



## Community College Partners





## **Education Initiative – STEM East Community Colleges**

### **The 14 Member Community College Initiative for NC East launched in January 2024.**

1. 14 Regional Community Colleges as Paying Partners.
2. The leader of this initiative, Wesley Beddard, initially went to our current Community College Presidents & Staff and asked, "What do you need?".
3. Based on conversations with colleges, the STEM East Community College Initiative offered Summer STEM Outreach Grants to colleges to host STEM camps with middle & high school students during the summer of 2024. Nine of our fourteen Community Colleges participated, and 488 Middle and High School students attended the camps.
4. Based on the success of the Summer STEM Camps, the STEM East Community College Initiative granted Fall STEM Outreach Grants for camps with middle & high school students during the Fall of 2024. Twelve of our fourteen regional Community Colleges were awarded grants to continue this vital work.
5. Natasha Roberson and Wesley Beddard established the Career Center/Career Advisor Network for the purpose of coordinating activities and bringing best practices along with critical professional development for the purpose of coordinating regional activities, promoting best practices and providing professional development
6. National Science Foundation – Advanced Technological Education (NSF-ATE) Workshop.
7. Eastern North Carolina has been an NSF ATE desert with only one grant received in the last decade. The NC East/ STEM East team hosted an NSF-ATE grant workshop with ten STEM East Community Colleges participating. The workshop was facilitated by three national mentor organizations. Six (6) community colleges applied for and were accepted by Mentor Connect to participate in an 8-month mentorship in preparation for the submission of NSF ATE grant applications in October 2025. The grants have the potential to bring millions of dollars to our community colleges to advance technical education in eastern North Carolina.
8. Seven of our partner Community Colleges co-hosted the 2024 "Industry in Schools" Summer Workshops for K-12 teachers.

#### **Connect with Wesley Beddard**

Have questions or ideas? Wesley would love to hear from you at [beddard@nceast.org](mailto:beddard@nceast.org), (252) 945-2150