



## **Catawba County Chamber of Commerce**



The Catawba County Chamber of Commerce has a cooperative membership of 900 businesses and a staff that is committed to creating, building and maintaining the most respected and visionary Chamber organization in the country.

The Chamber works in several ways: Advocacy and public policy on behalf of business on a local, state and national level; preparing our workforce for 21<sup>st</sup> century job skills; increasing educational attainment levels in our public schools to higher educational opportunities; providing networking opportunities for our member businesses to make new business contacts, expanding their customer base and access to new sales channels; being the leader in professional and leadership developing training for Catawba County; helping to engrain creativity and innovation into company culture; studying and preparing for the weak signals and future trends that are changing economies all across the world; improving the quality of life and livability of this county that will result in an increase in our population base; and helping our community become the most entrepreneurial friendly community in America.

### **Sports & Recreation**

Catawba County offers a wide range of Sports and Recreation for enthusiasts of every kind. Rock Barn Golf & Spa is home to the Greater Hickory Classic, a PGA TOUR Champions Tour Event. Other golf courses include the Catawba Country Club, the Lake Hickory Country Club, Hampton Heights Golf Club, Catawba Springs Golf Club, and Mountain View Golf Club. The Hickory Motor Speedway hosts the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series and is known as the "Birthplace of the NASCAR Stars". 2004 South Atlantic League Champion Hickory Crawdads (Class A Affiliate-Texas Rangers) offer minor league baseball at it's best. The YMCA of Catawba Valley offers numerous athletic, daycare and health and fitness opportunities for all ages at several facilities in the county. Additionally, the Catawba River provides many opportunities for boating and other recreations. Catawba County is also home to numerous parks that include Bakers Mountain Park and Riverbend park and provide opportunities ranging from family picnics and playgrounds to hiking and fishing.

### **Arts & Culture**

Home to three community theatres, a college theatre, a symphony, a choral society, and a first class art museum, Catawba County provides an array of artistic and cultural entertainment. The Hickory Community Theatre is the third oldest and one of the largest community theatres in North Carolina. In addition to its productions and educational classes, the Hickory Community Theatre also provides entertainment opportunities ranging from karaoke to a series of movie nights. Like the Hickory Community Theatre, The Green Room offers a range of plays and musicals as well as educational classes and other opportunities for youth. The Lenoir-Rhyne University Playmakers offer productions each year as well. The Western Piedmont Symphony, a professional orchestra of 60+ members, presents an annual season of symphonic music featuring guest artists who are rising stars of classical music. The Western Piedmont Symphony is also well noted for its outreach to students. Each year, the Chamber Orchestra (a smaller version of the full orchestra) goes "on the road" to bring concerts to nearly 30,000 public, private and home-schooled children in four Hickory metro area counties. The Hickory Choral Society, a volunteer organization of over 150 voices, presents three concerts annually: a traditional Christmas Concert, a classical Winter Concert and a Spring Concert featuring a guest artist. The Hickory Museum of Art is the second-oldest art museum in North Carolina and the first museum in the Southeast to collect American art. The Hickory Museum of Art offers exhibitions, lectures, art classes, films and outreach programs to schools and other groups. Additionally Catawba County offers a Science Museum, a History Museum, several concert associations, a youth symphony and a wide variety of musical groups ranging from Barbershop to Bluegrass.

### **Religion**

There are over 200 congregations in Catawba County representing a variety of Jewish, Protestant, Catholic and other beliefs. All major protestant religions are represented with the largest number of adherents belonging to the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In addition, there are numerous religious schools available in Catawba County encompassing grade ranges K-12. More information on these schools is available in the Education and Training section of this Fact Book.