



# NC TRAVEL NEWS

A weekly newsletter on North Carolina General Assembly news relevant to the North Carolina tourism industry

## NCDNCR Celebrates 50 Years in Cabinet

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources celebrated its 50 year anniversary of being a cabinet position under the governor this past week with a reception hosted by Governor Roy Cooper at the Executive Mansion.



The Department oversees the state's resources for the arts, history, libraries and nature and is home to the state's 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, and more.

"Since 1972, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has been a partner with destinations across the state," said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. "In-state and out-of-state visitors enjoy the many historic and cultural sites offered in North Carolina, and we are so grateful that our state's leaders saw the importance of it 50 years ago."

## 'A Life-Changing Experience' for a Student



James Baker-Perry



**James Baker-Perry**, a senior at North Mecklenburg High School, ended up having a life-changing experience after attending the Charlotte Area Hotel Association (CAHA) Job Fair at the Charlotte Convention Center on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. James had heard about the event from his Foods and Nutrition (1) Teacher, Ms. Sylvia Miller-Smith. He knew that he needed part-time employment and thought this might be a good opportunity to help him with this endeavor. Little did James know that this opportunity for part-time employment would turn into a full-time career opportunity. During the fair, James noticed that The Westin Hotel in Charlotte was seeking high school graduates to work within many different departments, including Engineering. Engineering has always been an area of interest for James. He showed them his resume and was granted an interview on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Following the interview, James was thrilled to be offered part-time employment in the Serving Department, which would turn into full-time employment upon completion of his high school graduation in June. At that time, James will begin employment with the Engineering Department at The Westin, with on-the-job training and experience in his field of choice. He was told that his first opportunities will involve specialized training regarding HVAC units.

One focus of Career and Technical Education within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is to not only expose and prepare all students for the countless career opportunities available to them, but to also ensure that every senior is career and college ready and has a plan in place **before** they cross the stage at graduation. Thanks to this fortuitous job-fair opportunity, James Baker-Perry has his plan in place. One, seemingly small event, turned into a career opportunity for one of our promising graduates. Congratulations James!

\*\*This event was held at the Charlotte Convention Center, and was organized by CAHA and Ms. Nakesha Dawson, a Career and Technical Education Pathway Lead within the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Career and Technical Education Department (CTE). The event, which will hopefully become an annual one, was created to expose high school students to the many career opportunities within the CAHA, and to also offer internships, resume writing and interview preparation, as well as full and part-time career opportunities to interested students.

NCTIA received the above letter this week written by the Career Development Coordinator at North Mecklenburg High School.

The letter highlights the opportunities one student – James Baker-Perry – received as a direct result of attending the Hospitality Job Fair held at the Charlotte Convention Center on April 7.

The job fair was made possible by the Tourism Education Foundation of NC, Charlotte Area Hotel Association, Charlotte Mecklenburg School Career & Technology Education, NCTIA, and the NC General Assembly.

"We were so very moved to learn that our work is having a positive impact on our hotel industry and the lives of students who are finding careers after graduation," said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. "I have no doubt that James, and the hundreds of students who came through our job fair, will see their lives and livelihoods transformed."

Chelena also said the hotel industry will be transformed by a new generation of eager and talented employees who will contribute to a growing and dynamic industry. "James and students like him will be the next leaders in our profession, and I am bursting with pride about it," he said.