went from 4.58 to 3.23 and the North Carolina rate dropped from 3.23 to 2.93.

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### Financial Stability

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Statistical analysis of the financial stability of the Dan River Region is provided in this section. Specifically, this report tracks changes in percent of financially stable families, students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, per capita income, persons at/or below the poverty line, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseloads, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) claims, average household net worth, and homeowner rates in the region.

**Findings** — Financial stability of the region remains a concern. Over the assessed period, percentages of students on free or reduced lunch have increased, per capita income has increased



at a slower rate than the state, and persons at/or below poverty level have increased. However, progress has been made on EITC claims. In fact, the entire region remains above state average in the percentage claiming available funds.

**Recommendations** — This proposal views the region’s decreasing financial stability as a result of decreasing economic vitality. Thus, the majority of interventions attempting to raise the financial stability should be directed at improving the economic vitality whereby financial stability would be indirectly improved. Furthermore, individualized interventions should be initiated to increase EITC claims, improve individual financial competence, and establish community-wide awareness of social assistance programs.

### ***Percentage Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch***

#### **Description of Indicator**

The percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch was gathered from the Virginia Department of Education nutrition statistics.<sup>17</sup> Free or reduced lunch eligibility is based on family income levels. This statistic is provided annually from every school district in the state. North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina Nutrition Services Branch.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Why is the percentage of free or reduced lunch important?**

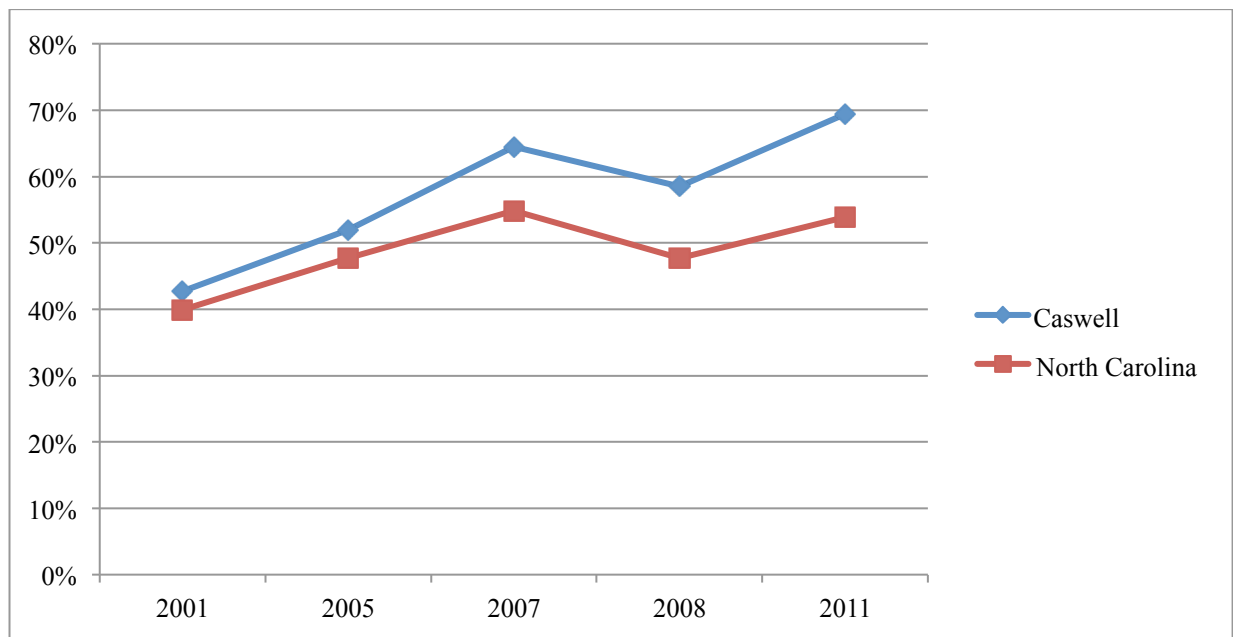
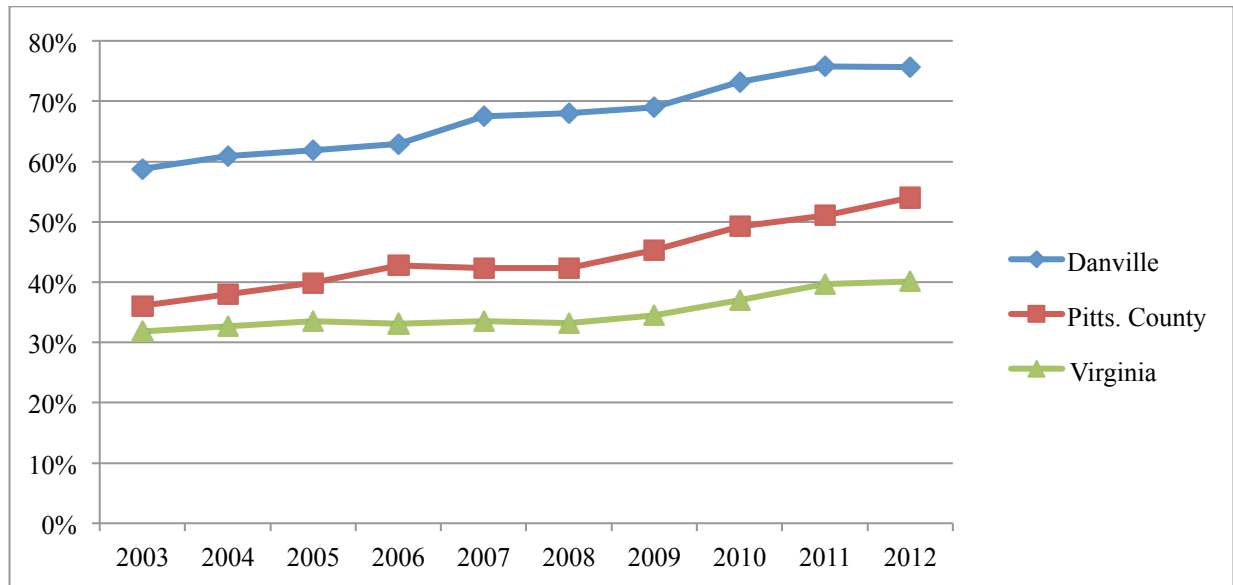
The percentage of students on free and reduced lunch serves as another assessment of the economic situation in the region, because eligibility is determined from family income levels. Furthermore, it displays the effects of the region’s economic conditions upon children and families, providing information beyond individual economic earnings. Additionally, more funds needed for free and reduced lunch inevitably reduce available funding for other district needs. Importantly, the goal is not to reduce the number of students eligible; rather, the goal is to improve or add to economic conditions that increase average family income.

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/statistics/free\\_reduced\\_eligibility/2012-2013/divisions/frpe\\_div\\_report\\_sy2012-13.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/statistics/free_reduced_eligibility/2012-2013/divisions/frpe_div_report_sy2012-13.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.nutritionnc.com/>

*Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch*



**How are we doing?**

Over the assessment period, both Danville Public Schools and Pittsylvania County Schools experienced an increased enrollment in the free or reduced lunch program. DPS increased from 69.01 percent to 75.66 percent, while PCS increased from 45.28 percent to 54.06 percent. Concurrently, the state average increased 33.1 percent to 40.10 percent. While the state's average also increased in the assessed period, DPS increased at a higher percentage, as compared to the average state growth in enrollment. These increases ultimately reflect the unstable economic

conditions found in the region. Caswell County also experienced an increase from 58.5 percent to 69.4 percent.

## *Per Capita Income*

### **Description of Indicator**

Per capita income is calculated by the total income divided by the total population of a given area. Statistics were provided for the Danville-Pittsylvania County Metropolitan Statistical Area from the Bureau of Economic Analysis data<sup>19</sup>, showing both the county and the city reflected in the provided statistic. North Carolina per capita income was acquired from the Bureau of Economic Analysis annual report.<sup>20</sup>

### **Why is per capita income important?**

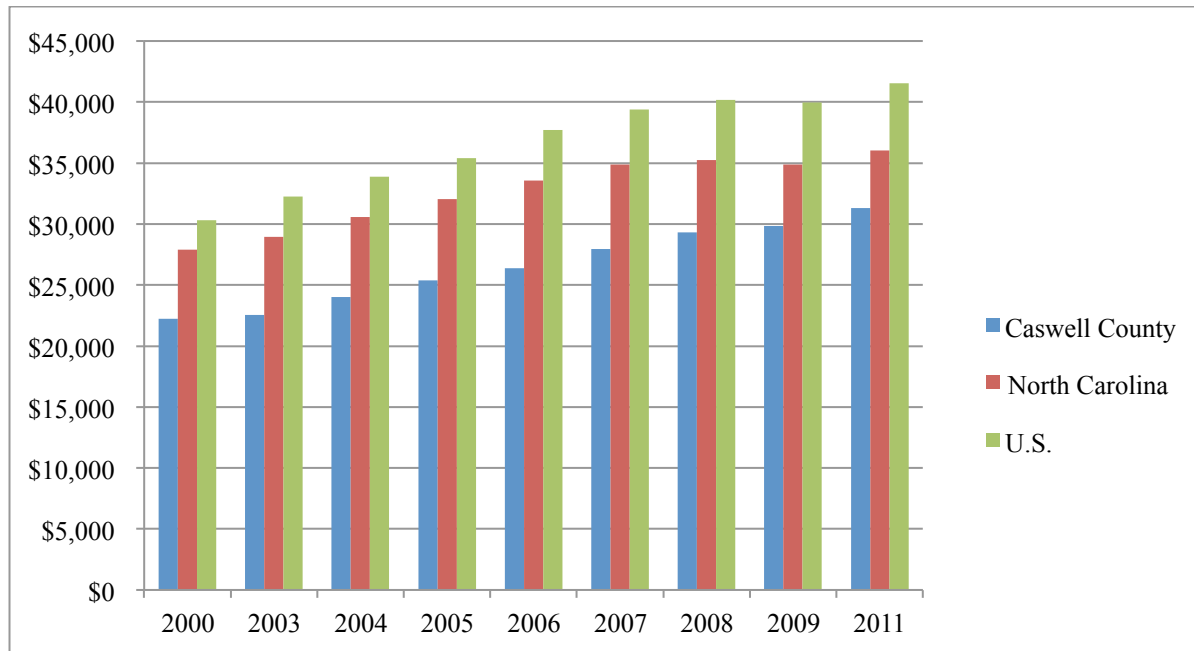
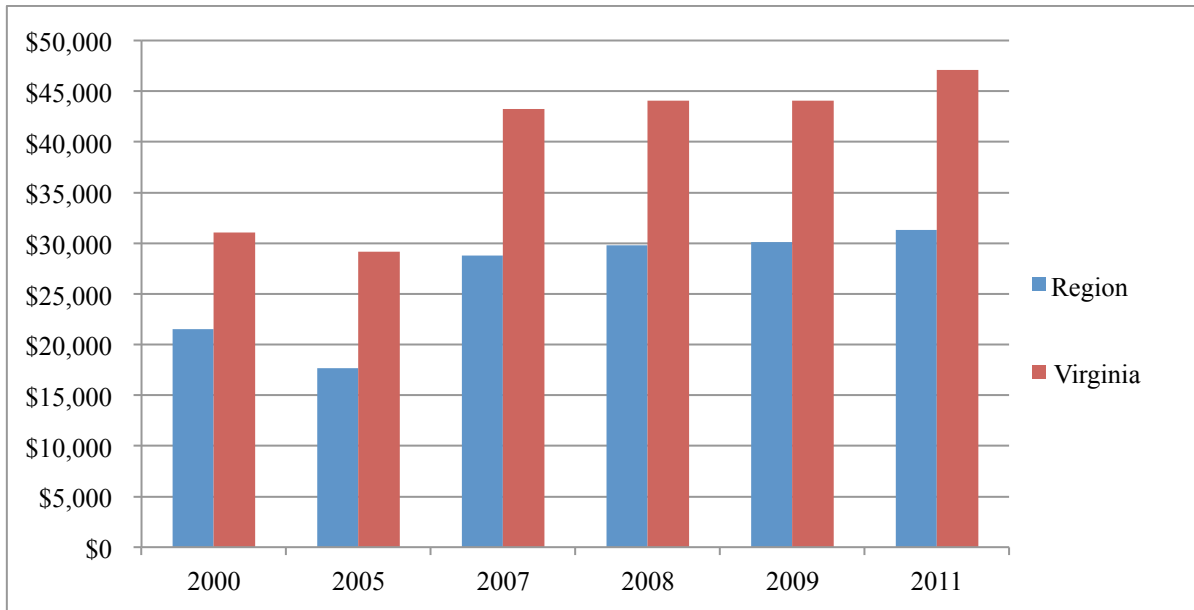
Per capita income is a statistical measure of the potential relative cost of labor in the area. Changes in per capita income indicate trends in a region's standard of living or the availability of resources for an individual, family, or society. Per capita income tends to follow the business cycle, rising and falling accordingly. Thus, increases in per capita income are a reflection of the economic vitality of the region leading to an increased standard of living, which implies increased occupational opportunities. Higher per capita income inevitably increases the competitiveness of the region when leadership is seeking to attract business as well as recruit and retain residents.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.bea.gov/regional/bearfacts/action.cfm>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.bea.gov/regional/bearfacts/action.cfm>

### *Per Capita Income*



#### **How are we doing?**

Danville and Pittsylvania County have experienced an increase from \$28,793 to \$31,297 from 2007 to 2011. Both the state and nation experienced similar increases with the state at a much higher level than the nation; thus, the region still remains significantly below both state and national levels. Caswell County and North Carolina experienced a similar trend; however, both county and state lie below the national per capita income.

## *Poverty Level*

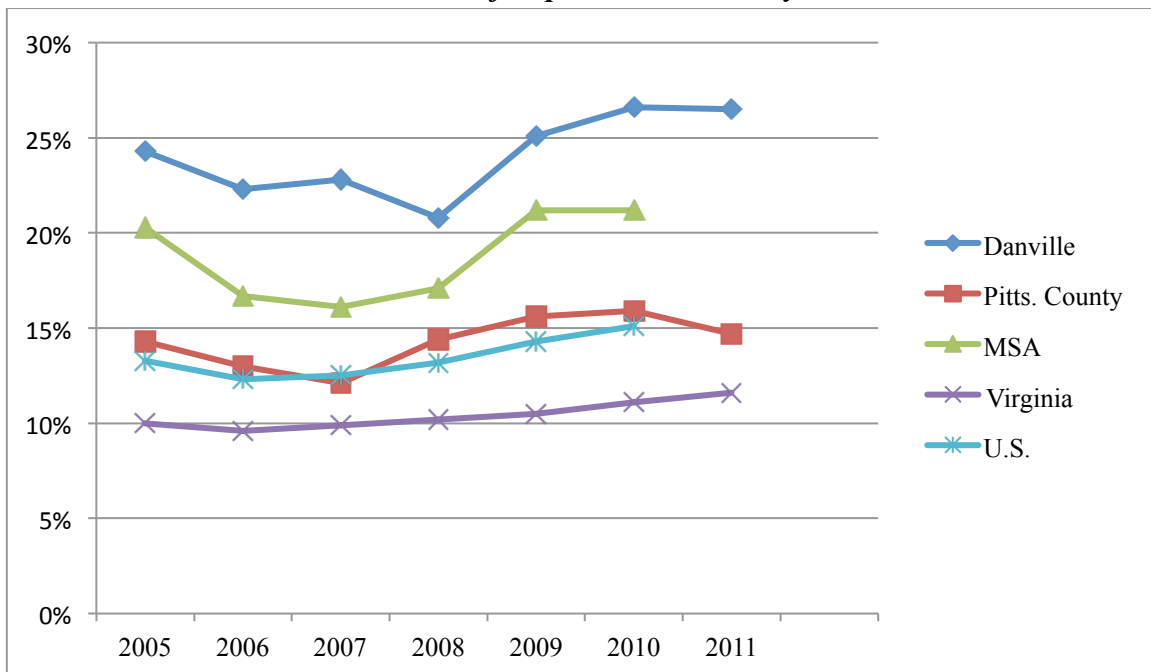
### **Description of Indicator**

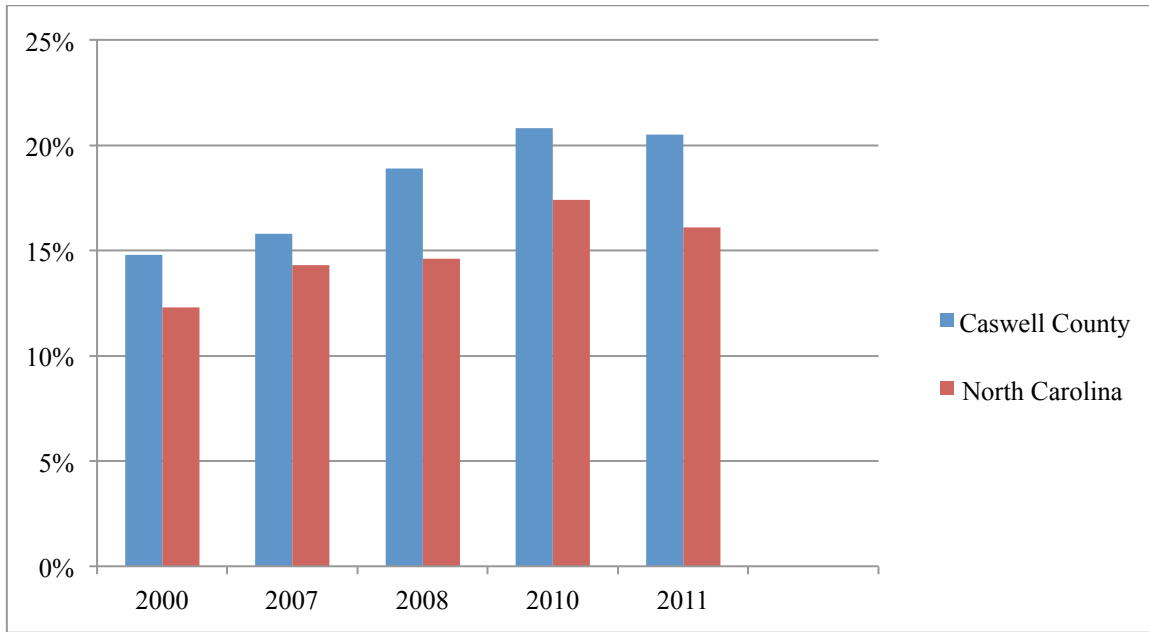
“Poverty” is objectively determined from calculating the pre-taxed income levels minus the estimated need of a family. If the family’s income falls below the threshold of need, the family is determined to subsist in poverty. The threshold is adjusted annually for inflation. The following statistics encompass all individuals in poverty, including families and children. This data is based on population estimates. The percent of the population at/or below the poverty line was ascertained from the U.S. Census annual report. The data for 2011 is the American Community Survey (ACS) data for Danville and Pittsylvania County.

### **Why is the poverty rate important?**

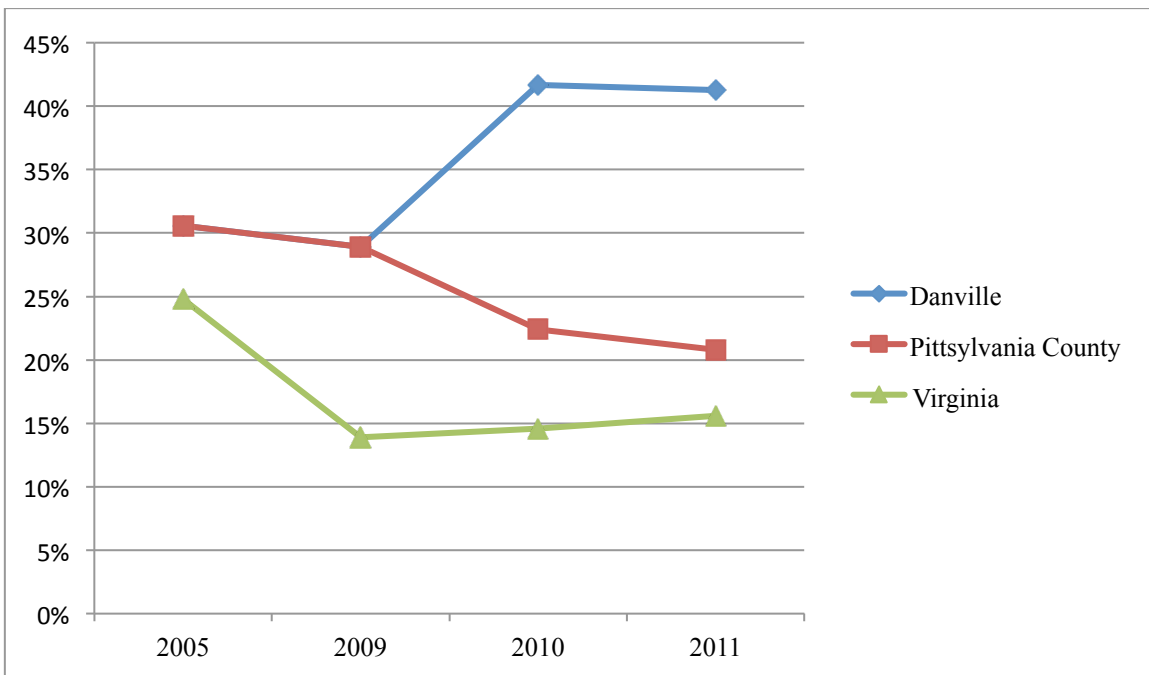
Poverty has far reaching implications for both individuals and entire communities. Exposure to poverty negatively affects, among other things, psychological well-being, educational attainment, propensity for contact with the criminal justice system, and political engagement. For community development, higher rates of poverty decrease a region’s marketability in attracting businesses. Furthermore, it represents decreased tax revenues and more increased public welfare expenditures. Poverty rates and economic competitiveness maintain an inverse relationship with increases in widespread poverty diminishing the sustainability of a particular region.

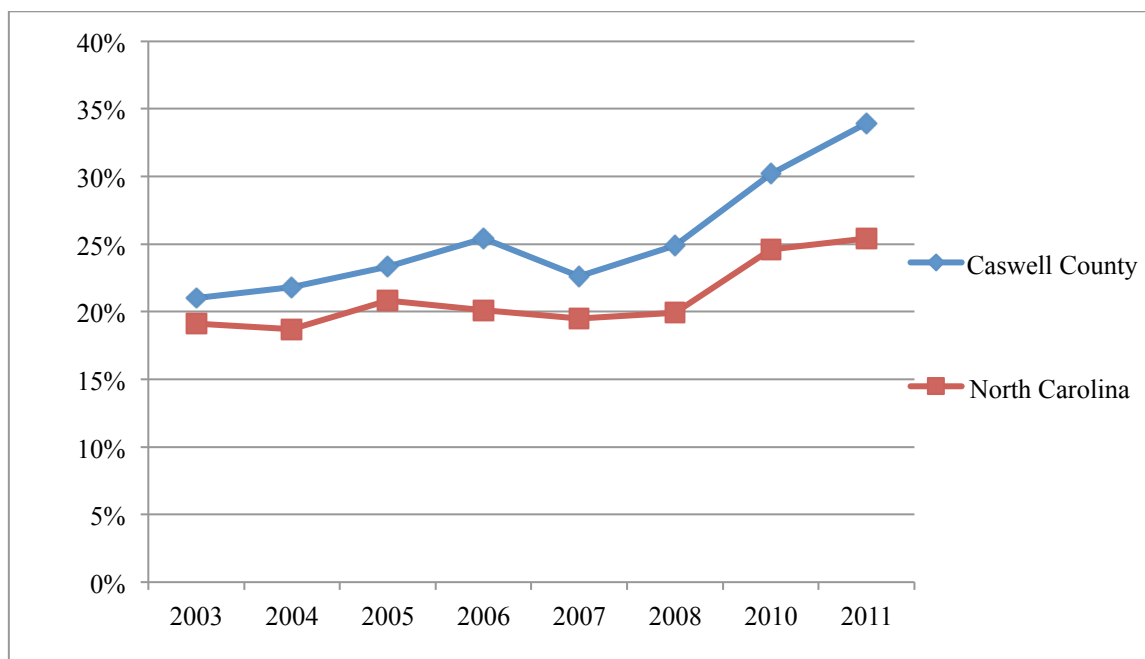
*Percent of Population in Poverty*





*Percent of Children in Poverty*





### How are we doing?

Over the assessed period, rates of poverty remained relatively stable across the region. The amount of poverty in the region increased from 2007 to 2011. When separated for 2011, the large difference between Danville (26.5%) and Pittsylvania County (14.7%) is much clearer. The state average also increased slightly from 10.0 percent to 11.1 percent. Caswell County has increased from 14.8 to 20.5 percent from 2000 to 2011, while North Carolina has increased from 12.3 to 16.1 percent. Children in poverty in Caswell County and North Carolina also increased from 22.6 to 33.9 percent and 19.5 to 25.4 percent, respectively.

## *Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)*

### Description of Indicator

The Earned Income Tax Credit is a Federal tax refund for low-income populations. Maximum refunds total \$4,824 per family. Eligibility is calculated based on income and accompanying dependent expenditures. Data was available for Virginia through the Virginia Department of Social Services.<sup>21</sup>

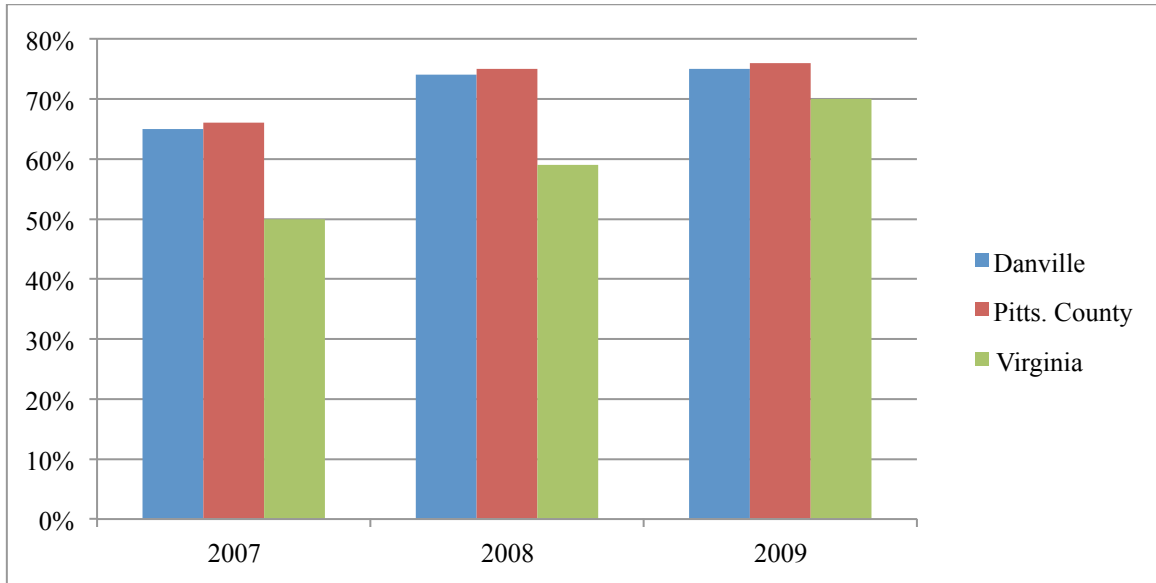
### Why is EITC important?

The EITC has been hailed as the most successful anti-poverty measure in U.S. social policy. Nationally, 21 million families receive refunds that total \$36 billion annually. Thus, the EITC refund alone has lifted five (5) million families above the poverty line. Importantly, economists reason that the EITC refund has a “multiplier” effect, because it has a double-dollar value impact for local and regional economies. However, it is estimated that 15 to 25 percent of eligible

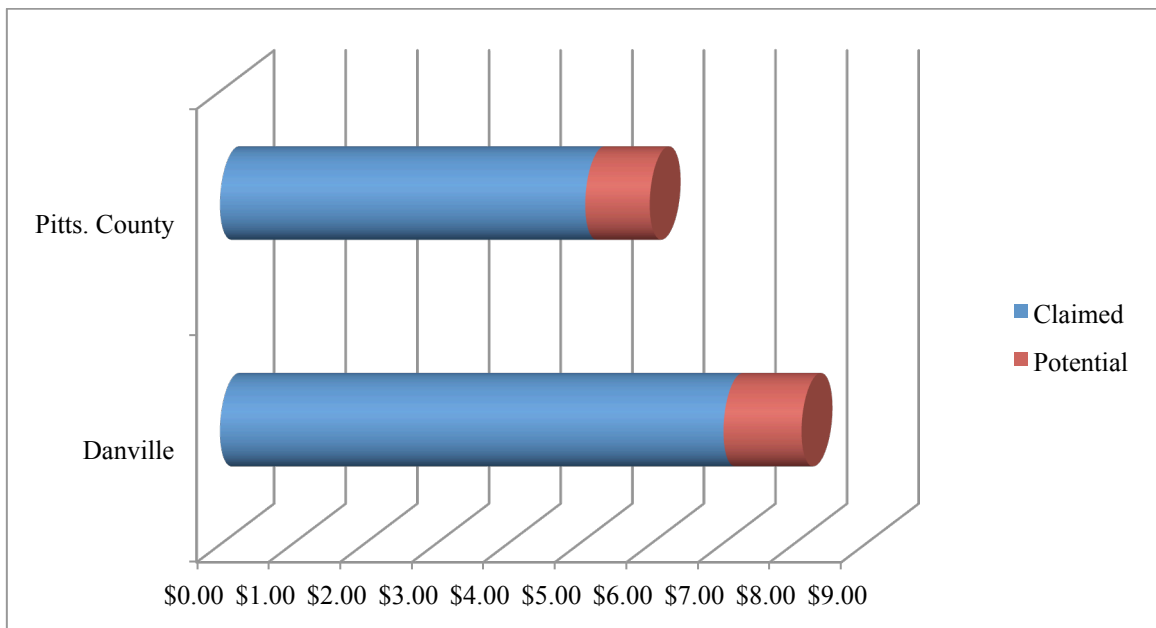
<sup>21</sup> [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/reports/financial\\_assistance/eitc.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/reports/financial_assistance/eitc.cgi)

families do not claim the credit. Increasing EITC claims remains important, because full claiming capacity would increase the regional revenue by upwards of \$12 million annually.

*Percent of Eligible Funds Claimed*



*Amount Claimed of Potential Eligibility (Millions)*





### How are we doing?

In 2007 the Department of Social Services released the first report of EITC claims. For the assessment period, Danville and Pittsylvania County claimed higher eligible percentages as compared to the state average. Specifically, 75 percent of Danville's eligible families claimed and received the EITC refund; Pittsylvania County achieved a 76 percent claim rate.

Concurrently, the state average maintained a 70 percent claim rate. Thus, Danville saw a revenue influx of over \$7 million while Pittsylvania County had a \$5 million influx.

## *Average Household Savings (Net Worth)*

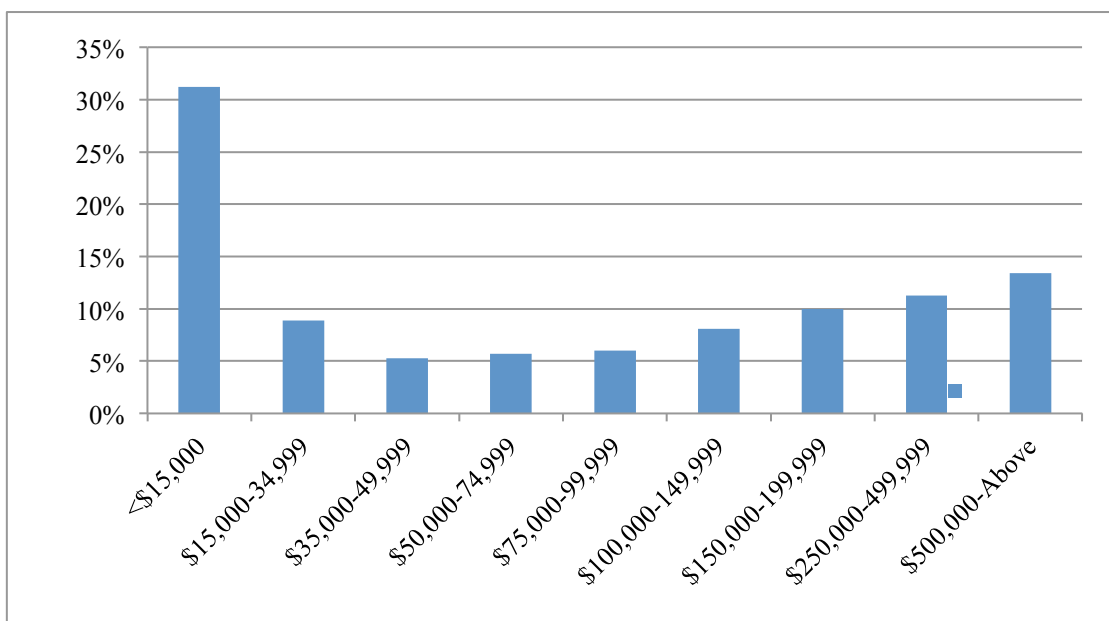
### Description of Indicator

The household net worth distribution represents average household savings. Taking personal income and subtracting personal debt determine estimates.

### Why is net worth important?

Personal savings reflect individuals' financial stability. Increased savings allow families to better deal with economic hardships, including unemployment, a death in the family, and annual fluctuations in the national market (i.e. interest rates and loan rates). Increasing the average net worth distribution would inevitably increase the competitiveness and sustainability of the region.

### *Household Net Worth Distribution (2007)*



### **How are we doing?**

As displayed in the graph above, income distribution in the region is skewed toward the lower end of the income spectrum. Over 30 percent of the population maintains net savings under \$15,000. Furthermore, the second largest point of income distribution is \$500,000 and above, hovering at 13.4 percent. Thus, the region suffers from an income disparity in which the region maintains a very small middle class. Thus, the majority of the population remains unprepared, placing it at financial risk in the event of foreseeable economic hardships.

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### **Economic Vitality**

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The following section delineates statistical data on the economic vitality of the region. Specifically, yearly assessments are provided for average weekly wages, new firm startup rates, unemployment figures, population distributional changes, and median household income.

**Findings** — Over the assessment period, the economic vitality of the Dan River Region remains in a less than competitive situation. Overall, the region remains below state percentages in average weekly wages and growing at a slower rate. Furthermore, new firm growth has decreased while unemployment rates have increased.

**Recommendations** — Community interventions should target increasing the economic vitality of the region. This area of focus remains highly impactful for future regional success. Without a competitive economic advantage, the region can expect continued population decline, revenue losses, and financial instability. As a result, the region’s leaders should target increasing the non-dependent population distribution, attracting living wage jobs to the region, encouraging new firm startups, and fostering entrepreneurship.

## *Average Weekly Wage*

### **Description of Indicator**

Average weekly wages were acquired from the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics.<sup>22</sup> Subsequent figures will be available annually. Weekly wages are defined as pre-taxed income across the total population.

### **Why are average weekly wages important?**

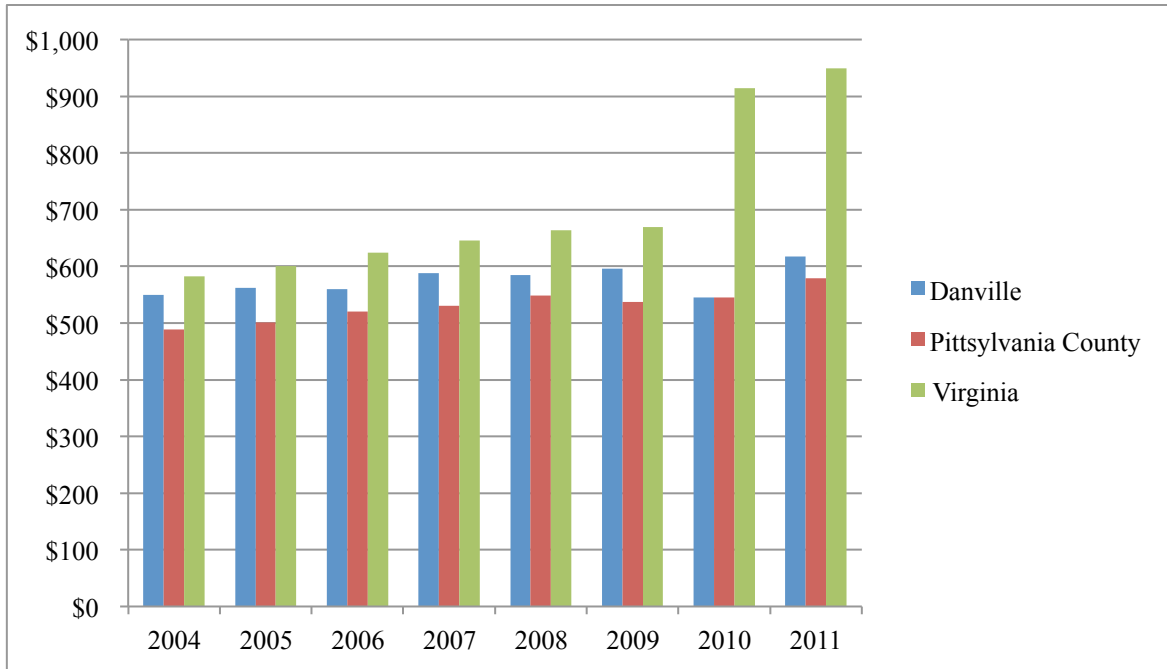
Average weekly wages are directly related to the economic vitality of the region. Higher incomes denote a higher standard of living. Importantly, the region’s leadership should try to achieve a

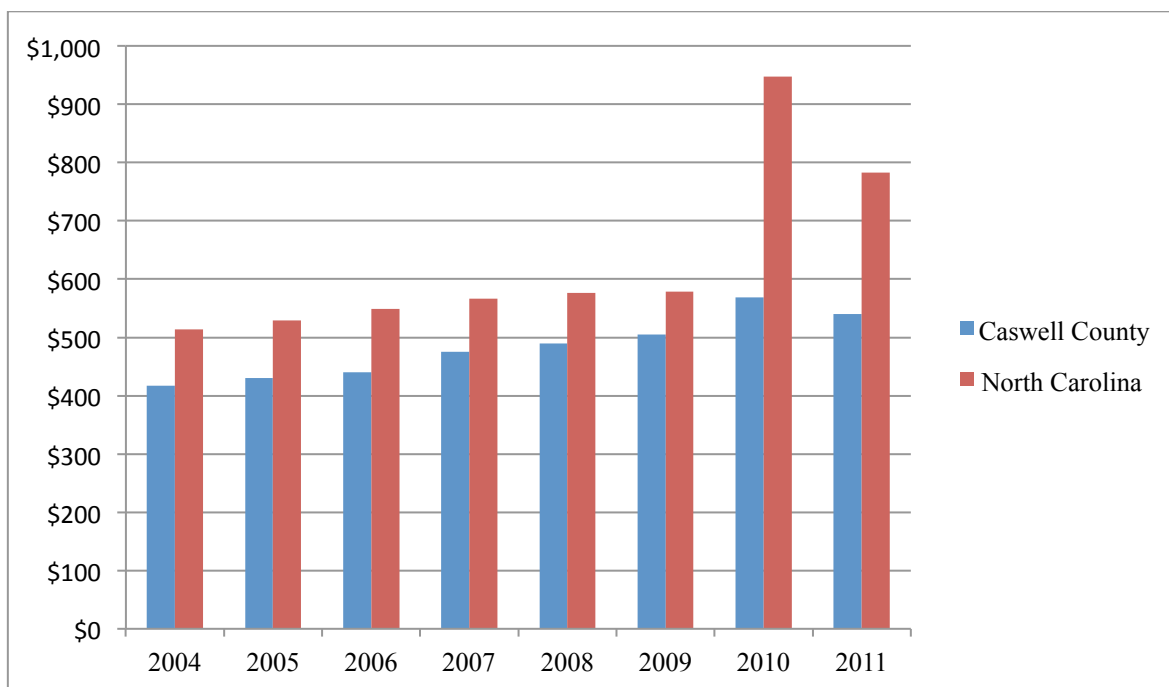
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<sup>22</sup> [http://beta.bls.gov/maps/cew/VA?period=2012-Q2&industry=10&pos\\_color=blue&neg\\_color=orange&Update=Update&chartData=3&ownerType=0&distribution=Quantiles](http://beta.bls.gov/maps/cew/VA?period=2012-Q2&industry=10&pos_color=blue&neg_color=orange&Update=Update&chartData=3&ownerType=0&distribution=Quantiles)

larger percentage of “living wage” jobs. Defining living wage jobs is difficult; however, the Department of Human Services defines the cutoffs for self-sustainability, taking into account cost of living in an area in addition to the individualized family expenses associated with size of the family. Increasing wages increases community-wide revenue through increased tax revenue and increased sales tax income from higher rates of spending. Furthermore, average weekly wages are the first determinant for acquiring wealth and reducing poverty.

*Average Weekly Wages: Second Quarter*





### How are we doing?

Over the assessed second quarter periods, the average weekly wages for Danville rose from \$562 in 2006 to \$617 in 2011, while Pittsylvania County increased from \$501 to \$579. Both areas are below the most recent state second quarter average of \$949. Furthermore, the entire region progressed upward, but at a slower rate than the state. Caswell County and North Carolina also progressed at similar intervals from \$551 to \$555 and \$736 to \$783, respectively.

## *Home Ownership Rates*

### Description of Indicator

The rate of home ownership was obtained from Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME).<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the 2000 rate was provided from the U.S. Census.

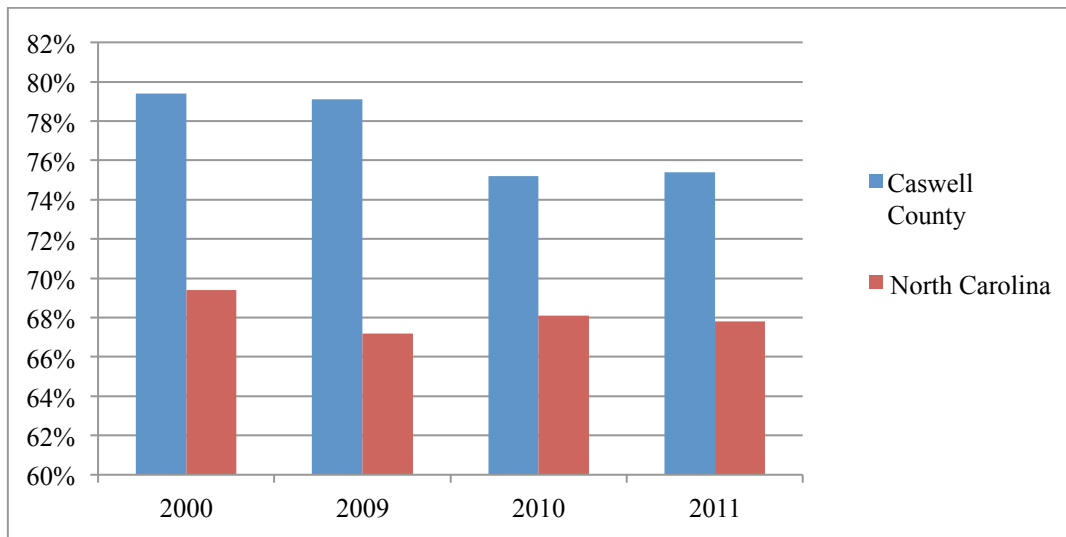
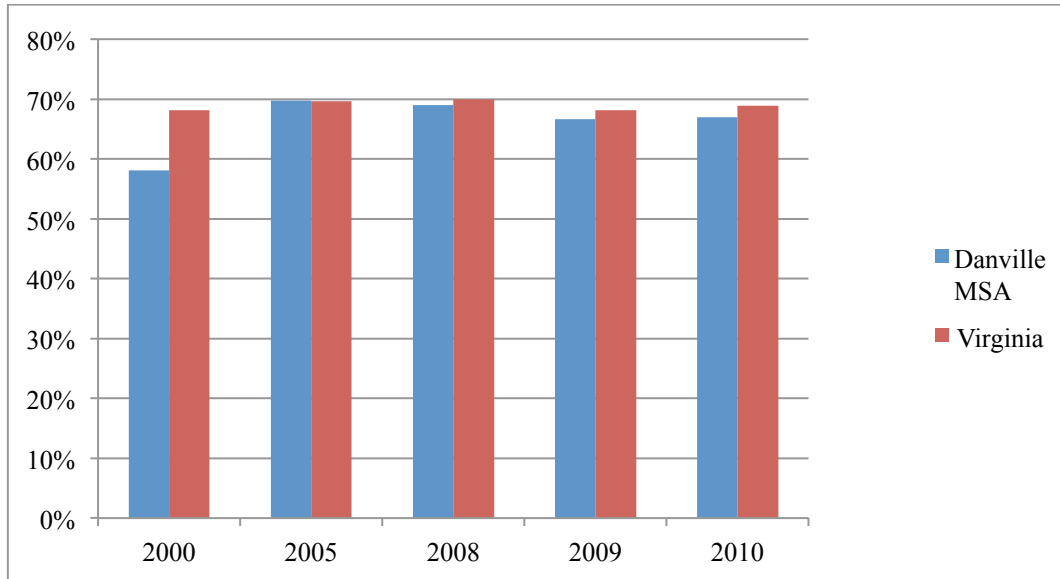
### Why is home ownership important?

Home ownership is one of the most substantial long-term investments. It adds to household net worth and provides borrowing opportunities when owners experience unexpected financial burdens. Beyond these short-term positives, home ownership is crucial in the creation of inter-generational wealth. Home ownership is also sociologically important, for increases in family stability, community engagement, and home upkeep all correlate with home ownership. Furthermore, home ownership strengthens neighborhoods by increasing stability, keeping capital in the community, attracting outside investment, and raising property values.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.vaservice.org>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.consumerlaw.org>

***Home Owner Rates (% of population)***



**How are we doing?**

Over the assessment period, the DPC region experienced decrease in Danville and an increase in Pittsylvania County home ownership rates. Caswell County home ownership rates have decreased slightly over the decade from 79.4 percent to 75.2 percent. Likewise, North Carolina experienced a decrease from 69.4 percent to 67.8 percent.

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## *Startup Firms*

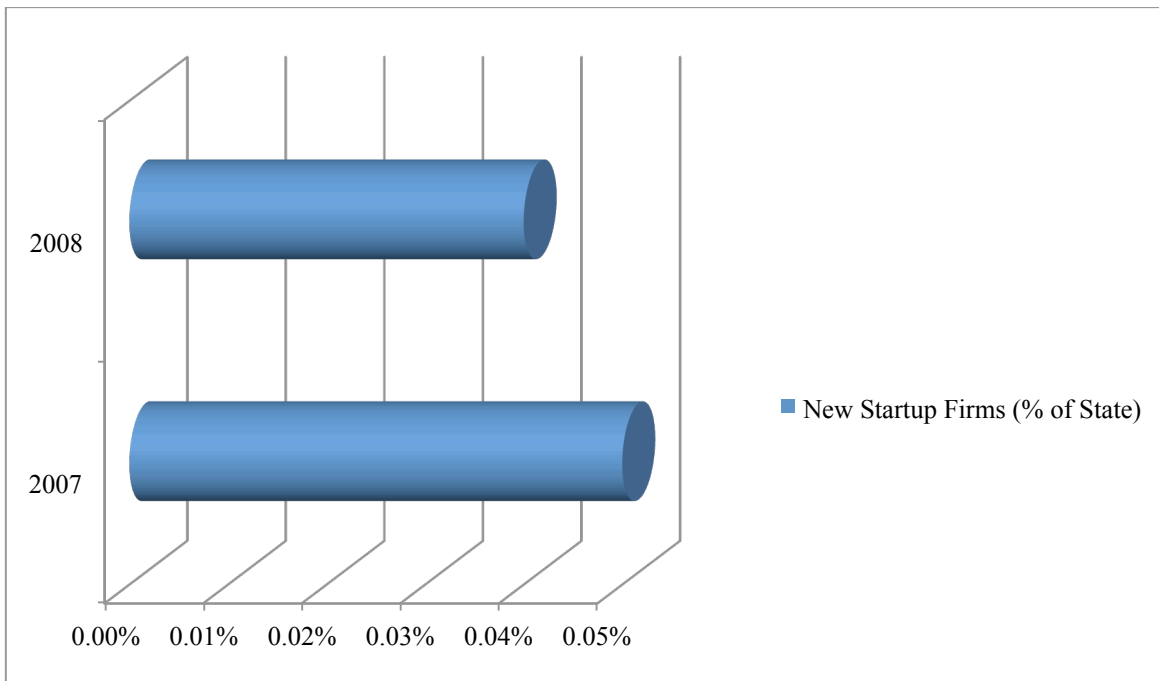
### **Description of Indicator**

Start-up firms are defined as newly created businesses and/or industries within the past year. Data was obtained from the Danville Office of Economic Development, which reports annually on start-up firms. The following graph denotes the growth in the region's industries as a function of the entire state's new growth. *Source: Virginia Department of Employment Statistics.*

### **Why is the number of new start-ups important?**

The number of new start-up firms reflects growth of the market in the region. Developments of new firms' remains particularly important within the region given current downsizing from previously dominate industries (tobacco, textile, etc.). Increasing the number of new firms displays the innovative fervor within the region, which is likely to remain an influential part of the region becoming economically competitive.

*New Startup Firms (% of State)*



### **How are we doing?**

During the assessed period, the growth of the region's firms decreased as a function of the percentage of the state's growth, falling from .05 percent to .035 percent. Additionally, the growth in the region maintains percentages of state growth under one percent.

## *Unemployment Rates*

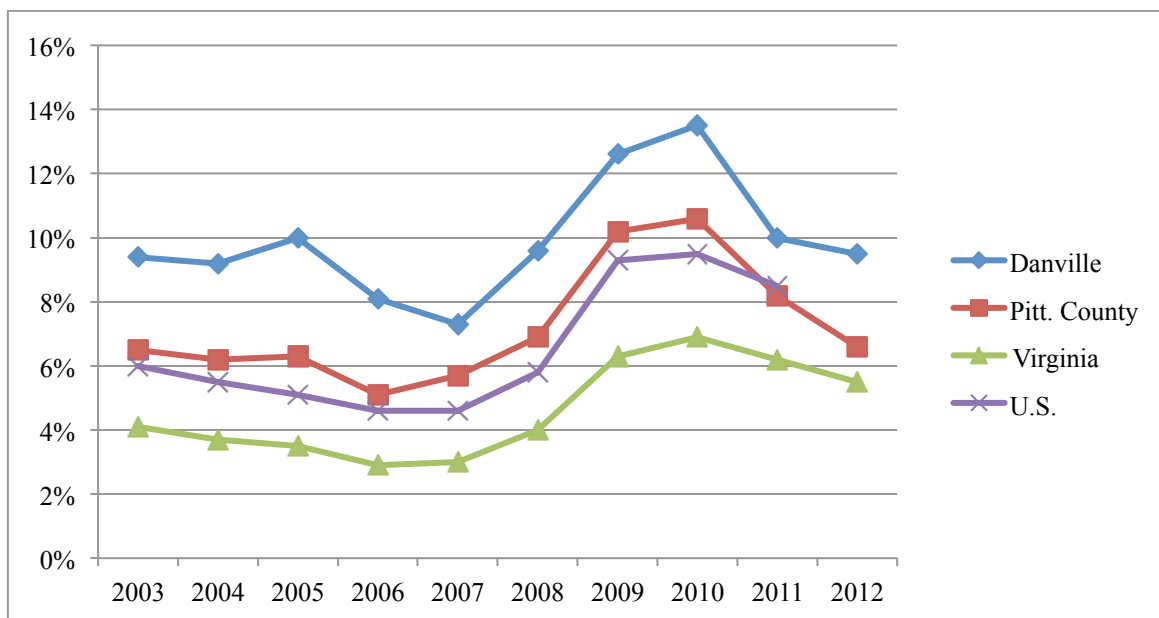
### **Description of Indicator**

Unemployment statistics were acquired from the Virginia Department of Employment Statistics<sup>25</sup>, which are updated monthly. The statistics are determined by the percentage of persons who are actively seeking employment as a function of the region's total population. Excluded in the figures are disabled persons, currently employed persons, persons in prison, and dependent populations, including children and the elderly. North Carolina data was obtained from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

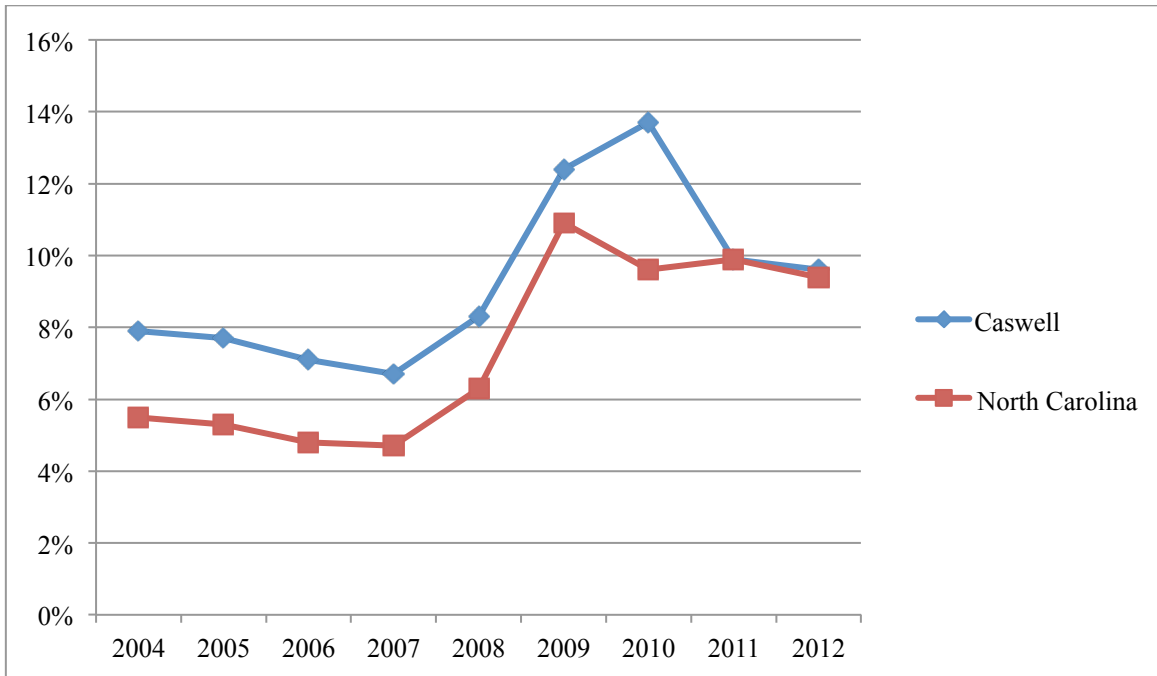
### **Why is the unemployment rate important?**

Unemployment rates are indicative of the current economic status of the Dan River Region. The economic situation inevitably affects the overall economic competitiveness of the region in terms of attracting businesses and recruiting potential residents. Unemployment rates also inevitably affect both individual and community levels of financial stability.

### *Unemployment Rates (Annual Averages)*



<sup>25</sup> Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Profile: Danville, VA. <http://www.bls.gov/lau/>



### How are we doing?

Regional unemployment rates remain significantly higher than both the state and national averages. Specifically, the unemployment rate in Danville has increased from 8.1 percent to 9.5 percent in the assessment period. Concurrently, the unemployment rate in Pittsylvania County has increased from 5.1 to 6.6 percent. Caswell County rate decreased and North Carolina increased significantly to 9.4 percent.

## *Non-Dependent Population Distribution*

### Description of Indicator

Non-dependent population distribution refers to persons over the age of 18 and under the age of 65. Non-dependent implies working populations not receiving parental or governmental assistance, respectively. Population distributions were obtained from the U.S. Census.<sup>26</sup> These figures are statistical estimates.

### Why is population distribution important?

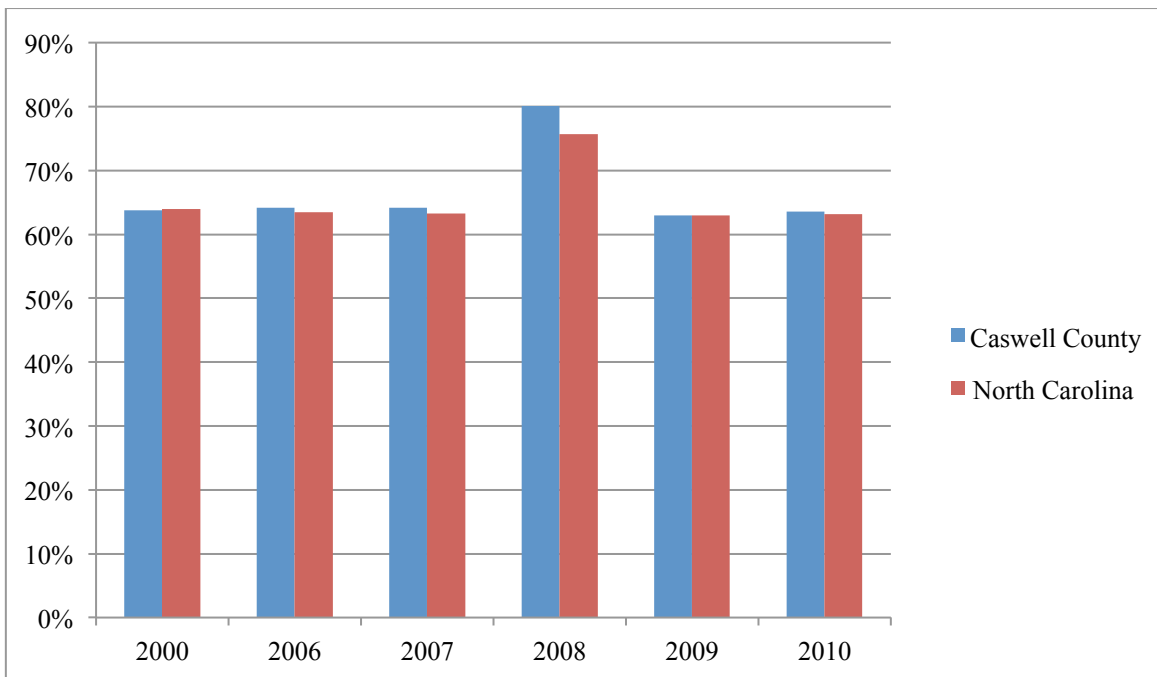
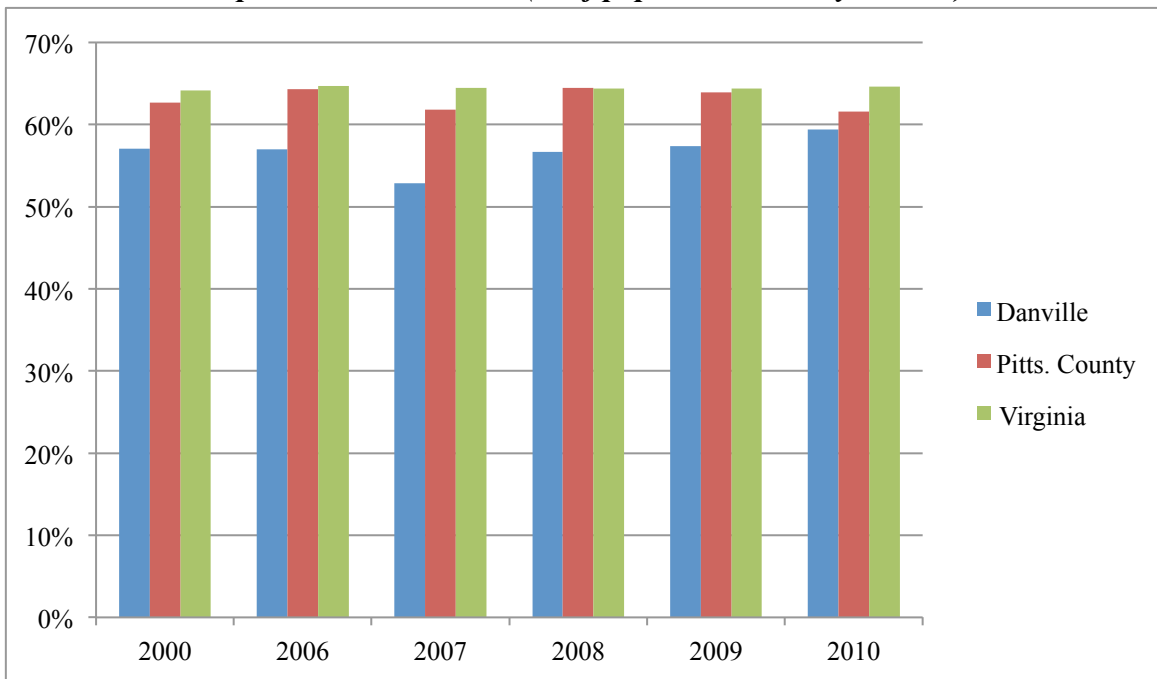
Population distribution is important for the self-sustainability of the region. Maintaining an increasing working-age population positively impacts community revenues and progress. Additionally, attracting and retaining a younger population hinges on the population distribution.

<sup>26</sup> <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



Working-age populations attract businesses and sustain the higher educational systems. To remain competitive in the continuously re-inventive economic system; the region must maintain a large, highly competent working-class population.

*Population Distribution (% of population 18-64 years old)*



**How are we doing?**

Over the assessment period, the non-dependent population distribution increased for Danville City and decreased for Pittsylvania County. Over the same time period, the state's distribution of 18-64 year olds decreased slightly. Both Caswell County and North Carolina saw a slight decrease in 18-64 year olds over the time period.

### *Median Household Income*

**Description of Indicator**

The median income is the amount which divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount and half income below that amount. The median household income for the region is MSA data obtained from the US Census database.<sup>27</sup> Caswell County projected statistics were obtained from the Economic Development Intelligence System.

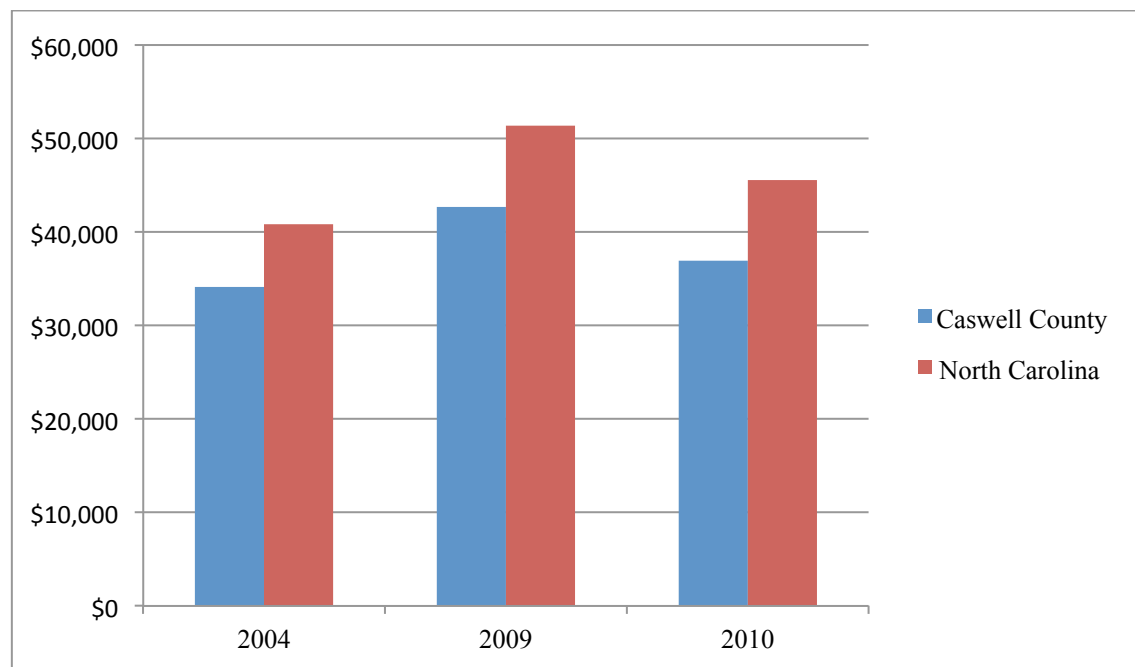
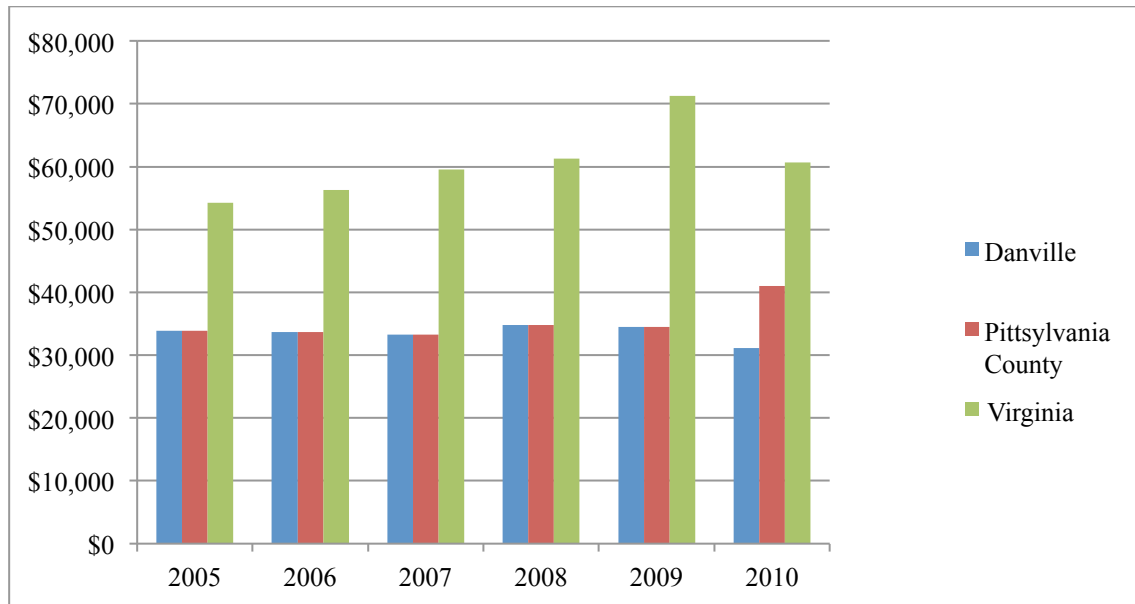
**Why is median household income important?**

Median household income represents the sum of money income received during a calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder, people living alone, and other non-family household members. Thus, the median household income is a general indicator of the economic well-being of all households in the state.

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<sup>27</sup> <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

### *Median Household Income*



#### **How are we doing?**

The entire region performs below state and national levels. The median income levels have remained close to stable of the assessed period with the Danville MSA experiencing a slight increase.

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## Community Health Status

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The following section delineates the community-wide health status, as judged by rates of obesity, infant mortality, heart attack, stroke, teen pregnancy, and uninsured persons.

**Findings** — Over the assessed period, obesity rates increased, placing the region above the state average. Infant mortality rates decreased for Danville while increasing for Pittsylvania County. Heart attack rates decreased while stroke rates increased. Overall, teen pregnancy fell in the region; however, it remained significantly higher than the state average. HIV/AIDS rates increased at a slower rate than the state average while Pittsylvania County reduced its HIV/AIDS cases. Uninsured percentages dropped significantly in Danville while increasing for Pittsylvania County.

**Recommendations** — Health status remains an integral need for community transformation. While progress was made, the intra-regional differences and fluctuations remain substantial, evidenced by diverging trajectories between Danville and Pittsylvania County. Given the interconnected aspect of stroke rate, heart attack rate, and obesity, interventions should target the creation of a “healthy lifestyle” in the area. By the adoption of a “healthy lifestyle” campaign, the region can attempt to reduce unhealthy behaviors including teenage sexual activity. A “healthy community” is important for generating positive attitudes within the populace, attracting businesses to the areas (as higher health care costs for potential employees serve as a deterrent to relocating to Danville), and providing a more productive and motivated community.

### *Obesity Rates*

#### **Description of Indicator**

Obesity statistics were obtained from the Virginia Performs Program website.<sup>28</sup> Rates indicate individuals who reach clinical levels of obesity as defined by Body Mass Index. North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina Department of Health.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Why are obesity rates important?**

Obesity impacts both the health status of individuals and the productivity of an entire community. Higher rates of obesity can lead to higher incidence of other medical conditions, including (but not limited to) heart disease, stroke, and arthritis. In terms of economic impact, the “Virginia Performs Report”<sup>30</sup> links higher obesity rates with lowered productivity and lost workdays. Furthermore, medical costs incurred from obesity remain higher in communities with

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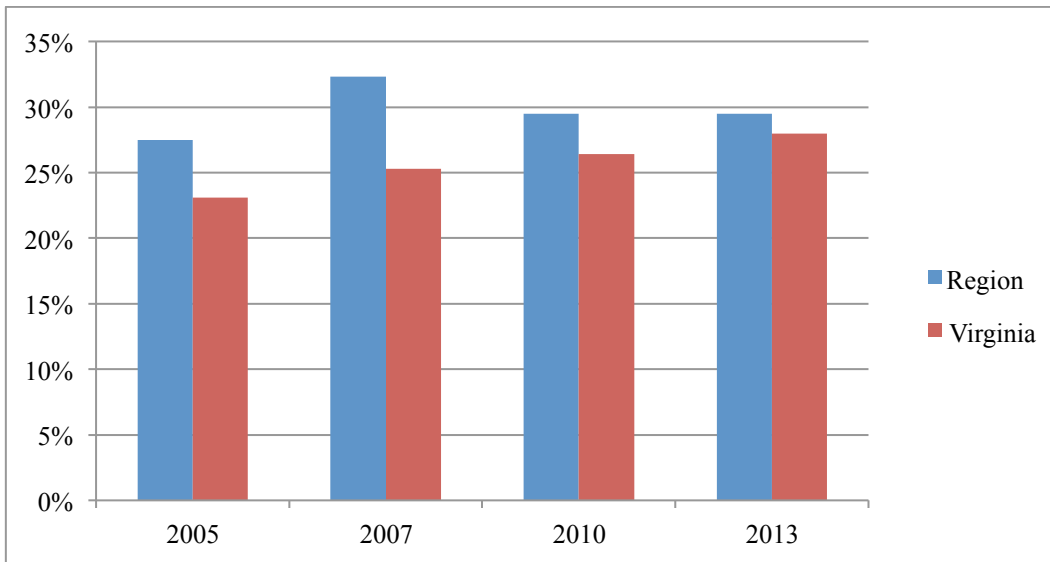
<sup>28</sup> <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/virginia/2013/rankings/outcomes/overall/by-rank>

<sup>29</sup> <http://vitalrecords.nc.gov/vitalrecords/>

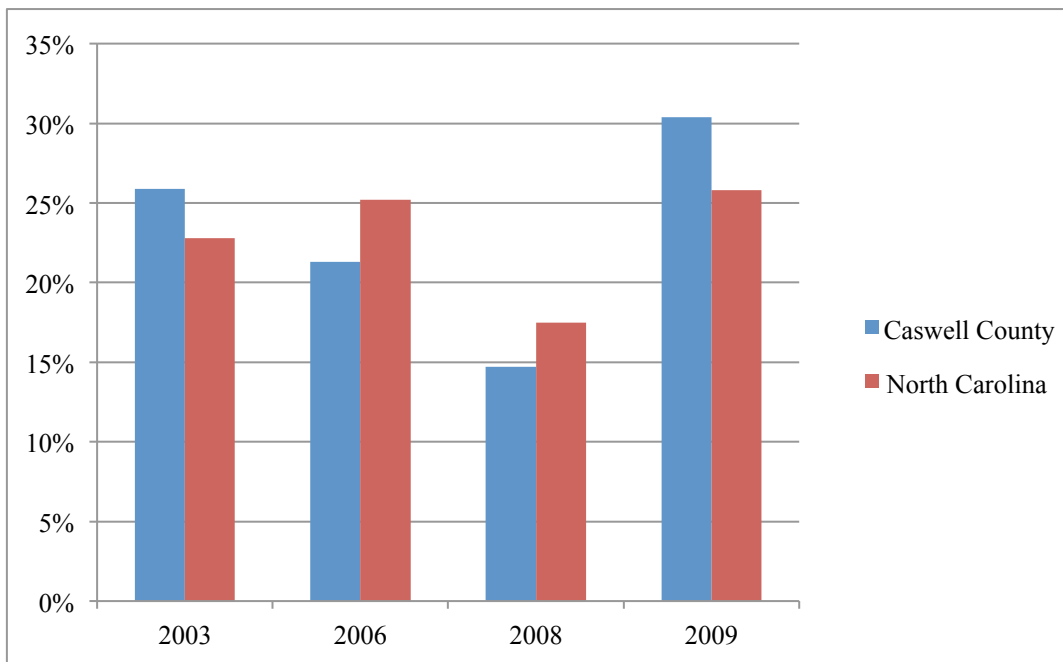
<sup>30</sup> <http://vaperforms.virginia.gov/indicators/healthFamily/obesity.php>

increased prevalence of obesity, straining state and local government health budgets. Beyond higher medical costs, higher rates of obesity decrease the region's competitiveness. Businesses are less likely to relocate to "unhealthy" communities, because of the increased health care expenditures they are likely to incur in an "unhealthy" workforce.

***Adult Obesity Rates (% of total population)***



***Child Obesity Rates (% of total population age 5-11)***



### How are we doing?

Over the assessed period, obesity rates increased throughout the entire region, continuing to place the region above the state average. The same increase occurred for Caswell County and North Carolina for child obesity rates.

## *Infant Mortality*

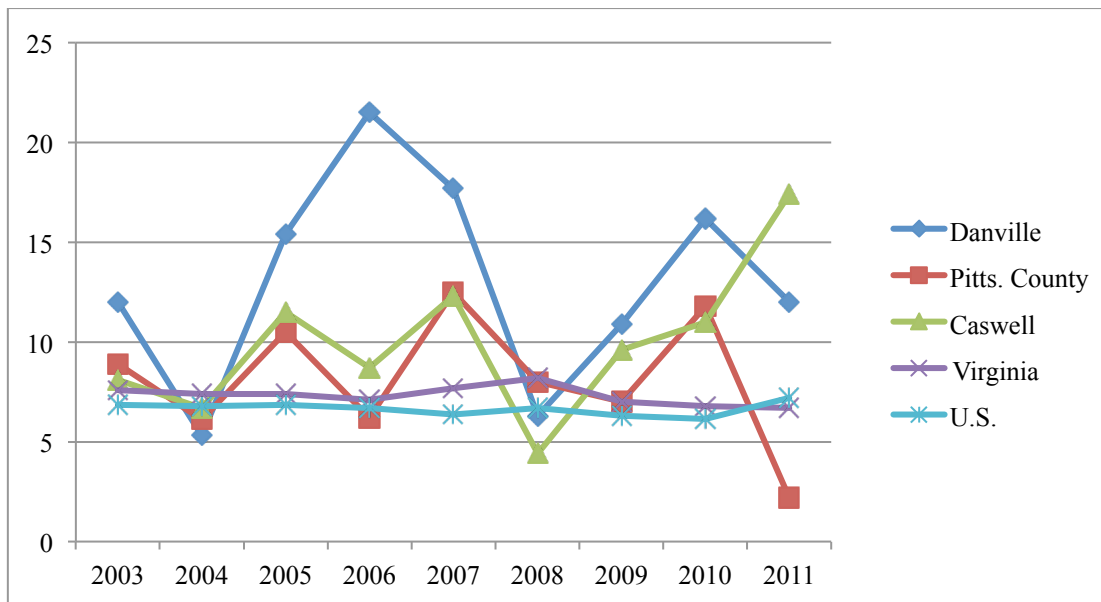
### Description of Indicator

Infant mortality is defined as death of a child in the first year after birth. The following statistics are presented as a rate of deaths per 1,000 live births. Infant mortality rates were obtained from the Virginia Department of Health.<sup>31</sup> National data was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>32</sup> North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics.<sup>33</sup>

### Why is infant mortality important?

According to the Virginia Performs Program, infant mortality rates reflect overall health of the region. Specifically, they display both prenatal care for mothers and post-birth conditions for Virginia's youth. This figure indirectly indicates information regarding both medical care access and the overall medical care quality in the region.

*Infant Mortality Rates (Rates per 1,000 Live Births<sup>34</sup>)*



<sup>31</sup> <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nvsr.htm>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/deaths/ims/2009/2009rpt.html>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.epi.state.nc.us> - Caswell County

**How are we doing?**

Danville averages for infant mortality have been very inconsistent over the past years. In the past year, the rate has declined. Conversely, Pittsylvania County has been more consistent and is currently on the decline. Virginia, North Carolina, and national data have stayed fairly consistent. Caswell County's averages have increased recently and are higher than the state averages.

### *Other Health Indicators*

**Description of Indicator**

There are many health indicators that show how a region is doing overall. Some indicators reflect the more prominent causes of death and how the region is addressing such causes. This report shows the statistics for heart disease death rate and stroke death rate. In addition, another significant factor reported is the teen pregnancy rate for the region. Virginia and the region data were obtained from the Virginia Department of Health.<sup>35</sup> North Carolina data was obtained from the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics.<sup>36</sup>

**Why are these measures important?**

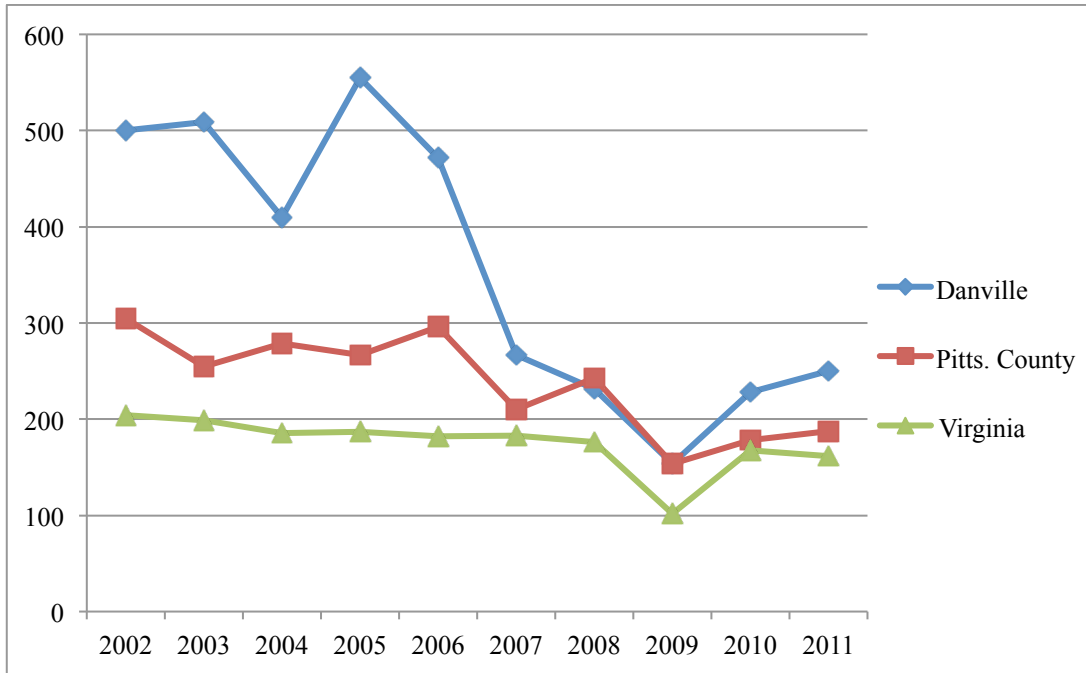
All of these measures create a holistic assessment of the community's health. Given the interrelatedness of obesity with incidence of heart attack and stroke rates and the relatedness of risky sexual behaviors with teen pregnancy and STD incidence, all of these assessments fail to be mutually exclusive. Thus, intervention strategies should simultaneously target all health areas. Rising rates in these areas deter businesses from locating in the area because of potential insurance payments and are instrumental in forming the cultural perceptions of a region. Furthermore, the rates of uninsured populations inevitably affect the scope of clinical intervention in the area. As a result, higher uninsured population rates lead to decreased area health because of limited access to high quality treatment. Furthermore, higher rates of uninsured citizens increase emergency-based costs and treatment.

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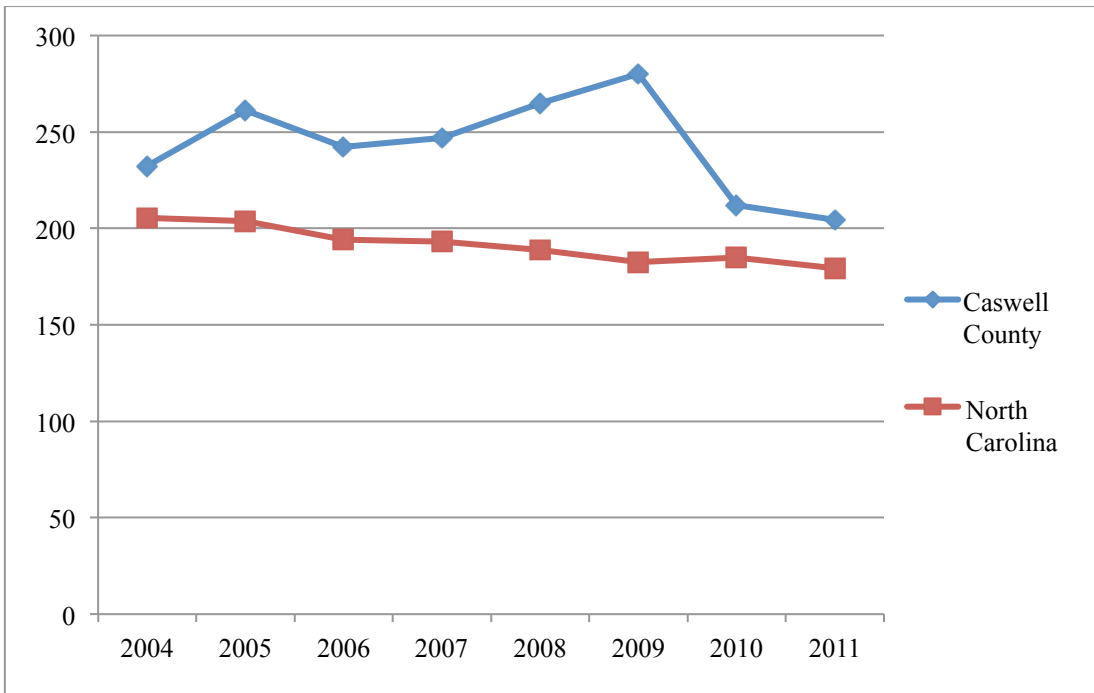
<sup>35</sup> <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregAge09.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/deaths/ims/2009/2009rpt.html>

*Heart Disease Death Rate (Per 100,000 population estimates)*

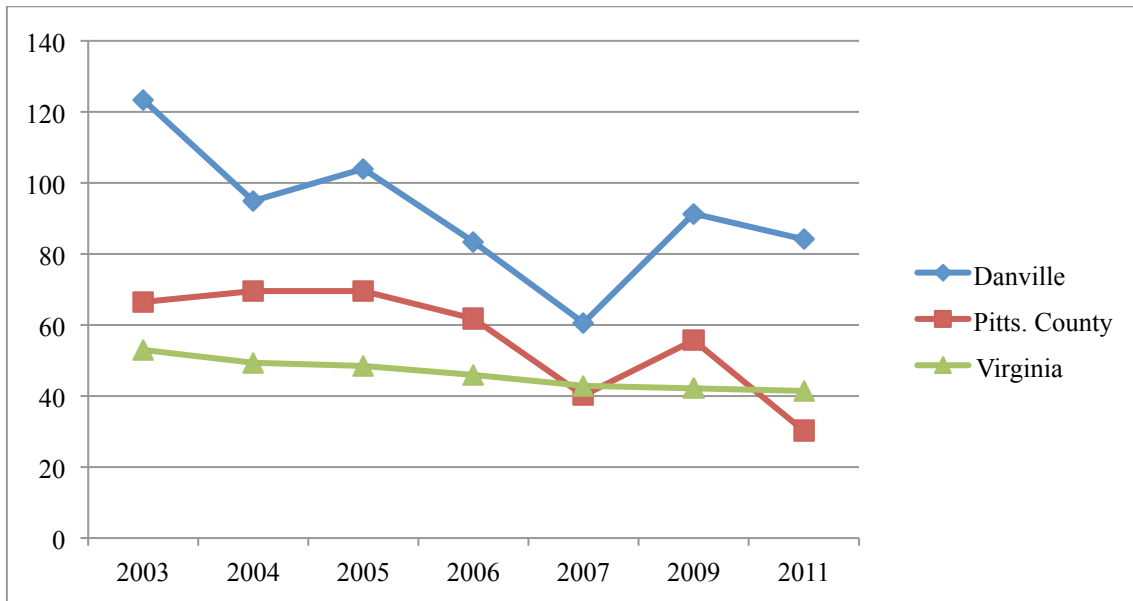


*Heart Disease Death Rate (Per 100,000 population estimates)*

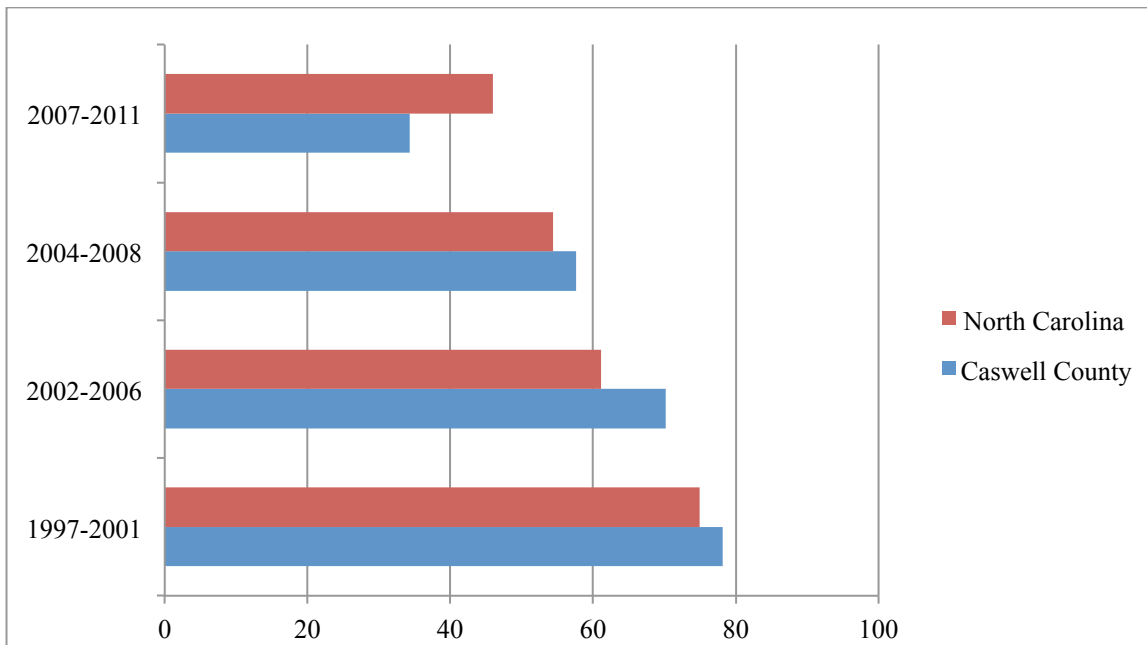




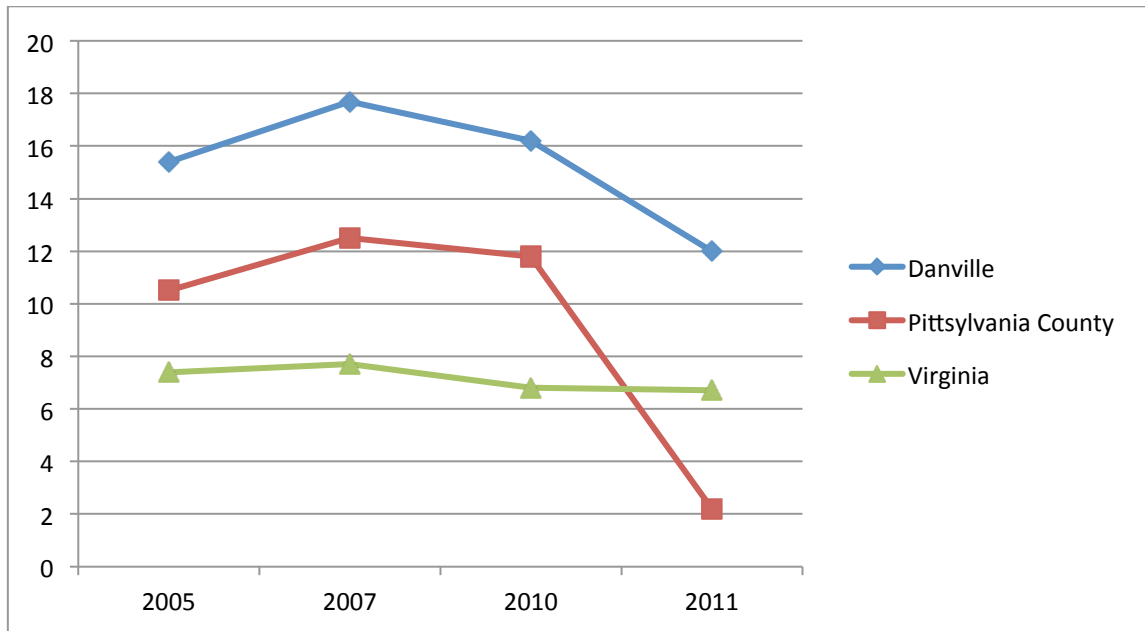
*Stroke Rate (per 100,000 persons)*



*Trends in Stroke Death Rate (per 100,000 persons)*



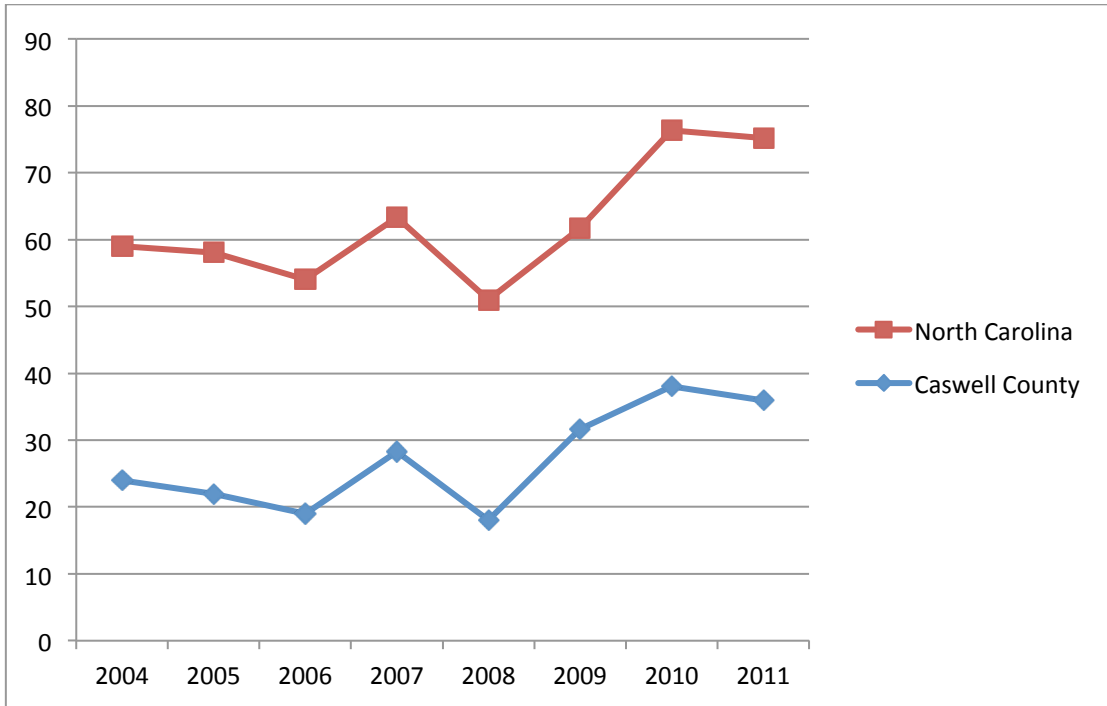
*Teen Pregnancy Rates (per 1,000 females)\**



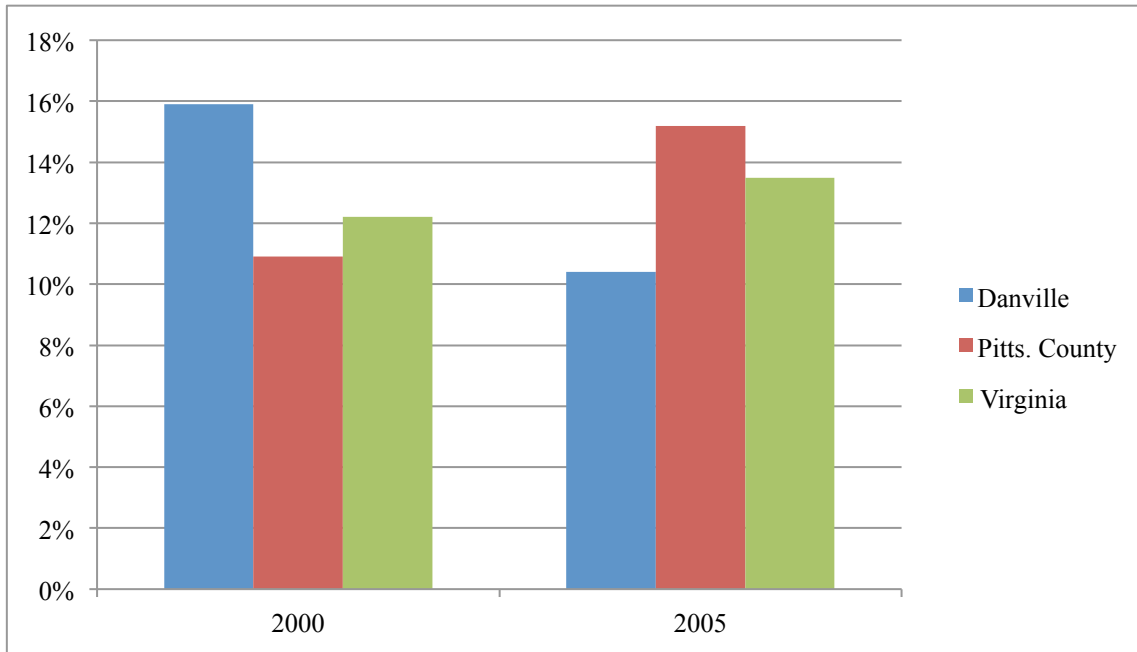
\*Virginia rates were collected from the most recent VDH press release on teen pregnancies. See PowerPoint.

[www.vdh.state.va.us/infantmortality/documents/presentations/V3\\_pressconfposters11-10.pptx](http://www.vdh.state.va.us/infantmortality/documents/presentations/V3_pressconfposters11-10.pptx)

*Teen Pregnancy Rate (per 1,000 females)* <sup>37</sup>



*Uninsured Percentage (% of total population)* <sup>38</sup>



<sup>37</sup> <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/pocketguide/2011/table8a.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.census.gov//did/www/sahie/data/>

### **How are we doing?**

Danville and Pittsylvania County heart disease death rates, cancer mortality rates and stroke death rate have all decreased over the assessment period, with the exception of cancer mortality and stroke rates for Danville in 2011. Caswell County's stroke death, cancer mortality rates, heart disease death and teen pregnancy rates have decreased. As a region, the quality of health appears to be improving in some areas.

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### **Civic Capacity**

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In the following section, the report provides information regarding the civic capacity of the region, as judged by non-profit organizations, charitable giving rates, and political engagement.

**Findings** — Over the assessment period, the number of non-profit organizations has increased in the area. Pittsylvania County increased its non-profit capacity by 6 percent, a significantly higher rate than the state. However, Danville did not expand at a comparable rate to either Pittsylvania County or the state average. Despite less growth in new non-profit organizations, Danville's non-profit revenue increased by rates higher than both the state and the surrounding region. In terms of charitable giving, as a percentage of adjusted gross income, both Danville and Pittsylvania County fell; however, both remain higher than the state average. It is likely this giving rate reflects the participation in faith-based organizations, given the 300 churches located in the region. Political engagement also increased. Of registered voters, turn out increased for the entire region; however, Danville remains slightly below the state average.

**Recommendations** — Subsequent designers of the community assessment should employ more holistic measures of civic capacity. Specifically, growth and revenues of non-profit organizations are important measures of non-profit quality; however, the effectiveness and scope of influence is not captured in these measurements. In other words, the transformative nature of the region's non-profits cannot be conclusively determined. Furthermore, charitable giving rates are measured in monetary allocations; the utilization of these funds is not assessed, and volunteer hours are not captured in this measurement. Furthermore, political engagement is measured in terms of voter turnout and not number of citizens registered. In total, this report card provides fundamental information; however, criteria should be expanded to encompass measures of influence.

### **Description of Indicator**

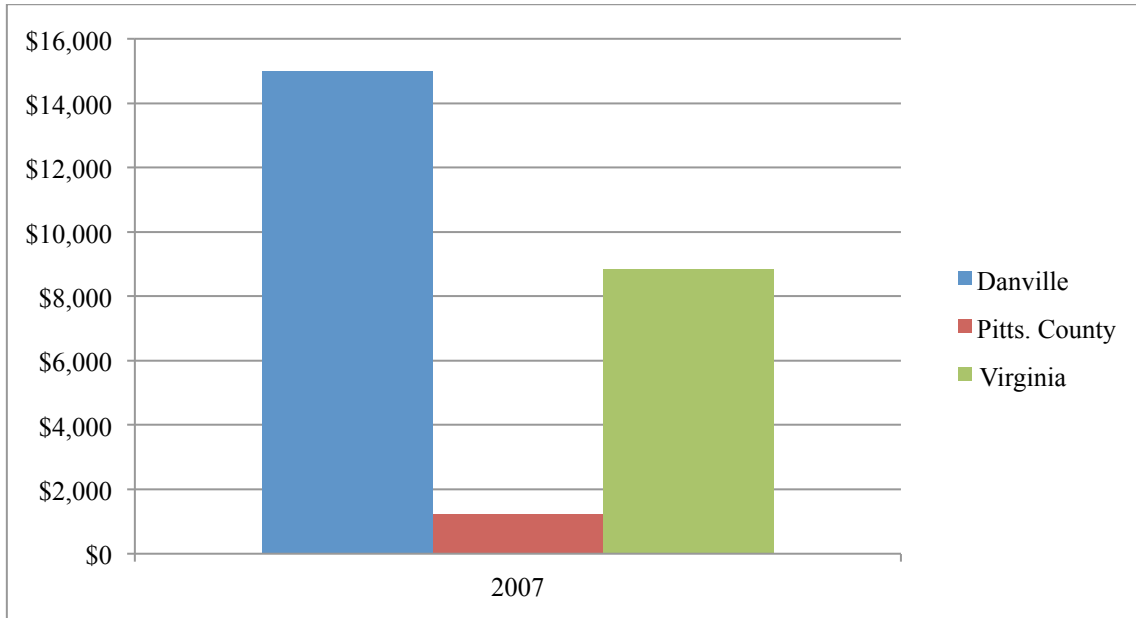
All of the following information was provided from the National Center for Charitable Statistics.

### **Why are non-profit organizations important?**

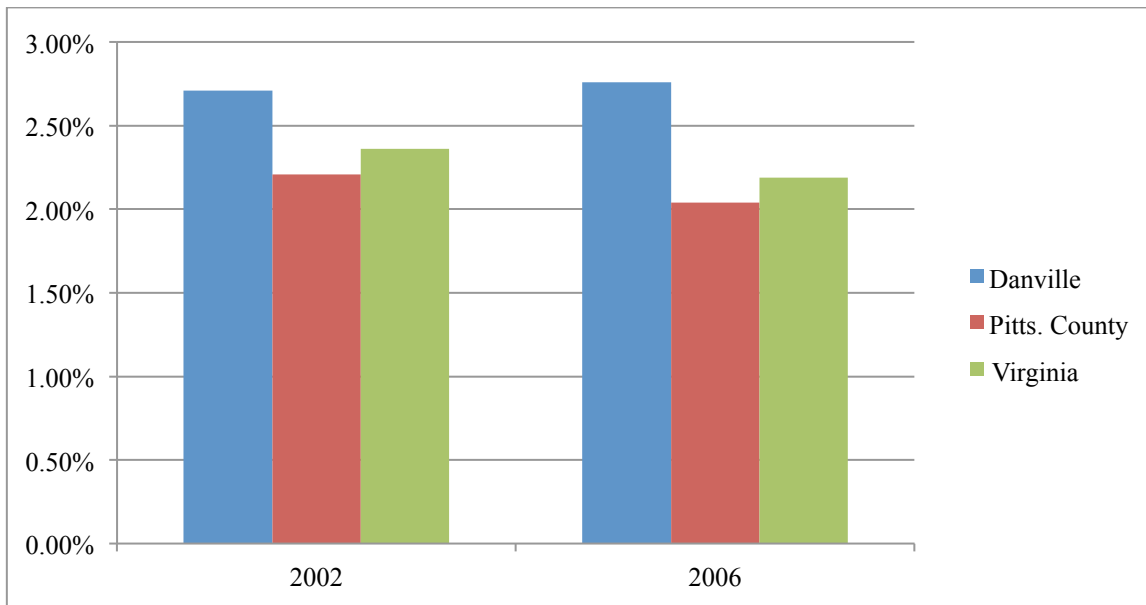
Non-profit organizations remain instrumental in community development. Non-profits are able to provide relief from impoverished conditions and poor economic situations. Non-profits also maintain the ability to fund initiatives to aid in community transformation. Furthermore, the charitable giving rate encompasses faith-based giving. This remains a salient indicator of the

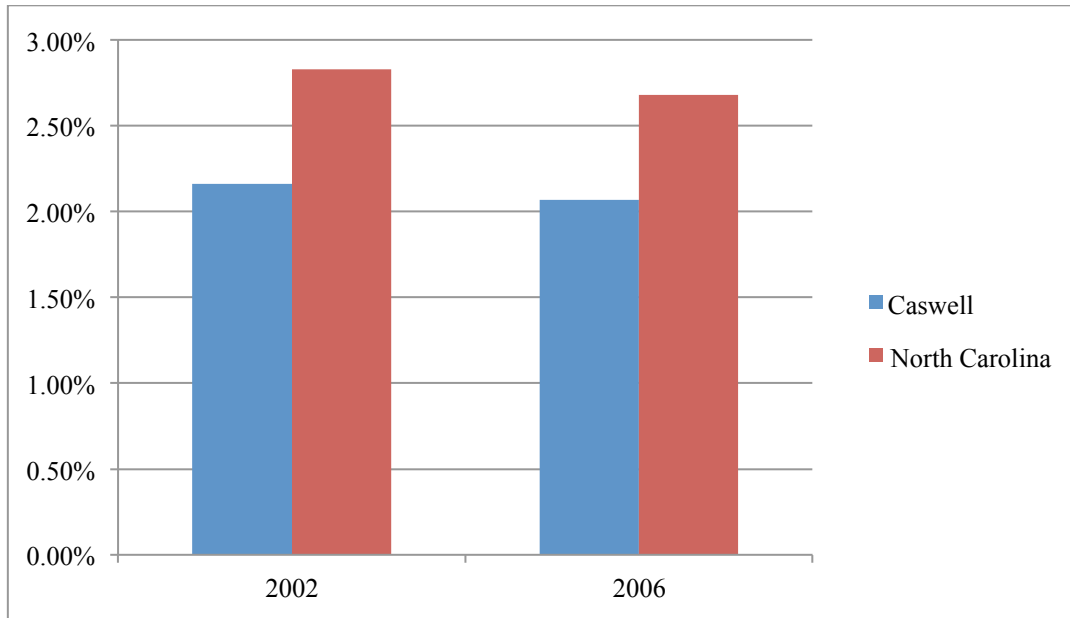
influence of faith-based organizations in the region, as the region has over 300 religious organizations. Increased rates of giving increase the potential scope of churches in community development.

***Revenue of Non-Profit Organizations (Per Capita)***



***Charitable Giving Rates (% of Adjusted Gross Income)***





## *Political Engagement*

### **Description of Indicator**

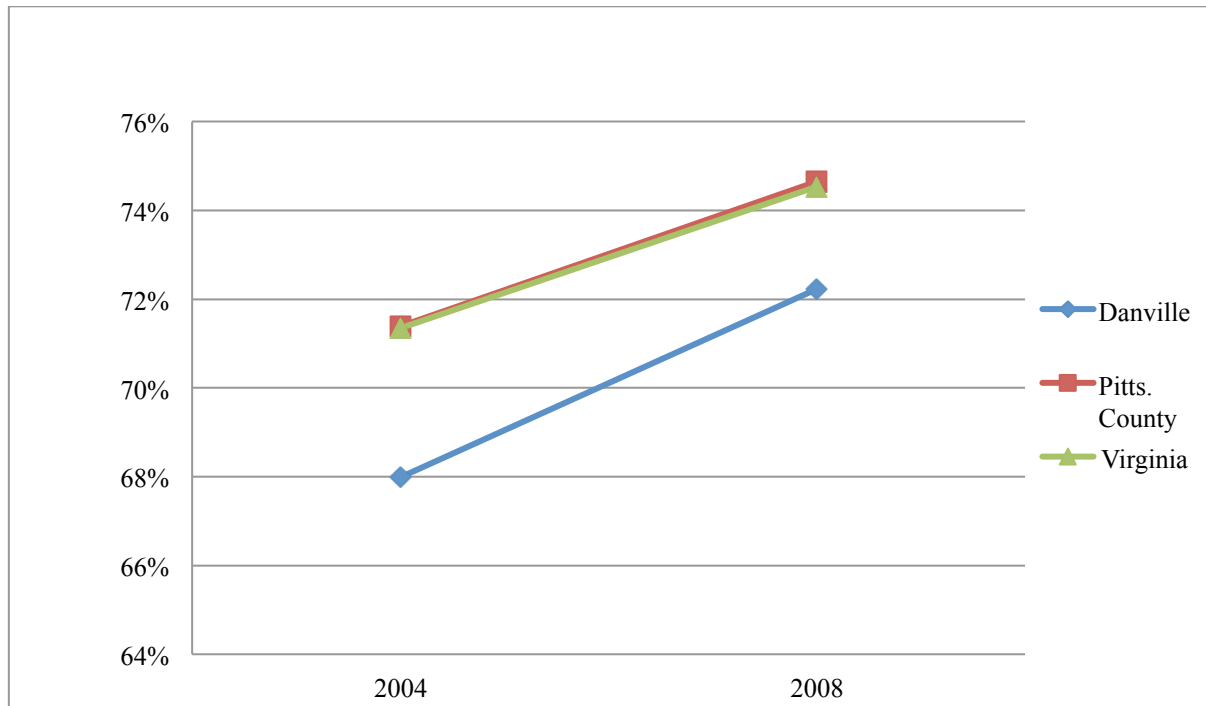
Rates of political engagement were obtained from the Virginia State Board of Elections. Voter turnout indicates the percentage of registered voters who successfully voted. The rates were obtained from the presidential election. Local government statistics were obtained from the Clarity Elections website.<sup>39</sup>

### **Why is political engagement important?**

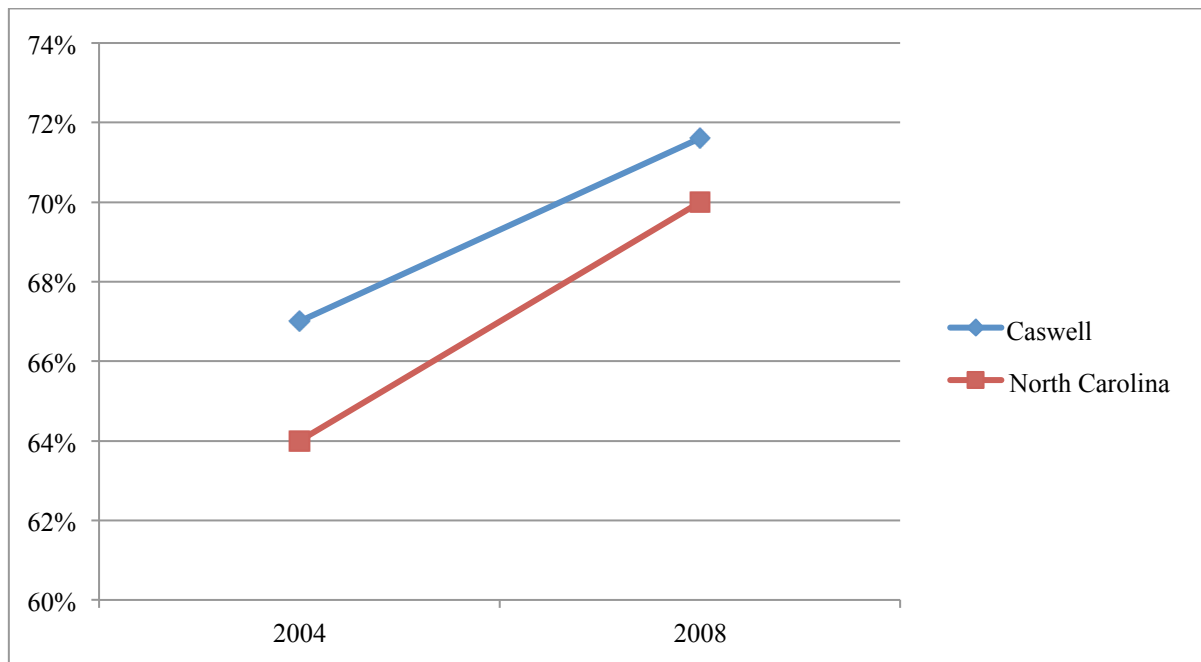
Political engagement is important in promoting governmental responsiveness. A large and active constituency receives more support from elected officials. Increased participation reflects a civically engaged community in which the citizenry remains more informed and educated. As a by-product of political engagement, community awareness and engagement in regional improvement increases bringing beneficial political decisions from elected officials.

<sup>39</sup> <http://results.enr.clarityelections.com/NC/Caswell/22583/40352/en/summary.html>

***Political Engagement (Presidential Election)***

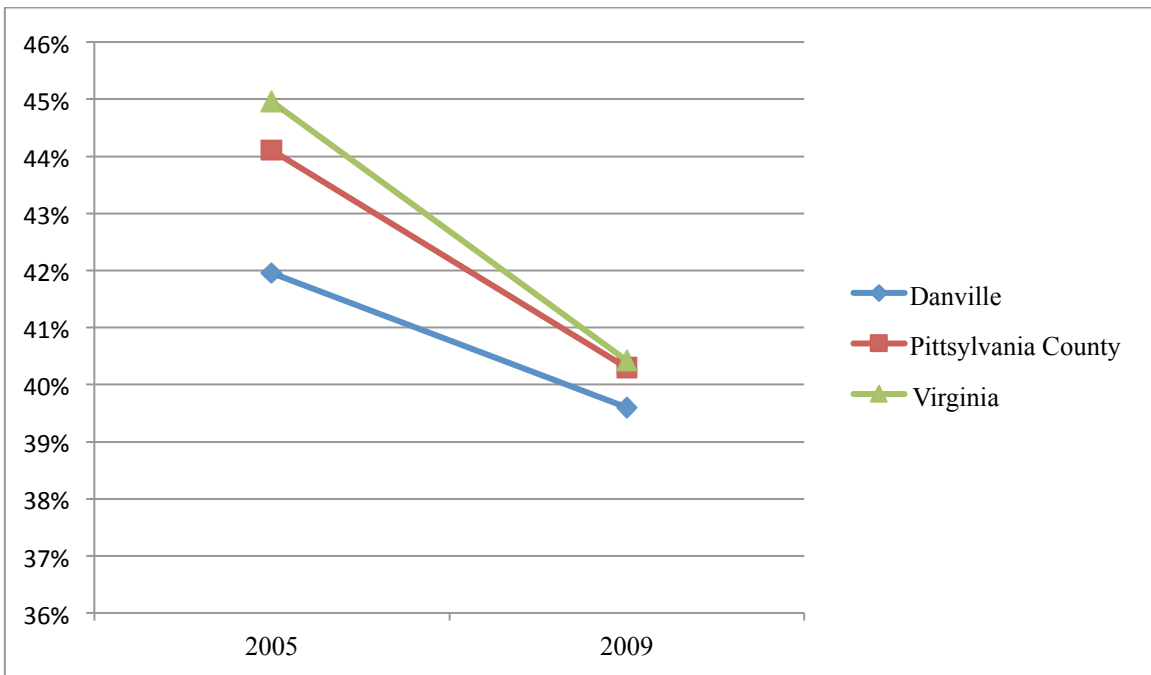
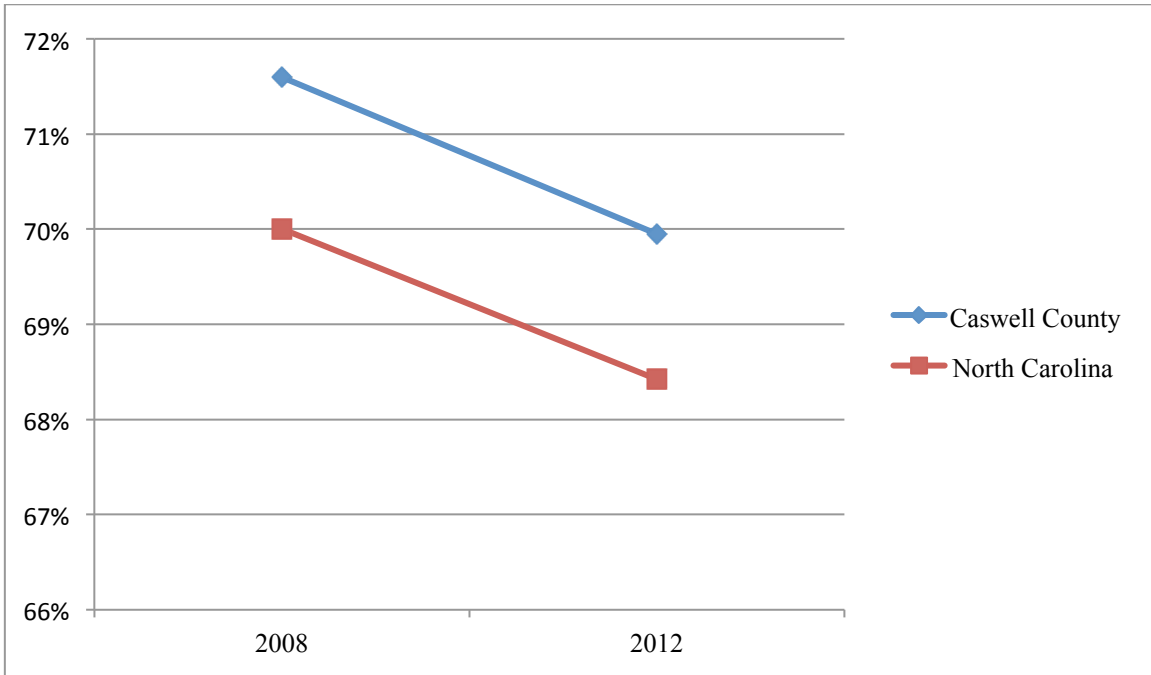


***Voter Turnout – General Election (% of registered voters)***



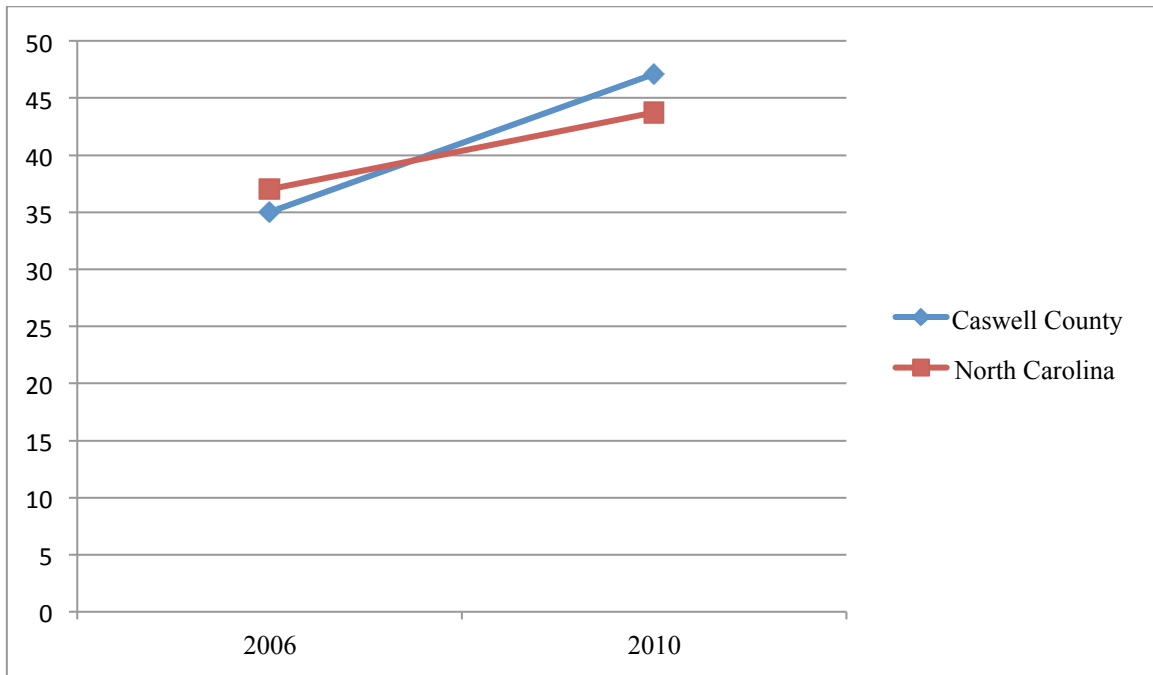
Source: N.C. Board of Elections

*Gubernatorial Engagement*





### *Local Government*



#### **How are we doing?**

Danville has decreased; however, it remains less engaged as compared to the state and regional average. In contrast, Pittsylvania and Caswell Counties maintains higher engagement levels than their respective states.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> [http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Election\\_Information/Election\\_Results/Index.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Election_Information/Election_Results/Index.html)